

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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[The Editor of "LIGHT" desires it to be distinctly understood that he can accept no responsibility as to the opinions expressed by Contributors and Correspondents. Free and courteous discussion is invited, but writers are alone responsible for the articles to which their names are attached.]

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

A new magazine which professes to embody the thoughts and aspirations of the passing hour, deals necessarily with that wide range of subjects which come within the sphere of this journal. Accordingly we have in *To-day* (as the magazine is called) the opening chapters of a story that I am not concerned to criticize, in which Spiritualism plays a part, and one Professor Hoaxley talks with Carpenterian glibness of unconscious cerebration, thought-reading, and the spirit of the age. "Unconscious cerebration on the one hand and trickery on the other—in these behold the solution of every difficulty," is a *dictum* quite worthy of certain self-styled philosophers. In another part of the same number the "Bold Thoughts of Science" are admirable reading. The materialistic tendencies of science are dealt with in a manner that is very refreshing. While gratefully acknowledging the debt that the world owes to the patient investigations of modern science, the writer administers a snub to the inordinate pretensions which are put forward in its name.

Science now-a-days has adopted rather a patronising air to her sisters, art and literature. After proving to her satisfaction that we human beings are the chosen samples of the great ape family, and that even the longest pedigree includes a baboon and a whelk or two; after reducing the soul to a chemical product, and casting doubts upon its existence hereafter, the science of the time affects a tolerant but slightly superior attitude to poetry and painting. "Scientific accuracy," the fetish of the more advanced scientific thinkers of the day, is shewn, with much force, to be, good as it is in its own place, not the highest ideal in art. "Mere exactness of portrayal is not the true aim of the artist." "A table of statistics is infinitely higher than a fine poem" is not an axiom that can be suffered to pass unchallenged. Science, "this golden image of superior enlightenment," has its feet of clay. The limitations of scientific knowledge are very clearly demonstrated; and also the bareness of that so-called knowledge when divorced from imagination—the divinest faculty in man, and the most luminous.

"Material philosophers," says the writer, "have well-nigh succeeded in endowing matter and motion with Divine attributes, and the time has now come for a breaking of the bonds that thus tie down research and thought. Science

must step forth into the glad light and look around at the world of feeling and imagination. She must dare to think boldly; she must dare even to consort with fancy. Let her remember that the bounds of the imaginable are continuous with those of the possible, and that it is only the inconceivable that cannot be. Who, for example, can maintain that there does not exist some vast region of space utterly void of matter. This may well be, and the question then arises whether this material vacuum is also a vacuum from an immaterial point of view. We may concede the absence of atoms, ether, and the physical forces, and yet hold that a something is still there, that life, and feeling, and thought are not absent, that joy, and beauty, and truth may gladden that unfathomable universe of souls. . . . This exercise of the imagination teaches us that immaterial existences and influences may be amongst us in this grosser region of space, and that possibly they to some extent control the working of the material phenomena to which we consider our experience to be limited. A Tyndall or a Huxley may refuse to indulge in such speculations . . . but it is surely more truly scientific to hold that the generation of *to-day* is like past generations in knowing but a portion of the forces and influences that exist, than to assert the impossibility of there being anything in existence dissimilar to what we have already experienced." All which is excellent and timely. The minute investigation of microscopic facts, their tabulation and arrangement are serviceable work, but not the noblest or the only work that man may fitly do. And when this study is pursued to the exclusion of that which involves the use of man's spiritual faculties, it is cramping to the intellect, and robs the soul of its birthright.

This it is that seems to ring out as the note of the age. Men have narrowed down the meaning of science until the word has become synonymous with that which has no real pretension to knowledge. They have crawled on their bellies, groping in the dust, and have lost conception of the bright heavens that are overhead. A Newton and a Darwin were cast in another mould, and therefore, they were true teachers; but most of the work called scientific, useful in its own way, falls short of that highest excellence which man's best nature craves. "It is not in papers on the spectrum of a comet, or the chemical analysis of a new mineral, that the soul can find its proper pabulum." Yet see the dwarfing and cramping effect of science on the mind! The very proof of a soul in man is viewed with such suspicion that it is received, if at all, with a violent prejudice against its probability, and the men of science who meddle with the evidence at all, act apologetically, as men with a craze, and take elaborate pains to point out that they are certainly not to be convinced of any spiritual existence, or unembodied entity, without prolonged and reiterated proof. They have arrived at a condition when they think it monstrous in us to demonstrate to them that they have a soul which may possibly survive physical death. That a reaction is setting in to this miserable, bald conception is due chiefly to Spiritualism, and finds demonstration in *To-day*, which puts forward as part of its creed that "*in every being there is that which has begun not and will never end.*"

The "Grim Tales" in the same magazine, if they are as

forcible as the present one, will add to the reputation of their writers. This instalment, an imaginative and horribly realistic development of what many Spiritualists will easily conceive of as possible, is ghastly enough for the most exacting. The writer must know some of the phenomena of the dark *séance* well.

While I am noting various contributions to general literature on these subjects, I may draw attention to an article on "Unfathomed Mysteries" in the current number of *Blackwood's Magazine*. The paper is chiefly remarkable for the admissions made in it of the reality of the facts observed by the writer. The editor introduces him as a well-known writer for the Press, and, by implication, assures his readers that, however suspicious it may be to find such a man writing as he does, he is not actually mad. This voucher made, the editor goes on to stultify himself by saying in effect that the article shews up the tricks of mediums. Whereas that is just what it does *not* do. The mysteries are still unexplained to the satisfaction of the writer, though he is inclined to credit them to the devil; that most convenient scapegoat who is always ready when the unexplained and unclassified truths, that vex impartial minds, have to be got rid of. How many of such have in the past been credited to him until they have taken their place among the blessings that are then credited to God! All unknown things are evil; all evil is of the devil. All that man sees to be true is good; all good is of God. A simple division; but hardly scientific, or satisfactory to any but a very elementary and simple mind: so convenient, however, and so venerable as a method that it will survive to the end. When I hear now that anything is of the devil I prick up my ears in anticipation of coming across something at once new and true.

M. A. (OXON.)

#### A PAPAL BULL OF EXCOMMUNICATION AGAINST SPIRITUALISTS.

The following is the verbatim text of the Papal Bull of excommunication recently sent by the Pope to various Bishops and hurled by the Archbishop of Santander (Spain) against Spiritualists in general, and certain editors in his diocese especially. In the course of our researches we come, at times, across curious facts, and we think it well to place this one on record. It will come in handy some day; meanwhile, Spiritualists will no doubt very modestly hide their diminished heads:—

##### BULL OF EXCOMMUNICATION.

"May Almighty God and His holy saints curse the Spiritualists and their journals with the perpetual malediction launched against the devil and his angels! May they be accursed like Judas the traitor, and Julian the apostate; and may they perish like Nero. May the Lord judge them as He judged Dathan and Abiram and command the earth to swallow them alive. May they be crushed and swept away from the face of the earth and all memory of them disappear for ever and ever; and may they be seized with terrible death and hurled alive, they and their progeny, into hell for damnation everlasting, so as not to leave a seed of themselves upon the surface of the globe. May the few days that are yet in store for them be full of gall and bring on incessant disasters and unhappiness to THE ACCURSED ONES. Let them suffer hunger, thirst, and nakedness, and be visited by every unclean disease and pain, and through wretched poverty and misery. Accursed be every bit of their property and every blessing and prayer instead of benefiting be changed for them into a curse. Let them be cursed everywhere and at every hour; cursed day and night, sleeping and waking, in eating, in drinking, and during fast; cursed when they speak and when they keep silent; cursed at home and abroad; cursed on land and on water; cursed from the top of their heads down to the soles of their feet! May their eyes be blinded, their ears deaf, their tongues dumb and rooted to their palates! Cursed be every member of their family and every limb of their body! Let them be cursed from to-day and for ever! Let light be changed for them into darkness before the face of the Creator, on the great day of the last judgment! May their sepulchre be that of dogs and asses! May famished wolves prey upon their corpses and may their eternal company be that of Satan and his angels!"

#### "UNFATHOMED MYSTERIES."

Under this heading, *Blackwood's Magazine* for May contains an article which is in every way remarkable, not only on account of the experiences which it relates, but also for the deductions drawn by the writer with reference to the evil moral effects of what he calls "dabbling in Spiritualism." The narrative bears on the face of it an impress of truthfulness; and moreover, an editorial footnote is appended, explaining that "the personal experiences narrated in this paper are those of a writer whose good faith is unimpeachable, whose powers of observation are of a very high order, and who most positively affirms that every detail herein related is accurately described without any exaggeration." The editor then very naively continues that "never in spiritualistic literature" has he "met with more striking proof of the wonderful success with which professional mediums practise their delusions." We say (and we are inclined to think all who look at the narrative in the light of common-sense will agree with us), that having regard to the strong testimony given as to the good faith and the high order of the writer's powers of observation, we have never come across a more striking proof of the wonderful success with which some professional *littérateurs* "practise their delusions." To turn such a literary somersault needs professional skill; no amateur could have done it half so well!

After a preliminary canter of gossiping chit chat on "Thought-Reading," "Brain Waves," &c., &c., the writer relates "an incident of so personal a character that I (he) should otherwise shrink from relating" were it not that "all well-authenticated evidence in any way bearing on the subject must possess a certain value in the eyes of those who are seeking a solution of the question." His story is as follows:—

"Two years ago, I chanced to find myself in Boston (Massachusetts), the fortunate guest of one whose hospitable home has for many years been the centre of the most delightful society in that literary city. Knowing Boston to be a centre of so-called Spiritualism, I remarked to a friend of my host that it was really quite wrong that travellers should be there and not see something of the Spiritualism for which it is so famous. He replied that he himself knew nothing whatever about it, but that if I cared to interview a medium, he would find out how to arrange the meeting, and would be glad to escort me. Of course I agreed, and he went off to ask an acquaintance learned in such matters how he was to set about it.

"His friend told him that it was the simplest thing in the world. He had only to go to a central office, called 'The Banner of Light,' and there he would obtain all necessary information. To this office he accordingly proceeded, and was received in the most business-like manner. 'He wished to see a medium?' Certainly. He had only to select the one he preferred. Thereupon a large book of reference was produced, like a servants' register, in which were entered the names and addresses of a multitude of professional mediums, on any one of whom he was at liberty to call and make his own arrangements.

"Quite at random he took note of several addresses and drove off to the first on his list. He was received by an unpleasant-looking woman, in a dingy house, and resolved to try his luck elsewhere. At the next house he was received in a pretty room by an attractive little lady of fragile and delicate appearance. She consulted her list of engagements, and said she could spare an hour on the following day, when she would expect us.

"Three other ladies had by this time expressed a wish to accompany us. The medium, Mrs. N. W., made some demur to the presence of so many, on the score that it was much more fatiguing to her. However, she waived this objection, and on the following morning we proceeded to her house. We were a party of five, almost strangers one to another—certainly not knowing one incident in one another's lives. Mrs. N. W. did not know even our names. Had she done so, they could certainly have conveyed nothing to her mind.

"We started immediately after breakfast, on a brilliant winter's morning, cold and crisp, with bright sunshine. We were all in the most mirthful frame of mind—amused by the

novelty of the proceeding, and certainly without one thought of anything serious in the matter. The only definite idea we had concerning the coming interview was, that we would ask the medium to tell us about a packet of papers which I had lost and could not trace,—not that we for one moment expected her to throw any light on the subject.

“On arriving at her house, we were received by a tidy little maid, and were shewn into a little drawing-room, into which the full sunlight poured, lighting up every corner. There was no question of darkened rooms or mysticism of any sort: only the simplest furniture—a few pretty cane chairs adorned with blue ribbons. We all carried large bunches of most fragrant winter violets; and when after a few moments, Mrs. N. W. entered the room, we offered her a bunch, which she accepted pleasantly, observing, ‘All good spirits love flowers.’ Though our friend had prepared us to see a very fair, delicate little lady, we were all startled by the unnatural pallor of her wax-like complexion—due, we suppose, to passing so large a portion of her life in some unnatural condition.

“After a few words of greeting, during which our previous levity was considerably toned down by her evident earnestness in the matter on hand, she asked us to sit in a small circle holding hands, for about one minute (all in full sunshine). Then she said, ‘I must sleep;’ and passing her hand a few times across her own face, she went off into a sort of waking trance. Then, much to our amazement, in a strange, unnatural voice, she began to pray a simple and most earnest prayer to the Great Spirit of all good and holiness, that He would bestow upon us all goodness, and grant us a closer union with the spirits of all His children; and especially she prayed that none but good spirits might be allowed to communicate with us. I must confess that we were all utterly taken aback—so entirely incongruous was this solemn appeal with the spirit in which we had sought the interview.

“Ere we had recovered from our astonishment, our medium commenced talking in a shrill child’s voice. (The idea seems, to be, that during the trance the medium is no longer himself or herself, but is merely a passive agent, of whose faculties some spirit present takes the mastery, while acting as spokesman for all others present.)

“Turning to one of the ladies, she told her that several of her near relations, who were dead, were present, and desired her to deliver certain messages. Knowing nothing about the lady in question, I took little interest in what was said, but I saw that she did so, and that she seemed rather surprised.

“Suddenly turning to the gentleman who had brought us, she told him that his father was standing beside him. She proceeded to describe him minutely, and said he bade her tell his son that his blessing rested on him because of his lifelong devotion to his invalid sister. This was startling: and I learnt subsequently that the invalid sister and the brother’s devoted care were prominent facts in his life’s history. Then she told him that a young girl—‘Nelly’—was coming close up to speak to him; that she said how bitterly she had grieved at having to leave him, for she had been so happy with him that she had no wish to enter the spirit world. Then turning aside, as if speaking to the girl, she said, ‘Now, Nelly, you must not cry; for if you do so, I cannot hear what you say.’ A few moments later she said, ‘Nelly bids me tell you that you are not to trust George so thoroughly. You know who I mean by George. A man who transacts business for you—no relation, only a business friend. She says he is not acting well for you. Those last shares he bought are not good. You had better look after that matter.’

“Throughout this communication—of which I omit many details—our friend was evidently much astonished; and though, of course, I could not venture to make any inquiry concerning his lost love, I did ask if there was such a person as ‘George,’ and was told in a whisper that there was, and that in every particular the medium had rightly described their relations.

“Suddenly Mrs. N. W. turned to me, saying that a spirit was pressing forward to get close to me—‘a short, thick-set man; he has been an old-fashioned-looking fellow ever since his boyhood.’ She then proceeded to give a most minute description of various physical peculiarities, so very marked as to be quite unmistakable. Yet so little had I dreamt of harbouring one thought concerning the sacred dead at such a time, that I could scarcely believe I heard aright when she added, ‘He says he is your brother!—his name is JOHN. That is John.’ She again commented freely on his personal appearance, adding, ‘But what a good companion he is; and how he does love

sport!’ Then suddenly pressing her hand on her head, she said, with a look of great pain, ‘Oh, poor fellow! how dreadfully he suffered here before he died!’

“Now I am positively certain that it was not till nearly all these details had been minutely described that my thoughts definitely recurred to the brother who, of all the dear ones gone hence, would, I think, draw nearest to me, were it in his power; the one brother who, in bodily presence, differed so strangely from all his stalwart brethren, though excelled by none in his skill as a mighty hunter; the brother who, after long years of toil in Ceylon, had died of a sudden and agonising pressure on the brain, at the very moment when he had definitely decided on returning home—so that the same ship which was to have brought him back to England brought the tidings of his death.

“Ere I had fully realised what had been said, the medium resumed. ‘There is a dark-complexioned woman standing beside him, who loves you both dearly.’ Then she minutely described her, adding, ‘She is your sister.’ She took my hand, and wrote three letters, so plainly that there could be no mistake, saying each as she did so—I D A. Doubtless, the name had risen in my mind, so that thought-reading might account for this. But certainly not one soul in all America knew any one of the facts which Mrs. N. W. told me that day; so that by no possible means could she have obtained any information concerning my family, even had she known my name, which she did not.

“Then, apparently as a means of identification, and although my own thoughts had most certainly not turned to the subject, she went on to say how terribly this spirit had suffered in her last long illness—how the internal complaint had puzzled and baffled all the doctors, whereas she (the medium) saw plainly that the cause of death had been different from what they imagined, and she named another malady.

“Feeling these revelations to be terribly painful, and being, moreover, determined that neither by look nor word would I allow any one present to detect how strangely true was every syllable spoken, I tried to turn the subject; but the medium went on—as if analysing some curious case—to describe various prominent features of a character which, in its various moods, was more strongly marked than that of any other woman I have ever known.

“Oh,’ she said, ‘how full of fun and mischief she is! What a capital racy story she can tell, and how witty she is! But some days, when she is in great pain, you know, she is so low and depressed that for days together she can scarcely speak. And then the moment she is a little better she is as full of wit and frolic as ever.’

“All this (with other strangely accurate details) was so startlingly exact a description of one endowed with most rare conversational powers, and a fund of mother wit which bubbled to the surface whenever the pressure of great physical pain was removed for a little season, that I could scarcely credit my hearing (especially as ten years had elapsed since those days of alternating mirth and suffering). But a moment later the medium added, ‘She wants me to tell you, that you need fear nothing in coming to the spirit world, for there are so many there who love you, and wait to welcome you.’

“The medium added, ‘There is a young man standing close to your sister; she is speaking to him.’ She went on to describe one who was buried on the field of Alma in 1854; and as I plainly recognised her description, I asked, with carefully assumed indifference, what was his name? In my own mind I thought of the name by which we always addressed him. She replied, ‘I will tell you when I hear it.’ A moment later, to my amazement, she uttered, not the name that was in my mind, but that by which his wife alone called him! Then she said, ‘There is another lady with them—also a sister; she is taller, and has smooth dark hair. She has an uncommon name—S E Y— I cannot make out the last syllable.’ I need scarcely say that the name of my eldest sister, Seymour, had presented itself vividly to my mind, yet she could not make this out. This, then, was clearly not thought-reading.

“She did not lose more than a few seconds in this effort. Then turning from me to a lady who sat opposite, she said, ‘I have much to tell you—from Annie, your sister-in-law.’ She then described the spirit in question, and, correcting herself, said, ‘Oh! her name is not Annie—it is Fanny. I had not heard rightly at first.’ Then she said, ‘Come close, that I may tell you in a whisper, for you will not like the others to hear what I have to say, and it is no concern of theirs.’

"She spoke for some minutes in a whisper, quite inaudible to the rest of the party; but I watched the lady who was thus addressed start, as if utterly amazed by what was said, and she appeared more and more perplexed as she listened. She told us afterwards that she could not possibly repeat what had been said to her, but that it had reference to strictly private family affairs, which she was convinced that no one outside of her own domestic circle could possibly know. On returning home she told her relations what had been said, and all were alike perplexed. She said her father had the greatest horror of Spiritualism, and had never allowed any of them to dabble in it; and evidently this revelation confirmed his objections.

"As soon as this private aside was ended, I asked Mrs. N. W. whether she could tell anything about people who were still alive, in the ordinary acceptance of the word. She replied in the affirmative; whereupon I said there were two men concerning whom I should like to have information. I certainly did not expect to receive any, but my thoughts turned to my brother and my half-brother, both in Afghanistan.

"She said, 'Tell me in what sort of country to look for them—a hot country or a cold one?' It was in the depth of winter, so I replied, 'A cold country.'

"After a moment's pause, she said, 'I see them both. One is more nearly related to you than the other. He is your brother. His name is Frank. I think he must be some sort of merchant, for he has long trains of animals carrying heavy burdens. There are strange wild-looking people about him—something like our wild Indian tribes, but different. I think there must be some disturbance or trouble in the country for he seems to be anxious for peace,—something like what was going on where the poor Prince Imperial was killed.'

"Strange to say this brother was then in charge of a land transport corps, oppressed by the amount of work thrown on his shoulders, in organising means of transporting all stores to the front, and personally inspecting every detail. The long caravans of laden camels and pack-horses might well have seemed suggestive of trains of merchandise.

"I asked her to tell me the name of the other man. A first she could not, for she said he was ill—not seriously ill, but that somehow she could not make out his name. Some minutes later she said, 'The name of that other man—the one who is not so closely related to you—is Fred. They will both come home safely.'

"So far all she had said was extraordinarily accurate. Now, however, she seemed to be exceedingly weary, and as if speaking at random. I asked if she could tell me about a lost packet of papers. She replied, 'Oh yes; they are lost to you for ever. You need take no further trouble to recover them. (I did recover them a few days later.) She then volunteered to tell me that I should very soon go 'across the pond' (*Anglicè*, return to England, which, in fact, I did a week later); that an old friend would come to welcome me, but that within ten days he would die suddenly. Her description of this gentleman so far resembled a friend who actually did most unexpectedly come to meet me, that I frankly confess to having been unable to shake off an uneasy qualm till the allotted ten days were well over. But I am thankful to say that in this case also, our medium proved herself quite unable to prophesy, for my friend continues to this day in perfect health.

"The fragile little woman now said she was very tired, and must awaken. She passed her hand over her face, shivered, and seemed by a voluntary effort to come out from her trance. She appeared utterly exhausted, and confessed to feeling so. The death-like pallor which had at first struck us so painfully, seemed even more ghastly than before. Strange to say, all this had occurred within the hour which she had previously allotted to us—for a specified pecuniary consideration. Throughout the *séance* she had continued to speak in the strained unnatural voice, purporting to be that of the child who was supposed to be speaking through her agency. We were glad once more to hear her speak in her natural voice. She told us she had other appointments in the course of the day, and must rest; so we left her and passed out into the crisp sunlight of the New England winter, and went on our way feeling considerably bewildered by our interview.

"Much of what she had said was so utterly unaccountable, that I, for one, could not put it from me for days. It really seemed as if, but for lack of time, and the presence of others all claiming their share of one short hour, she might have gone on speaking consecutively, as one who had something definite to

tell; or else, if there were any fraud in the matter (which seemed quite impossible), I might have obtained some clue to it.

"I could not attribute her words to thought-reading; for in almost each case the thoughts were entirely of her suggestion; and in several instances where she addressed the others, she had to explain something of which she had to remind them; saying, 'Don't you remember?' and they answered, 'Yes; but I had forgotten.'

So much for the story. Where the "delusion" comes in unless the narrator deliberately mis-states facts, we fail to see. Subsequently he attended a spiritualistic lecture in New York, of which he says "the one object was to prove that the reality of Spiritualism rests on evidence of precisely the same character as that of Christianity."

This rather shocked the nerves of our friend. He considered this method of "treating sacred subjects could not but sound painfully irreverent." Here again we fail to appreciate the situation, especially as it is admitted that "this was evidently not the intention of the speaker nor the impression produced on his hearers." The conclusions drawn are stated as follows:—

"The advance of modern science has taught us to despise the superstitions of the dark ages. Necromancy and witchcraft are deemed things of the past. Yet under new names, and with refinements better suited to this nineteenth century, the same beliefs would seem to be at work. A few years ago, a simple little heart-shaped piece of wood, called 'Planchette,' running on wheels, and pierced by a pencil, became a favourite drawing-room plaything, and was required to act the part of the divining-rod in the hand of the Eastern magicians. So eerie were the answers thus obtained to various questions, that in many cases the inquirers took alarm, and solemnly condemned their 'Planchette' to an *auto da fé*. We know of one which was deliberately sunk in the Nile, and another in the Thames, as being decidedly 'uncanny.'

"Then we have had the whole array of evidence concerning table-turning and spirit-rapping, which for so many years formed a fruitful topic of conversation and wonder. Add to these, numerous indisputable stories of unaccountable apparitions, such as those vouched for by Mr. Lane and his sister during their residence in Egypt; and also such mysterious rappings as continued for years to disturb the pious home of the Wesleys; and many other instances equally well authenticated.

"All I can learn on this subject, and its effect on those who have gone most deeply into its study, inclines me to believe that it is one which it is well to leave untouched, and so my inquiries have gone no further. From what I can gather, I infer that the whole question of Spiritualism is full of difficulty; that those who start on the endeavour to follow it out soon find themselves plunged in an intricate labyrinth, from which escape becomes more and more hopeless the further they advance—a labyrinth in which light becomes darkness, and in which they who once enter are beguiled ever onward, in the vain hope of grasping something tangible, which for ever eludes their quest."

This is the old tale in which "bogie" turns up once more as lively as ever. We were under the impression that the "devil-theory" had died a natural death long ago, when lo! it is re-dressed for further service. This particular impeachment of Spiritualism has been answered over and over again, and we do not feel ourselves specially called upon to give reiterated denial to statements made by those who "having eyes they see not and having ears they hear not." The accusation may be true in exceptional cases; as regards Spiritualism generally it is totally false. But, perhaps, we have taken this paper too much *au sérieux*.

THE BARONESS VON VAY, the well-known Austrian Spiritualist, is a powerful healer. Rich and poor are treated alike without fee or reward.

WE learn that the late Madame Kardec bequeathed her property, which represented a considerable amount, to the "Society for the Continuation of the Spiritualistic Works of Allan Kardec."

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, the eminent French astronomer and Spiritualist, never shrinks from avowing his belief in the reality of the spiritual phenomena, and is ever willing on all suitable occasions to take his part in the public advocacy of the spiritual movement.

## EXPERIENCES IN A "HAUNTED HOUSE."

Five years since being obliged to enlarge my borders, I took the house I am now occupying, for a term of seven years, thinking myself fortunate in having secured so eligible a place for the requirements of my profession.

The first afternoon of our being here a young lady, whom I had sent to lie down, told me that a tall lady had stood by her side. I fully believed, and persuaded the young lady so, that it was merely a chimera of a disordered brain.

We had been located here about a month, when I went away to spend my Easter holidays. On my return my mother had a strange tale to tell, viz., that the young ladies left here and the domestics and herself had been very much frightened by strange noises. Believing that these had been nothing but noises proceeding from natural causes, exaggerated by a distorted imagination, I ridiculed the whole affair, desiring them "to let me hear no more of that nonsense." A short time afterwards, however, I was myself suddenly awakened by a terrible thud as of some falling furniture. This was at two o'clock in the morning, and from that time until after four, I was kept awake by a confusion of sounds apparently in the drawing-room below. I then got up and went downstairs, fully expecting to find the room dismantled, and I was very perplexed at seeing everything precisely as I had left it when retiring the previous evening. At the breakfast-table I asked casually if any one had been disturbed during the night, when my governess, occupying the room immediately over mine, said she had not been able to sleep for certain sounds which came apparently from my room. Up to this time I had never associated the disturbances with anything supernatural. I knew nothing of Spiritualism whatever.

From the time of which I am writing to the immediate present we have rarely been free from these visitations. All the first summer, and the spring and summer following, the whole household was terror-stricken. The noises increased in intensity and frequency; strange forms, animal and human, presented themselves; and lights appeared in perfectly dark rooms. One young lady had fits through seeing a hand and arm stretched towards some flowers upon the table.

About this time (during our first summer here) I had been out, and on coming in my companion walked towards a half-glass door, opening to the garden, and seeing her attention rivetted, I looked in the same direction—towards the greenhouse at the bottom of the garden. My attention was immediately arrested by a gaunt black figure standing against the open door of the greenhouse. We watched it for a long time, standing motionless; then it slowly advanced until about half way towards us, when it faded as a dissolving view passes from a magic lantern.

Just at this time a young lady was crossing a passage, and looking from the window to the garden saw a woman in a light dress crossing the lawn. She called her companion, and they both watched the figure disappear. The same evening two others, knowing nothing of what these had seen, met the same figure coming from my room, and even noticed that it had very large bare feet.

I was called from supper to a room in which eight were retiring. A light, egg-shaped, was visible under the piano; all saw it but myself. I requested them to ring if it came again. I had hardly reached the dining-room when the bell recalled me. I seized my Bible, and on entering the room, I too saw the light—a dead, non-radiating light, egg-shaped, or, as my pupils called it, an eye of fire. Seeing how frightened they were, and being wrought to a fit of desperation by the repeated disturbances, I flung my Bible at the light, saying: "There, you devil; come again if you dare!" and, strange to say, that night we were perfectly quiet.

A visitor saw a woman's figure, in everyday attire, sitting at the foot of her bed; and my mother, entering the same room, saw what—until she spoke to it—she imagined

to be the servant. In this room are frequently seen large balls of bright light.

It would occupy too much space to enumerate the events as they actually occurred. I must confine myself to a few of the more prominent. No room is free from the phenomena; and most persons visiting hear or see some of them. One night I had two visitors, to whom I gave up my own room, going to share one at the top of the house with three young ladies. Being a very sultry night the window was half open. I was standing at it. One young lady had been in bed some hours, and was sleeping; the other two were almost close to me. Suddenly, a very peculiar noise, startlingly loud, came at the open window. The sleeping girl was roused, and jumped from her bed in terror. Another threw her arms round me, exclaiming: "Oh! What is that noise?" while the fourth occupant of the room *heard no sound*. It was at one time a common thing for an animal, about the size of a cat, but not like one, to rush out from behind the piano in the bedroom and whisk about the middle of the floor, and the girls have several times chased it.

The figure of a child has been seen by the drawing-room fire-place, and at the top of the stairs.

In February of 1882 I had a friend staying with me. The first morning I asked how he had slept, and heard that he had been unable to sleep the greater part of the night on account of noises in the room and passage. This led to my disclosing the experiences; and he gave me the name and address of a gentleman, Spiritualist, whom, he thought, might help me. This was the first idea I had of associating the phenomena with the spirit world.

The spring of 1882 was very troublesome. One evening a young lady rushed breathlessly into the dining-room saying she had been walking in the garden, and on hearing footsteps had looked round and seen a gentleman very close to her. The same evening two servants saw the same phenomenon.

In the autumn we were sitting at supper when a loud knock came on the table, as if struck underneath, and on the 20th October following I was sitting alone in the room in the afternoon when the same knock came again. In both cases the knock, if it had been real, must have split the table to pieces, and yet, although the table was laid, not an article was displaced or rattled. In the latter case only myself and one other were in the house.

In December last about eleven o'clock one evening, I was startled to see a huge, colorless face at the window. I could see no hair, and the expression was terrible. I shall never forget it.

This year, too, has been rather remarkable. One evening my pupils called me to their room to see that the greenhouse was illuminated. My governess and I went up. At first we could see nothing; then a small ball as of fire, bright, but not a flame, appeared, but whether in the greenhouse or on the ground close to it I could not determine. We all (six) watched it, and it slowly grew larger and larger until it was quite two feet in diameter, and then as slowly faded away. This is a frequent phenomenon. I know some will immediately ascribe it to reflection, but it is not so, all the windows being closely shuttered for the purpose of testing it, and the garden is not overlooked in any way; neither is there ingress except through the house.

Twice I have been awakened by shrill maddening peals of laughter, when all in the house have been soundly sleeping.

On one occasion in December last, a young lady met a figure on the stairs from which she received a sharp blow on the face. The same figure emerged from a closet in the bedroom, and walked to the foot of the bed, which it shook violently and then disappeared.

Sometimes the noise is a crash as of glass breaking.

These are a few only of the phenomena we are continually experiencing, and it is singular that, while no season of the year has been wholly free, the phenomena are always more frequent in the spring.

I am aware that by many this narrative will be received with contumely, and I shall be regarded as a mistaken visionary. I do not attempt to account for these manifestations. That I must leave, but I have related only facts which have actually occurred, and are still occurring.

May 10th, 1883.

STELLA DUNBAR.

[The above narrative has been kindly furnished to us at our special request, and we believe that the good faith of the writer may be confidently relied upon.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

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

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

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## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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## Light :

SATURDAY, MAY 19TH, 1883.

## MATERIALISATION CONDITIONS.

The following letter of our valued contributor, "M. A. (Oxon.)," appeared recently in the *Harbinger of Light*. Setting aside the fact that everything from his pen is well worthy of attention, we think its subject so important that we give the letter in question *in extenso* :—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—In writing a few words of greeting to my friends in the Antipodes, it is not very easy to select topics that may be of general interest, but I shall not be wrong if I say something of your Materialisation Scéances, of which you have presented us with such an exhaustive report. There is no phase of the manifestation of spirit that is more astounding than this; none that demands more complete proof before it can be finally accepted. It seems to me that you have done much to place the evidence on unimpeachable grounds. I have had the advantage of seeing some of the private records of the circle in which Mr. Spriggs sat at Cardiff before he migrated to the Antipodes, and I can see that his development was carefully guarded, and that pains were taken to render it possible for results to be satisfactory. It is by no means so simple as it might appear to ensure that end. "LIGHT" has contained of late some correspondence and some notes of mine that bear closely on this point. I cannot summarise them, and can only refer your readers to them. But compendiously I may say that results worth having are not to be had save by strict attention not only to the medium, but also to the composition of the circle. Here is the fatal fault of public circles. Any chance loafer who can pay the fee finds his place, and ruins the chances of success. Any man who hates and detests the whole subject can pay his money and find his opportunity of damning it. He has no sort of belief in the whole thing, no knowledge of the very alphabet, yet he is to sit as judge upon the most elaborated manifestation of spirit-power. He, absolutely ignorant, is to pronounce an opinion on one of the most subtle manifestations of spirit. He starts from ignorance, and he pursues his way through rashness to absurdity. He pays his fees, sees something he cannot understand, clutches the spirit, grasps (of course) the medium, and goes away with the air of a man who has exploded a fraud. Yet what has he done? Simply and solely he "has written himself down an ass." For spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and grave problems of this kind cannot be solved by the rough and ready methods that spirit snatchers think proper to employ.

It is a cheering sign that investigators are becoming alive to the absurdity of current methods of investigation, and also to the necessity for attending to the circumstances under which investigation is held. It is not enough that the medium be so placed that he cannot cheat. "Be he chaste as ice, pure as snow," he is the victim of his surroundings; he is the wash-pot into which the psychical emanations of the circle are poured. If they be vitiated how can he remain pure? He is nervously sensitive to every influence with which he is brought into rapport. It is necessary then to see that all these are good; for "one dead fly maketh the ointment of the apothecary to stink." It is abundantly sure that nothing short of the most careful attention not only to the medium but to the circle, will ensure satisfactory results.

You have, it appears to me, secured this, and you have given us a record of your investigations that seem to me to be of high value. It would be impertinent to suggest to you experiments that may be impossible. None can judge of the conditions save those who are present. But supposing it possible for you to elaborate your experiments so as to get a clear view of the medium and psychic form at the same time, it would be of the highest scientific value if you could determine the relation between the two; for instance, by seeing how far one could subsist apart from the other; by weighing both simultaneously and determining the variations of weight, and especially by watching the gradual extinction of the materialised form, and seeing how, and after what time, it disappeared.

All this means a clear view of the medium. I earnestly hope that you will secure that. Do not believe that it cannot be done. It can; and until it is done, the philosophy of materialisation will be nil. At the present moment we know almost nothing of the *modus operandi*. We never shall know more till we see what is going on. Let us have that privilege, and we shall advance with giant strides. And it would be better, believe me, to get one satisfactory experiment in a month than an unsatisfactory one every day. I know that I ask for what is difficult. I ask it none the less. It is a *sine quâ non* to progress.

You know as much as I can tell you of our Spiritualism. It is written in the columns of "LIGHT." We have reached and passed a turning point, I will not call it a crisis; our facts have accumulated to an extent that renders it unnecessary to add to them. There is a distinct break in their presentation. Five, three, even two years ago, they were evolved far more rapidly than now. They are so far complete; we now want the mind that can tabulate, arrange, sift, and classify them. We want a philosophy. These are the facts—where is the mind to deal with them? Echo answers where! But the mind will be forthcoming. No fear of that.

I offer most respectfully my hearty greetings to my friends and co-workers, and am always,

Yours most cordially,

M. A. (Oxon.)

## THE LANGHAM HALL LECTURES.

A full report of the lecture by the Rev. John Pogo Hopps at Langham Hall, on Tuesday evening last, will appear in our next issue. In the meantime we again very gladly urge upon our readers the claims of the C.A.S. for support in their spirited public action in undertaking to provide high class lectures of this description. Those who desire to shew sympathy with the object in view will, we think, find a fitting opportunity by contributing towards the expenses. The cost of the series of six lectures is estimated at £70. Friends who intend contributing to this fund are requested to communicate as early as possible with Mr. T. Blyton, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C. About half the requisite amount has, as yet, been subscribed.

## SPECIAL LECTURE FUND.

The following donations have been received :—

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[Particulars of the first three lectures will be found in our advertisement columns.]

## "TRANSCORPOREAL ACTION OF THE SPIRIT."

BY A. M. HOWITT WATTS.

No. II.

(Continued from page 188.)

"It is only when the person is asleep, or entranced (or in reverie) that the spirit is able to leave the body; and it is only with persons possessing medial powers that it is at all possible."—*Dr. Eugene Crowell's "Spirit World and its Inhabitants," Chap. i. p. 20.*

In the paper on "Transcorporeal Action" in "LIGHT," for April 21st, were given instances of the *phantasms* of living persons taken from printed records of the phenomenon from various accredited sources. The following instances are from private sources, and have not until now appeared in print, being the personal experiences of intimate friends of the writer, or her own experience. The names of the ladies concerned, the writer is not permitted to give.

The following narrative was written, September 15th, 1882, from the dictation of an old and intimate friend, whom we will call Mrs. C., and shews how

**A Spirit returned from Chapel whilst the Body still remained there.**

"When I was quite a young girl," said Mrs. C., "for a short period I resided with a family-connection named Dora. She was wealthy and of the Methodist persuasion, living a retired life, except for the visits of religiously-minded persons of her own belief; and herself much devoted to prayer. She was a very interesting woman, whom I, in my then crude state of knowledge of things spiritual, could not understand or do justice to. She had been a spirit-seer from childhood, and I am now convinced that when in the twilight—as was her wont—she having played passage after passage from memory of the grand old masters, fell into 'playing her thoughts, as she termed it, she was playing by spirit-inspiration. Of the wonderful beauty and charm of these musical improvisations I cannot attempt to convey an idea. Dora was an invalid and not infrequently unable to attend public worship at the neighbouring chapel. Consequently one summer's Sunday afternoon I went there alone. Dora meanwhile sitting reading in her room at home, heard me, as she supposed, return at an unusually early hour. Not only did she hear, but she clearly saw me quietly pass the door and enter my chamber.

"After a while, service being over, I returned at the usual hour, and entered the room where Dora sat, in my bonnet and walking dress, shewing myself thus immediately upon my return.

"How long have you been back?" asked Dora, with a look of surprise, glancing at my bonnet.

"I am only this moment returned," I rejoined.

"But," insisted Dora, "you have been back half an hour, or even more. I saw you pass the room door and enter your chamber."

"No, dear Dora, that is not so. I have only just returned. I have not, as yet, been in my room."

"Dora looked greatly puzzled, even troubled in mind. Evidently she believed that thus having seen my double,' she had received a 'death omen.' For weeks afterwards this apparition, in recollection, continued to trouble her.

"My own experiences in the matter," remarked Mrs. C., "were these. The afternoon was hot—I was drowsy and tired during the service.\* I sat by myself in a large pew, curtained round; above the line of the curtain I alone saw the figure of the good preacher delivering his sermon. His voice and monotonous action tended to produce, possibly, a

mesmeric sensation over me. I fell, consciously, into a state of reverie, and was quite aware that my *mind wandered*; my body remained in the pew, but my mind, my thoughts, involuntarily returned home. Dora, who possessed the seer's eye, beheld my returning mind, clothed, as the French Spiritists would phrase it, in its *périsprit*.

"I once again many years later experienced how

**"A Spirit form of one in the flesh can knock at a door."**

"It happened that once going on a visit to N.," continued Mrs. C., "where my step-mother resided, to whom I was strongly attached, on arriving I was met by my brother, who informed me that unexpectedly our mother's spare room was occupied by a visitor and that therefore at her request, I was that night to sleep at his house. Some way I was disappointed not at once being able to see our mother. I determined to rise early on the morrow and surprise her at the breakfast-table. I felt a yearning to see her. Her home was at some little distance and to reach it, there was a steep hill to be ascended. I was so impatient to arrive that I actually felt my will and mind rush on before me, my feet seemed to linger behind, as I toiled up the hill. At length I was at the door of my step-mother's house, and knocked. To my surprise she herself opened it, exclaiming 'Well, here you *really* are, this time! I heard your loud knock a quarter of an hour ago—but no one was there! for I, feeling certain you were come, ran to the door as now!'" Probably in this case, as in the case of apparitions of the dying, a mutual yearning gave rise to the development of so much psychic force as to produce a loud knocking.

**Mrs. B. appears to her maid bringing with her a Spiritual Light.**

In a series of papers in the *Psychological Review*, entitled "Thoughts regarding the Mystical Death," the writer introduced a lady, whom she called Mrs. B., and her maid Jacintha.

Mrs. B. for many years has been conscious of her thoughts, her mind, her soul, her "*périsprit*," as the French—her "nerve-spirit" as the German psychologists have termed it—going forth from herself, and making itself manifest to persons with whom she is *en rapport*. This, usually, has occurred without volition on her part. She enjoys good health; is, however, markedly that which we now accustom ourselves to term a "psychic." She herself is also well acquainted with the phenomenon of beholding the "phantasms" of living persons, and also of hearing the voices of living persons when at a distance from her; in short, she hears and sees manifestations of the spirits of living persons equally with manifestations of the spiritual presence of those whom we call "the dead." Jacintha, her maid, is also a "psychic."

In the summer of 1882 Jacintha said to her mistress, who was preparing for an absence from home of some duration, "I do hope, madam, that master and yourself will not this time give me another terrible fright such as you gave me last autumn when you went abroad."

Mrs. B.: "How was that, Jacintha?"

Jacintha: "About midnight of the evening that you started for the Continent, I was suddenly awakened by a loud knocking at the front door. It was master's well-known knock. I heard, then, his footsteps on the stairs. He did not walk into the drawing-room, but came directly up and up—not entering his bedroom as I expected—but straight up to my little room at the top of the house. You followed. You carried a bright light in your hand, which enabled me to clearly see you both, and all the objects in my room. You both looked frightfully pale, tired, and wet. Bits of mud fell off master's feet as he walked. I cried out! I was dreadfully alarmed. I felt certain that some accident must have occurred. Not for a moment did I doubt that you were both killed, and that

\* Compare with this, remarkable narrative given in No. 88 of "LIGHT," p. 406, "Presence at a Distance," as related by Josiah Gilbert, in a letter to editor of the *Spectator*. Several members of a family seated in a pew one hot summer Sunday afternoon simultaneously behold the form of a brother, resident in America, approach them and lay his hand upon the edge of the pew—the real man being asleep at the time in America, dreaming a clairvoyant dream of his family beheld in the pew. The state of reverie of the persons in the chapel pew inducing, possibly, simultaneous clairvoyance, the spirit form of the dreamer in America could thus be clearly recognised.

\* The Seeress of Prevorst was enabled by her nerve-spirit going forth from herself to make sounds of knocking at a distance. Instances of this are given by Dr. Kerner.

I now beheld your ghosts. You, ma'am, looked steadfastly at me, holding your light, and I asked, 'Is that you, ma'am?' and you replied, 'It is not I, it is my ghost.' This more than ever alarmed me. I have often, you know, in many ways seen you in the spirit, but never had I quite seen you in the same manner. I could not remain in my room. I got up, and in great trouble went down into the kitchen and made myself a cup of tea. I was regularly upset. I had not a shade of a doubt but that some trouble had come and that I had seen your ghosts. I did not dare mention to anyone what I had seen, and was most miserable, until a letter came from abroad saying you and master were all right."

Mrs. B.: "I imagine, Jacintha, that at that particular moment when you thus saw us in the spirit you saw our then condition of body and mind. That night at about midnight, we, having come off the steamboat at Calais, missed the carriage which should have taken us up from the pier to the hotel. It was very low water, and the distance was thus greater than usual between the boat and the inn. It was damp, dreary, and wretched. There had been much rain, and we, very much exhausted, had a dark, wet walk up to the hotel. We remarked at the time that never had we had a more disagreeable walk, and never so dreary an arrival at Calais. Being very tired, also having left you very unwell, as you may remember, my thoughts most probably returned home, and were directed to yourself, especially as I had left with an anxious feeling regarding you. The ghost of my thoughts, no doubt, visited you."

Jacintha then told her mistress that years previously she had, when first she entered the service of Mr. and Mrs. B., received in a similar manner a visit in the night from Mrs. B. which had greatly startled her. She had been, perhaps, a month in the family, and had heard her fellow-servants' mysterious hints regarding the "queer things" believed in by their master and mistress. "For they are," said the servants, "what people call Spiritualists." What "Spiritualists" were Jacintha did not exactly know, but supposed it had something to do with "ghosts." One night Jacintha, sleeping in a room with another maid, suddenly was fully awakened by beholding, as she supposed, her mistress in person standing in the room. Indeed she had first seemed to see Mrs. B. come straight through the bedroom-door as if she walked through it. She brought a light with her which made all things clear in the room. She wore her dressing-gown and her hair hung down and spread over her shoulders. She gazed fully at Jacintha, who was so astonished by the apparition that she started up in her bed. Mrs. B.'s phantasm then vanished. Jacintha thought to herself that if this was an example of "the queer things" done by "Spiritualists," she never could possibly remain in such a household. But as it appears she stayed on in the same service for many years.

(To be continued.)

#### BIRTH.

KREUGER.—May 11th, Mrs. Kreuger (nee Everitt), wife of Mr. Gustav Kreuger, Lilian Villa, Holder's Hill, Hendon, of a daughter.

SEANCES WITH MR. CECIL HUSK.—The first of a series of members' private subscription sances at the rooms of the Central Association of Spiritualists with Mr. Cecil Husk was held on Thursday evening last week, when some very interesting physical manifestations were experienced. The phenomena were remarkable in many respects, and of such a character as to give much satisfaction to the members present. This series of sances will be held on consecutive Thursday evenings at 7.30 o'clock prompt, and members desirous of securing tickets of admission are requested to obtain them previous to the evening of the sance.—Thomas Blyton, secretary.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITEN will lecture at Halifax, May 20th. Belper, May 27th. Liverpool, June 3rd and 17th.—Address The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

## PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA IN ANCIENT GREECE.

BY A. J. CRANSTOUN.

An interesting story of a dream vision is related by Plutarch in his delightful letter, "Consolation to Apollonius," on the death of his son; a letter which sets out very fully the philosophical and religious grounds for bearing patiently, and overcoming the sorrow caused by the death of a dearly-loved friend. This beautiful and instructive epistle is adorned with many examples illustrative of his views, and with extracts from the classical poets on the subject, and is very worthy of study.

Plutarch did not offer this friendly and wise consolation to his friend until after a considerable time had elapsed from the death of his son, being well aware, as he declares in the beginning of the letter, that all attempts at consolation must at first—when the blow is fresh—fail; and that it is only Time, the great Comforter, who can succeed in reconciling a really sensitive heart to such great calamities, and make it perceive, as Carlyle says, "That sorrow was not given us for sorrow's sake, but always and infallibly as a lesson to us, from which we are to learn somewhat, and which, the somewhat once learned, ceases to be sorrow!"

The story is as follows:—"Of Euthynous, the Italian, there is this memorable story, that he died suddenly without anyone knowing the cause of his death; his father was Elisius, the Terinean, a man of the highest rank, both as to estate and virtue, being rich and honourable, and his son the heir to all his fortune, which was very great, and having thus died he conceived a strong suspicion that he had been poisoned. Not knowing how to arrive at the truth as to this, he went to the place set apart for the invocation of the dead (*ψυχομαρτυρίων*), and after having performed the rites and sacrifices enjoined by law, he went to sleep there. When all was silent he had a vision or apparition (*ὄψις*); his father appeared to him, to whom he related his misfortune, and earnestly requested that he might be assisted in discovering the truth as to his son's death, whereupon, his father replied that 'he had come with that intention, but that he (Elisius) should first receive from this person here what he had brought you, and thereby you will see the true cause of your affliction.' The form alluded to bore a strong resemblance to the deceased Euthynous, both in years and stature, and on being asked 'who he was,' replied, 'I am the genius (*δαίμων*) of your son,' and then shewed him a roll, which, on being unfolded, had these lines written on it.

"Men wander through life with minds led astray by illusion, Euthynous by decree of the Fates has found repose in death: His life, if it had been prolonged, would not have been beautiful either to himself or to you."

The foregoing is the story, which is interesting in many respects. This antique view of death as the Freer from approaching calamities is more consoling than that held by Dante, reflecting the Middle Age gloom of Hell and Purgatory, which pressed like a death pall upon the living; in the "Vita Nuova," he calls death "di dolor madre antica," "the ancient mother of grief;" and yet Dante too was right, for in spite of all verbal consolations, the death of those loved has ever been the mother of sorrows, a true "Mater dolorosa." Cicero, like Plutarch, wrote eloquently upon the folly of grieving at death, but when his own beloved daughter died, he was so thoroughly overmastered by grief, that he retired and shut himself up for a considerable time, invisible to any of his friends, so as not to be disturbed by vain attempts at consolation. It may be said of consolation in such cases, as Dean Swift said of philosophy, that she was "a splendid mare in the stable, but an arrant jade on a journey."

The above story proves that the custom of invoking the dead—Necromancy—either by obtaining actual objective appearances (materialisations), or by clairvoyance, or by subjective dream visions, was a recognised and common practice in the ancient world, and that a particular place was set apart for this rite, with a particular name as above mentioned, and which was probably a chamber in a temple, and that a regular appointed ritual with offerings was used for the success of the invocation. The religious element so introduced was an essential part of these ancient séances until in later times the whole thing got into the hands of paid impostors and jugglers. How different and how much better and more likely to have good results was this ancient practice than our modern mixed séances, where for the most part the sitters get simply what they deserve, the reflection of their own states of mind. It appears to have been the practice, in some cases, to give the invoker, previous to his going to sleep, a magical drink probably of an anæsthetic kind, by which it is supposed the soul becomes loosened from the bands of the flesh, and enabled to enter into spiritual communion with the inhabitants of the spirit spheres. The witches' salve undoubtedly, both in ancient times and in the Middle Ages, produced some analogous effect to these anæsthetics, as is shewn by the curious experiences of Gassendi with a witch. As to the writing on the scroll, many cases are recorded, similar to the above, in which clairvoyants have seen writing on scrolls, or in books, or in crystals; so that this ancient story is in this respect also parallelised in modern phenomena.

The Genius (daimon) of Euthynous, mentioned in the story as bearing a strong resemblance to Euthynous himself, was, I think, his own spirit or soul, and not a separate entity, or what is called a guardian angel; but simply his soul clothed with the spiritual\* or fluidic body, as its vehicle, and which would naturally resemble the earthly body, at least for the purpose of recognition.

The Theosophists (most of whose writings I agree with and admire), drawing from the rather misty and dreamy philosophical or psychical speculations of the Hindus, Gnostics and Neoplatonists, (notably from the Vedanta and Sankyha schools, and their later outcome Buddhism,) divide and separate the thought principle in man into several different entities, each to have a separate destiny; but so far as the writer has yet been able to discover, no evidence has been adduced to prove that the thought principle is not a unity, indivisible into parts, and consequently only with one destiny before it. This theory of many kinds or portions of souls in the one man, seems to rest only in the sphere of allegation and dogma, without any evidence to sustain it. It is probably the combat and struggle which is always going on in the human soul between good and evil, which has given rise to this notion of a duality or indeed of a multiplicity of distinct thought entities. This soul combat can be explained, or at least attempted to be explained, much better by the Darwinian doctrine of evolution from the lower forms of life, the instincts and habits derived from which cling to our now human souls so closely, giving rise to a perpetual struggle, at least with most men, between the higher and the lower tendencies and aspirations, as naturally to give rise to this notion of duality or of multiplicity. If man be the microcosm of all preceding substances, inorganic and organic, and if he is placed on the "upward path" of Being; and slowly, painfully, and with infinite effort and dire sorrows, ascending the great ladder of life which extends from earth to Heaven, how could it be otherwise than that we must all have inherited the imperfections (relatively such) of our long line of "predecessors in title," and that a fierce and continued combat must arise in the soul in order to eliminate from it the tiger, the hyena, and

the ape, or other of our charming progenitors. Tennyson, adopting this theory, well says:

"Rise, human soul! arise and fly  
The reeling Fawn, the sensual feast;  
Move upwards working out the beast  
And let the wolf and tiger die."

And Matthew Arnold, in his beautiful poem, "Empedocles on Etna," expresses the same view:—

"Born into life—man grows  
Forth from his parent stem,  
And blends their bloods, as those  
Of theirs are blent in them;  
So each new man strikes root into a far foretime."

May not this notion of duality, of opposing forces in the human soul, be merely part and parcel of that universal duality and polarity which exists everywhere in that minute portion of the infinite universe which is known to man; that necessary looking at all phenomena from contrasting and opposing points of view, in which they are viewed as opposite pairs—good and evil—light and darkness—God and Devil—Heaven and Hell—male and female—and so on in a never-ending series of opposite dualities?

The Pythagoreans (according to H. Ritter) held a view analogous to this, as the unity of the world was called by them harmony, but which harmony arises from opposing or contradictory notes or principles; and this unity, consisting of substance and element, or, as we would say, spirit and matter, is God, who governs all things, doing the best He can as far as is possible. They did not believe that God was at first perfect, but rather a progressive God; for, being the principle of *all* things, from Him must come the uneven, the imperfect, the negative; concluding, therefore, that the ground or cause of the imperfect must be itself imperfect. Their idea of God was the same as that of the Vedanta, and of Spinoza, a World-Soul, identic with the Kosmos, the universal life being the life of the World-Soul, that universal spirit which rules and works in all things; the "*Mens agit molem*" of the Latin poet. Who can explain the great mystery, that the best and the beautiful are not at the beginning of things, but unfold themselves out of the less good and the less beautiful? It is probable, and greatly to be hoped, that this, to us, strange system of dual opposites, on which our world seems to have been constructed, and to be governed, including the duality of body and soul, spirit and matter, are only part and parcel of this phenomenal-planetary life, and that a time will come to all when they shall disappear, giving place to a world of true unity, harmony, and peace, a condition which has ever been the fond and longing dream of contemplative man, in every climate, and in every age.

This upward path of being—the "*ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον*" of Parmenides, the path of empire or self-control, may be considered, as it occurs to me, to have six halting-places or stages; 1st. From beast to man, but man, preserving for long ages more or less of the nature of the beast, although the form has become human, but the soul not as yet humane but egotistic, cruel, with the "mark of the beast" still upon his forehead and in his heart. Humanity is not yet altogether out of this epoch—the stone age of man.

2nd. From savage man to man humane and civilised, more or less; in this stage religion, morality, science and art operate powerfully in modifying and changing the old original brute-man—the old Adam; but nevertheless much yet remains of the egoistic, grossly material, unspiritual man. This is the Kali yuga of the Hindus, marked most distinctly by the test of vivisection, justified almost universally by the civilised and educated men of science, for selfish human ends, contrary to all morality and sympathy with sentient life, on which all morality ultimately rests and which is stigmatised by these thought-

\* "Spiritual body" is a very incorrect expression as it involves a contradiction in terms; psychic body, an impalpable body, or radiant body (*Soma augeoides*), of the Neoplatonists would be better.

leaders with contempt as "sentimentality." Truly it is sentimentality in its true sense—feeling—and that is a thing they apparently wish to get rid of as effectually as possible. Herbert describes this epoch,

"Unless above himself he can erect himself,  
How poor a thing is man."

And Goethe puts into the mouth of the scientific pessimist, Mephistopheles, type of the gross materialistic Agnostic, these notable words, too applicable, alas! to man:—

"Der kleine Gott der Welt bleibt stets von gleichem Schlag,  
Und ist so wunderbar als wie an erster Tag.  
Ein wenig besser würd er leben,  
Hättst du ihm nicht den Schein des Himmelslichts gegeben;  
Er neunt's Vernunft und bracht's allein,  
Nur thierischer als jedes Thier zu sein."

"The little God of the world remains ever of the same stuff,  
And is as wonderful as on the first day.  
He would live a little happier  
Hadst thou not given him the reflection of the lights of  
Heaven;  
He calls it Reason, and uses it only  
To make himself a worse brute than any other animal."

3rd. From natural and even comparatively civilised man to man as a being more and more increasingly receptive of the Divine spirit of the World-Soul, ever ready to flow into the *open* human soul by afflatus, influx, or inspiration, and thereby making man's will more and more united with God's will, until, in its highest state of earthly perfection it becomes one with that will: "Tat-toun-asi."

4th. Death—new birth—a spiritual being arises from the ashes of the earthly being, clothed with an imponderable but far stronger body, the "Soma angeoides," and endowed with an internal sense, the mysterious workings of which man has had even here sundry glimpses, through the veil of flesh.

5th. Personality greatly modified, perhaps swallowed up in sympathetic association with choirs of spirits, united together by original soul idiosyncrasy—each male spirit united with a female spirit.

Last stage. Nirvana, or by whatever other name the mystery may be called, but which is now incomprehensible to man in his present low condition.

(To be continued.)

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is preferable that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

##### The Preparation of Inquirers and the Graduation of the Phenomena: To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I cannot accept the opinion of Mr. Barkas on the above subject as at all satisfactory or even feasible. He observes that "Spiritualists generally are much too desirous to place the marvellous phenomena of which they have themselves been witnesses before their friends and the general public." But surely there is a natural and perhaps an irresistible impulse to do so, and to suppress this impulse would be unnatural, and as I think, unwise too. "I believed, and therefore have I spoken." This was the Apostle's statement of his own procedure, and surely it was as wise as it was natural. If you see "marvellous phenomena" how can you be silent? Mr. Barkas would have you practise strict reticence both before your "friends and the general public." Such reticence would be for any ingenuous mind as painful as it would be unnatural.

Besides, the evidence of the phenomena would thereby be impaired. That it should be described *at once*, when all the details and accompaniments are imprinted most freshly on the mind, and not blurred or confused by lapse of time, is the indispensable safeguard of the correctness of the narrative. That you should relate it *at once* to your friends or communicate it to the public is the principal element of security. Let the comment follow *at once*, and any plan or deception pointed out.

But Mr. Barkas would have one stifle the natural impulse,

and wait some considerable time—say a year or two—until it has undergone a crucial investigation by some secret tribunal which is to issue its *imprimatur*. Then it may be safely announced to the public, and not before.

Nor can I admire his motive. We are enjoined to practise silence and withhold narratives, because the interest felt in such things is "feeble" in most minds, and because the things themselves would be thought so "antecedently improbable." This is a complete condemnation of the Apostles in immediately announcing the Resurrection. They ought to have waited till mankind had become more spiritual. This is surely unwise counsel. If the interest felt is feeble, how is it to become stronger but by presenting to the public well sustained recitals? Is life best cherished in a vacuum?

The next requirement is that "all who enter on the inquiry should first have some practical knowledge of the occult forces in mesmerism, biology, clairvoyance," &c. But how are "the occult forces" to be arrived at but by practical instances? not surely to be guessed at on *a priori* grounds. Herbert Spencer rejects all Spiritualism, because on *a priori* grounds he judges the thing to be impossible.

Moreover Mr. Barkas requires a "moral, mental and spiritual adaptation" for such studies, in one word, *genius*—before we presume even to inquire. But here he confuses two different things. Mankind in general may accept and be elevated by a belief, though they cannot discuss it or enter into the depths of the argument—*e.g.*, a child or a peasant may believe in a God, though neither can fathom the depths of the theistic argument. Yet religion was meant for all, and so is Spiritualism, if it be true. They may be sure of the thing, though they are not sure of the argument. Music, again, was meant for all, for all have ears, and those ears have musical susceptibilities, and all may be more or less refreshed or exalted by hearing it, though a small section only of these can become skilful executants, and not one in a million of first-rate executants can become a great composer. But that act does not militate against the universal cultivation of music.

The last remark is that "even observers ought to be gradually led into the arcana," beginning with the elementary phenomena. On this I would remark that Spiritualism cannot be taught in the same way as mathematics or any material science, where you advance by steps from the simplest to the most complex propositions. It depends on the inscrutable motions of "spirits." They will not be commanded. You must get them when you can. An inquirer must avail himself of such opportunities as present themselves. He cannot choose what sances he will attend. He must go where he is allowed access. Thus, in the same page as the letter in question, Mr. Damiani gives an account of a most remarkable sance with Mr. Husk, on which occasion he "introduced a lady to her first sance in England." Would Mr. Barkas have had this lady refuse Mr. Damiani's introduction on the ground that she wished to begin with the raps? Or would he reprove Mr. Damiani for rushing off into print with an account of this most successful sance, and not rather counsel him to withhold it for a year or two until it had first "undergone the crucial investigation"?

G. D. HAUGHTON.

##### To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—You have chosen a title under which to place this correspondence which seems to me exactly to indicate what all old Spiritualists will desire to carry out.

Frequently when I have recorded for the public some interesting account of spiritual phenomena I have been inundated with letters from perfect strangers wishing to sit *en sance* with us and observe for themselves; and some of my intimate friends have thought it hard, when I have convinced them of these phenomena having actually occurred, that I cannot at once let them come in and be more convinced by sight.

As well often would it be to introduce a bull into a china-shop! only with less result. These higher phenomena are obtained under such delicate conditions that to bring any one, unaccustomed to sit for them, into a circle would be to prevent their occurrence. Absolute harmony is essential and a *prepared* mind.

My advice has always been to would-be inquirers—take in "LIGHT," join the Central Association of Spiritualists, so as to become familiar with what is going on; read up the literature connected with the subject of which even many well-read people know nothing. The ignorance of what is going on at the very

doors of inquirers is simply marvellous to a regular reader of "LIGHT."—Yours truly,

MORELL THEOBALD.

April 30th, 1883.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Barkas does not say in what sense he uses the word "phenomena," whether in its general sense as applying to all spiritual phenomena, or in its restricted one as applying to the material or objective only. In either case I hold an opposite view to his, and, as I take it, you desire an expression of opinion on Spiritualism in its entirety without reference to any particular phase.

We have heard of one who "came to scoff but remained to pray," but if the graduating system had been applied in that case, the scoffer would not have been admitted, consequently there would have been no pray-er.

Mr. Barkas will pardon me, but I venture to think his illustration is not a fortunate one when he says: "It is absolutely useless for persons without a moderate share of musical genius to study music, or persons without natural mechanical skill to study practical mechanics; both would prove failures; and so it is in reference to the investigation of spiritual phenomena; they are far beyond the capacity of a large proportion of people to appreciate or rationally to investigate." If none but those who have musical, mechanical, or other genius were to study anything, I am afraid some of us would cut a sorry figure and be denied many an hour's pleasure. People do not all desire to be Mozarts or Stephensons, yet it is quite allowable for them to acquire a little knowledge on these or any other subjects according to their aptitude, inclination, or leisure. Because I have not the capacity to become a great theologian that would scarcely be a reason why I should stay away from church.

Spiritualism is for the *many*, not the *few*: it came as "a little leaven to leaven the whole lump," and any attempt to restrict or stop the leavening must end in failure. Canute was the first who tried to stop the advancing tide, and Mrs. Malaprop, with her broom, was, I believe, the last, but neither succeeded.

The graduating idea does not apply to Spiritualism, but to Theosophism as represented by the Occultists and the Bounding Brothers of the Rocky Mountains, generally known as the Himalayan Brothers.

Curiously enough, on this very question of open or restricted investigation we have the experience of the Rev. C. Ware at Plymouth and latterly at Exeter, admirably stated by himself in your contemporary, the *Medium*. He says: "We do not claim that in these promiscuous gatherings we have the most favourable conditions for the development of mediumship—that is not the object we primarily have in view. Our public movement is a large open door, whereby all the people, irrespective of class or creed, shall obtain admission to the Temple of Truth. To those who cry out against promiscuous gatherings, I would say, that my idea of Spiritualism is not that half-a-dozen persons shall sit together, singing the same drowsy tunes every week, from January to December; but that it is a grand system of Spiritual education for all the people.

"The development of mediumship is not by any means the chief object of Spiritualism, much less is it the evolution of phenomena to be exhibited at so much per head. Nay, indeed. Its grand mission is the evolution of pure, noble, lovely souls; to make all the people spiritual; to develop the angel life—the Divine image—in every human being. Hence our idea of a 'circle' is, that it is a spiritual meeting, and, of course, the more people attending such meeting the better; the worst will get some good there; and, however large such a meeting, the true medium will occupy an impregnable position—like a lighthouse, to shed forth light and heavenly influence upon all.

"Spiritualism being for all, and being no respecter of persons, we understand the purpose of the spirit world to be to open a door for a universal admission of the people to a knowledge of the truth. The spirit world itself will regulate such admissions if we will let it work in its own way. We see these principles put into practical operation in a very striking manner in this city; we have had nothing to do from the beginning but to quietly remain at our post,—the authorities at headquarters have managed the work.

"The writer of this was first introduced to Spiritualism on April 18th, 1879; when, by means of a little table, in a company of Christian friends, conversation was held with intelligent beings unseen by mortal eye. The astounding fact then dis-

covered, viz., that there was connection and communication between this earth and the world of spirits, completely revolutionised my whole intellectual and spiritual experience. It was to me nothing less than a new birth, and from that time to this, though it has cost me more suffering and conflict than I care even to recall, my one ideal of Spiritualism has been, that it is 'a gospel for every creature.'

As to the *duty* of Spiritualists in making Spiritualism known to those who know nothing of it, each can do it in his own way according as he is a communicative person or one who picks and chooses his hearers; but one thing is clear, and that is that it is the duty of every Spiritualist to make Spiritualism known at least to somebody and give them a light from his lamp to light them on their way to Heaven.—S.

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

### METROPOLITAN SPIRITUAL LYCEUM,

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51 AND 53, MORTIMER STREET, REGENT STREET, LONDON.

Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Nottingham, was received at these rooms on Saturday evening last, with the cordiality and appreciation so justly due to his sincere and earnest character and powerful spiritual gifts.

He went straight to the heart of the audience by a preliminary recital of the pathetic story, in verse, of "Billy's Rose," the issue of which appropriately introduced his lecture "After Death—What?"

Death as a stage of life, as the point of separation of the spiritual personality from its erstwhile associated "chemical atoms," was described with that cheerful confidence which is the essential characteristic of the views of those who know the meaning of the "what" of the inquiry. A sustained existence which recognises no interruption, a direct sequence of cultivated or neglected opportunities so philosophically adapted to progress and that degree of happiness of which each is capable, that the mind is appeased, the sympathies enlarged, the affections satisfied—in a word, the whole nature healthfully stimulated to its best, that, briefly, is the meaning of the "what."

In the course of a vivid exhibition of these Divine truths the eloquent controls referred respectively to the efforts of those earnest souls who, as humanitarians, do so much to promote the well-being of the race, in spite of the inadequacy of their motive power, and the relative insufficiency of results which are limited to the seen possibilities, and deny the minor potentialities of being.

Less consideration was shewn for that ecclesiastic range of thought, so commonly regarded as scrupulously religious, which in fact, if not undeniably in terms, attaches less importance to morality of conduct than to belief; and the insecurity and danger of all who would pass forward to the misunderstood "what," in feeble reliance upon the merits of another, were effectually exposed.

Dead men *do* tell tales: they return to our midst, and the more they are sought, and intercourse with them is respectfully welcomed, the more accurate and valuable will be our conception of the form of life which is *their* present experience; and their testimony uniformly is that only by the straight gate of personal righteousness, with every faculty and function of our common human nature in diligent exercise, can we hope to realise promptly "after death," what are the conditions and the happy possibilities of continued life.

The subject selected for Sunday, the 20th inst., is "The Spirit Land." As we have been already informed by the controls of Mr. Morse how they propose to treat the facts, we can promise an absorbingly interesting evening. See advertisement.—S. B.

### NORTH SHIELDS.

During the visit of Mrs. Britten to the north she very kindly favoured the public at North Shields with two lectures on "The New Dispensation" and "The Spirit World, its Locality and Occupations." The Oddfellows' Hall, a place capable of holding about 600 persons, was crowded to excess.

### FERRY HILL.

The South Durham Spiritualists held their long-advertised gathering at the above place on Whit-Monday, and we are glad to say it was a successful one. A large number of Spiritualists and other friends gathered in a field about a mile from the village, and in the afternoon held a most successful open-air meeting, at which Mr. David Richmond, of Darlington, presided, and after relating some of his wonderful experiences in connection with the movement was followed by several short, but telling addresses by Messrs. Grey, Ouston, DeMain, Dunn, and Burton. After the meeting and sports were concluded the assembly retired to a school-house in the neighbourhood and partook of tea; after which some excellently-rendered songs and readings concluded the day's festivities.

NORTHUMBRIA.

### NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. TURSDEN, (Bedford.)—Will receive attention.

J. EARP.—You ask for the return of your letter but give no address.

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

(With which is Incorporated the British National Association of Spiritualists. Established 1873.)

33, GREAT RUSSELL ST., BLOOMSBURY, LONDON, W.C. (Entrance in WOBURN STREET.)

THIS ASSOCIATION was formed for the purpose of uniting Spiritualists of every variety of opinion in an organised body, with a view of promoting the investigation of the facts of Spiritualism, and of aiding students and inquirers in their researches by providing them with the best means of investigation.

The Association is governed by a President, Vice-Presidents, and a Council of thirty Members elected annually.

The Reference and Lending Libraries contain a large collection of the best works on Spiritualism and occult subjects. Spiritualist and other newspapers and periodicals from all parts of the world are regularly supplied for the Reading Room, to which Members have access daily.

The Secretary, or his representative, is in attendance to receive visitors, and answer enquiries; on Saturdays, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; on other days from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. On Sundays the Rooms are closed.

Spiritualists and others visiting the Metropolis are cordially invited to visit the Association and inspect the various objects of interest on view in the Reading Room and Library. Information is cheerfully afforded to enquirers on all questions affecting Spiritualism.

Members' Free, Seances are held on Wednesday evenings, at 8 o'clock prompt, subject to certain regulations, which can be ascertained on application.

Discussion Meetings are held fortnightly during the winter months. Admission free to Members and Subscribers, who can introduce one or more friends to each meeting. Programmes can be obtained on application during the winter season.

Socires, at which all friends are welcome, are held at intervals during the season. An admission fee is charged, including refreshments:

Per annum. £ s. d.

Table with 2 columns: Category (Country members, Town members, etc.) and Price (£ s. d.).

Light refreshments are provided at moderate charges. Prospectuses of the Association and forms of application for Membership can also be procured from the several allied Societies at home and abroad.

All communications and enquiries should be addressed to the Resident Secretary, Mr. THOS. BLYTON, 33, Great Russell-street, W.C., and Post Office Orders made payable to him at the Great Russell-street Post Office. Cheques to be crossed "London and General Bank Limited."

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