

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M. A. (Oxon.)"

It is interesting to find how careful the Committee of the Mesmeric Infirmary were to keep clear of anything that might prejudice the scientific world against their work: and how futile all their precautions were. They say in an early report (1854): "Above all we keep clear of supernaturalism . . . we allow nothing that is termed spirit-rapping or spirit table-turning (*sic*): although we express no opinion upon the subject, nor as to whether a power, hitherto overlooked, exists in us and other animals of causing movements in inanimate bodies independently of mechanical impulse, and a power in some conditions of the system of causing certain sounds." Very cautious, but quite fruitless! The men of science laughed mesmerism to scorn, as many of them have been laughing at Spiritualism:—

- "'Tis above reason, cried the doctors on one side:
- 'Tis below reason, cried the others.
- 'Tis faith, cried one:
- 'Tis a fiddlestick, said the others.
- 'Tis possible, cried one:
- 'Tis impossible, said the others."

So the world wags: and half-a-century of added knowledge and broadened experience makes us very little better than our fathers in our reception of new truth.

The case of mesmeric healing that I have marked for summary is one of the "cure of a true cancer of the female breast" recorded by Dr. Elliotson, and published by him in *The Zoist*, No. 23, and separately in the form of a pamphlet, with an introduction by Dr. Engledue, of Southsea. This latter gentleman regards the case as "one of the most important and instructive in the annals of surgery." Dr. Elliotson calls it "one of the most splendid triumphs of mesmerism." "*The disease*," he says, "*was malignant and structural, and such as the art of medicine has never been known to cure, nor the powers of nature to shake off.*" The disease, moreover, was hereditary: "her father's mother had died of cancer of the breast." When, on March 6th, 1843, the patient first consulted Dr. Elliotson, the disease had manifested itself by violent, darting pains, for a period of about eighteen months. The case was seen by various eminent surgeons—Sir Benj. Brodie, Mr. Liston, Mr. Samuel Cooper, among them—and "the breast was unanimously doomed to extirpation." Dr. Elliotson, himself, does not seem to have expected more from mesmeric treatment than "to render the patient insensible to the pain of the surgical operation." It would be tedious to pursue the course of the case, complicated as it was by the prejudice of other surgeons whom well meaning friends called in. But, briefly, "the tumour underwent such changes, day after day, and month after month, just in proportion as the efforts of the mesmeriser were continued: and finally it became absorbed: and not only

so, but the constitutional symptoms, which were of an aggravated character, yielded; the darting pains ceased, sleep returned, the sallow complexion vanished, the swollen arm returned to its natural size, and the situation of the patient became in every respect more and more satisfactory."\*

We have the best evidence that this amelioration was due to mesmerism, for "on one occasion, during the absence of Dr. Elliotson on the Continent, the treatment was nearly discontinued for two months." What was the result? Dr. Elliotson testifies that on his return he "found a very painful and bleeding sore, and what was worse the darting pain had returned, and the diseased mass had grown firmly to the ribs." This relapse took place after two years' treatment. Again she was mesmerised daily and again the mass began to diminish. . . . During 1847 the disease "*steadily gave way*. The mass had become not only much less but *detached from the ribs and movable again*." And at length, in September, 1848, the report is—"The cancerous mass is now completely dissipated; the breast is perfectly flat, and all the skin thicker and firmer than before the disease existed. Not the smallest lump is to be found, nor is there the slightest tenderness." † Dr. Engledue asks very cogently: "Is there not here a manifestation of cause and effect? Have we not the same evidence here that we have when a beneficial effect follows the exhibition of a drug?" It would be curious to hear a negative answer logically defended. But alas! logic was conspicuously absent, then and now, from the arguments (if they can be so called) with which men of science and theologians were wont to meet what they equally feared and detested. Dr. F. Hawkins, in the Harveian Oration before the College of Physicians, in 1848, was not ashamed to denounce "the impostors called mesmerists" in words which shall not defile these pages. And even Mr. Syme's certificate to the reality of the cure, in the case narrated above, produced little effect. Dr. Hugh McNeile, "great and good man," according to his own estimate of himself in after years, seemed to think ‡ that mesmerism must be supernatural, and so, *diabolic!* But he naïvely adds, "I have seen nothing of it: nor do I think it right to tempt God by going to see it." Yet he does not fear to "tempt God" by slandering from the pulpit in His house those whose only crime it was to follow in the beneficent steps of Him who "went about doing good, and healing all manner of diseases."

Some of the most interesting accounts in the Reports are those of clairvoyance, in which the patient diagnoses his own case, predicts the recurrence or disappearance of symptoms, and the date of perfect cure. There are many such recorded, and it is of them that Dr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Watson, than whom no abler and more philosophic physician, none more respected by the profession, ever, perhaps, lived, offered the following judgment. I quote it as added evidence of the difficulty of getting fair play for new truth even from those whose minds are pervaded by philosophic calm, and as some consolation to those who now chafe with impatience against the difficulty of getting acceptance of what they regard as an important and noble

\* Statement of Dr. Engledue.

† Statement of Dr. Engledue, quoting Dr. Elliotson.

‡ "Satanic Agency and Mesmerism." A Sermon at St. Jude's, Liverpool. April 10th, 1842.

truth. Dr. Watson says in his "Lectures" \* :—"All the transcendental phenomena, the miraculous (*sic*) diagnoses and revelations, the clairvoyance, the prophecies, I class with the spirit-rappings and the table-turnings, as evidence of imposture on the one side and of miserable credulity on the other, and as alike scandalous in an age and country which vaunt themselves to be enlightened." This, observe, from a philosopher writing in measured and dignified language for the instruction of others about a subject which he could not have investigated, and of which he is proved out of his own mouth to be ludicrously ignorant! If philosophers rave thus, what wonder if ordinary mortals talk even more wildly!

A far more philosophical utterance from one who has not less claim to the title of philosopher, I may be pardoned for contrasting with that just quoted. Archbishop Whately studied mesmerism, knew what he was writing about, and had breadth of mind sufficient to overcome inherited prejudice. How few alas! in his position would have had the fairness, the bravery, and the justice to write thus about a subject so unpopular :—

"I myself was for many years reluctant to believe in mesmerism; but I was at length overcome by facts. Any amount of detected mistake or imposture will no more go to disprove a well-established fact than the detection of a number of pieces of counterfeit coins will prove a genuine shilling and sovereign not to be genuine silver and gold. To suppose that we are all so mad as to believe that things are taking place before our eyes which do not, and all mad in the same way, is utterly incredible. No one, I am convinced, who has seen *what I have seen*, or the half of it, can remain unconvinced that mesmerism is a real and powerful agent. Those who profess complete disbelief, therefore, must belong, I conceive, to one of two classes: first, those *who have made but a slight and scanty inquiry, or none at all*, and shun full investigation, lest they should be convinced—which is what they do not wish; and secondly, those *who have inquired more fully, and really are convinced, but are afraid to own it*, for fear of being laughed at, or of being sent 'to Coventry' by a kind of Trades' Union conspiracy."

The books to which I have referred in these Notes will be found (through the kindness of Captain James, who has handed them to me for presentation to the Society,) in the library of the Society for Psychical Research. They will well repay perusal.

M. A. (Oxon.)

#### CURE OF DIABETES.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reply to the letter of "J.E.P.," requesting to know if anyone can tell him if diabetes can be cured by mesmerism or other means, I may say that I have myself cured several cases of diabetes mellitus by nitrate of uranium, and by phosphorus in small doses.

It is true the cures were not permanent, but in several cases all signs of the disease disappeared for years.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

P.S.—While writing, I may add, in reference to M. Didier's interesting paper on "Healing by the Royal Touch," that in olden times the king was generally supposed to be either an *Initiate* or one anointed of the Lord, and thus one through whom flowed the Divine influence of healing.—G.W.

SIR,—Seeing in "LIGHT" a letter headed "Cure of Diabetes," I beg to inform you that I have cured several cases, and one very serious. You will see a case reported on p. 18 of my little book, "Curative Mesmerism." The patient was declared incurable. I mesmerised her during six weeks, and the improvement was so great that she began to gain flesh and strength to walk. I attended the whole family for years; the patient, her husband, their children, and their grandchildren.

I think you will find cases also reported in the *Zoist*.—Yours truly,  
ADOLPHE DIDIER.

February 23rd.

\* Vol. I., p. 718.

## GENERAL GHOST-OLGY.

(Continued.)

Apart from the respective theories of renovated images, mental hallucinations, and magnetic influence, which embrace among them the greater portion of the phantom world, there lies one description of incident to which no explanation seems, with the least plausibility, to apply, viz., that which has, to all appearance, a local habitation, and is, past all question, associated with that particular spot by means of events which have never come to the knowledge of the seer.

The late Lady P. told me that in her youth she happened to be visiting with her mother at an old moated mansion, not far from Warwick. Not being as yet promoted to the honours of the late dinner-table, she was, one evening, awaiting in a large room above the drawing-room, in company with three other young ladies, the accustomed summons to dessert. Their fire having become low, she took up a shovel, and proceeded towards a closet near the other end of the room, where the coals were kept. She had made but a few steps in that direction when, to her utter astonishment, the figure of a tall man suddenly stood before her. Her companions, at her cry of surprise, ran to her side, and likewise saw the figure.

There was something—as they afterwards declared—in the appearance of the intruder that convinced them he was not of flesh and blood; nevertheless, Lady P. (she was then Miss B.)—a child of remarkable spirit and courage—made a step forward, and actually offered to strike at the apparition with the shovel in her hand! The figure seemed to nod gravely in answer to the menace, but never moved from its place. For a minute the parties stood gazing on each other, until, to the relief of the juvenile allies, help arrived in the very material form of John, the footman, who announced dessert.

A general scream invited John to approach, for the phantom foe still stood his ground, and it was impossible to reach the door without passing him. John accordingly entered upon the field, and, thus taken in flank, the enemy disappeared. The young ladies eagerly related what they had seen, when the man evinced no surprise, merely telling them that they were in what had always been called the "haunted room." The circumstance being made known in the drawing-room, the host and hostess expressed much regret that they had been introduced to the room in question, which had been rarely used on account of its painful associations, the steward of a family who formerly occupied the mansion having shot a fellow-servant there, and concealed the body of his victim in the coal-closet. It was a curious circumstance that the pistol which had effected the murderous deed had ever since been suffered to hang over the mantel-piece in the room. It was many years before the distinct impression stamped by the vision on Miss B.'s mind—even to the very features of the spectral visitant—faded away.

Here is another example of that singular class of incident which seems to be permitted to re-act the remote past, simply for the information of some person, or persons, themselves wholly unconnected with the circumstances thus revealed.

A lady, not long since resident in London, but whose family had, for many years, had connections with Canada, related that an aunt of hers, Miss Caroline C., was one of a large family living at Montreal, and, at the period of our story, a handsome, healthy girl, by no means dreamy or imaginative, possessed of a remarkably clear intelligence, and (we are pledged to state all the facts) an uncommonly robust appetite, inasmuch as it has been left on record in the family that this fortunate young lady could eat eight or nine eggs for breakfast "quite comfortably." (I note this circumstance as in some sort material, proving as it does that in Miss Caroline's system no undue preponderance

existed on the spiritual side). The mansion tenanted by her father, Colonel C., had been built by a Dutch or French settler, and was a quaint old place, covered with lichens and creepers. It had a large, old-fashioned garden, divided by a low wall from an orchard well stocked with apple, peach, and cherry-trees. On the other three sides of the orchard ran an old, half-decayed oak paling, and beyond this frowned the old forest, yet untouched by the arm of man. Growing close to the paling stood a very large cherry-tree loaded in the season with luscious fruit, and this spot Miss Caroline had adopted as her study, reclining for many hours on the soft grass, which cushioned a little mound at the very foot of the tree.

One summer morning, in 1800, while the children were at play, and Caroline, the staid elder sister—then about fifteen—was lying on her favourite bank deep in (the times were not fastidious) “Roderick Random,” a strange, sudden impulse, such as she had never before experienced, caused her to look up, as if in answer to a call. Yet all was still, the very voices of the children having died away into the woodland. Glancing along the paling, Caroline observed, with great surprise, a young lady, apparently about seventeen or eighteen, step suddenly upon the paling, and trip along that narrow bridge towards her. As this, however, was a feat constantly practised by her sisters, Caroline’s predominating feeling was rather one of curiosity as to who the stranger might be. The dress of the latter was very peculiar. She was in white, wearing what was formerly in fashion as a *negligé*, and over her shoulders a long blue scarf. She had light, wavy hair and a fair and pretty face. As she held her dress up slightly, while stepping along, Caroline saw that her tiny feet were encased in red morocco high-heeled slippers. She walked lightly and steadily, gazing straight before her, until she reached the cherry-tree, and was close to the astonished watcher. Then she stopped, looked up among the overhanging branches, calmly unwound her blue scarf, flung one end over an arm of the tree, secured it there, made a loop at the other end, and slipping the latter over her head, leaped from the paling! Caroline uttered a piercing shriek, and fainted. Her cry brought children and servants to her aid, and she was soon restored to consciousness, when her first eager question was for the poor suicide. The hearers looked at her in amazement. She related all that had passed, but it was, of course, attributed to a dream or illusion. There was not a sign of girl or scarf to be seen, nor, as it appeared on inquiry, had any person resembling the figure described been noticed by anyone in the neighbourhood.

Some weeks later the story happened to be mentioned at a mansion in the vicinity, in the presence of an old negress, who, though past ninety, had all her faculties about her, and evinced an extraordinary interest in the narrative, dropping so many mysterious hints in reference to the subject that they finally reached the ears of Colonel C. That gentleman, determined to sift the matter fully, called on the family with whom the negress lived, and extracted from the “good old chronicler,”—who, like Nestor, had for three generations “walked hand in hand with time,”—the following singular explanation:—

Colonel C.’s house had, seventy years before, belonged to a German, one Waldstein. Among his daughters was one of great personal attractions, with beautiful light hair, and noted, besides, for the perfection of her little feet. A French officer, on a visit to her father, struck with her beauty and innocent, winning ways, offered marriage, but added that, according to French law, he must obtain the formal consent of his parents, who, belonging to a proud and noble line, were, it was feared, not unlikely to refuse it. On this errand, the young soldier hastened back to France. What he did—or did not do—there, was never accurately learned. For he never communicated directly again with her to whom he had vowed his life. Only an unhappy rumour

was conveyed to her, under circumstances which commanded belief, that he had married the young daughter of a house as noble as his own. When the poor girl’s lingering trust in the promise-breaker was thus at last extinguished, she spoke not a word. She walked with a frightful calmness, into the garden. None followed her, for they believed their darling had gone, as other proud mourners have done, to weep *alone*. But that light, quiet step passed through the familiar garden into the orchard, to the very tree under whose shade she had so often sat hand in hand with *him*. Upon its branches she hanged herself with the blue scarf she wore, and on that spot, where the grass grew so soft and fine, the old negress averred that she saw her buried, in the dress in which she died.

One circumstance remains to be mentioned, that adds not a little to the painful interest of the story. The young seer, Caroline C., herself died within two years of the vision, under circumstances mournful enough, and—save in the act of self-destruction—not dissimilar from what has been just narrated. Could the vision have been intended as a warning? a prophecy? Such a mystery sets at nought the boldest philosophical speculations. It is equally impossible to conceive that the scene of despair was perpetually re-enacting, or that but one individual, in a period of seventy years, should have derived, from natural causes, the capacity of witnessing it. If, on the other hand, we treat it as a special interposition, and remember that there is on record no wholly fruitless miracle, how should the warning have been suffered to fail?

An occurrence of a kindred sort, much nearer our own time, created much interest in Paris, obtaining greater notoriety from its association with the name of the amiable Archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Sibour, subsequently assassinated by a half-mad priest.

A young German lady arrived, with a party of friends, at one of the most renowned hotels in Paris, and chanced to occupy a first-floor bed-chamber furnished with unusual magnificence. Here she lay awake long after the hotel was wrapt in slumber, contemplating, by the glimmer of her *vaillense*, the costly objects around, when suddenly the folding doors, which she had secured, flew open; the chamber was filled with a bright light, as of day, and in the midst of this there appeared a young man, tall and handsome, and attired in the undress uniform of the French navy, having his hair arranged in the peculiar mode, *à la Titus*. Taking a chair from the bedside, he placed it in the very centre of the room, sat down, took from his pocket a pistol, with a remarkable red butt, put it to his forehead, and, firing, fell back apparently dead! Simultaneously with the explosion, the room became dark and still, but a low, soft voice seemed to utter, “Say an *Ave Maria* for his soul.” The young lady had fallen back, not insensible, but in a more painful state—a kind of cataleptic trance—and thus remained, fully conscious of all she imagined to have occurred, yet unable to move tongue or hand, until her maid, at seven o’clock on the following morning, knocked at the door. Even then she was unable to reply, and it was not till an hour later that the maid, in company with another domestic, repeated the summons. Still no answer, and for yet another hour the poor girl was delivered over to her agonised thoughts. At nine o’clock the doors were forced, and at the same moment the power of speech and movement returned. She shrieked out that a man had shot himself there some hours before, and still lay upon the floor.

Observing nothing unusual, the attendants concluded that it was an illusion consequent upon some terrible dream. She was removed to an adjacent room, and with difficulty persuaded that what she had seen and so minutely described had no reality. Half an hour later, the hotel proprietor, seeking an interview with a gentleman of the party, declared that the scene so strangely re-enacted had actually occurred three nights before. A young French officer had

engaged the best room in the hotel, and there terminated his life, using for the purpose a pistol of the peculiar appearance described. The body and the weapon were still at the Morgue, waiting identification, and the gentleman, proceeding thither, saw both—the head of the unfortunate young man exhibiting the Titus crop, and the wound in the forehead, as in the vision.

The Archbishop of Paris, struck with the extraordinary nature of the story, shortly after called upon the young lady, and directing her attention to the expression used by the mysterious voice, urged upon her with much fervour (but, it is believed, without success) the advisability of embracing that faith to whose teaching it appeared to point.

A letter from Mr. S. C. Hall, in the last number of "LIGHT," recalls to my memory a singular circumstance which, some thirty years ago, made a great impression on the minds of those who, like myself, were too well acquainted with the original narrator (a gentleman who held a high position in the Bank of England) to doubt his veracity. Without, at this moment, dwelling on the question whether the lower created animals are admitted to a future life, I will simply relate my friend's experience, as he himself imparted it.

He had, at one period of his life, a Pomeranian wolfhound—a noble creature, between whom and his master there existed a strong attachment. In the brief holidays Mr. St. C.'s official duties permitted him to take, he had been invariably accompanied by his four-footed friend—until one autumn, when the prospect of a two months' leave suggesting a longer journey than usual, he resolved to go abroad. Finding it inconvenient to take his favourite with him, and somewhat apprehensive as to the animal's behaviour when its naturally fierce temper should be, perhaps, irritated by confinement and its master's absence, it occurred to him to request a friend connected with the Zoological Society, Regent's Park, to place the animal in the Gardens until he should return. A commodious cage was at once devoted to "Luath," and his master bade him farewell.

Mr. St. C.'s absence lasted a month longer than he had foreseen, and it was late in November when he returned to his home, near Muswell Hill, Highgate. On the morning after his return, while shaving close to a window which looked upon the garden, he suddenly saw—to his great astonishment—the enormous head and outspread paws of "Luath" rise up above the garden wall and, after an apparent struggle to keep hold, drop out of sight; again and again was the action repeated, until the dog, seemingly disheartened, after a last violent effort sank back, and was seen no more. By this time, the gardener, who had been summoned, arrived with the key and opened the door—no Luath was to be seen. As soon as he was dressed, St. C. ran down, himself—hoping to whistle back his favourite, who could not be far off; a thin sheet of snow was on the ground, but, on this, St. C. noticed with surprise, there was not a trace of Luath's huge paws. On that day, Mr. St. C. was detained late at his official duties, but, on the next, he called at the "Zoo," and at once taxed the custodian with allowing his dog to escape.

"He has escaped indeed, sir," said the man "but it was no fault of ours. He was all right till a day or two ago, but yesterday morning we found him dead."

"Nonsense, man! I saw him, myself, yesterday," exclaimed St. C.

"You can see him *now*, sir," was the reply, "if you'll walk this way. Bill's a burying of him. He was very fond of the dog, was Bill."

They went to the spot, and were in time to see the noble Pomeranian laid in the just completed grave.

Has any one ever yet heard of the ghost of a *doll*? Such an alleged phenomenon was the cause of much excite-

ment and uneasiness at fashionable Wiesbaden about twenty years ago. The circumstances were singular enough to be worth recital.

A pretty little girl (the daughter of one of the residents), well-known in the neighbourhood from being constantly seen playing in the beautiful public gardens of the place, died, after a few weeks' illness, having been much soothed and solaced, during that painful interval, by the companionship of a favourite doll. The latter, who had received the name of "Flore," was scarcely less familiar to the juvenile community than was her poor little mistress. It seemed painful to separate the two. At all events, a feeling, perfectly intelligible to kindly hearts, induced the friends of the deceased child to place the doll in the coffin, in the position it had been used to occupy on the bosom of the little sleeper: and thus they were interred in the neighbouring cemetery of Biberich. Some weeks elapsed, and then a mysterious whisper went abroad that—wonderful as it was—Eulalie (the little girl) and Flore had reappeared in the public walks and gardens! This rumour quickly narrowed down to the apparition of Flore alone. But here it made so determined a stand as to awaken the attention of the older and wiser members of the community. Not a day now passed without one or other of the juvenile playmates bringing home an eager story of Flore's having been distinctly seen—if not fairly "interviewed"—sometimes sitting, bolt upright, under a rose-bush, sometimes propped against a garden chair, with her head mournfully drooping on one shoulder, sometimes borne in the arms of a certain dark-looking child, whose demeanour appeared to have discouraged any friendly advances, who disdained skipping-rope, and had proved impervious to the seductive influence of hoop.

With some difficulty, the story was traced back to this circumstance, that, about three weeks after the funeral, an intimate friend of Eulalie happened to be walking in the gardens, when her attention was attracted by two other children who were quarrelling. With the curiosity of her years the little girl hurried up to ascertain the cause of the dispute. It was a doll. No sooner had her eyes lit upon it than she uttered a scream, flew back to her nurse, and, pulling her towards the spot, bade her look at the ghost of Flore, who had been buried with little Eulalie! The nurse complied, but, less familiar with Flore's specialities than her charge, declined to offer any decided opinion on the subject, excepting that it was certainly no ghost, and wore a different cap and bonnet from those in which Flore made her last terrestrial appearance. The little girl, nevertheless, positively maintained that it was indeed Flore, and no other; or, if *not* Flore, then undoubtedly her ghost—and this conviction she repeated to every acquaintance they encountered during the remainder of the walk. It became, in fact, the child's fixed idea, and, as the almost daily sight of the mysterious doll began seriously to affect her health and spirits, the parents, as the readiest means of dispelling the illusion, resolved to make a complete inquiry into the matter.

As they knew something of the family to whom the doll-carrier belonged (that of a gentleman from the Cape of Good Hope), there was not much difficulty in getting the toy in question submitted to their scrutiny. It appeared that the little girl was able to mention some certain trifling peculiarities, either in the dress or structure of the doll, which were not visible without a close examination. These were found to correspond minutely with her description. There was literally no longer room for question. It was Flore herself, *rediviva*! The ghost thus laid, it became necessary to ascertain the cause of the singular resuscitation of Flore's corporal frame, and, by agreement, the police were intrusted with the investigation. It was soon ascertained that the doll had been purchased by the toy-shop keeper, of whom the present possessor had bought it

from a travelling dealer, whose habitat was unknown. An application was then made to the authorities, for an order to examine the coffin of the deceased child. It was found empty! The inquiry resulted in the detection of a miscreant who had used certain means he possessed of access at all hours to the cemetery, for the purpose of stripping the bodies of the recently buried of anything of value that remained upon them, and disposing of these articles to the travelling pedlars. The wretch was condemned to the inadequate penalty of a year's imprisonment.

HENRY SPICER.

## THE DOUBTS & DIFFICULTIES OF INQUIRERS.

By John S. Farmer,

Author of "A New Basis of Belief in Immortality," "How to Investigate Spiritualism," &c., &c., &c.

[Since the publication of my little pamphlet, "How to Investigate Spiritualism," numerous inquiries have been addressed to me upon various points which seemed to suggest a difficulty or a doubt to the questioner. Until now, I have answered these queries privately by letter, but as my time is limited, and furthermore, as the same questions arise again and again, it has occurred to me that were I to publish them in "LIGHT" I should not only save myself unnecessary labour, but also in all probability considerably extend the usefulness of my answers. Hence the appearance of matter that may seem very elementary indeed to many readers. This statement is, however, not made as an apology; surely such, for obvious reasons, is not needed.]

The various points dealt with have been actually raised, and they therefore fairly represent the difficulties which some inquirers have experienced. I have endeavoured to make my replies as clear and as succinct as possible, and trust they may prove of practical benefit to those who are only just entering upon the study of what, if rightly understood and used, should prove an inestimable boon. I need hardly say that it will afford me much pleasure to explain or answer to the best of my ability any other difficulties or questions that may arise in the minds of those who are honestly and reverently investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism. Such inquiries may be addressed to the care of the Editor of "LIGHT," 4, New Bridge-street, Ludgate-circus, London, E.C.]

(1) *Is it in all cases necessary that a circle should be formed in order to produce the phenomena, or is it possible to investigate matters by one's self? If so, how? If not, what is the smallest number of persons who may expect results?*

The inquirer in this case said that he was "ignorant even of the A B C of Spiritualism" but professed to be "greatly desirous of testing the truth of the phenomena which have been explained by the spiritual hypothesis." In a subsequent letter he informed me that his great difficulty lay in the fact of his being a stranger in the town from which he wrote, and that consequently he knew of no friends who would join him in forming a circle. In such a case as this the best plan would probably be for the investigator to experimentalise with a view to ascertaining whether he was personally a psychic, in which event it would not be unlikely that phenomena would occur even with no other person present. The least tedious way of arriving at this would be by using a Psychograph or Writing Planchette. An hour a day should be devoted to the trial, for say a month, at the end of which period, if no indications of external power were perceptible, the investigator would have reasonable ground for supposing that he was not a psychic, or rather that he was not possessed of sufficient power as a sensitive to make it of any practical value for strictly personal and private investigation. Failure to obtain results in the time mentioned could not, however, be taken as absolute evidence that the power did not exist. With a protracted trial it is not improbable that success would attend the efforts of the inquirer. Few, however, have the time, and fewer still the patience, to devote to the investigation. Still I have known instances where successful results have not been obtained until after the lapse of two years although such cases have been exceptional. In the event of the trial being made with the Planchette, a considerable amount of weariness may be avoided if the inquirer peruses a book or paper while he is sitting with his hand (right or left as preferred) on the little instrument in question. Such a course, too, is useful in producing a frame of mind somewhat favourable to success, viz., an attitude of unexpectancy. In many instances the Psychograph

will after a time begin to move across the paper, tracing at first lines and strokes with no apparent meaning in them. Do not trouble about that—the meaning of it all will appear in good time. Do not interrupt until fluency of motion is attained, when the power moving the instrument may be questioned. Often directions will then be given how best to facilitate the manifestations; also messages on personal and other topics. Address the "power," or "force," or "intelligence"—whatever you may prefer to call it—in the same way as you would any stranger you met, listening courteously, but keeping your eyes and ears open. Above all, use your reason. Never for one moment surrender it.

If, however, the inquirer can induce one or two friends to join him the chances of success are increased in proportion. The plan suggested for "table movements" and "rappings" could then be tried. It is impossible to say what number is best for a circle. Sometimes two or three would obtain better results than seven or eight; it is a matter of experiment, and a great deal depends upon those forming the circle. As a rule, however, eight or nine is a very good number, although, as I have said, the party may be limited to three or four or five persons with good effect.

(2) *Your pamphlet speaks of a danger to which inquirers are exposed of obsession by spirits. Is not the determination to face this, even after having been informed of its existence, evidence that the mind so determining has sufficient strength to resist the attacks of such spirits?*

The danger spoken of is very real, but by no means common. Obsession is the exception and not the rule, as a result of intercourse with spirits; and to be forewarned is to a large extent to be forearmed. Many of the cases which have come under my notice have arisen through surrender of the reason on the part of the obsessed, or from a failure to rightly understand the legitimate uses of spirit communion. But the fact of the possibility of Spiritualism being capable of abuse is no argument against it. Money, food, drink—every earthly thing—may be similarly mis-used. Those, however, who approach the subject in a right and reverent spirit of inquiry, earnestly desiring to arrive at the truth, carefully sifting everything and testing all that comes by the same sound common-sense that is brought to bear upon affairs of everyday life and thought, need have little fear of evil. Certainly there are temptations; these, however, meet us everywhere, and those which come to us through Spiritualism can be as successfully struggled against, and overcome as those which are otherwise caused. *Prima facie*, the determination to face the possible danger would be evidence of strength to resist the attacks of such spirits.

(3) *Supposing communication with spirits once established, is it characteristic of them to manifest themselves when unexpected, and at possibly inconvenient times?*

No. As a rule they only manifest their presence when communion is sought. Here I refer, of course, solely to what are known as evoked phenomena. Spontaneous manifestations, however, such as hauntings, &c., are subject to different laws, and oftentimes occur when least expected, and for no apparent reason. But generally speaking no inconvenience such as that suggested is experienced.

MRS. KATE FOX JENCKEN has left London for St. Petersburg, at the invitation of the Hon. Alexander Aksakof. She will, in all probability, be absent about two months.

A CONVERSAZIONE will be held at 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening next, at 7.30. The evening will be devoted to social intercourse, music, and recitations. The charge for admission will be one shilling. We look for a large gathering of members and friends.

GHOSTS.—At the Fortnightly Discussion Meeting, held in the Rooms of the C.A.S., 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening last, under the presidency of Mr. Desmond G. Fitzgerald, Mr. Frank Podmore gave, before a large audience, a number of well authenticated ghost stories, which had been collected by the Haunted House Committee of the S.P.R., accompanying the narratives with critical remarks. Some of these stories we hope to have the opportunity of publishing in future numbers of "LIGHT."

MRS. HARDINGE BRITEN will lecture on the first and third Sundays of March and April and the first Sunday in May at Liverpool; on Sunday, March 11th, and Monday, March 12th, at Leeds; on Sunday and Monday, March 25th and 26th, at Bradford; on Sunday, April 8th, at Sowerby Bridge; on Sundays, 22nd and 29th April, at Newcastle; and on May 13th and 20th, at Cardiff. Mrs. Briten can give a few more lectures in the South and West during May, if early application is made to her at The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"  
4, NEW BRIDGE STREET,  
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

## TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding and enclose stamps for the return Postage.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained direct from our Office, and also from F. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

## PIÈCES JUSTIFICATIVES

## OF THE NEED OF A SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

## CASE V.

## MESMERIC CLAIRVOYANCE.

Shortly after my correspondence with the Rev. Thomas Myers, another still more remarkable case of so-called clairvoyance reached me. I first heard of this case through a friend in Staffordshire, from whom I obtained the name and address of his informant; this person, however, proved to have had the facts second or third hand, and rather resented my asking from whom he had heard them.

A personal interview ultimately led him to give me his authority, and I was referred to Shrewsbury. Here other difficulties arose, and were overcome upon making a strict promise that I would not mention the name of my informant. (This is but a slight but typical instance of the difficulties that surround these inquiries.)

Having traced the story home I wrote to the address given me. In reply I received a courteous letter from the rector of a large parish in Cumberland, saying that he had no idea how the facts had reached me, but that they were certainly very much as I had narrated them to him. He had learnt to mesmerise through his old friend the Rev. Chauncy Hare Townshend, and had found it so beneficial in many cases that he had tried the effect of it on a young lady residing in his family, a Miss F., \* and she had proved clairvoyant. Up to this time he had little belief in clairvoyance, but was now convinced. Upon asking for his own account of the story I had heard, he promised to give it to me if I would not mention any names, nor the name of his rectory, as he would be inundated with letters and unreasonable requests of all kinds. This promise, of course, I gave, and accordingly received the following letter:—

"February 3rd, 1877.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The particulars of the case are shortly these: Miss F.'s sister married and settled at Shrewsbury. Her husband had a favourite dog stolen from him. M., as I will call his wife, wrote to her sister to ask her to get me to mesmerise her, and send her to look for it. I did so, and she succeeded in finding it. I attempted to take down her description of the road from their house to the place where the dog was; but there were so many turnings and windings, and landmarks, that I could make nothing of it; so I gave her a sheet of paper and a pencil, and told her to draw me a plan of the road. This she did, and by the help of it, M.'s husband, with the assistance of the police, traced out and recovered his dog. It was found, as she had described it to me, fastened up in a cupboard, with several other dogs, in the house of a noted dog-stealer, and

\* To avoid confusion it must be borne in mind that this Miss F. is not related to, nor, so far as I know, has ever heard of, the Miss F. mentioned in the preceding cases.

would have been sent to Liverpool, in the course of a few hours—as she had also forewarned me—to be disposed of.

"I ought to have mentioned that when she drew the plan she had never been to Shrewsbury, nor nearer to it than Crewe.

"Marvellous as this seems, it is a mere nothing to some of her performances. She had been a great invalid for years, and had suffered many things from many physicians before I tried what effect mesmerism would have upon her. She tells me that when she was a child—I was not then acquainted with her—she was very sensitive and highly nervous, and when she is in a mesmeric state she attributes her remarkable powers of vision partly to this, but still more to two severe attacks of brain fever. As far as my experience goes, I do not think there is ever any real clairvoyance unless the brain has been acted upon in a similar manner.

"You ask me if I can give you any good instance of thought-reading. I have Miss F.'s permission to give you the following:—A few months after M.'s marriage, her sister, when in a mesmeric state, told me that there was an envelope addressed to her, lying upon the chimney-piece in her sister's drawing-room, at Shrewsbury, and that she (her sister M.) was thinking how she could tell her that she was *en route*. I told her this when I awoke her, but she would not believe it, and I bet her sixpence that the letter would arrive the next morning. I won my bet, and bought a walking-stick with the sixpence.

"You must not suppose that the strange gift of Miss F.'s has been used for no higher purpose than finding a missing dog. Having, I am thankful to say, derived great benefit from mesmerism, she has used it for the benefit of others. More than one person is now alive and in good health who owed their recovery to her having been enabled to ascertain the real seat of their disease, and the proper remedy for it. Unless in the case of her own and my family, and intimate friends, I have never allowed her to undertake a case until the doctor had given it up as hopeless.

"It may also interest you to know that Miss F.'s powers of vision depend a good deal upon the state of the weather. When there is a high wind and the air is charged with electricity, she sees with greater difficulty. When there is a snowstorm in addition, she cannot see at all; at whatever distance it may be, it entirely obstructs her vision in that direction.—I am, dear sir, yours truly, H.C."

I now wrote to Shrewsbury, and obtained the following letter from M., Miss F.'s sister\* :—

"Neither my sister nor Mr. C. had been in Shrewsbury, but by the description she gave, where we should find the dog, we soon knew it must be the White Horse-passage, in Frankwell. My sister has gone, in a mesmeric state, much further than here; she has gone to several places on the Continent, and by the description she has given (which has been most accurate), Mr. C., who had been abroad to the places she described, knew exactly what street she was talking about. She has also been able to see the state of health of several persons when she was mesmerised, and has prescribed for them, and I know of two, who, acting upon her prescription, recovered and have never been so well in their lives as they are now. My sister was first mesmerised by Mrs. Fowler, an American M.D., when she was under Sir James Simpson, in Edinburgh. She had been very poorly, when Mrs. Fowler afterwards came to Mr. C.'s house and so she thought she would like to be mesmerised again. She (Mrs. F.) said that if my sister could only be mesmerised every day, for a short time, it would strengthen her more than anything else. So Mr. C. had some lessons on mesmerising from Mrs. Fowler, and has since then occasionally mesmerised her. My sister does not now take these long journeys in her mesmeric sleep, as it makes her feel weak and languid for a day or two afterwards."

As I was extremely sceptical about the possibility of clairvoyance, believing that some simple explanation would be found, I was most anxious to test this case further. Accordingly I wrote to the Rev. Mr. C., saying that I would come over to Cumberland the following Easter, if he would permit me to be present when he mesmerised Miss F., and allow me to submit the case to some simple and unobjectionable scientific test; or, failing this permission, whether he would try an experiment proposed by myself or

\* I was unable to go to Shrewsbury to investigate the matter at the time, but on a visit I made there subsequently for this purpose I found the main facts confirmed, except as to the police, on which there was some doubt. Unfortunately, Miss F.'s sister was away at the time. I hope to go to Shrewsbury again this summer to complete the inquiry.

by any better known man of science. In reply I received the following :—

“What you propose is simply impossible. Miss F. would no more allow herself to be made a subject for scientific investigation than I would consent to act as showman. If you think the particulars I have given you worth repeating, you must rely upon my veracity, as your readers must upon yours. Those who know nothing of mesmerism, will, of course, look upon my statement as a mere romance, and even amongst those who have investigated the subject, it can only be among the very limited number of persons who have had an opportunity of verifying an undoubted case of clairvoyance, that it can hope to find acceptance.

“For your own information I may mention that having acted as chairman of the Petty Sessions here for upwards of five and thirty years I have at all events had considerable experience in sifting evidence. I am no believer in table-turning, spirit-rapping, or spiritual manifestations of any kind. I have never witnessed any experiments of the kind that could not have been as well, if not better, performed by a second-rate conjurer. It is not, however, upon this that my incredulity is founded, but upon the miserable results that even the most successful operations lay claim to. Had mesmerism obtained no better results than those which may be witnessed any day in these exhibitions of the ignorant charlatans who make a living out of it, I should hardly have thought it a subject worth investigating.—Believe me, my dear Sir, yours truly, H. C.”

The last sentence in this letter is very much what Dr. Elliotson, Professor Gregory, and other believers in clairvoyance, would have written in their day. But from a scientific point of view, such a position is wholly untenable. Clairvoyance and Spiritualism are both, on a *a priori* grounds, incredible to an educated man. Belief in either one or the other is simply determined by our estimate of the value of the evidence, and whether we *listen to the evidence* or not. In like manner, the telephone was on a *a priori* grounds incredible to a scientific mind, and would have been laughed at by the learned and proved impossible to the present moment, if its discoverer had found the public unwilling to put their ear to the instrument. Thereupon, whether the scientific fact was credible or incredible, belief followed irresistibly :—if the ear was applied properly, and the person was not deaf.

Though evidence on behalf of clairvoyance is not yet abundant enough to entitle it to general belief, it is accumulating, and there can be little doubt that thoughtful sceptics will be more inclined to listen to this evidence when they have admitted the truth of thought-transference,—a point that will be reached before very long.

W. F. BARRETT.

18, Belgrave-square,  
Monkstown, Dublin.

THE PIONEER.

Every age on him who strays  
From its broad and beaten ways  
Pours its seven-fold vial.  
Happy he whose inward ear  
Angel-whisperings can hear,  
O'er the rabble's laughter ;  
And, while hatred's faggots burn,  
Glimpses through the smoke discern  
Of the good hereafter.

Knowing this, that never yet  
Share of truth was vainly set  
In this world's wide fallow ;  
After-hands shall sow the seed,  
After-hands from hill and mead  
Reap the harvest yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the seer,  
Must the moral pioneer  
From the future borrow ;  
Clothe the waste with dream of grain,  
And on the midnight sky of rain  
Paint the golden morrow.

From “THE LIFE-LINE OF THE LONE ONE.”

“ATTEMPTS AT TRUTH.”\*

By St. George Stock.

This volume is a collection of essays on some topics of philosophical interest by a well-informed, clear-thinking, and frequently powerful writer of rising reputation. Its chief interest for the readers of this paper, as such, consists in the prominence given to Spiritualism, and in the able vindication of its claims to intellectual recognition. That authors, editors, and publishers are no longer afraid to entertain a subject which has been so long in the demi-monde of speculation and research, is a very encouraging and significant symptom. The “conspiracy of silence” is breaking up, and we may expect soon, if not immediately, that a fair literary field will be opened to representatives before whose knowledge and ability a host of prejudices and misconceptions will have to retreat.

An adequate review of these treatises would carry us too deeply and extensively into the subjects comprised in them. Nor would it be easy to condense an author who has himself the merit of condensing and bringing to a logical focus most of the controversies he deals with. Mr. George Stock is nearly always on the highest level of the argument, which he answers, or states, at its best, and in its latest recognised development. His analysis is invariably intelligible, and usually complete, and now and then we have to thank him for striking contributions of original thought. And nowhere do we find the results of modern speculation in several important departments set forth with more succinct clearness, or in a more agreeable literary style. Especially is this the case with the first three essays, concerning the problems of morality, and the opposite tendencies of thought which ultimate in the Intuitionist and Utilitarian schools. It is always difficult to assign a critical mind like our author's a place in either. Indeed, as regards the standard, or test of right, they are brought as near to a reconciliation as possible. When, in the progress of the controversy between the two schools, the Utilitarians had divested their notion of happiness of everything that makes it a definite conception in the minds of the mass of mankind, and when they had raised it from a realisable possession of existing generations into an ideal for the race, they gained an easy victory for a scarcely controvertible position in establishing the claim of this spiritualised beatitude to be the *summum bonum* of humanity. It is “the Everlasting Yes” in “Sartor Resartus.” “Thou mayest do without ‘happiness,’ and instead thereof find blessedness.” For then, as Mr. Stock points out, “ideally, happiness and virtue are inseparable ; happiness standing to virtue in the relation of whole to part. Hence the attempt logically to explain the conception of virtue by that of happiness must be acknowledged futile.” A result which certainly does not entitle the Utilitarian to the somewhat inconsistent conclusion of the author that “in spite of all difficulties utility, or conduciveness to happiness in the highest sense, must be regarded as what makes the difference between right and wrong, until some one has shewn what else it can be.” If we cannot logically explain the conception of virtue by that of happiness, one is at a loss to see how the latter can maintain its ground as the test of the former. As regards the sanction, Mr. Stock frankly confesses that the admission of a standard cannot of itself give the sense of obligation. In considering the question whether the moral motive is self-regarding, he goes on the old lines of thought, and does not sufficiently advert to the great reconciliation of the two views afforded by the principle of a common humanity. To neglect of this—a conception still associated with mysticism, save in its unintelligible presentation by the Positivists—must be ascribed all apparent paradoxes of the subject, of which our author gives so clear a view. The identification of happiness with the dictates of a deeper and more universal nature in each individual is the true solution of the question whether “self-sacrifice,” such as that of St. Paul,† is possible, or if possible, whence springing. “Exclusive individuality,” says Professor Edward Caird,‡ “cannot be the highest category for those who see that the only being who is really individual is also universal.” The real battle of the sanction in future will not be between the Intuitionist and the Utilitarian, but between the doctrine of the universal self within the

\* Trübner, 1882.

† Quoted at p. 20. “I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ that my brethren of Israel might be saved.” It is as if St. Paul had said, “My true self is not my distinct personality, but my race and nation.” All sympathy is *pro tanto* a testimony to this more universal self. The same superiority of sympathetic to individual consciousness is exhibited in the following declaration in the *Scrimat Bhagavat* : “Before God, I do not pray for transcendental powers or Mukti (‘deliverance’ or salvation) ; my prayer is that I may really be possessed of the suffering of all that they may be free from it.”

‡ “The Philosophy of Kant,” p. 30.

individual and the association school reinforced by the principle of heredity.

Passing to the essay entitled, "Hume on Miracles," we find a clear recognition and statement of the capital fallacy by which the great sceptic's argument is vitiated. In the just observation that Hume confounded "the absence of experience in favour of a fact with the presence of experience against it," Mr. Stock has been anticipated by Mr. Wallace and others. That the definition of a "miracle" as "a violation of the laws of nature" begs the question in dispute, limiting "Nature" to a partial experience, and that Hume gets his "uniformity of experience" by ignoring the very evidence which that assumed uniformity is then employed to invalidate, are also answers well stated elsewhere, though never better than by Mr. Stock. And it is a correct and instructive criticism that Hume seems never to have doubted the evidential value of "miracles," if admitted, as authentications of the Divine origin of a religion. "To accept the Christian miracles was with him to accept the Christian religion, and to accept the miracle at Alexandria would have been to accept the Egyptian religion." It may fairly be suspected that an unphilosophical animus betrayed the calmest of reasoners into an impulsive and unwary polemic; a suspicion countenanced by the evident enjoyment with which Hume professes his obligation to a Christian bishop\* for a refutation of the supposed foundation of Christianity.

The interesting account, from classical authorities, of the "Mediumship of the Emperor Vespasian," may be read along with "A Text from the Delphi Oracle" as contributions from antiquity which become credible in the light of modern experience. "After all deductions have been made," says Mr. Stock, "we need not doubt but that much in Herodotus and other ancient authors, which has hitherto been regarded as grotesque fable, will regain its place as sober history." But we must remonstrate with the author on his indulgence of Spiritualists in their extravagant abuse of the term "mediumship," by making it applicable to every kind of occult experience. All the phenomena of clairvoyance, double consciousness, prophetic dreaming, thought-reading, apparitional projection, the mystic and thaumaturgic powers of will, desire, and imagination in their exalted states are indifferently subsumed under a term which tacitly excludes the whole science of the human spirit or soul, ignoring all its transcendental energies, and limiting its spiritual privileges to a passive relation with disembodied entities. The healing by Vespasian is no more to be ascribed to "mediumship" than is the power of the mesmerist to work on the imagination of his subject.

The author's clever and acute review of a book or pamphlet, by Dr. George Sexton, entitled, "God and Immortality viewed in relation to Modern Spiritualism," need not long detain us. Demonstrators of the existence of God and immortality of the type of Dr. Sexton and "Mr. Gillespie, of Torbanchill," are in evil case when they attract the notice of such as Mr. St. George Stock. It would have been more satisfactory had the latter discussed the question of Force=Will with Schopenhauer instead of with Dr. Sexton. But when Mr. Stock, like many others, speaks of God as being a necessity of the heart but not of logic, we are disposed to protest against even a general proposition of this sort being put forward without any statement of what is meant by "God." As a First Cause in the temporal order of phenomena, the least philosophy puts the conception out of court. As a conscious intelligence or person, apart from universal manifestation, the idea is scarcely less unphilosophical, since the definition of universal manifestation would include every consciousness. But logic, or rather the necessity of reason, does compel us to suppose the ultimate source of manifestation, its unity, the one in the many, and the many in the one.

It seems we are not to speak disrespectfully of Mr. Gillespie, to whom Mr. Stock devotes twenty-five pages. Mr. Gillespie's demonstration of the Deity won applause from Sir William Hamilton and Lord Brougham; and Mr. Stock himself, after knocking, as we should suppose, all logical vitality out of it, describes the book as "a great service to philosophy." It may be so: we have not read it; but judging from the analysis of it in this essay, we are reminded rather of the most barren of scholastic abstractions than of the wealth of real thought which modern philosophy has brought to bear on the great subject

\* Dr. Tillotson, in his argument against the Real Presence. That argument, which asserts the superior evidences of the senses even to express revelation, was as fallacious in its application as Hume's. For according to the scholastic metaphysics of the Church of Rome, transubstantiation does not involve a change in the "accidents" or sensible qualities.

discussed. Mr. Stock's style relieves the tedium of such considerations, but we still yawn over them as out of date and unprofitable. It is possibly the present writer's defect of intelligence that made him unable quite diligently to finish the perusal of this particular essay.

Mr. Stock's own speculative position may, perhaps, best be collected from the powerful essay on "Theism," which has already attracted public attention and criticism. Looking on the religious hypothesis first as an explanation of the physical universe, he says, "To begin with, we have no reason to suppose that there was a First Cause at all. Secondly, if there was a First Cause, we have no reason to suppose that it was mind rather than matter." Conscious rather than unconscious, we think would be a better statement of the alternative. The existence of evil is the next consideration. "The Theist will, of course, say that evil is appointed in the good providence of God for some wise end. But if all is to come right in the end, one hardly sees why it should have gone wrong in the beginning." That is the old difficulty, which was opposed by the followers of the Sankhya philosophy in India, to the existence of the Demiurgus, in almost the same terms, a thousand years ago, as the modern atheist now uses. The Vedantist cut the knot by denying original creation: the periodical re-emanations from Isvara being necessitated by antecedent causes; an explanation not available to Western theology. The truth is that what is called Atheism is in every age a testimony to the very principle which it seems to deny. "Not he is godless," says Lucretius, "who rejects the gods of the crowd, but he who accepts them." If there is a transcendent ideal seeking manifestation in human consciousness, it must first work as the negation of false or inadequate conceptions. It is only when Atheism, unable to rest in mere negation, becomes in turn its constructive, and as the substitute for the Creator offers us its hypothetical atoms, with their assumed motions and accidental directions, in explanation of the intelligence, law, and order, no less than of whatever still seems or is chaotic in the universe, that its impotence and folly are apparent. The true object of religious faith is not a conception of the understanding, though it must needs make provisional use of such conception, for faith is verily, as the Apostle taught, both evidence and substance. In the words of an American writer, "The object of worship is more than object; it pre-existed in the worshipper, and prompted the aim and the prayer."\* Yet it is true that when faith loses an old home in the understanding it is, as it were, bodiless for a time. Only in the ensuing sadness and desolation are its root and necessity then still known. All this pregnant presentiment our author ascribes to the weakness of "the heart" in rebellion against the terrible logic of the reason. Yet it is in language of eloquent sympathy, which none can read without feeling that it is also the language of experience, that he describes this disconsolate moment: "It may freely be admitted that the prospect before us, when this doctrine is taken away, will at first seem a dreary one to minds trained in the tender nursery of an anthropomorphic faith, and that the substitute we are warranted in offering the emotions will appear cold and cheerless till use has taught them to find their home in it. Not at once can the change be effected; in hours of dejection and sickness the strongest spirit will crave its old support, and even if in the daylight we are content with truth, still in the night-season the heart may reach out after God, after some power more present, to help and to save them, 'the righteous and salutary law of natural selection,' till in its loneliness and despondency it is ready to join in the woman's querulous cry, 'They have taken away the Lord, and we know not where they have laid Him.'" Yet the "querulous cry" was answered by announcement of the resurrection. Will "the substitute we are warranted in offering" serve for that? Perhaps not quite, as Mr. Stock states and leaves it. "There is not a God yet, but there is one coming." "While it is absurd to say that love is the law of things, we do seem justified in declaring that love is the goal to which Nature wades through blood." "What can a belief in a Benevolent Creator mean, when put to the test, except a conviction of the ultimate triumph of good? This conviction is faith—a faith not unfounded, and full of consolation." Not unfounded if the ideal is already substantial, informing, actuating, working out a necessary manifestation in nature and in us. But the foundation is precarious in the extreme if the

\* "Oriental Religions, and their Relation to Universal Religion." By Samuel Johnson. (Trübner, 1873.)—A work of much literary and philosophical merit, which deserves to be better known in this country than perhaps it is.

only reality of the ideal is placed in the future of the phenomenal and temporal order. What has been termed teleological, as contrasted with fortuitous, evolution is applicable alike to the moral and to the physical world. In both cases the inherent tendency to development can exist only on the presupposition of the "idea" which it is to express, of this idea as real, complete, and energetic from the first, and as the substance of its phenomenal manifestation. Admit the potent principle of good, omnipotent in time, but on that very condition manifest in progress, and not in consummation, and the essential verity of Theism is restored. And that is the witness of faith which the understanding—not "the heart"—personifies, and which is not finally subverted when the understanding subverts its own conception. But even that conception remains valid, in Greek, if not in modern form. For "the One," which was also "the Good" transcendent, immanifest, exempt, takes on\* the conscious and the personal in the second and third of the Platonic triads. In this philosophy, as its best modern† exponent (Taylor) points out, "*fabrication* is nothing more than *procession*," and the Demiurgus, (himself far from supreme in the grand scale) is the "father" of the mundane Gods or "whole" souls ("Planetary" of occult philosophy), and mediately of *individual*, or "partial" souls. Thus, if evil is mere negation, limitation, we see it to be inseparably incident to progressive or temporal, that is, partial manifestation, and to the sense of individuality; and so our problem becomes, not why did God produce an imperfect world, but why is there a world at all. That is the difficulty as it presents itself to the Eastern mind; and the doctrine of Maya is an answer more profoundly conceived than is commonly supposed. It is Western idealism with an important addition. The recognition that all that comes before the consciousness as "object" is phenomenal, is thoroughly established in our own philosophies; but in Indian systems Maya is sometimes actually identified with Auidya—Ignorance—and that is the clue to its meaning. For the phenomenal is not illusion till it is mistaken for the real. Nor is it the speculative correction of this mistake—mere philosophical idealism—that will suffice, though this doubtless is indispensable. The phenomenal must cease to have power over us, we must cease to dwell in it with consciousness and desire as our nature, before it really loses its character as illusion, and we can survey it as the enlightened observer on a mountain top looks down on the panorama of curling clouds, which on the plain below were his darkness and perplexity.

"Theism," says Mr. Stock, "is necessarily optimistic." This may be true of theistic theories, which are the attempts of the religious consciousness to find accommodation in the understanding; but it is so little true of the faith thus imperfectly expressed that its living action in the will implies the very reverse. It is not the creative, but the re-creative, God to which religion directs us. Nay, the favourite commonplaces of all religious teaching are not the beauty and perfection, but the vanity and insufficiency, of "outward" things; the world and the flesh are so far from being recognised as defensible in honour of their Creator, that they are associated in spiritual estimation with the principle of evil itself. The constant ideal, union with God, if it means anything, is a return to the deepest subjectivity, for which the phenomenal world has no practical existence. As regards the latter, it would be more correct to say that pessimism is the religious, than that optimism is the theistic assumption.

It is, however, less with the subjective truth of religion than with its intellectual presentations that Mr. Stock is concerned in this essay. The fine and eloquent passage—too long to quote—with which it concludes, introduces us to his conception of Spiritualism as the religion of the future. We have done, he thinks, with Christianity, with Theism itself. As political progress tends to democracy, so the corresponding spiritual movement will emphasise the solidarity and brotherhood of man, but

will suppress the Divine paternity. There may be some who will consider the analogy of nature a safer guide to transcendental truth than the transient phases of social institutions. It is the conception of the State, and not of the mob, that gives dignity to democracy. It is well to demolish our idols, but it is better to substantiate our ideals. To reduce these to nominal abstractions, to deny their hypostasis, is to disbelieve in spirit, whose static manifestation, or logos, alone is "personal."

The consideration of the claims of Spiritualism, as set forth by Mr. Stock, and other topics comprised in this volume, must be reserved for a second article. C. C. M.

#### SPIRITUALISM AND THE RUSSIAN PRESS.

(From a letter in the *Revue Spirite* by Count Stecki.)

It is well-known that there are many earnest disciples of Spiritualism in high society in Russia. It is equally well-known that to the majority of the upper classes it is a subject of indifference, if not of dislike, from its being misunderstood. The Government being despotic must have the Press under subjection of a censorship. This censorship is in two departments, the civil and the ecclesiastical. From the latter, Spiritualism has always met with open hostility. The civil department is tolerant of foreign literature, even spiritualist, but it does not allow translations into Russian of some works; the ecclesiastical will not allow any translations of spiritualist books. Original writings in favour of Spiritualism have always been under ban.

Some years ago my late friend, General Boltine, wrote a letter in answer to one full of misrepresentations, which appeared in one of our leading journals. Before his answer could be inserted it had to pass the censorship. It came back to him prohibited under the seal of the "Holy Synod," on the grounds that it questioned dogmas of "Holy Church" in respect of the devil and everlasting damnation, and favoured the doctrines of one Allan Kardec. The writer was advised to address himself to his proper father confessor instead of the public Press.

I also had my experience. A pamphlet, published in St. Petersburg, marked by perversion of facts, provoked me to writing one in reply. The ecclesiastical censorship refused leave to publish it for reasons assigned, which I hoped to be able to set aside at a personal hearing. This hearing I obtained through the intervention of one in an influential quarter. I explained that my pamphlet was merely a criticism without the presentation of positive views of my own. I was listened to and then politely told that the office had established a rule not to allow authors who wrote against Spiritualism to be criticised.

This was subsequent to General Boltine's experience and occurred ten years ago. Imagine, then, my surprise, when I—residing now in my province—entering a bookseller's in its capital town, saw on the counter a little book by Bonmihoff, "What is Spiritualism?" in Russian, with the imprint St. Petersburg, 1882! and announcing in a preface that similar little works on the subject are to follow. He refers in it to larger works in foreign languages, among them to R. Dale Owen's, now translated and published in Russian!

It is clear that some influences, unknown to us, are being—doubtless in the order of Providence—brought to bear to set the Press of this part of the world free.

Twenty years ago, General Boltine translated into Russian the two chief works of Allan Kardec. As he was not permitted to publish them, he used to lend them to those who did not know French. I look forward now to their being printed. There are so many Spiritualists in the provinces that a large edition would soon be taken up.

Mrs. FLETCHER.—*Miller's Psychometric Circular* (New York) says:—"Mrs. Willis Fletcher, whose illness has excited so deep an interest and solicitude in all circles where Spiritualism is known, has not improved since our last. All that her medical attendant or her nearest friends can say of her is that she still remains on the border line, hovering between life and death. Mrs. Fletcher has completed 'Twelve Months in an English Prison,' which will be issued at an early date, in which will be found a graphic account of the marvellous manifestations that have occurred through her mediumship during her eventful life."

INSPIRATION.—By the study of a certain class of psychical facts we may learn that we receive ideas from the spiritual world; that much of what we take to be the result of intellectual application and cogitation is due to sympathetic co-operation from the other side of the veil.—*L. de Montaut.*

\* This expression must serve here, though it is not a correct statement of the deific process as exhibited in the Parmenides. It is deplorable that the Platonic theology is not now studied by the light of the Hegelian philosophy. Dr. Hutchison Stirling ("Secret of Hegel") has recognised the connection. Indeed, it is only necessary to quote the following passage from Thomas Taylor's Introduction to his translation of the Parmenides (1793, before Hegel had been heard of as an author), to make that connection immediately apparent: "For the intelligible, as we have already observed, must hold the first rank, and must consist of being, life, and intellect; i.e., must abide, proceed, and return: at the same time that it is characterised, or subsists principally, according to permanent being. But in the next place, that which is both intelligible and intellectual succeeds, which must likewise be triple, but must principally subsist according to life or intelligence. And in the third place the intellectual order must succeed which is triply convertible." But why remark on Taylor's priority to Hegel, when we have in Proclus, if not quite intelligibly in Plato himself, the whole process unfolded in concrete richness, which in the German philosopher appears rather as a logical skeleton?

† Perhaps we may rejoice to find a worthy successor in the eminent and accomplished American Platonist, Professor Wilder.

## LETTER FROM AMERICA.

I am a seeker after truth first and I am a Spiritualist next, and I am a very firm one too, because a truth-seeker. It is a very pleasant thought to me in these latter days, after a quarter of a century of experience in and with the spiritual manifestations, to see the collateral proof of what I have experienced and am experiencing, coming into light from so many unexpected and religious and social sources. Every now and then some one whose conversion was hardly to have been expected from his having sneered at the testimony of earlier believers, becomes convinced of the fact that the manifestations are realities and are what they claim to be. Often some of these late converts say, "Now, the world can't help believing, for I know it to be so!" They will soon find, as we earlier ones have found, that modern Spiritualism is a matter of experience and not yet a matter of argument, so slowly does a new light permeate the atmosphere of old established thought.

I sometimes thoughtfully sit in my easy chair, or at the writing table in my library, and feel happy to think that I was one of the early birds, and thus have enjoyed my worm. I have sometimes wondered, during some lean period—for I have had lean periods—or when frauds abounded—for, unfortunately, there have been frauds, and very likely on both sides of the line—if I would not have fallen from grace, so to speak, but for epochs from time to time occurring in my experience, which proved that I still rested on the truth. I guess, however, that I should have stuck, even if, like Saul, I had lost my connection, and found no open vision, for when at first convinced I saw it was not only true, but, what was fully as important to me, I felt that it ought to be true, and creation would have lacked the finishing touch if the spirit did not survive the body. But who cares anything for my cogitations? especially when I have said what few can deny, that the subject is, or seems to be, wholly a matter of experience and not a matter of argument.

An occurrence in my domestic life was a great advantage to me and mine, and I can never be too thankful for it. I often wonder why I should have been so favoured, and I have good reason to think the fact was a spiritual movement, the divinity "shaping my ends." The occurrence referred to was the introduction into my family of a young girl, as a wet nurse, who lived with me in that capacity for near two years. She proved to be the most remarkable medium that I ever met. I did not then know she was a medium, or the meaning of the word medium, and when the manifestations began, or attracted my attention, she was not aware that she had any influence in them. To give even a statement of the various forms or phases of manifestations would occupy too much of your space, but no one can imagine how much the experience I had with this young woman, of the name of Anne, educated me on this interesting subject, and though I may never write out in detail this episode in my life, it has become a part of my intellectual being in spiritualistic matters, and so finds expression in my articles which have so frequently appeared in spiritual papers, at least, in this part of the world.

Perhaps, with the foregoing as an introduction, it might interest some if I narrate an incident that opened up the fact of Anne's mediumship, which led to so much satisfaction and instruction for a year or two afterwards. I am sorry to say intemperance shortened her life, she dying a few months after leaving our home.

One afternoon there was a row in our kitchen, and going to the door to see what it all meant, it opened, and Anne rushed in, and a rolling followed, thrown up the stairs from below. I went down and found a very mad cook, who was going to leave unless Anne did, as she would not live in the house with her. She said Anne had several times given the table a shove on which she was working, to her great annoyance; and then had denied doing it. At this time she was mixing bread on the board on it, and the shove almost knocked the batch on to the floor. Anne not only denied it, but gave her the lie, and she would not stand it. I smoothed the matter as well as I could, telling the cook that the little baby would starve if I sent Anne away, and she must put up with her as we had to. I touched her feelings and made peace, but requested Anne to keep upstairs and out of the kitchen, and her cocoa should be sent up to her, &c. I, of course, thought Anne, as was the fact, was the source of the trouble.

About a week after this, as I returned home one evening, I found my wife quite frightened, and she said she never wanted to be left alone at home again. It seems the table at which Mrs. W. and Anne were sitting sewing, moved and almost upset the kerosine lamp standing on it, and Anne being checked for her carelessness, said in an impudent manner that she did not do it. The table kept moving and cook was called up, which made matters worse, and there was no cessation till the latter said a charm, thus: "In the name of Christ, stop!" she making a cross, and then everything was

quiet. I should say at this time that Anne was a little in liquor; she would now and then get it somehow, and when so conditioned, her manifestations were treble in power, but that is not the point now.

When I saw the state of the case on my return that evening, I sat with Anne at the table and found her to be a rapping and tipping medium. I had to explain it to her. She did not suppose at first she was concerned in it. She said she was not a Spiritualist, but she was a Catholic, evidently not knowing the import or meaning of the word.

At a convenient time after this first sitting, I took Anne into the kitchen, and told the cook to go to the table and stand in the same position she occupied when she and Anne had their quarrel, and Anne to take her position, which she did, at the end of the table. The hands or arms of both were then on the table, and I said, "If any spirits are here, I wish they would move the table," and immediately, enough to startle us all, this large pine, unpainted table leaped two feet. Thus was explained our row in the kitchen, which by this explanation led to very pleasant results in the many months that followed.

This to be sure is not a very high-toned or dignified story to tell, and to some it may seem derogatory to the character of departed spirits. I learned, however, that Peter and Andrew, the husband and father of Anne, though spirits, were very low fellows here, and equally low on the other side, but they made an entrance for many of my own near and dear ones to come, and the manifestations were clearly characteristic of the social and intellectual position of the two classes of spirits as measured by their earthly standard; and then again, including both classes, the source, and not the phenomena, is the point of chief interest. Crabs and scorpions, you know, become sublime when hung up as signs of the zodiac. I have looked at all spiritual manifestations as signs in the zodiac, not to measure stellar distances or starry objects, but to connect us with the nearest world to this—the spirit-world.

Boston.

JOHN WETHERBEE.

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON &amp; THE PROVINCES.

## METROPOLITAN SPIRITUAL LYCEUM,

ST. ANDREW'S HALL, 14, NEWMAN STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON.

The subject of the lecture at this hall, on Sunday evening last—"Humanity: its Resurrection,"—as expounded by the guides of Mr. Morse, was in the nature of a sustained and glowing peroration of the series, whose earlier divisions upon the Birth, Life, and Death of Humanity have been, by the kindness of the editor, already reported at some length in this column. The human body is not in question; the associated spiritual body is not specifically in question. What a mass of distressing controversy is thus avoided. The glorious theme is simply the restoration and amplification of the Divine qualities in man. These qualities constitute Humanity; their renewal and development its resurrection—or, in the sense of the first lecture, its worthier birth. There is a symmetry and compactness and vigour of thought, blended with a delicate but pronounced vein of spirituality, throughout these discourses which, outside of possible differences of opinion upon the facts, cannot fail to invigorate the mind, sustain the heart, and brighten the life. On this occasion we were invited to bestow one last regretful glance upon the dead form of Humanity, so pathetically exhibited on the preceding Sunday by the pourtrayed arrest or decay of the Divine principles of our being, and were again reminded that among the prominent sources of that disaster were Ignorance, Superstition, and that aggravated form of Selfishness—the Shibboleth of the day—which tramples upon all claims found in conflict with personal greed of wealth, or place, or power. If, perchance, this apparently miserable relic of Humanity does, in however feeble a degree, retain always the capacity to renew or re-awaken the vital spark, in what direction are we to look for the necessary agencies of resurrection? It is painfully evident that it would be worse than useless to appeal to present social, intellectual, or moral conditions, for there is so little to approve in any of these, already responsible for arrest of life, that we are even denied the poor consolation, often pressed upon us, of making "the best of things as they are," precisely because, in their essence and influence alike, they are so utterly and radically vicious as to be unsusceptible of beneficial use or application. Indeed a process of elimination of these conditions must take precedence of other action before the inherent recuperative powers of the unquestionably good qualities of the abstract Humanity can find room for active and fruitful operation; before we can talk of the cultivation of agencies which tend towards, and harmonise with, the unfolding of the higher inner qualities of our nature. Each living soul has to be convinced of the dignity of its own selfhood, and that out of its own innate resources must come the necessary force for the restoration of life. The need of the situation, then, is to be expressed by one little word, abused, misunderstood, and commonly underestimated, it may be, but daily and happily becoming a more powerful factor for good—Education. Not an education which consists in supplying tools of which the use is unexplained, but that slow and methodical process of educating from the very nature of every man and woman every quality of which that nature can give expression, for so surely as the

universe contains within itself the needful resources for the exhibition of its phenomena, so does the soul of man for every greatness it exhibits. And the education, thus initiated, must cover the morality, science, and religion of the world. When, however, the problem is seriously and earnestly approached, in this exhaustive way, there face you, with intensified bitterness, the formidable external dangers variously disguised as vested interests. One has such an interest, or alleges that he has, in the management of your soul; another in the trimming to conventional pattern of your intellect; a third regulates social morals and can only be disregarded at the risk of a threatened disintegrating pollution of the very sources of gregarious life; and each cries aloud with the intensity of apprehension of loss of personal emoluments. We charge you nevertheless to recognise and reverence the higher instincts of your nature; cultivate, nourish—in a word, educate—them; for so long as they are practically neglected, or, while truly dishonoured, are only superficially acknowledged, so long does the pale form of outraged Humanity remain upon its bier, so long shall its resurrection be delayed; but once introduce a personal education of the searching character suggested, and there shall promptly ensue an encouraging evidence of renewal of life—feeble, it may be, in its earlier effects, gentle as the operation of a ray of light in the still evening air upon the palpitating leaf, when even the insect throbs and moves not, but there is a perceptible quiver in the previously rigid limbs, and the eyes open, if languidly, yet brightly and hopefully, as stars asserting their gradually unfolding powers under Heaven's departing daylight. Then the chamber of death grows luminous, the so-recent dead, erstwhile denied the living sunlight, arises from its icebound sleep, and the consciousness of erect and triumphant selfhood signalises the glorious restoration of the godlike capacity which can never die. That true and earnest and soulful reverence for self—the form of selfishness as previously applauded, guaranteeing regard for other selves, asserting the Fatherhood of God for all, and constraining to good deeds worthy of such parentage—is awakened anew, and the real and abiding resurrection is at hand. Education, then, must be applied to the whole being, to the moral, the intellectual, and the spiritual departments of life equally. Moral progress should reflect every endearing sentiment which binds Humanity in worlds, in families, and kinship, and the prime causes of crime should be investigated, and diligent and persistent efforts made to remove them, when the contrasting weakness of mere punishment will become increasingly apparent, and be rightly discredited. Morality is not reached by the simple and vicarious process of punishing immorality, and the assertion of this principle must not be confined to the study, but proclaimed from the house-tops. Let the intellect also be perseveringly cultivated—educated—for the more a man knows of himself, and of natural laws; the more he is trained, to the nature of his understanding, to think for himself, and then and thence resolves his knowledge into the practical direction of life—the better must it be for the community, the better for the resurrection of Humanity. In a word, intellectual progress means the capacity to use knowledge, and its ready application to the redress of wrong. Upon religion, let it be said, without controversy upon sectarian pretensions, that that alone is good, and true, and ennobling, which brings Humanity into intimate relations with its God. In its innermost meaning religion concerns the conscience of every human being, and must find its response in the individual nature; one God, one heritage, one Divine character in man, under laws absolute and complete in every department of existence. To acknowledge this thoroughly is to interpret the Divine beneficence rightly. The religion of the future will be something more than belief, and will be built up upon the assurance of knowledge. The grand and culminating truth of immortality has been brought home convincingly to the human conscience, because mortal man, under exceptional conditions—or rather under exceptional manifestation of conditions—has penetrated the veil, and then spoken of that which he has truly and really seen. When the resurrection of Humanity is fully achieved, as it will be when all its faculties are fully developed, this otherwise exceptional privilege shall be found to be the common inheritance of man, for we do not hesitate to affirm to you that the day will come when every individual representative of Humanity shall discover his power to intromit his spiritual self into the higher spheres, and learn and know, with the assurance of personal experience, of the bright and brilliant future of the developed Humanity. The religion of the future, then, must educe the spiritual faculties and forces, revive the dormant and discredited powers of human life, which shall then be found to be related to every other form of life, acknowledging God as the common parent of all. The present generation must be content to live, and toil, and struggle, and hope for this consummation, and find its prompt reward in the consciousness that Humanity is built up by the many labours of every age and people, each contributing its mite, and in the certainty that no good or kindly action ever fails of fruition. The resurrection of Humanity will be realised only as the result of grand deeds and noble purposes, the principles and essence of which are within each one of us. Mingling with the efforts of others, let us individually claim a place in the work of this revival, and in aiding the construction of an abiding temple of

Humanity, honour the resurrection of the Divine qualities of man.

On Sunday, the 4th March, when the subject of the lecture will be "Spiritualism: its Dangers," every visitor to this hall will be presented with slip abstracts of the four discourses forming the "Humanity" series.—S.B.

#### EXETER.

As there are many persons in this city seeking and obtaining "Light" concerning their spiritual surroundings and interests, it will not be inappropriate to communicate a few particulars of our work to a paper bearing that title. Our one object is to spread a knowledge of Spiritualism, its facts, revelations, and teachings, and to unite all seekers after truth for spiritual communion, and the development of mediumship, which is the one basis of intercourse between the two worlds. Hence we have, as the result of systematic and persistent effort, a growing, promising spiritual church, with a centre of operations close to the Cathedral. Our church is, of course, but an infant as yet, requiring careful nursing and constant attention; but it gives evidence of remarkable vitality and energy. The following are some particulars of last week's work.

MONDAY EVENING.—Thirteen present. After devotional exercises by the writer, the circle was arranged by the guides of Miss T. This lady is an excellent physical medium, and renders invaluable assistance in the circles by arranging the sitters and magnetising the mediums. Two new sitters at this circle were powerfully influenced; they give promise of becoming good mediums.

TUESDAY EVENING.—Select circle. Eight present. Miss G. is being rapidly developed as a speaker, and Mr. White deeply entranced is clairvoyant, and describes some of the spirits around.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.—Newton St. Cyrs.—Nine present. The writer gave an address on "The Importance of Moral and Spiritual Culture as a Qualification for Mediumship." The guides of Mrs. C. also gave an address.

THURSDAY EVENING.—Select circle. Ten present. This was a highly spiritual meeting, and there were five mediums different stages of development, all being in harmony.

FRIDAY EVENING.—General meeting. Fourteen present. The whole evening was occupied with devotional exercises and teaching, conducted by the writer.

The Sunday meetings at the Hall, morning and evening, were exceedingly good, and several mediums took part in the proceedings.

OMEGA.

#### FALMOUTH.

Mr. E. W. Wallis, the inspirational speaker, has recently paid a visit to this town, his public labours extending from February 11th to 18th inclusive. During his stay he discoursed upon the following topics:—"The Gospel of Glad Tidings and the Gospel of Spiritualism;" "Man's Three Saviours;" "The Temperance Movement;" "Is Spiritualism Lawful and Right?" "Sin: Its Cause and Cure;" "Man's Double Duty, to Gain the World and Save His Soul;" "The Religion of Knowledge: Its Benefits;" and "The Reality of Spirit-Life." The audiences were excellent and appreciative, and listened with great attention to the lectures, which, with the answers to questions put at the close of the week-night meetings, seemed to afford great satisfaction. The Rev. Mr. Douglas, who has frequently taken a very active part against the cause here, has at last been obliged to seek a new field for his labours. The cause has taken firmer root as a consequence of his opposition in the past.—R.G.

#### NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Mahoney addressed the friends at Newcastle on "Spiritualism: its Relationship to Politics, Science, and Religion." The lecturer handled his subject in the able and terse manner so characteristic of him as a speaker. Mr. Thompson, the president, occupied the chair. The next two weeks, March 4th, 5th, 11th, and 12th. Mrs. E. W. Wallis, of Nottingham, will occupy the Newcastle platform. We hope our friends in the two boroughs will rally round and give her a hearty welcome on this her first visit to the North in the capacity of a public lecturer.

GATESHEAD.—Last Sunday evening the president of the Gateshead Society, Mr. H. Burton, lectured to the friends in Gateshead. Commencing his lecture with the intimation that Mr. Jno. Walton, one of the first vice-presidents of the Society, had during the last week, after a protracted and severe illness, passed on to the higher life, he stated that in consequence of this, although he had intended to address them upon some other theme, he would speak to them on "Death and the Future Life." The lecturer having noticed in a few appropriate remarks the event just spoken of, passed on to the consideration of the primitive ideas of a future life; and how these had expanded until we reached the base of modern theology, yet withal how the future life was but a speculation, a belief, and how in this age with a growing materialism, and a craving for facts, we had bridged the gulf of doubt by the demonstration presented by modern Spiritualism. Mr. Bambridge occupied the chair. Next Sunday Mr. Thompson, of Shildon, will lecture, and on Easter Monday the annual tea and concert will be held in the large hall.

NORTHUMBRIA.

## TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; \*Dr. J. Elliottson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; \*Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; \*Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; \*Dr. Ashburner, \*Mr. Rutter, \*Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

\*Professor F. Zollner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; \*Lord Brougham; \*Lord Lytton; \*Lord Lyndhurst; \*Archbishop Whately; \*Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; \*W. M. Thackeray; \*Nassau Senior; \*George Thompson; \*W. Howitt; \*Serjeant Cox; \*Mrs. Browning, Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness von Vay; \*W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; \*Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; \*Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; \*Epes Sargent; \*Baron du Potet; \*Count A. de Gasparin; \*Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H.I.H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H.S.H. the Prince of Solms; H.S.H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; \*H.S.H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of \*Russia and \*France; Presidents \*Thiers and \*Lincoln, &c., &c.

## Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER, AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

## ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

## The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sance.

The first indications of success usually are a cool breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form-manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly—Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning Spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your Reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.