

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MERE 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.)"

It is not a little curious to note the various conceptions of a future state which have been formed by great writers in the past. Homer made the dwellers in Hades mere empty shades, without form, and to be revived to an evanescent vitality only by copious draughts of blood. Tiresias cannot prophesy till he has thus refreshed himself: and his mother cannot recognise him till she too has drunk of "the blood which is the life." To Homer the physical body was the real man: the rest was an empty shade, soon to vanish into nothingness: a sort of analogue to the shell on its way to extinction, which modern speculation has recently revived or evolved. If the body were ill-treated or dishonoured, as by lack of decent burial, the poor cold shade stood shivering until it could enlist the sympathy of some kind friend to perform the fitting obsequies. It was the body that was the great fact.

Turning to Virgil we find the same conception of the sanctity of the body, and of the injury done to the soul by any lack of reverence to it. They who remained unburied were left waiting a hundred years before Charon would ferry them over the infernal river. Infants who had been prematurely removed from the body, which had thus failed of its full development, passed their time in ceaseless wailing. They who have laid sacrilegious hands on the body, and have cut short its life by suicide, are kept in prison willing to endure anything if only they may atone for their sin. The same notion of the body as the real man is everywhere manifest. In Virgil's conception, too, the voices of the dead are thin and shadowy. When the hosts of Agamemnon saw Æneas they would fain have cried aloud, but could not. They had left all that was best of them on earth, when they quitted the body.

In Virgil's conception of the future state we meet with a very distinct idea of re-incarnation. When Æneas saw a great multitude of souls on the banks of a river "thick as the bees on a calm summer's day in a garden of lilies," he was told by the Sibyl that these were souls which had yet to live again in a mortal body. When the worthy had been sent on to Elysium and the plains of the blest, and had been wholly purified, then they drank of the river of Oblivion and returned to the upper world. So it is not the soul that has failed to reap the benefit of its incarnation that returns to the school in which it has once failed. It is the

soul that has garnered up its full experience and has been purified and perfected thereby that returns with larger knowledge to add to its experience in another phase of being. As for the unfortunate failure it appears to be consigned to a very gruesome pit, where it suffers such tortures as adorn the mediæval conception of a material hell of fire and brimstone.

Scipio's dream (*Cicero de Republicâ*, Book 6) gives a not very dissimilar conception; but we have got rid of the idea that the body is all important. "Do not consider *yourself* but your *body* to be mortal. You are not the being which this corporal figure evinces, but *the mind of every man is the man*, and not the form which may be delineated." In the midst of such sentiments, which shew how grandly the early conception has developed in the direction of spirituality, we have a statement of the inherent divinity of man. "It is divinity that has consciousness, sensation, memory, and foresight: that governs, regulates, and moves that body over which it has been appointed, just as the Supreme Deity rules this world: and in like manner as an Eternal God guides the world, which, in some respects, is perishable, so an eternal spirit animates your frail body." From this the transition is easy to a homily on the reaction of daily pursuits on the soul, and the desirability of cultivating the noblest and purest habits, since "the soul that is stirred and agitated by these will fly the more quickly to this mansion, even to its home; and *this will be the more rapid, if even now, while it is imprisoned within the body, it sallies abroad, and contemplating the objects beyond, abstracts itself as much as possible from the body.*" And then the guide proceeds to say that they who have devoted themselves to corporeal pleasures and have yielded themselves to their baser passions, "when they escape from their bodies *hover round the earth, nor do they return to this place till they have been tossed about many ages.*"

From the same source we get a mystical description of the circles and spheres of earth below the moon, which carries off the mind to Koot Hoomi and his endless gyrations through a course of planets. All things, we are informed, are connected by nine spheres (now there are seven), of which the outermost is Heaven, the dwelling-place of God, the home of "the original principles of those endless revolutions which the planets perform," whatever may be imported by that mystical utterance. Saturn fills one sphere, Jupiter the next, and then Mars. In the middle comes the Sun, "the soul and guide of this world." After him comes Venus, then Mercury, and last of all comes the Moon, in this cosmical scheme as in the later one of Koot Hoomi, the dust-bin of the universe, the home of death and desolation. So there is nothing quite new even in cosmical speculation.*

The account of pearls given through Mrs. A. recalls to my memory a very striking instance of the same phenomenon. I had met that most excellent medium at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, and we were sitting round the table. The light was full, and perfectly sufficient for the most exact observation. I had previously heard of the materialisation of little pearls through Mrs. A.'s medium-

* I am indebted for much that I have here very inadequately noticed to a curious paper in the *Westminster Review* on "Classic Conceptions of Heaven and Hell."

ship, and was both pleased and excited when I suddenly saw two tiny seed-pearls on the table in front of me. With a rapid exclamation I put out my hand and touched them. They melted beneath my finger, and I was told that I had touched them before they were fully materialised. It was promised, at my earnest request, that I should have my pearls if I would keep still. I got them, and I have them still: two little pearls, unpierced, and in no way distinguishable from the little seed-pearls that are of natural growth. Indeed, if I had not touched and destroyed two in my haste, I should have taken them to be *apports*, and not, as they presumably were, *creations*. It is a common thing for small objects, such as little gems, to be brought in and placed on the table, but it is very rare that an observer can positively say in any given case that such objects are materialised, to use a clumsy expression. They may be, and to all appearance generally are, natural objects, which the invisible operators assert that they invest with a certain magnetic aura for definite purposes of their own. This is not unintelligible when we reflect that a sensitive can distinguish mesmerised objects with certainty, and that curative properties can assuredly be imparted to material objects by the passes of the mesmeriser. Whether by the potency of faith, or by what occult means, I know not, but I have seen many cases of the cure of pain by such means, and not merely of nervous pain, but of actual injury which under normal medical treatment would have needed some considerable time to relieve.

M.A. (Oxon.)

PLANCHETTE WRITING.

The only explanation (such as it is) of Planchette writing that I have ever heard, where the good faith of the operators is beyond question, is that it is unconsciously written by one of the operators under the influence of impressions once made on his brain, but possibly quite forgotten. I had lately a striking proof of the inappropriateness of such an explanation.

About the end of September I was staying in a much haunted house, where Mrs. T., the mistress of the house, and her sister frequently write Planchette. They are both highly mediumistic, and sometimes the control of one sister takes direction of the writing, and sometimes of the other. They sit opposite to each other, with one hand at least of each upon the board, so that the writing is upside down to the one and upright to the other, and it is always to the one whose control is operating at the moment, that the writing is upside down. They write with quite as great rapidity as a practised penman, and the board looks like an animated being under their obviously impassive hands.

We had had some Planchette writing on the Sunday afternoon, after which Mrs. T. had put the unused paper back in a cupboard which she kept locked. On Monday after breakfast it was proposed to have some more writing, and Mrs. T. went to her locked cupboard in the dining-room for a supply of paper, when she was surprised to see a reddish-brown smear upon the paper about two inches long, which she felt sure was not there when she put the paper in the cupboard the evening before, nor when she had been to the cupboard once before early in the morning. She brought the paper in to us in the drawing-room, when I observed that the stain was still wet and smeary, and as our thoughts were very full of the ghosts and their doings, and drops of blood had once been found mysteriously spattered all over a writing-table, the thought of ghostly bloodstains at once occurred to us all; but as we were just going to sit down to Planchette, we should probably get positive information from thence. The two sisters sat down, and Mrs. T.'s control at once signed his name, and then proceeded to write "Bloodstains!"

followed by a large mark of admiration. "Can you tell us about this?" we asked. Three taps. "Well, C. J. (Mrs. T.), you opened that cupboard this morning, what for?" Mrs. T.: "To get some medicine I wanted from the bottle." Planchette: "Fetch the bottle and put it on the table; don't examine it." Mrs. T. did so. Planchette: "I sincerely wish I could tell you something grisly, but put the bottle on the paper." This was done, and the mystery was solved. The bottle left a smaller stain on the paper similar to that which had been first observed, obviously arising from some of the medicine (Gregory's mixture) trickling down when the bottle had been opened in the morning. Mrs. T. assured us that she had never thought of the bottle, and it is evident that if a suspicion of such a source of the stain had occurred to her, she would at once have examined the bottle.

A few weeks previous (July 15th) when Mrs. T. and her husband were writing Planchette, the writing intelligence gave them notice of what was taking place in a different part of the house unknown to either of them. About 8.30 Mrs. T. was alone with Jumper (the dog) in the kitchen, and nobody in the house but herself and her husband. She was standing before the fire when she heard a very long wailing cry like a woman's voice, coming from the larder or thereabouts. She had time to hear it, get frightened, and still hear it, before it stopped, for it was very long. The dog pricked up his ears, listened, put his tail between his legs, and rushed into his box, where he lay shivering. Mrs. T. went into the larder and all about, but there was no one either there or outside. She felt very much frightened and turned quite cold. She locked up all the doors, and went into the dining-room to tell her husband, and after searching all over the house they sat down to write Planchette. While writing they heard two low cries in the room, and a great deal of movement like the rustling of a dress in the corner. Planchette admitted that the noise was spiritual and bad, though it would not say by whom made. It suddenly told them to go and fetch Jumper, who had been left in the kitchen. They went, and found the poor dog crouching in the wicker chair, not daring to move, even when called, and shaking all over as if in dreadful terror. Planchette told them that if they had left him alone he would have died of fright or had a fit.

H. WEDGWOOD.

THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS. New Arrangements.

We are requested to draw attention to the fact that the rooms of this Association at 38, Great Russell-street, W.C., are now open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., during which time visitors can use the reading room, exchange books from the library, &c. In addition to this the rooms will be open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening from 7 to 9 p.m., when either the Hon. Sec. or some member of the Council will be in attendance to receive visitors, friends or inquirers, and to transact generally the business of the Association. If it is found that the opening of the rooms in the evening meets a felt want, opportunity will be taken to extend the facility. In the meantime our readers will help the C.A.S. if they will inform inquirers and others that the Council will be happy to see any such, and will be the better pleased the more the rooms are used.

* * * "Quench not out
The holy fires within you, though temptation
Shower down upon you; clasp thy armour on,
Fight well and thou shalt see after these wars,
Thy head wear sunbeams, and thy feet touch stars."

"Who lives in love doth live in part with Heaven;
'Twixt here and there, the golden link that's given,
To mortal eye, of that stupendous chain
Which doth the living universe maintain."

P. J. BAILEY.

Nothing is more difficult to conquer than the obstinate national prejudices of a high culture, which still retains a vitality, in the shape of civilisation, in the outward sense of the word.—*Bunsen*.

THREE CASES OF SPONTANEOUS CLAIRVOYANCE,

TOGETHER WITH

PROLONGED ABSTINENCE FROM SOLID FOOD.

"A Service of Suffering, or leaves from the Biography of Mrs. Croad, formerly of Reading and Swindon, now residing at Redland, Bristol. With extracts from her writings." Also, "Poems by the late Miss F. R. Havergal and other friends who have witnessed some of the incidents in her unparalleled history." Compiled by J. G. Westlake. Second edition. "Truth is Stranger than Fiction."

London: W. Mack, 4, Paternoster-square, and 38, Park-street, Bristol.*

In the preface to the second edition of this unpretending and curious little book, its author tells us that within four months an edition of 3,000 copies was sold. We presume, from the tone in which the narrative is presented to the public, that these 3,000 copies will have found readers among the orthodox religions. Its subject-matter is, also, such as to make it well worth the consideration of another, though by no means so widely spread a body—namely, the body of students of Psychology.

Mr. Westlake, the compiler, regards the history of this suffering lady as "unparalleled." To this broad assertion the readers of "LIGHT" will demur, however remarkable and interesting the experiences of Mrs. Croad may appear. The interest to them will mainly consist in discovering for this lady her proper niche in the edifice, so to speak, which the labourers in the science of mind are busied in erecting.

The case of a lady, a patient of the celebrated Sir Hans Sloane may be, with profit, glanced at before we consider in greater detail the case of Mrs. Croad. The writer in the "Yorkshire Spiritual Tracts" (p. 89, article, "The Inner Light,") who there gives a condensed amount of the phenomena manifested above a hundred years ago, in the patient of Sir Hans Sloane, says: "To describe fully and circumstantially the sufferings of the lady would be too tedious; suffice it that I acquaint the reader that she was recovering from the small-pox, when one day her friends found her quite dumb and stone blind. In that state she lingered three-quarters of a year, being, for the same period, denied daily food, save in the form of liquid or essence, for no solids could be made to pass down the throat. Sir Hans Sloane, and all the skill that the faculty could bring to bear, seemed to stand on the dark side of so mysterious a case. Their efforts were in vain to give her relief, but what was their amazement to see her sit down and write in the most orderly, polished style of penmanship, the subject-matter of which we are not favoured with; probably inspirations. But one thing we are assured of, that if in her composition a word was omitted, she carefully corrected it and placed a caret under the exact place of said omission. Think of this, reader, she was stone-blind! A pincushion of most exquisite workmanship was also, together with other beautiful and curious needlework, performed by her during that three-quarters of a year of suffering! A clergyman, drawn with others to visit her, seeing her writing, placed his hat over the candle, but she continued to write, and at length lifting her hand knocked away the sceptic's hat. Before her affliction her highly sensitive nature caused her to shudder at thunder and lightning; but now she would sit close to the window during a storm, as if, with her sightless eyes, she delighted to gaze upon the elemental war. (It is needless to say that she was not a mesmeric patient; for Franz Anton Mesmer was then in his infancy; he was born in 1743.) I may add that we hear of the poor deaf and blind lady always taking the hand of those present to ascertain whether or not they were strangers to her. The

hand seemed to be her only earthly communicative link with those around her. It was by a system of *hand-talking* also, that she caused them to know her voiceless words from the time when she became dumb to the day of her death.

"It was truly astonishing, one would think, to the savans of that day, who had *entré* through Sir Hans Sloane, to behold the 'clear-seer'—for such she must have been—point out the colours in an apron worn by a lady who was present, telling her it was embroidered with blue, green, red and pink. She could tell which was pink, although so near one of the other colours, viz., red. She had a great dislike to have strangers brought into her presence. One day her sister invited her out of the room, which she usually sat in, into the parlour. At first she assented, but finding that strangers were there anxious to see so strange a case, she was indignant, and made signs that her sister wished to deceive her: 'There were strangers present,' she said; and nothing could induce her to go in. Thus they were convinced that she possessed a sight and knowledge beyond their finding out; and they increased in brilliancy of perception as she drew near to her end. In short, she appears to have become less and less of material clay, and more of pure spirit." (Unfortunately this writer does not furnish further detail of the phenomena manifested, nor yet give reference as to where this interesting account may be met with in the original.) Similar instances of clairvoyant condition spontaneously developing are not, however, so rare as might be at first supposed.

Elizabeth Squirrell.

Amongst the remarkable cases on record of spontaneous clairvoyance produced by disease, perhaps the most interesting in England, may assuredly be said to be that of Elizabeth Squirrell, of Shottesham. Her autobiography,* with selections from her writings, was, in 1853, published in London, by Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall and Co. This narrative has been quoted by various writers in the *Spiritual Magazine*, and Howitt, in *History of the Supernatural*, Vol. II., pp. 227 to 231, gives a short sketch of her extraordinary history. He says:—

"Amongst the most remarkable spirit mediums of modern times is Elizabeth Squirrell, whose revelations took place before Spiritualism, in its present advent in England, had taken place. Elizabeth Squirrell may be said to be the seeress of Shottisham, as Mrs. Hauffe was the seeress of Prevorst. There is a striking similarity in these cases. Both had their bodily frames so weakened by disease, and their nervous systems so excited, that the spiritual life within predominated over the bodily life without; the communion with the spiritual world was opened up, and they became not only clairvoyant of what was around them, but prophetic of what was approaching. Both were malign and charged with imposture; and both found some candid people who were ready to examine thoroughly into the case, and thus became witnesses to the honesty of the accused, and to the extraordinary nature of their visitations.

Elizabeth Squirrell was born at Shottesham, in Norfolk, (five miles from Woodbridge, and thirteen from Ipswich), in 1838. Her father appears to have been in trade there, and was the son of the Baptist minister of Sutton, a neighbouring village. At three years of age she fell into a severe illness, which probably laid the foundation of her future malady, though she recovered her health and for several years used to walk three miles daily to school and back, six miles altogether. It appears to have been in her twelfth year that she was suddenly attacked with illness at school, and

* Since this paper was written there has appeared in "LIGHT," for September 15th, 1883, a short notice of Mrs. Croad, headed *A Curious Case of Sensitiveness*, which shows that she is still alive and an out-patient of the British Home for Incurables at Clapham.

* "The Autobiography of Elizabeth Squirrell, of Shottesham, and a selection from her writings; together with an examination and defence of her statements relative to her sufferings, blindness, deafness, entire abstinence from food and drink during twenty-five weeks, and other extraordinary phenomena; also facts and opinions illustrative and suggestive by one of her watchers." London Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1853.

these attacks grew more and more complicated for years. At first she experienced a weakness in the back, a severe pain and pressure on the head, then violent epileptic fits, spasmodic contractions, paralysis of the limbs, and eventually loss of power to swallow, lock-jaw, which continued twenty-one weeks, and finally she lost sight and hearing. Her sense of smell disappeared in the nose, but she could inhale odours through the mouth. *All her senses except feeling were shut up.* Doctor after doctor was called in, who attributed her complaint to as many causes as there were doctors. * * * It was soon noised abroad that this poor girl, when about fourteen or fifteen, had lost all power to swallow, and had lived without taking any nourishment whatever for twenty-five weeks. The thing was denied (as impossible) though there are numerous cases of the kind on record.* There was a great rush of people to see the case, and a loud outcry of imposture succeeded. Both she and her parents were accused of being in complicity to deceive, for the purpose of obtaining money. Three separate committees were appointed of watchers. The second, on which there were several clergymen, imagined that they had discovered fraud, and broke up, quarrelling among themselves, and setting abroad the most damaging reports. A third and still more vigorous watch of twelve persons was appointed, who reported, everyone signing his or her own statement; all most unequivocally asserting that no food could possibly have been taken during fourteen days' watch, night and day, the parents being excluded from the room. All declared their conviction that both parents and child were honest, conscientious people, and that Elizabeth herself was not only innocent of all deceit, but was a very sincerely religious and highly-gifted girl. Various medical men of more liberal character visited her, and, after careful examination and inquiry, confirmed this opinion. Amongst these, Dr. Johnson, of Umberslade, published a very interesting visit to her. Dr. Garth Wilkinson and Dr. Spencer T. Hall, both gentlemen well acquainted with such cases, gave decided opinions on the truth of her extraordinary condition. Some clergymen were equally fair, and amongst them the Rev. W. A. Norton, of Alderton. But this did not prevent the Baptist Society at Stoke-Green, Ipswich, expelling both parents and daughter, because they asserted that Elizabeth had for more than a quarter of a year lived without taking sustenance; and still worse, because she asserted that she had seen angels and departed spirits.

"In fact, the poor girl had become a thoroughly clairvoyant subject. She saw spirits about her, amongst them her guardian angel; and in her mesmeric sleep *she saw her own internal condition, the seat and nature of her complaints, and could distinctly, in these sleeps, foretell the approach of great illness, or of alleviation, when she should be able to swallow again, and when a return of her inability to swallow would occur.* In her waking condition she knew nothing whatever of what she had seen or said in her mesmeric sleep; and her attendants, wisely, did not communicate this to her, so that they could judge of her truthfulness and consistency. In her mesmeric sleeping, she spoke of her waking condition as of another person, as if two spirits occupied one body, one sleeping as the other awoke, and *vice versa.* She always called her waking condition 'My waking,' and said 'My waking is very ill—very ill indeed'; or 'My waking will suffer so and so'; but always added, 'It does not know this, and don't you tell it for it would distress it.' The attendants always found her prognostics occur to the letter, and exactly as to time. * * * An eminent London surgeon, who went down to see her, says with much truth: 'I am quite of opinion that Elizabeth Squirrell possesses extraordinary genius for her years, and that all she says teems with so much good sense, good taste,

and genuine piety, that all she utters deserves to be preserved. Her powers of sight and hearing being obliterated, of course she is desirous to hold communion with herself; this constitutes a new existence.' He adds, 'It is most shameful that people should prejudice this case. I confess that I went down with one impression and returned with another.' But all were not so self-reliant, or so charitable as this liberal medical man. The parents of Elizabeth were ruined in their trade, and compelled, from the persecuting spirit of those about them, to remove to Ipswich to endeavour to get a livelihood. Elizabeth has since been in London, supporting herself as a needlewoman. On inquiry after her I understood that she was again gone down into the country. With only a simple village education, she writes with a spirit and vigour, a sound sense, that few persons possess at any time of life. Like the Seeress of Prevorst, she wrote a good deal of poetry, and in a very sweet and genuine vein."

(To be continued.)

ON OBSESSION AND ITS ACTION ON HUMAN BEINGS.

M. Hippolyte, the well-known healing medium of Paris, has communicated to the *Revue Spirite* the following observations, made during the exercise of his gift as a healer:—

"Obsession is defined as the persistent action of disorderly spirits upon individuals, offering characteristics varying from merely moral influence to profound disturbance of the organic and mental faculties. Such action is recognisable, in mania, epilepsy, and hysteria, in cases where, after a crisis, the patient exhibits a state in which there is an effacement of his selfhood and presentation of a new character; a state controllable by the magnetic action of beneficent spirits, co-operating with that of a healing medium upon the patient's organism, and with his moral force upon the obsessing spirit.

"In some cases the obsessing spirit recognises the action of the healing medium, and his ability to help him out of his disordered state. Then, in proportion to the increase of magnetic or nervous health and of mental light in the patient, the obsessing spirit's action weakens, finally to end with spiritual progress on all sides. The following cases are illustrative:—

"Albert P., aged seven, was brought by his mother and another relative from the country. He had had epileptic fits since he was three months old. I witnessed one; in it were exerted the strength and activity of a man in frenzied anger. When the crisis had passed, his tongue was paralysed. On inquiry into family history, I learned that Madame P. had an elder son sound in health, who was the darling of his grandparents, while her maternal affection was fixed upon this one; that she and her father-in-law, in whose house she lived, had had a violent quarrel about the distribution of his property between his grandchildren; that he died before the heat of the quarrel subsided. Albert was then but a few weeks old. The mother had continued with her mother-in-law the strife about the property. The child's epilepsy developed itself when he was twelve weeks old, and fits recurred irregularly.

"I pointed out to Madame P. the wrong of having quarrelled with close relations, especially as she and her children seemed dependent upon them. I urged the rectification of this wrong, that this was important for the child's recovery. I magnetised him daily for a week, and reiterating my exhortations, sent them back to the country.

"It must take some time for nervous equilibrium to become re-established, but I had the satisfaction to receive, a few weeks after their return, the news that Albert was well in general health, that he retained the calmness which the magnetisation had induced, and that harmony now existed in the family.

* An invaluable record of cases of long abstinence from food was published in pamphlet form some years ago by Mr. William M. Wilkinson, with reference to the extraordinary and pitiful history of "The Welsh Fasting Girl."

"In cases of obsession, it must be remembered that the patient is not alone to be considered. There is the obsessing spirit, who may, instead of accepting light and direction, be exasperated, and instigate the patient to resist the medium's influence and counsels; and thus prayerful effort to re-instate him may be rendered unavailing.

"The struggle of a disorderly spirit to hold on to a victim, for the sake of satisfying perverted appetites, is sometimes felt by those who, if sensitive, are ministering to the patient.

"Two young work-women were brought to me; they had been under hospital treatment eighteen months; one for epilepsy, the other for hysterical fits and nervous lameness. The victim of epilepsy had an unsympathetic, wandering look. I ascertained that she frequented certain objectionable society. I urged that if she wished to be cured she must renounce such society. She promised. The effect of the first few magnetisations was such that I augured the best results. But then we lost ground. She had lapsed into her old habits. I felt that my means of action were nullified. She is now an inmate of a public asylum for epileptics.

"Between this and the other, there was a great difference; the countenance of the latter was engaging and quiet except when she felt the premonition of a fit, the invasion of which she could not resist by the most strenuous effort of her will. She was free from low tendencies. She comprehended and seconded the counsels I gave her. How radiant her countenance became, when, by the power acting through the healing medium, the spirit who had obsessed her withdrew, leaving to her the feeling of restored interior freedom! Some attempts were made by the spirit to return, but to her continued joy, his *rapport* could not be renewed. Health speedily came back to her. She has developed into a medium for clairvoyant examinations.

"Many have become convinced of the unseen presence of spirits, by communications received through mediums, and they have desired to become mediums themselves. For some of these it would have been better if they had confined themselves to the study of serious communications through serious mediums. All new converts should be instructed, if they are mediumistic, to prepare themselves seriously for the exercise of the gift of mediumship; they should not be left to learn by experience that there are spirits ever seeking for opportunities to act in a disorderly way upon those who are still in earthly bodies. Circles or séances under unwise direction, where mental and moral harmony are absent, offer the conditions for such spirits exercising their influence, an influence difficult for sensitives to throw off. The unintelligent and doubtful results of such ill-regulated séances should warn sitters. *Rapport* with a spirit should not be lightly welcomed. A circle, like an individual, should keep under the shield of prayer. If we have at heart the injunction, 'Pray without ceasing!' and act in accord with it, we place ourselves under the guardianship of spirits higher than ourselves. I have had much correspondence on this subject, shewing that where spirit communication has been sought without such interior sanction, sensitive individuals have fallen under a psychic or magnetic influence, which has resulted, if not in obsessions, in nervous disorders of various degrees, exhibiting themselves in impairment of moral, mental, or organic health."

WHAT HAS SPIRITUALISM DONE?—It has experimentally demonstrated that spirits are a reality; that there is another life for the human soul; that a man makes his character by his acts; that his happiness depends upon his character; that it is easier to reform here than there; that the status of his enjoyment is equal to the sum total of his life-work, and that a pure life is the guarantee of the divinest happiness.—J.H.H.

The supernatural is nothing else than the sovereign intervention of Divine Liberty in history.—Ernest de Bunsen.

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 Glasgow Trance-Painting Medium.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have read with interest the account of the presentation of a testimonial to Mr. D. Duguid published in your columns. I am however sorry the amount subscribed is not more in accordance with the services rendered to the cause.

I can speak from personal experience and testify to the fact that Mr. Duguid gave his noble talents gratis, which, I consider, have been of immense service to the cause of Spiritualism. It is never too late to perform a duty and good action, or to rectify an omission—more properly speaking a neglect,—therefore I have much pleasure in enclosing a guinea, which I hope may be added to by other friends to swell the amount to a sum more in proportion to the service rendered.—Yours truly,

A JERSEY CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST.

Jersey, October 1st, 1883.

More Perplexed Still.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am still perplexed. "A Catholic Priest" is "not of the Roman fold alone." But if he be, as his words imply, of the Roman fold at all he can be of none other; and if he be of the Greek communion—which is the only other Church recognised in his last letter as Catholic—he cannot be of the Roman too. Whether Greek, or Roman, or neither, the title he uses to pass off the strange farrago of theology which he has treated us to is a misnomer. Such heresy would be tolerated in no Church, Catholic or otherwise.

My perplexity is increased by the letter of Mr. Atkinson's which immediately follows that of the *soi-disant* "Catholic Priest." What, in the name of common sense, is the meaning of this bewildering sentence? "May I say a word on the great mistake on the attempt to fathom the nature of 'the great First Cause least understood,' itself without a cause—what must to us be occult and unintelligible, the incomprehensible of the Christian, the noumenon of Kant, 'the unknowable absolute' of Herbert Spencer, the unfathomable of all—so that all speculation in respect to it must be mere fancy and untrue in a misuse of the human understanding resting on particulars observed in daylight experience—a mind in nature, or a being outside nature."

That is, indeed, "saying a word," but is any human being a whit the wiser for it?

I am still more perplexed, if possible, by Mr. Sinnett's reply to Mr. Kiddle. That latter gentleman places side by side two passages from which it appears that Mr. Sinnett's invisible instructor has committed a very manifest act of plagiarism. Not only this but he has omitted inconvenient words, and has so distorted the ideas he has borrowed as to divert them from their original intention to suit his own very different purpose. Mr. Sinnett, like the rest of us, knows nothing of his instructor beyond his instructions. Yet he regards what I suppose everybody else will consider a very grave charge, one which, unless disproved, strikes at the very root of the pretensions of the adepts, as "trivial," "rather out of date now," and "merely ridiculous." That does indeed perplex and surprise me.

A PERPLEXED READER.

A PRINTER'S BLUNDER.—There are many stories regarding printers' blunders, but one of the most remarkable is doubtless that of "Men of the Time," edition 1856, in which the then Bishop of Oxford is thus described:—"Oxford, Bishop of (Rt. Rev. Samuel.) A more kind-hearted and truly benevolent man does not exist. A sceptic as regards religious revelations (*sic*), he is yet an out-and-out believer in spirit manifestations." The error is easily explained; the lines had been "dropped," as the printers term it, from "Owen (Robert), of Lanark," on to the broad shoulders of Dr. Wilberforce, who heartily enjoyed the obvious blunder, and it is said he took some trouble to procure a copy of the soon-suppressed issue for his private library.—*Cassell's Saturday Journal*.

WILLIAM BLAKE A SPIRITUALIST.—In one of his letters to a friend, William Blake, the painter, wrote: "I am not ashamed, afraid or averse to tell you, what ought to be told, that I am under the direction of messengers from Heaven daily and nightly. But the nature of such things is not, as some suppose, without trouble or care; temptations are on the right hand and on the left."

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TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

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Light :

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13TH, 1883.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor of "LIGHT" will esteem it a favour if readers and subscribers will make a point of introducing this journal to the notice of those who are interested in the subjects discussed herein from week to week.

MESMERISM BY E. GURNEY AND FRED. W. H. MYERS.

(IN THE *Nineteenth Century* FOR OCTOBER, 1883.)

Few of our readers will need any assurance on our part that the gentlemen whose names appear at the head of this column, are doing good work for the advancement of psychological science, not only in their capacity as joint authors of this and other papers, on psychical research, in the principal quarterlies of the day, but also as individual members of the "S.P.R." It would be almost impossible to over-estimate the value of the records which have already appeared, and the present paper is no unworthy addition to a very valuable series.

This, the first article on the specific subject mentioned in the title, deals mainly with the fundamental question as to the reality of the mesmeric force; in other words, of the reality of the specific facts of mesmerism, whether mingled with, or standing beyond and distinct from, those of Hypnotism. In a concluding article they hope to deal with some further departments of the subject, including what they designate as "the vexed questions" of clairvoyance, phreno-mesmerism and mesmeric healing.

The authors of the paper before us proceed very cautiously. This is well. One of the first axioms of successful scientific study has been *festina lente*, and Messrs. Gurney and Myers act wisely in making very sure of the ground beneath their feet, even at the risk of being considered somewhat hypercritical. There is very evident trace of the extreme care taken by them to verify their facts and in our opinion their report in no way loses in value thereby.

They start by pointing out that as regards mesmerism two very common and not altogether unnatural objections to subjects *sui generis*, cannot fairly apply. So far from being liable to the damning description of superstition, the facts are wholly independent of any occult philosophy, and claim to be practically as much a modern discovery as the antiseptic

treatment of wounds. And in the second place they are definite and reproducible, being neither elusive nor obscure.

Bearing this in mind, the wonder is to account for the small measure of attention which has been accorded to phenomena so eminently impressive, and which have more than once been so impressively put before the world. They say:—

"No other subject, assuredly, which has drawn forth such a report as that of the French Academy of Medicine in 1831, has been subsequently allowed to fall into utter neglect. The territory at which science used to cast fascinated if somewhat dubious glances has simply ceased to attract the explorer's eye; and meeting after meeting of the British Association passes without so much as a mention of its name. Even opposition has languished; or, rather, it now takes the form not of attacking the offending doctrines, but of shutting the door on them. For while it is true that, under the name of Hypnotism, the subject has after a long interval reappeared on the scientific horizon, and many of the phenomena commonly called 'mesmeric' have lately received a good deal of valuable attention, the theories which would confine the field of Mesmerism to these phenomena are based on observation so limited that the slightest general scientific interest would have sufficed to shew its inadequacy."

Passing briefly in review the more obvious phenomena as presented in public mesmeric entertainments and which need no detailed description here, as most of our readers will probably be well acquainted with their general features, Messrs. Gurney and Myers consider that as phenomena apart from theory they cannot be denied—the hypothesis of collusion, which naturally first suggests itself, being rapidly negated by the indiscriminate acceptance of any volunteer who presents himself as a subject. They continue:—

"Clearly, then, if the facts do not excite the attention of experts, it must be that they are supposed to have been already explained and done with. And, in truth, a theory has been propounded, the apparent sufficiency of which has been a very main factor in that lulling of scientific curiosity on the subject to which we have adverted—a theory the more harmful to the extension of knowledge in that it contains a large amount of truth, and with a little straining will cover, for example, nearly all the phenomena above described. The theory may be most comprehensively designated as that of *suggestion*. It entirely negatives the idea of any direct effect of the organism or will of the operator on the organism or will of the 'subject,' and it attributes the effects produced to a suspension of volitional or directive power in the 'subject,' and the entire engrossment of his faculties by any idea which is presented to him *ab extra*. As so far described, however, the theory is clearly not in any way an *explanation*, but a simple statement of the condition in which the 'subject' obviously is: the question is, how, if the operator produces no specific effect on him, is he brought into that condition?

"For the present we must be content to give in a rather summary fashion some of the conclusions which we are quite prepared to defend in detail. We may briefly say, therefore, that the question, How does suggestion operate? has both a mental and a physical side, and has received replies from both points of view."

First, Dr. Carpenter is tackled upon his "automatic mental action" theory, which is shewn to fail in covering the whole ground, while on the other hand the physical side as approached by Braid and Heidenhain appears to demonstrate "that the peculiar state of exaltation, merging into coma, which mesmerists had ascribed to the operation of their specific effluence, could be induced by a particular strain of the muscles of the eye, a prolonged upward and inward squint, which the subject could effect for himself without any one to mesmerise him. And it has been gradually discovered that this 'hypnotic' state, as Braid termed it, may be induced by other methods of 'fixation,' other ways of adjusting the nervous system to a uniform or rhythmically recurring stimulus. Light monotonous stroking on the face, the tick of a watch in the ear—even such small causes as these, if the attention be steadily fixed on them, may suffice to bring about, in sensitive persons, this peculiar nervous change."

This they hold to be a true discovery. But it does not cover all the ground, and in reply to the query why they insist on the existence of *mesmerism* as well as hypnotism—i.e., on the reality of this supposed specific influence of one person upon another, which lies so far out of the main track of physiological speculation, their answer is, that the reality of this specific influence is forced upon us by a number of unmistakable facts, which cannot fail to strike every experimenter if he will only make experiments *enough*.

It is contended that the objection to the sufficiency of the hypnotic explanation, from the fact that some persons can operate successfully, and others cannot, has never been realised or met.

They emphasise their position as follows :—

“There are all varieties both of power and of susceptibility, but if we take a casual group of persons, omitting those who are in no degree susceptible, we shall probably find that they may be arranged somewhat in the following order. A and B can hypnotise *themselves*, either by the inward or upward squint, or, as it may sometimes seem, by mere imagination and expectancy. C and D cannot hypnotise themselves, but can be hypnotised by gentle rhythmical stroking at the hand of almost anyone. E and F can be slowly and partially affected by almost anyone, but immediately and thoroughly by a given mesmerist, X. And the rest of the letters of the alphabet can be sent into the sleep-waking state by X, and by X alone, even though they may have no previous notion that X can affect them—nay, even though they are distinctly told that it is not X but Y who will be able to control them. In such a case—as we have ourselves seen—Y may be as Goliath and X as David in comparison, but the big man will not succeed in doing in an hour what the small man who has the specific gift will do in five minutes.

“Secondly : just as X alone can send these persons into the trance, so X alone can awake them out of it. It is very easy to take care that the subject shall have no previous notion that X alone will be able to wake him ; and, as a matter of fact, the most striking illustrations of this thesis are cases where every one present, mesmerist included, is new to mesmerism, and believes that anyone who chooses can wake any subject up again. The typical case is somewhat as follows. A group of persons at an evening party begin to mesmerise each other in joke. One of the guests sends a schoolboy to sleep, and drives off, thinking nothing more about it. At the end of the evening the boy's parents try to wake him up. They cannot do so ! The boy begins to rave, and is worse when touched or spoken to. Next morning they send in alarm for the guest who has done the mischief. He succeeds in waking the boy, but the experiment is followed by a week of headache and depression.”

The reality of the mesmeric effluence is, they contend, further shown by the distress and even danger which sometimes follow on cross mesmerisation—on passes, that is to say, made by Z upon a person whom X has already mesmerised, and over whom X may make passes as often as he likes with only a soothing result. Now in such a case Z's passes may very probably have no effect whatever ; but in a specially sensitive “subject” they sometimes bring about a state of mental chaos, of alternating violence and bewilderment, which, though it almost always subsides after a time, is a real risk against which experimenters in mesmerism must before all things be on their guard.

The result of their private experiments are then given. With these our readers are already familiar, and at this point we may well close the first part of our running summary of a very valuable paper. We shall conclude it next week, and in the meantime would recommend all who conveniently can do so, to obtain the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*, and read the article *in extenso*.

THE PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM.—The cause of Spiritualism continues to make rapid progress both in our own country and in all others. It is fast becoming the cause of the nations of the earth. It is all the more vigorous and expansive because it has kept outside of the compressing limitations of institutions, and has gone wherever human hearts were ready to welcome its approach. It offers demonstration, while it inspires a new and profounder faith.—*Banner of Light*.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE IN ZANTE.

By CAPTAIN E. J. S. RAE.

From the “*Theosophist*,” for September.

During the winter of 1857, I was stationed in command of the left wing of my regiment, the 91st Highlanders, in the Island of Zante (one of the Ionian Islands). The house allotted to me in my capacity of Commandant and Paymaster, had been previously occupied by a Captain Tucker and Lieutenant Applegarde, of the 57th Light Infantry, whom we had come to relieve. Captain Tucker had held the same appointment that I was ordered to take up. This gentleman asked me if I intended residing in the house, which was set apart by the Barrack Department as the one fixed upon for the officer holding the appointment that I did. My reply was, “Certainly. It seems a nice large house, and beautifully situated near the sea. In every way it appears to be a most desirable residence. Why do you ask ?” Captain Tucker then, with great reluctance, told me that he firmly believed the house was haunted ! and that he found it impossible to live in it on account of the strange and totally unaccountable noises that were constantly heard in various parts of the house, both by day and by night, such as heavy footsteps, as if some one of no light weight were ascending and descending the stairs from basement to attic. I must here state that this house was built as follows. First, the ground floor, which consisted of kitchen, store-room and two servants' rooms. Second storey, dining-room, drawing-room and a small room with balcony, overlooking the sea, which approached within a few feet of the walls of the house. The third storey, two large bedrooms, with dressing-rooms, &c., &c. The noises and disturbances complained of by Captain Tucker and his friend and their servants, were described as being quite unbearable. Night after night they used to hear first as if several doors and windows were being violently slammed as if repeatedly opened and shut by some one in a great passion. Then a crash as of a quantity of crockery being smashed and thrown from the top of the stairs to the bottom, then a pause, and tramp, tramp, tramp, would be heard on the staircase as if some one shod with heavy boots were deliberately ascending from the basement of the house to the very attic. Captain Tucker, his friend and the two soldiers declared that in spite of their utmost vigilance and constant watching, they never once saw *anybody* or *anything* in any part of the house to account for these mysterious noises and disturbances. However, it was more than they could put up with, so they “hooked it,” locked up the evil house, and hired another a good distance away. Now I must say I felt very uncomfortable when I heard all this, especially as the story was corroborated by every one in the town. My wife was quite a young woman, about eighteen, her sister was a little girl of twelve, and the servant maids were very ignorant, superstitious young Greek women. If they heard all these dreadful stories, good-bye to my occupying the house. So I begged of the two officers to say nothing about the place to anyone. I was determined to live in it and find out from personal experience whether all I had heard was true or not—at any rate I could not afford to rent another house sufficiently large for my household. So the following morning after our arrival in the island, in we went, bag and baggage. For the first week or so, nothing unusual occurred ; but one morning after parade (11 o'clock) I was seated busy with some regimental accounts in the room overlooking the sea. Two sergeants of my regiment were with me. I had had occasion to leave the room and go into the drawing-room to look for some document I had left there. So I walked along the passage, and at the further end, close to the drawing-room door, I saw a woman dressed completely in black and with a thick black veil drawn down over her face, standing as if she had knocked at the door and was waiting to be admitted. Thinking it was some poor widow

with a petition, I merely glanced at her, and as the passage was rather narrow I stopped for a moment for her to let me pass, but as she never moved, I said, as I gently pushed her to one side, "Pardon, madame. Que voulez vous ?" She stood perfectly still but did not answer. I then turned the handle of the door and going in said to my wife :—"There is a woman outside the door who evidently wants to speak to you ; she does not seem to understand French. Go and see what she wants." Having found the document I required I left the room, my wife having just before done the same. "Why," said she, "where is the woman you said was standing here just now ?" As I was very busy I answered, "Oh ! I don't know ; very likely she has gone down to the kitchen to talk to your maids." My wife at once went down and asked the servants (there were four of them, viz., two soldiers and the two maids) where the woman in black was. They all replied that no such person had been seen by any one of them ! No one could possibly have come up to the drawing-room passage without coming first through the kitchen. The front door of the house opening into a lane,—where there were no other houses, only a very high stone-wall,—was always kept carefully locked and bolted and seldom or never used by us. On this occasion it was locked as usual, and the key was kept by one of the soldiers. No one had seen this woman except myself and the two sergeants who had a full view of the passage when I went out. These two sergeants were perfectly astonished when I told them what had occurred, but they both said, "Ah ! sir, the 57th men told us this house was haunted, but never said a word about any woman in black or white ever having been seen either by night or by day. Better leave the house, sir ; it has a very bad name." I was very much annoyed and disgusted, especially when I found my wife in a great state of alarm, the maid-servants having just heard of the mysterious appearance and disappearance of the woman in black. They too had a long story to tell of what they had heard in the town. So there was consternation and weeping and wailing in my hitherto quiet and cheerful house. Of course I was entreated to leave forthwith, but as the veiled lady had done none of us any other harm than frightening the women folk, I sternly refused to comply, little thinking that in a short time I should be the first to take the initiative and leave the accursed house with the greatest pleasure. About a fortnight or so after this mysterious visitation, I went with my wife and little sister-in-law to the opera to hear a celebrated prima donna who had just come to the island from Italy. We stayed till the performance was over, about 12 o'clock p.m. We were accompanied home by a couple of my brother officers, who stayed and had some supper with us and then left. Before retiring to bed I carefully examined every door and window, locking and bolting every one of them with my own hands. I turned in and was just falling asleep when I heard a noise as of some one walking upstairs from the kitchen towards the dining-room. Thinking it was one of the soldier servants about to remove the things from the supper table, I took no notice of it, but my wife, who also heard the noise, asked me who could be moving about, as none of the servants had attended upon us at supper and were all in bed. Just as she had spoken we both heard heavy footsteps coming up the stairs towards our bedroom. Up, up, they came, and then the handle of our door was turned sharply several times and the door violently shaken. The door was locked inside. I jumped out of bed, and in spite of my wife's terrified entreaties, seized my revolver and rushed at the door, unlocked it, and holding the pistol at arm's length shouted, "Who is that ?" There was no one near the door, nor was there any indication of any one retreating down the steps. The noise I made, opening the door and shouting, awoke my sister-in-law and the two maids, who all slept together in the adjoining bedrooms. Out they all bundled in an awful fright screaming and crying. I told them to go

into the room where my wife was and stay there until I had examined the lower part of the house. This they were very glad to do as they were frightened out of their seven senses. Lighting a candle and revolver in hand downstairs I went, but had hardly got halfway down when there was a terrific crash as if the supper table with all its burthen of plates, dishes, knives, forks, Argand lamp, &c., &c., had been suddenly overturned, smash upon the floor. Oh, thought I, Tucker's story is true after all. However, down I rushed, revolver on full cock, and breathing dire vengeance on the destroyer of my crockery. When I got to the foot of the stairs I saw a figure in a very scanty shirt emerging from the top of the lower stairs. This figure had a very bushy pair of red whiskers and moustaches to match. Ha, thought I, here is the destroyer of my domestic peace and happiness, I'll pay him off now. Stand ! you blackguard, or you're a dead man ! "Don't shoot me, sir," said or rather howled a familiar voice. Ha, ha ! The apparition was only my faithful henchman, Develin by name, who having also heard the noises that we had, jumped out of his bed and arming himself with a bayonet, had come up to see what was the occasion of all the row. Together we carefully searched every nook and corner upstairs and down, but not a thing could we see or find out. Every door and window was closely shut and fastened *inside*. I may here say not a single article was found broken. The following day I mentioned what had occurred to several Zantiote gentlemen. They did not seem a bit surprised, but merely said they knew perfectly well I should not stay long in the house, as it was a notorious fact that the place was, and had been haunted for a great many years. I then asked if there were any story connected with the place. They replied that some twenty years ago a number of men, well-known to the authorities, occupied this house. They were suspected to be both smugglers and pirates. Fearful orgies often took place amongst these ruffians. The police, who were very few in number, were afraid to go near the place. One night there was a dreadful uproar. Pistols were fired, and there were the sound of swords and knives clashing, terrible oaths and yells. Towards morning the uproar had ceased, and at daylight two large fellucca boats put off from the beach, under the balcony. The house was entered by a number of police, and others well armed, that day. In the kitchen were found lying dead, and fearfully cut about, several bodies. Evidently the fraternity had been carousing, and, when drunk, had quarrelled among themselves, until the disagreement had ended in a free fight all round. Quantities of contraband goods were found stowed away in every room in the house. The pirates, or whatever they were, never came back. The house had an evil repute. No one would live in it, and no one did, until the wisecracks of our Barrack Department hired it for the use of British officers, who are supposed rather to like haunted houses, and who from their well-known pluck think it great fun to be hunting ghosts instead of sleeping the sleep of the just. As the noises never ceased night after night, I was at last compelled to quit this uncanny dwelling and rent another house several streets off.

The Religio-Philosophical Journal, of Chicago, edited by our esteemed friend and correspondent, Colonel J. R. Bundy, is as fearless and as outspoken as ever. It may always be depended on to take a sober, common-sense view of all matters relating to Spiritualism, asking only a fair field and no favour. It has won many friends on both sides of the Atlantic, and by its firm and consistent attitude in the conflict between purity of life and free-love, and between genuine and fraudulent mediums, has made itself a power for good for Spiritualism, especially amongst the outside public. However much they may differ from the special views of the *Journal*, the American secular Press always has a good word to say as to the singleness and honesty of purpose of its management.

The body oppressed by excesses bears down the mind, and depresses to the earth any portion of the Divine spirit we have been endowed with.—*Horace*.

BELL RINGING BY SPIRITS.

Invisible bell ringing is, I believe, accepted by Spiritualists as an indication of a spirit's wish to communicate. A fact came under my notice some years ago, of which the story told in to-day's "LIGHT" reminds me. The mother-in-law of a friend of mine, who lived with her, died rather suddenly from an accident at home; a few days after her decease, two of my sisters called to condole. During their visit the servant came in with the usual "Did you ring?" and the almost angry reply, "Go away! you *know* I did not," so much surprised my sisters, that as soon as the door was shut, they asked the meaning of it, and were told that ever since the recent death, bells, which no one had touched or could have touched, had been ringing in the house (a newly built one, by the way) at all hours, and that the servants knew them to be no summons from living housemates.

In about ten days or a fortnight the disturbance ceased. Shortly after this, while staying at the house of a cousin, my attention was arrested one evening by hearing her say in a low voice to one of her guests for the evening, "How has the bell ringing been this year? as bad as usual?" and the answer was, "Well, perhaps, not *quite* so bad as formerly."

I expressed curiosity about this, and was told that the house occupied by the last speaker was notoriously haunted to an unpleasant degree, so much so, that on taking it the owner entreated his tenants to keep one particular room locked up; a caution their family was too large to allow; and frightful faces and figures of men and women were seen in it by both parents and children. But the bell ringing was confined to a few days of August, beginning on the sixth, and was sometimes so loud and unpleasant that the next door neighbours, newly arrived, sent in to complain, believing it done for sport.

The house is now demolished to make way for a railroad, and the lady who told me these facts, as well as her husband, is dead, or I would ask leave to give both their name and the locality of the haunted house. The room, which ought to have been shut up, looked evil and extremely old, when I went into it to take off my bonnet and cloak, at a tea drinking, and *not* then having heard anything about it, I exclaimed, "How like a haunted room this looks." Children occupying it habitually, frequently reported to their mother the "ugly faces of lots of old men and women" they saw in it. Unable to give up its sleeping accommodation, she told me she always joked merrily with them about their visions, but one night, she and her husband occupied it, and both saw what made them resolutely close their eyes *there* for the future, when candles were put out; what they saw she described to me as almost a crowd of horrible looking people advancing towards the bed. Nothing was known of the antecedents of this old house.

A. J. PENNY.

September 28th.

THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE, AND THE STAGNATION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

The following letter from our correspondent the Rev. C. Ware, appeared recently in the *Devon Evening Express* :—

The annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science affords an ever-recurring reminder of the wonderful progress of the modern mind in scientific knowledge, *i.e.*, in the facts, secrets, and resources of the material universe, and the relation and application of these to the interests and the improvement of our physical existence. Geographical research is constantly bringing to light new facts respecting the topographical characteristics and physical features of different parts of the earth's surface. Geology is constantly increasing our knowledge of that wonderful Bible, the earth's crust; and of the Divine revelations which time and nature, during

millions of years, have been inscribing upon its pages—its strata and its rocks. The volume of ancient writings which we all have on our shelf is valuable, because it is a product of the human mind—the expression of an infinitely varied human thought; a record of the thoughts, actions, transactions, and experiences of intelligent beings, belonging to this and other worlds. But the contents of that volume are as the crude thoughts of infancy, and the story books of the nursery, when compared to that wonderful Book of God—the Universe, which is under and over, without, within, and around us. Astronomy gives us glimpses of the infinite universe of worlds, to which our tiny earth is related, as a grain of sand is to the wide expanse of the sea shore, or the drops of briny water to the mighty ocean; and the magic art of chemistry is shewing how fearfully and wonderfully made, in essence and in combination, are our physical organisation and our material dwelling-place. The *Times* says of the British Association :—"Each annual meeting brings home the realities of science, the fascinations with which it enthalls its followers, and the gladness of its discoveries to some locality in which these things had, it may be previously, received an indolent assent, but in which they were not held as articles of a real and living faith." God speed the scientific plough!

But, side by side with this grand onward march of material discovery and enlightenment is it not strange, anomalous, and marvellous that there is absolutely no progress, but utter stagnation, in religious thought and spiritual knowledge—I mean within the multitudinous sections of that vast and costly system known as the Church; which is expressly instituted and endowed to teach and promote knowledge concerning things spiritual. In relation to spiritual things, the "Church" is *now* where the "world" was before Galileo discovered that "the earth moves" as a mere speck in the infinite universe of worlds and systems; where intellectual philosophy was before Lord Bacon taught the human mind to cease revolving eternally upon itself, and to exercise its powers of investigation and induction upon external nature; where astronomical speculation was until Sir Isaac Newton discovered the grand principle of gravity, which infallibly determined the positions and movements of all material atoms and worlds; and where the will-o'-the-wisp flickerings of a vague alchemy were before our great modern chemists, Huxley, Tyndall, Roscoe, Stewart, &c., gave the world an insight into the subtle essences and wonderful combinations of nature's elements and forces. It is a fact, a melancholy fact, that with all this advancement in physical science and material experience, we remain hopelessly stationary and entirely stagnant as regards our knowledge and experience of spiritual things.

Ages and ages ago, the Church formulated and stereotyped its creed, and there it still remains. Hundreds of years ago, in the deepest darkness of an ignorant and superstitious time, a crafty and covetous priesthood invented its crude little theological system—its rival god and devil, who were to be eternally playing at battledore and shuttlecock with the souls of mankind, by the agency of this same well paid priesthood; its nursery-like heaven, where the goody-goody dupes of this priestcraft were to be rewarded with white dresses, and pretty flowers, and nice sweetmeats; its dark and awful hell of fire and endless tortments; its artfully conceived system of sacrifice and blood, and all meritorious faith, as a substitute for good works and righteous living. And, strange to say, there it stands to-day, in this *enlightened* age; the entire ecclesiastical system being eternally pledged thereto; no advance, no progress; no new thought, fact, or principle; always stationary—nothing but stagnation!

But, sir, I will not dwell upon this picture. I will only say that, thank God, beyond this standing memorial of the dark ages, light—the light of a true spiritual science, of true spiritual knowledge, has dawned upon the minds of millions. To them, the old theological caricature is no more—it has vanished, as darkness vanishes before the morning dawn. The grand principles of spiritual existence are discovered, by the demonstration around us of the intelligent realities of spirit life; the inner realm of being, the inseparable connection between this life and all the spheres of existence beyond it, the essential interblending and intercommunication between the seen and the unseen, and the personal responsibility of life and conduct—effects springing from causes as fruits from the tree, as is illustrated throughout the entire realm of nature.

Earnestly hoping, sir, that this glorious light may dawn upon every mind, and these spiritual realities come to every human being—scattering their doubts and misgivings, and making the life of their spirit buoyant, joyous and free.

I remain, yours respectfully,

CHARLES WARE.

Exeter, September 28th, 1883.

WHAT OUR CONTEMPORARIES SAY.

Weakness of the Spiritualist Rostrum—Remedy.

Complaint, says the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, abounds in all quarters of the Spiritualist field, of the paucity of new thought, of hard thinking, of perspicuous, well digested discourses on the part of lecturers. While it cannot be denied that these defects exist, those uttering them do not seem to understand the cause. They fail to see that the lack of compensation is one of the prime causes for the lack of educated teachers. . . . Spiritualism, in its present unorganised, ill defined, chaotic state, offers no inducement to educated teachers, and no person of average business capacity, with a dependent family, can afford to enter the lecture field. As a consequence, with rare exceptions, the Spiritualist rostrum gets its recruits from mediocrity, and this in the face of the fact that Spiritualism offers a solid foundation of incontrovertible facts on which to build the grandest spiritual philosophy the world has ever known; a field which should attract the best talent, the profoundest learning, the most brilliant genius. . . . Now is the opportunity for Spiritualists; let them unite in organised co-operative efforts, upon a platform affording complete intellectual freedom, yet maintaining the highest standard of character. Let the Spiritualist forces be mobilised, drilled and disciplined. Let there be legalised societies, officered by men and women of probity and business tact, who have no selfish ends to subserve in their work for Spiritualism.

Divisions Among Spiritualists.

The *Banner of Light* marvels that in the very midst of this new descent of influences from heaven, there should be found the slightest divisions of sympathy or sentiment among those who claim to have been the recipients of the larger knowledge and belief. It would better be supposed that the agreement among them would be closer than was ever before witnessed in a multitude of believers who had come into the possession of new forms of truth. That there should be any serious question over facts among believing Spiritualists appears almost incredible; it is to be expected as between Spiritualists and those who professionally traduce them. It is solely upon these same facts, conveyed to the senses through the phenomena, that the whole structure rests. Take these away, and we all return to vagrant speculation and blind faith again. Instead of disputing over the phenomena, it strikes us that it would be much better to give them still closer attention, that their true meaning might be more clearly made known to us and what is valueless might be swept away. If we all receive the phenomena, those signs by which spirit-communications first became known, and then make a study of them, we shall sooner know whether they are worthless than by standing and disputing over them.

The Himalayan Brothers.

Mr. W. H. Harrison, late editor of the *Spiritualist* newspaper, writing in the *Medium* of the 5th inst., criticises the difficulties in the way of belief in the existence of the alleged brothers. One or two remarks are very pertinent, and we quote them herewith as representing what is thought in some quarters of the pretensions made by Theosophists with regard to Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky:—"All along I have held that the powers about Madame Blavatsky are but the usual 'John' and 'Katie Kings,' whoever they may be, and that she and her friends believe what these unseen intelligences assert as to their identity. I did not know at previous times of writing that when she was in America one of her regular attendant sprites then actually gave his name as 'John King.' Now that Koot Hoomi is on the scene, has the humbler John King of former days disappeared? Has the principle of resurrection believed in by the Australian savage obtained, namely, 'Tumble down black man, tumble up white man.' If so, the case is on a parallel with one which occurred in England with a medium, in which a long-known attendant spirit went away ostensibly to be replaced by another, but some of the oldest observers believed the alleged change to be all nonsense, and that variation had taken place only in the name given. . . . He himself (Colonel Olcott) seems to have originated the hypothesis that she (Madame Blavatsky) had been admitted behind some mystic veil; she on the other hand, at that time was 'very reticent' on the point. Anyone who knows how quickly the intelligences about physical mediums adopt ideas and even names for themselves suggested by the sitters, can see what the result would be if similar ideas about a mystic brotherhood were frequently broached by sitters in the presence of any physical medium. . . .

Criticisms expressing disbelief in the Himalayan Brothers have been ascribed to malice. I cannot see why unfounded stigmas of this kind should be flung at those who cannot accept in faith most of the assertions made by the powers controlling physical mediums as to their personal identity. The question of spirit identity is the most difficult one in Spiritualism, especially to those best acquainted with the subject. . . . In London some physical mediums believe in the asserted identity of their spirits, others do not, but they do not get out of temper or take personal offence at a discussion of the problem. Neither does Madame Blavatsky: so far as I know she has taken my critical examination of the question with the utmost good temper, and there is no reason why anyone should suppress his opinion if he cannot find a scrap of good evidence that Madame Blavatsky is anything but a physical medium acquainted with Buddhist theology, and possessing powers closely resembling those of Mrs. Guppy-Volkman, with such variations as might be expected from difference of personality. . . . This leads up to another point, and to a question I have more than once put publicly and cannot get answered. Theosophists who wish to come into communication with the Himalayan Brothers, and to enter their fraternity, are told they must live the life of severe ascetics, abstaining from wine, spirits, meat, and tobacco, that they must purify their thoughts, and so on, but after many years of such life, it is not guaranteed they will obtain their desire. How, then, is it that Madame Blavatsky, who is not an ascetic, has been successful where those who carry out the instructions she does not follow, may fail? I have never met a strong physical medium who was an ascetic; indeed, the reverse of that characteristic prevails with them, and asceticism would probably reduce their mediumship to zero instead of strengthening their powers."

AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT.

I have residing with me the step-niece of my wife, who is a good medium for table messages. On Sunday evening, September 30th, it occurred to me that possibly if she were put into the mesmeric sleep her spirit friends might control her; so I asked the question through the table, "If I mesmerise A—e can you control her and speak?" "Yes." "Are you sure?" "Yes." I immediately mesmerised her and in about 20 minutes she began to manifest signs of an influence at work other than my own. By-and-bye she said, "There are two here who want to come." She afterwards began to shew symptoms of acute pains in the head, and after they had apparently subsided she began to make signs for writing materials.

I placed a pencil in her hand, and a piece of paper on the table, on which she wrote:—"I can't speak to-night. It is the first time I have controlled. I died of a stroke.—J. H." The following questions were asked by me, and answered through the table:—"Are you the medium's uncle?" "No." "Grand father?" "No." "Any relation?" "No." The table then knocked the name in full. "J. H.—r H—x. I made my will altogether wrong." I may here state the spirit controlling proved to be the half-cousin of the medium's mother, and under whose will the medium is interested.

Last night, thinking to repeat the experiment, I asked the question as on the former Sunday. "Shall I mesmerise A—e that you may control her?" and we got the emphatic answer, "No." "Is it not advisable," I asked; and the answer was still more emphatic, "No." "Then shall we sit?" "Yes." Having sat for a short time, the medium began to be distressed by a deep, dry cough, of an asthmatical character, and to experience the most excruciating pains in the region of the stomach, so much so, that she left her seat and lay down in writhing agony on the floor. Presently I raised her and placed her in a rocking chair, where gradually the pains began to subside, and she in a while began to speak.

I took down word for word all that she said, which was a communication from her own mother to her father, who does not believe in the return of and communication by spirits. It was of a private nature, and, therefore, I do not give it. This I may say, those who do wrong under the impression that no one sees them labour under a great mistake, and when all people have realised this we may expect an improvement in morals.

PETER LEE.

141, Drake-street (formerly 38, Church-stile),
Rochdale.

The highest perfection of human reason is to know that there is an infinity of truth beyond its reach.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA

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

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

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

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

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

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

Is it Conjuring?

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

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

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

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

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS,

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

38. GREAT RUSSELL STREET, 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 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 Reading Room and Library is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., during which hours books can be exchanged, and enquiries answered. The Rooms are also open on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday Evenings from 7 to 9 o'clock, when a Member of Council or the Hon. Sec. *pro tem.* will be in attendance to receive visitors and attend to any requirements of members and friends of the Association.

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 inquirers on all questions affecting Spiritualism.

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.

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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 inquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, *pro tem.*, Mr. THOS. BLYTON, 3, Truro-villas, Station-road, Church End Finchley, N., 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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On MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, and FRIDAY, October 15th, 17th, and 19th, a Member of the Council or the Hon. Sec. *pro tem.* will attend between 7 and 9 p.m. to receive visitors, answer enquiries and exchange books.

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