

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon)"

In "LIGHT" (November 17th ult.) some details were recently given of what has become known as "The Shropshire Mystery." There is, in effect, no great mystery about this story of powerful physical mediumship; but the newspapers have made a wonder of it, and the illiterate and uneducated people of the neighbourhood have magnified reports until it becomes very difficult to know how much is to be believed. It seems clear that the girl, Emma Davies, is a medium, and that various phenomena, familiar to Spiritualists, occur in her presence. The invisible agency is destructive, mischievous, and indulges in the rough horse-play characteristic of the *Poltergeist*. There is absolutely nothing in the accounts given, making due allowance for exaggeration, that differentiates this case from others duly authenticated in days past. But a fiercer light beats upon these matters now, and it is not surprising that the London newspapers should see a possible opportunity for some spicy paragraphs. One of them sent down a representative, selected apparently from the possession of a purely negative qualification. He knew nothing about Spiritualism, but he did know that nothing of the kind had ever taken place in his presence. He had always felt able to dispose of ghosts and psychical phenomena as mere hallucinations of a weak or diseased mind. And so he went off with a light heart to dispose of this new imposture. In due course there appeared in the journal which he represented an account of a confession made by the girl that she had imposed on the credulity of these simple country-folk, and had done by natural means what they regarded as supernatural occurrences. The newspapers rejoiced, for they are half afraid of Spiritualism, and wholly hate what they instinctively fear. And so the matter dropped.

But not for long. From the *Wellington Journal and Shrewsbury News* of November 24th ult., I see that the phenomena have broken out with renewed vehemence. From the account, which is as poor and flippant as can well be conceived, and which I quote, therefore, with much reservation, it appears that the girl when sitting on a chair was raised, together with the chair, a foot from the floor. It is not easy to see how she could have effected this by natural means. Various other phenomena are recorded; and a statement of the girl's is published which throws

some light on the fair and honourable methods by which the newspaper reporters and doctors extracted from her the so-called confession which has so solaced the London journals. These "doctors, newspaper men, &c." (no newspapers are referred to specifically), are charged in this statement with frightening, intimidating, and even striking this poor girl in order to overawe her into saying what they wished. One interviewer represented himself as a police constable, and threatened her with the gaol if she did not tell how the thing was done. They bribed a fellow-servant to worm out the secret. One crafty reporter resorted to the time-honoured plan of making love to the poor girl to get at the truth. The whole story is as pitiful as can be conceived. Whether wholly or partially true it is not pleasant reading, and suggests with startling force the shifts that men of education and position will resort to in order to crush what they detest. The London reporter, of course, neither kissed nor "smacked" this little servant-girl; but, by his own confession, he went down with no qualification but a strong belief that these things never occurred at all, and he found what he carried with him in his own strongly prejudiced mind. The local journal, which prints the statement of the girl, winds up by saying, "The child must be a most accomplished actress"! "The pitiful fact becomes evident that the popular superstition is only too plainly increasing."

Though I by no means attach importance to the *ipsissima verba* of an illiterate girl recorded by a scarcely less illiterate reporter, who suffers from a belief that it is his duty to be funny, I think the statement important enough to be placed on record, and therefore quote it from the journal to which I have referred. It seems to me that this is a case which should be carefully looked into by some experienced member of the Psychological Society. To remove the girl from her environment, and bring her to London would be probably to paralyse the manifestations for a time at any rate. The whole matter should be patiently investigated on the spot by some qualified observer. The statement of the girl is as follows:—

"They fetched a bucket, and shook me, and smacked me. 'Chuck it high over head,' and because I did not throw it high enough they made me do it again. They asked me how these things were done, and I told them I didn't know. They said yes, I did know, and that I should have to tell them, and said what they would do. I told them something. I don't know what I said because they smacked me. I was frightened and told them that I did it. I really don't know how to do them. When anything has happened I haven't known about it till I have seen it. I don't know how the thing is done. I can't move that brush or table or anything else without catching hold of it. (This was said with a smile.) One man said he was a police-constable, and he should take me to gaol if I did not tell him. I thought he was a police-constable. He was in plain clothes. I was frightened into saying what I said. Of course what I told him was not true. I was frightened into it. I can't account for the things in any way. I feel frightened after they have been done. Dr. Corke gave me a shilling, and said it was 'to keep the devil off.' I don't know how the things happen. I want them stopped. They upset me. The one who said he was a policeman asked me how to make the knife fly off the table. They tried to make me do something with the knife, but I wouldn't; they locked the doors to keep me in. They followed me all about the house. They gave the other girl something to ask me to shew them how to do the knife trick. I never saw it

till they shewed me. (A smile.) One slapped my hands and held them behind my back. The others said it was too bad. I did no tricks with the knife or anything else. I couldn't. A chair, and a thing they hang clothes on, a clothes horse, moved about, and a pair of slippers went from the hearth on to the sofa. Miss Turner did not see it, but she was trying to do it herself. I cannot tell you how the things are done, nor anything about it. Dr. Corke was very kind. He said he should tell mother he thought I was tricky. Dr. Mackay was also very kind. More things happened at home than at Wem. I can't account for it. While I was there the housekeeper's dress flew off the bed. Jane was there then, and she said she would not stop if I did. One of the reporters asked me to kiss him before he went. I wouldn't, but (smiling) he kissed me. When I was washing my hands in the yard the bucket moved. They said I did it, but Dr. Corke's boy, who was in the yard, said I didn't touch it. I've had nothing to do with these things at all."

The *Spectator* (November 24th ult.) has a very fair review of the Lourdes cures, of which an account has been recently published by M. Henri Lasserre. This gentleman had been recommended to try the Lourdes water by M. de Freycinet a Protestant, and since then Prime Minister of France. In September, 1862, M. Lasserre had so far lost his eyesight (from hypertrophy of the optic nerve) that "he could not read three or four lines of the largest print without an excessive fatigue in the upper part of the eyes, which rendered it quite impossible for him to continue." It was when he had been deprived of his sight for all reading purposes for nearly three months, that M. de Freycinet urged him to try Lourdes. M. Lasserre was unwilling; not that he feared failure, but success. The responsibility is tremendous (he said in effect); with a doctor, the fee would quit me; but if God cures me, I must give up all in the world, and lead a saintly life. M. de Freycinet, however, overcame his scruples, and himself wrote to the curé of Lourdes for a bottle of water for his friend's use. The letter was signed by M. Lasserre, and a photograph of it is given in his book. "The cure was sudden and complete, though there was some threat of a relapse, which M. Lasserre ascribed to a conscious moral failure of his own, following directly on the cure—a threat of relapse which was averted, as he believes, by the prayers of M. Dupont, and his own penitence. Twenty years have elapsed and M. Lasserre, who has become the historian of the Lourdes wonders, has never found his eyesight fail him again."

That is, in itself, a strong case, and the testimony is unimpeachable. But physicians would, I presume, refer the cure to the stimulating effect of faith acting on a nervous disease. But the following case cannot be included in any such category:—A carpenter of Lavour (a town some forty miles from Toulouse) was cured of an exceedingly aggravated disease (varicose veins) of thirty years' standing. First of all, to establish the reality of the case, three elaborate certificates are given from two local physicians, and from Dr. Bennet, of the Faculty of Paris. They are too long for citation, but I give the comparatively brief one of his regular attendant:—

"I, the undersigned, declare that for about thirty years Mr. Francis Macary, carpenter, has been suffering from varicose veins in the legs. These varicose veins, which were of the thickness of a finger, and complicated with *de cordons noueux et flexueux très-développés*, compelled him to wear up to the present time a regular compression (*une compression méthodique*), exerted partly by means of twisted bandages, partly by means of dog-skin stockings. In spite of these precautions, ulcers frequently shewed themselves on both legs, and, whenever they did, compelled complete repose and a long course of treatment. I have visited him to-day, and although his under limbs were stripped of all clothing, I have only been able to discover a few traces of these enormous varicose veins. This case of spontaneous cure appears to me all the more surprising, that the annals of science record not a single fact of this nature. — (Signed), SÉGUR, Doctor of Medicine, Member of the Mutual Aid Society of Saint Louis, Lavour, August 16th, 1871."

Dr. Bennet's testimony is far more minute; and none of the physicians conceal their astonishment at this cure of a man of sixty, whose disease, of thirty years' standing, was of such an aggravated character. Nor can they in any way explain what they nevertheless attest.

Society journals reflect, in a certain way, the floating opinion of what in London passes for fashionable life. It is so far interesting, therefore, to find the *World* concerning itself with what it calls "The New Religion." "Aestheticism is becoming obsolete, and the new gospel of Buddhism is rapidly supplementing it in drawing-rooms and boudoirs." "The modern Leuconœ," it seems, "reads 'Isis Unveiled,' and fervently accepts the new revelation, according to Mr. Sinnett and Madame Blavatsky. . . . Few male worshippers are associated with her in the new religion, and these few are of the weak-kneed race. . . . The new religion is essentially feminine. . . . The air is heavy with aspiration (*sic*), ghostly forms sweep round the threshold, and the astral body of Madame Blavatsky stands within before the vision of the sacred Lotus." And so forth. The stuff is poor enough, and the writer is ignorant of what he (or is it she!) deals with. The fact is that some very powerful and robust intellects have been and are influenced by this new religion. The dealing at all with the subject in a society journal is the only point worth noting, unless I except the admission that "literature and conversation witness on all sides to a decay in the general conviction of immortality." This note of the age is beginning to strike even observers so superficially flippant as the writer in the *World*. What he calls "the preposterous imposture," which he fails to understand or appreciate, is not the only answer to this craving for new spiritual food.

Mr. im Thurn, an Oxford graduate (I wonder of what nationality), recently appointed a special magistrate among the Indians of the Pomeroon River, has gathered together and published* a vast amount of information about the Indians of Guiana. A reviewer in the *St. James's Gazette*, who is apparently not well informed as to the subject of Spiritualism or Thought-reading, which he seems to regard on synonymous terms, thus comments on a very interesting part of the book. It is easy to ignore his preconceived ideas and to recognise among these primitive people the presence of what is ubiquitous and protean in its manifestations.

"Every one who has been in British Guiana has heard of the Kenaimas, human and spiritual powers of evil, who are the bane and terror of the Indian's existence. To counteract the malefic influence of the Kenaimas, each larger Indian village keeps its peaiman or medicine-man. One of Mr. im Thurn's most interesting adventures was that in which he placed himself in the hands of a peaiman, who undertook to cure him of a headache, and who, to judge from the author's description, had in him the making of an admirable Spiritualist professor or of a thought-reader. Mr. im Thurn submitted for six long hours, in a hut on the savannah, to the process of 'peai-ing.' By ventriloquism were produced the most terrible noises, and an extremely clever imitation of the animals of Guiana in whose bodies the Kenaimas who had bestowed the headache were supposed to lurk. The patient describes himself as being all the while in a sort of mesmeric trance, feeling at times the air driven over his face, 'as if some big-winged thing came from afar toward the house, passed through the roof, and then settled heavily on the floor; and again, after an interval as if the same winged thing rose and passed away as it had come.' It was interesting, even wonderful; but he was not cured. He rushed at last into the open savannah and 'a wild and pitch-dark night;' and, 'bare-headed, bare-footed, and coatless,' with the lightning flashing now and then behind the distant mountains, waited for the dawn. The peaiman insisted that a cure had been effected, and demanded payment; and as he produced in proof the kenaima, a caterpillar which had been extracted from Mr. im

* "Among the Indians of Guiana." By Everard im Thurn. (Kegan Paul and Co., 1883.)

Thurn's body, his fee, 'a looking-glass which had cost fourpence,' could not be denied. Concerning the folk-lore of the Indians it is somewhat difficult to come to any certain conclusion; for there can be little doubt that it has been mixed with stories told by white men. The chapter on Animism—that is to say, the assumption of the Indian that there is a soul in everything, from the bird overhead to the weirdly-shaped stone by some waterfall—is very entertaining and suggestive. To the Indian, dreams and visions are realities. 'To him, dream-acts and working-acts differ only in one respect—namely, that the former are done only by the spirit; the latter are done by the spirit in its body.' Consequently, if an Indian dreams he has been ill-treated by any one, it is an injury that actually occurred, and has to be avenged accordingly; for the *vemletta* is the police of the Indian's world. This dream-life is a source of much that is ludicrous, and also of a good deal that is tragic, as may readily be imagined."

M.A. (Oxon.)

INSTANCE OF DOUBLE-CONSCIOUSNESS IN DREAMS.

THE SLEEPING MUSICIAN.

(From article on Dreams in "The Occult Sciences," by the late Elisha Rich.)

"It was observed by the ancients that a certain class of dream occurs in the transition between sleep and waking, but they were far from supposing that this discovery explained the mystery of dreaming in general.

"Such an opinion, however, has obtained currency, chiefly, we believe, on the authority of Lord Brougham, and it forms a part of that sensational philosophy which recognises in sleep nothing more than the repose of organisation. . . . So far from the notion of Lord Brougham and his followers being true, the very reverse is the fact. The more profoundly we sleep the more perfectly we dream, for the degree in which the spirit is remitted into freedom, and into the exercise of its proper faculties, is proportionate to its separation from the body; or if the body remains active (as in some states of clairvoyance), to its distinct consciousness. In proof of this distinct consciousness, how often do we suddenly remember having dreamed, though previously the night had appeared to us a perfect blank. Frequently the dreamer awakes at the instant when a whole train of circumstances or a scene vanishes, not by a decay of memory or deficiency of impression, but in all the vividness of life, and as instantly as if a door were closed against him which opened into another world. In such cases no volition can recover the momentary glance that alone seems necessary to restore the vision. Children, also, wake up in excitement often immediately after talking in their sleep, and yet, however closely questioned, they have no recollection of having dreamed. Beyond these significant facts there are certain vague impressions of another field of memory, the objects of which seem to float in some indistinct shadowy outline before the mind's eye, and every instant we expect these impenetrable little mysteries to blossom into life, until expectation may, under peculiar circumstances, become agony. There are feelings that nearly all must have experienced, and the inference we draw from them is, not that volition ever ceases, but that the objects that occupy it are not always impressed upon the material memory. In other words, that the memory, so far from being one distinct organ, is the activity of all the faculties, which activity is resolvable into two or more distinct states of consciousness.

"The double consciousness is recognised by Dr. Moore in his 'Power of the Soul over the Body.' He cites a few cases from Pritchard, Abercrombie, and others. The following instance, abbreviated from the account of Dr. Abercrombie, is most interesting:—'A girl, seven years of age, employed in tending cattle, was accustomed to sleep in

an apartment next to one which was frequently occupied by an itinerant fiddler, who was a musician of considerable skill, and who spent a part of the night in performing pieces of a refined description. These performances were noticed by the child only as disagreeable noises. After residing in this house she fell into bad health, and was removed by a benevolent lady to her own home, where, on her recovery, she was employed as a servant. Some years after she came to reside with this lady, the wonder of the family was strongly excited by hearing the most beautiful music during the night, especially as they spent many waking hours in vain endeavours to discover the invisible musician. At length the sound was traced to the sleeping room of the girl, who was fast asleep, but uttering from her lips sounds exactly resembling those from a small violin. On further observation, it was discovered that after being about two hours in bed she became restless, and began to mutter to herself. She then uttered tones precisely like the tuning of a violin, and at length, after some prelude, dashed off into elaborate pieces of music, which she performed in a clear and accurate manner, and with a sound not to be distinguished from the most delicate modulations of that instrument. During the performance, she sometimes stopped, imitated the re-tuning of her instrument, and then recommenced exactly where she had stopped, in the most correct manner. These paroxysms occurred at irregular intervals, varying from one to fourteen or even twenty nights, and they were generally followed by a degree of fever. After a year or two, her music was not confined to the imitation of the violin, but was often exchanged for that of the piano, which she was accustomed to hear in the house in which she now lived; and she then began to sing, imitating exactly the voices of several of the family. In another year from this time she began to talk much in her sleep, in which she seemed to fancy herself instructing a younger companion. She often descanted with the utmost fluency and correctness on a variety of topics, both political and religious, of the news of the day, the historical parts of Scripture, of public characters, of members of the family, and of their visitors. In these discussions she shewed the most wonderful discrimination, often combined with sarcasm, and astonishing powers of memory. She was fond of illustrating her subjects by what she called a fable, and in these her imagery was both appropriate and elegant. She has been known to conjugate correctly Latin verbs, which she had probably heard in the school-room of the family, and she was once heard to speak several sentences correctly in French, at the same time stating that she heard them from a foreign gentleman, but could not repeat a word of what he said. During her paroxysms it was almost impossible to awaken her, and when her eyelids were raised and a candle brought near her eye, the pupil seemed insensible to the light.' (Chap. x., pp. 220-223.) Corroborative facts may be found in most works which treat of mental philosophy or physiology connected with mental states."

Take from the Bible what is termed miraculous or supernatural, and you have nothing but history left. Spiritualism shews how all this is possible, through natural laws, and gives a reason for everything; so that no more is it supernatural, but rational and tangible to our senses. To know that death is but a *change*—a vacating of the old home of the soul, for a new and spiritual one; a leaving the old chrysalis state to emerge a bright and radiant being in the natural element of the spirit, is a joy unspeakable to mortals here below. It is not death, but life; not destruction, but a new birth into a changed condition of existence—an immortal one, with glorious possibilities of growth toward the Infinite, of which we, as children of our Heavenly Father, are an epitome creation, made and fashioned in His own image.—*Mirpah, in Saratoga (N. Y.) Sun.*

Parnassus has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height and its laurels of eternal verdure.

"WHO ARE OUR SPIRITUAL ENEMIES?"

A PATCHWORK FROM BÖHME.

BY A. J. PENNY.

V.

Very significantly does Böhme say in his "Aurora," to which I must refer the student for copious (and to a patient mind fairly intelligible) teaching about Lucifer, "In his pride he smote himself with darkness and blindness, and made himself a devil. He knew in God only the *majesty* and not the Word in the centre. He would needs inflame himself and rule in the fire over the meekness." ("Aurora," chap. 15, par. 12.) To the present hour how incessantly we make the same mistake! The dignity of pride, the superb stateliness of indignation, the forceful bluster of wrath, how much stronger and more availing they feel to every angry human heart! It knows the majesty, *i.e.*, the might of the kindled aching forms of nature, but not "*the Word in the centre,*" the meek light of love escaping from the fire, and shining far beyond the lurid prison where only wrath and pain can be generated, and never the waters of eternal life and the imperishable substance which it forms. The forces of Eternal Nature are mighty, but to the Word in the centre alone was *all* power given in Heaven and in earth.

In the 1st book of Kings, chap. 19, the agency of the powers of Divine Nature, as contrasted with that of the Word of God, is marked emphatically. We read there that "The Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a still small voice." To this the negative is not added, and we are led to suppose that the God of Israel was in that voice made known. Again, when the disciples of Jesus proposed to bring fire from Heaven to punish the Samaritans, His gentle monition, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," suggests Divine knowledge of the evil source of a wish for exercising resistant *power* even with good intentions. "The devil sought great strength and power, as also the present world doth great might and honour and despiseth the light of love" ("Third Great Point," chap. 4, par. 31), and until Jesus Christ came to this earth and shewed the majesty of humble self-sacrifice, the power of meekness was unknown, and to this day so contrary is it to our natural ideas of greatness that very generally it is mistaken for defect of force.

"Learn of Me for I am meek and lowly of heart" was the new and wonderful teaching of Him Who gave for His last and all-embracing commandment, "*Love one another.*" And now we know that "in love and meekness we become new-born out of the anger of God; in love and meekness we must strive and fight" . . . "for love is the devil's poison, it is a fire of terror to him wherein he cannot stay." (Second part of "Treatise on Incarnation," chap. 7, pars 44, 45.) "Therefore it is that Christ so earnestly teacheth us love, humility, and mercifulness; and the cause why God is become man is for our salvation and happiness sake, that we should not turn back from His love." ("Threefold Life," chap. 14, par. 71.) In this passage the connection of ideas is not evident until we remember the office of imagination in re-moulding the attitude, and hence the "spirit of the soul;" for, "*mark this, every imagination maketh an essence.*" ("A Warning from J.B.," par. 2.) To say nothing here of the far less comprehensible effects of the Word taking flesh upon Him, we can easily see how much a fellow creature's example, greatly admired, tells upon the ideal of his admirers, and consequently upon their self-conduct. Jesus Christ gave the human race an absolutely new ideal. His forerunner announced that the Kingdom of

Heaven was at hand, but He revealed the more important truth, "the Kingdom of God is within you." Into that Kingdom we enter so soon as we surrender ourselves to meekness and love; "in the love the fire dieth and transmuteth itself into joy." (Apology 3, Text 1, par. 58.) Yes! and therefore is the joy resulting in proportion to the dying of the kindled fire.

But the habitual maintenance of love and meekness is, I suppose, a difficult achievement even to those who are constitutionally placable; to people of irascible nature so extremely difficult as to call for the Biblical proviso, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Rom. xii. 18.) With all men and at all times it is not possible, and for such exceptional cases Böhme gives a recipe which no one will ever try in vain. "If a fire riseth up in one qualifying spirit then that is not concealed from the soul. It may instantly awaken the other qualifying spirits which are contrary to the kindled fire, and may quench it. But if the fire will be, or become, too big, then hath the soul a prison, wherein it may shut up the kindled spirit, viz., in hard astringent quality." (which *here* I venture to explain to myself as *inaction* and silence)—"and the other spirits must be the jailers, till wrath be allayed and the fire be extinguished," . . . "but if the spirit breaketh out of prison, then put it in again, *make good thy part against it as long as thou livest.*" ("Aurora," chap. 10, pars. 85, 86, 90.)

I must diverge a little from the main line of this chapter to call attention to the way Böhme here contrasts the power of the seven fountain Spirits with that of the soul, taking for granted its possible supremacy in every conflict. He here identifies the *soul* and the *will*; now as elsewhere the soul is spoken of as *one* with the seven Spirits of Eternal Nature, confusion of thought will result unless we carefully bear in mind that he has shewn that this Eternal Nature was, and is, the consequence of the Abyssal Deity willing to manifest itself: the original of the human soul also was prior to its manifestation, for we are told that God breathed into man the breath of life—a life that must have preceded all nature and creature since it emanated from God, and made man to be in the likeness of God. Hence the much contested free will of man which now fights at such tremendous odds against what we call fate; *i.e.*, the forces of inferior beings raised by *his* fall, and insubordination to comparatively superior power, nay, in time, and as regards his external life to most undeniable superiority. Yet, notwithstanding all the opposition of the stars and the elements in his outer life, in the life within "all is possible; as soon is the good changed into evil as the evil into good. For every man is free, and is as a God to himself, he may change or alter himself in this life either into wrath or into light." ("Aurora," chap. 18, pars 42, 43.)

An assertion that many will contradict, but one that should be taken as bearing upon the generality of human beings; not those who by long continued indulgence of lowest instincts have lost, or by the hereditary penalties of ancestral vice have hardly ever attained, consciousness of their human birth-right.

In one short sentence Böhme sums up what is in the power of every human being whose spiritual degradation is not yet complete. "Man hath the death in him, whereby he may die unto the evil." ("Signatura Rerum," chap. 16, par. 28.)

Incapable as the deeply corrupted may be of doing or feeling anything right, *ceasing to do evil* remains possible, and when this—the whole of man's share in working out his own salvation—is persisted in, the Divine spirit begins and carries on the new creation of regenerate life. This habitual death to the instigations of the *divided* properties or forms of nature in us, is the indispensable condition of any true life. "The curse of God" (*i.e.*, the

withdrawal of God's holiness—wholeness of action) "is come into the seven forms so that they are in strife and enmity, and one form doth annoy the other, and can never agree unless they all seven enter into death and die unto the self-will. Now, this cannot be except a death come into them, which breaks all their will ; as the Deity in Christ was a death to the human selfhood." (Ibid, chap. 12, par. 30.)

And had not Jesus Christ broken the rebellious will of the human selfhood in a true human soul, this death had not been possible to us : "For the soul having sprung out of the Eternal source, and having its originality out of the eternity, none can redeem it in its own root of eternity, or bring it out of the anger, except there come one who is love itself and be born in its own very birth, that so he may bring it out of the anger and set it in the love in himself, as it was done in Christ." . . . "We know very exactly that we could not be redeemed except the Deity did go into the soul, and bring forth the will of the soul again out of the fierceness in itself, into the light of the meekness ; for the root of life must remain or else the whole creature must be dissolved." ("Three Principles," chap. 25, pars. 6, 8.)

AN ANCESTRAL GHOST.

The following singular story was related to the writer in 1865 by a gentleman who shall be called Major Hammond.

He was born, he said, in an ancient house in one of the Midland counties, a curious place which for many generations had been in the possession of his family. It had originally been surrounded by a moat, which possessed the reputation of being haunted. The story of the haunting was current amongst the country folk ; nevertheless my informant, as child and youth, had heard no description of the ghost. "In fact I did not in those years," he said, "give credit to such tales." During his boyhood the moat was filled up. When the water was drawn off, the workmen came upon a strange thing lying in its bottom, namely, a log of wood, rudely carved, and chained to stakes firmly planted in the mud. As soon as the workmen came upon this thing they, in great confusion, rushed from the spot. They had come upon the ghost's effigy chained and "laid" by seven clergymen, according to the prescribed formula of exorcism and "ghost laying." No one, at first, dared to touch or to remove this effigy from its chains, lest once more the ghost should "walk."

The father of the Major, from home at the time of the discovery, upon his return forthwith ordered it to be removed. The informant well remembers that the uncouth log lay disregarded afterwards for years, in an outhouse.

Time passed on, and the ghost was no more talked about. One night, however, the Major, then grown into a young man, whilst on a visit at home, dreamed a most vivid and frightful dream. The impression was so strong and disagreeable that he found it impossible to again fall asleep. What with the horror which he had passed through and his sleepless night, when he appeared at the breakfast table his countenance betrayed that something was grievously amiss with him. His mother anxiously demanded an explanation from her son.

"It was only a dream, mother," he replied ; "never mind it."

The mother, however, not easily satisfied, pressed the youth again so earnestly for an explanation that, at length, he told her what had been his "vision of the night."

In his dream he had seen a relative, lately deceased, whose death had been caused in a frightful manner, and whose life, unhappily, had been one of violence and dissipation. He beheld the deceased precisely as when still upon earth, only with a countenance expressive of direst misery. The expression of anguish of mind was such that once beheld it could never be forgotten. Beside

the dead man stood a lady clothed in a long white garment of most peculiar fashion. Her tawny-coloured hair hung in heavy, loose, trailing masses around her, nearly to her feet. Her face was beautiful, but sad and stern ; a countenance to turn the on-looker almost to stone, as if she herself had been Medusa. Her keen, pitiless blue eyes were fixed upon her companion in unflinching gaze, as if conveying to him an unspoken judgment. With her right hand she repeatedly struck him with a switch. This lady had no left arm ; it was cut off at the shoulder, leaving only the stump.

No sooner had the son described the left arm as being wanting, than the mother exclaimed with terror, "You saw, then, the White Lady, the ghost of the family ! Some misfortune surely must be about to happen !"

The youth in his dream had thus beheld the ghost, said to have haunted the house in former generations, and the effigy of whom he had seen raised out of the moat ! No misfortune, however, so far as he remembered, appeared to have followed upon his sight of her in this dream. But the dream itself left behind it an indelible impression. The idea remained ever with him, that this ancestress of the family, herself in a state of purgation, was made, by an irresistible decree, the agent of purgatorial suffering for her descendants. Possibly the vision of the stern, avenging spirit had been granted to the young man as a salutary lesson for future guidance.

A. M. H. W.

THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM: CONCESSIONS TO SCEPTICS AND POSTULATA.

"CONCESSIONS TO SCEPTICS.

"I grant of the facts affirmed to be real, many are very strange, uncouth, and improbable ; and that we cannot understand them or reconcile them with the commonly received notions of spirits and the future state.

"I allow that there are many over-credulous persons ; and that frauds, impostures, and delusions have been mixed up and confounded with real facts in Spiritualism.

"I grant that melancholy and imagination have very great force, and beget strange persuasions ; and that many stories of apparitions have been but melancholy fancies.

"I know and yield that there are many strange natural diseases that have odd symptoms, and produce astonishing effects beyond the usual course of nature ; and that these are sometimes quoted as explaining preternatural facts.

"POSTULATA.

"Having made these concessions, the postulata which I demand of my adversaries as my just right are :

"That whether our phenomena occur or not is a question of fact, and not of *a priori* reasoning.

"That matters of fact can only be proved by immediate sense, or by the testimony of others. To endeavour to demonstrate fact by abstract reasoning or speculation is as if a man should attempt to prove by algebra or metaphysics that Julius Cæsar founded the Empire of Rome.

"A certain amount and character of human testimony cannot be reasonably rejected as incredible, or as supporting facts contrary to nature, since all facts within the realm of nature must be natural.

"That which is sufficiently and undeniably proved ought not to be denied because we know not how it can be ; that is because there are difficulties in the conceiving of it ; otherwise, sense and knowledge are gone as well as faith. For the *modus* of most things is unknown, and the most obvious in nature have inextricable difficulties in the conceiving of them."—EPES SARGENT.

A SPIRITUAL ROMANCE, by W. J. Colville, is announced, and "will be, in all essentials, based on actual history : setting forth the leading features of the Spiritual Movement during the last ten years. The relations of Spiritual Truths to the notions of every section of society will be vividly portrayed. The Spiritualists will recognise glimpses of the most prominent workers in the cause, in the actors who appear on the stage thus delineated. All phases of Spiritual Teaching will be introduced, in such a manner that the general reader will be well informed on Spiritualism without intention on his part of such a result."

TEMPORARY OFFICES OF "LIGHT,"
38, GREAT RUSSELL STREET,
BLOOMSBURY, W.O.
(Entrance in Foburn Street.)

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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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.

Light :

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15TH, 1883.

M. AKSAKOW'S EXPOSURE

OF THE

ST. PETERSBURG COMMITTEE ON SPIRITUALISM.

An interesting letter from a Russian Prince (signed Fürst D.K.) appears in the October number of *Psychische Studien*, calling attention to a recently published work by M. Alexander Aksakow. This book is entitled "The Exposed Intrigue (Die entlarvte Absicht), a history of the scientific investigation of mediumistic phenomena by the Committee of the Physical Society of the University of St. Petersburg." It is another record of the inveterate prejudice and even bad faith so frequently betrayed by the materialists who speak in the name of science, when dealing with facts beyond their intelligence, and fatal to their views. In May, 1875, the Society for Physical Researches in the University of St. Petersburg named twelve of its numbers, including Professors Mendélejew (chemistry), Petrow (mechanics), Pétruschewsky (physics), &c., for the investigation in question. Messrs. Aksakow, Butlerow and Wagner were invited to assist. The Committee met and unanimously agreed to hold forty sances up to May, 1876, before coming to any decision; and that every report, document, communication, &c., referring to the subject should be imparted to all the sitters. M. Aksakow came to England and, acting on the advice of Mr. Crookes, and other friends in London, engaged the Petty Brothers and Mr. Clays as mediums for the investigation.

The committee held four sances in November, 1875, with the Pettys, and four in January, 1876, with Mr. Clays; and we are told that the phenomena were fully exhibited. Nevertheless, on March 5th, 1876, the committee resolved, contrary to the agreement, to close its sances. Reports and protocols subsequently issued were not communicated to Messrs. Aksakow, Butlerow, and Wagner, also in contravention of the express condition to which all were parties.

As early as the 15th December, 1875, while the investigation was actually in progress, Professor Mendélejew, who seems to have been the most influential person on the committee, actually called a public meeting to denounce

Spiritualism and mediumship; and on the 20th March, 1876, long, therefore, before the agreed term of investigation and reserve had expired, he obtained the signatures of all the committee (except Aksakow, Butlerow, and Wagner) to a report which is said to have "bristled with errors," and which he forthwith published in the *Golos*. This report elicited a protest, which appeared in the *Moniteur* of St. Petersburg, signed by 150 persons belonging to the educated classes in the Metropolis, against the unwarrantable proceedings of Herr Mendélejew.

The latter then published a book entitled "Materials for an Estimate of Spiritualism," in which, adopting a tone of authority, he declared "Spiritualism and mediumship to be quite unworthy of study and serious examination"; "terribly stupid humbug"; "the Spiritists simpletons; and the medium's charlatans," concluding, "Spiritualism darkens the understanding of the persons who occupy themselves with it, confuses their conceptions, and obliterates their intelligence, as I can certify." M. Aksakow has now replied in the book above mentioned, the publication of which has been unavoidably delayed. Prince D. K. describes it as written by a master hand, in a style attractive and convincing; appealing to documents, and logically yet courteously demonstrating that the Professor's treatment of the subject "is neither scientific nor honourable, and is even contrary to truth." The writer quotes a forcible passage in which M. Aksakow exposes the true character of this pretended judgment, as an attempt to suppress inquiry, and an abuse of the authority of science in the same sense and for the same purpose for which the authority of the Church was abused in past times. The parallel is perfectly just, making due allowance for the diminished resources of intolerance, the spirit of which is precisely the same, whether the dominant preconceptions are those of priests or of exceedingly arrogant men who may, nevertheless, ably and faithfully represent our limited stock of exact physical knowledge. Nor are the means of repression at all dissimilar, save in the inability to persecute in the old-fashioned way. It was not upon the latter method that the power of the Church to retard intellectual advance ever really depended. It was the authority which its judgments commanded in the then state of public opinion that made it really formidable to progress. Now the tables are turned; and the spirit of the priest, passing into the recognised representatives of modern attainments, has at its disposal all the respect and deference transferred from religion to science. And that is a great power.* We did not destroy the effective force of intolerance with the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

In the preface to his book, M. Aksakow puts aside all theories, confining himself to facts, and leaving their explanation to follow their recognition. This has been the usual line of writers who address the general public on the subject. It has not been a very successful one. I doubt if a fact out of all relation to either custom or intelligence can be impressed upon the human mind. On the other hand, it is instructive to see the facility with which evidence will be accepted by a theorist. Dr. Carpenter, for instance, admits some phenomena probably true in fact, but individually resting on evidence which would hardly be passed by the Society for Psychical Research. And this is what is really meant by the plausible but fallacious proposition that evidence should be

* For instance, to be identified with a highly discredited belief is often very injurious to a man's prospects in life. My own experience, not very long ago, supplies an illustration. I was at the Bar, and a friend wished to secure for me the business on my circuit of an important firm of solicitors, then unappropriated, owing to a recent legal appointment. I knew nothing about it, till my friend met me one morning, as I was going down to my chambers, with a volley of humorous imprecations. I soon gathered that it was my notorious connection with Spiritualism of which he was complaining. He told me he had actually obtained the promise of employment he sought on my behalf, and was just leaving the office of the solicitors, when he was recalled by the question, "By the-by, there is a man of that name in the profession who goes in for Spiritualism; your man, of course, is not the same?" My friend had reluctantly to admit that indeed he was, and all his assurances that, this notwithstanding, I was not an absolute fool, could not avert a prompt and emphatic refusal to have anything to do with me.

proportionate to probability. When we speak of the probability of a fact we are thinking of its intelligibility. A short time ago, the *Saturday Review* informed us that science does not concern itself with mysteries; the real question being, of course, whether science has any concern with facts which it is not ready to explain. If not, it is evident that science is either *à priori*, or is unprogressive. When a mind is so constituted or limited as to be unable either to conceive or to admit an hypothesis adequate to the fact, the latter is violently thrown up by a sort of mental indignation similar to the rejection by the stomach of some unwelcome food. Yet the food may not be noxious, only the stomach weak or diseased. So with the mind. And then this mental incapacity is called the "improbability" of the fact. I have come to doubt very much whether the world will ever be converted by the accumulation and critical presentation of mere evidence (though this is indispensable) without a corresponding advance of psychological conceptions. Of course it may be otherwise if (as seems not impossible) the facts become so obtrusive as to take rank in the stock of notorious experience. In the meantime, what we want quite as much as evidence for the public is a few books of the character of "The Unseen Universe," written by men of established reputation, and familiarising the "educated" classes with conceptions into which the facts will fit.

Prince D. K. (who avows himself a Re-incarnationist of the school of Kardec) adverts to "the false circle of mysticism and dogmatic sectarianism in which the Russian Spiritists are too often confined." He mentions an article by M. Aksakow lately published in the Moscow journal *La Russie*, replying to another by Dr. Saloviev entitled "The Heresies of the Russian Aristocracy." The Prince concludes a letter of considerable length with a passage of some eloquence, which I fear might be missed in my translation.

C. C. M.

HINTS FOR INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM.

No. II.

Cultivation of Mediumship.—By Hudson Tuttle.

The prevalent conception of mediumship is: a state of passivity in which the individual can be used by spirit intelligences as an instrument, and as such, of necessity, the medium is wholly irresponsible. As a general statement, this view outlines the truth, but is insufficient and misleading, and conveys an inadequate, unsatisfactory, and erroneous impression of the phases and conditions of spirit control.

The faculty or state of mediumship is not a freak of nature, nor a gift from a Divine source, but like the senses is common to all human beings. As the senses vary in different individuals, and at different times in the same individual, so sensitiveness varies. Some persons have exquisitely keen sight, while in others it is dim; some hear the slightest sounds, while others can hear only the loudest reports; some catch the faintest perfumes, while others are able to sense only the most pungent odours. In the same manner, while all possess the quality of sensitiveness, in some it is dormant; in others indistinctly blended with their physical senses, while in a few it is dominant. It is a faculty capable of cultivation, and also of nearly complete extinction.

There are two methods of its cultivation: The first is what may be called the negative or passive, by which the medium is led to merge his identity in that of the controlling intelligences, and become a mere puppet to do their bidding. Astonishing results are often produced by this method, but the medium yields his individuality, and becomes the sport of unknown and irresponsible influences. The passive condition which allows pure spiritual beings to come *en rapport* with such, opens wide the portals for the

approach of the low and depraved, and what is of more vital consequence, to mortals of every grade! The position which such mediums at last attain is one of greatest danger. They have lost self-control, the power of will, and are as magnetic needles trembling to every influence, good or bad. If a spirit can entrance them and make them utter its thoughts, it can compel them to act as it desires. They may be carefully attended and guarded by good intelligences, and their friends may surround them, but the time will come when the guard will be broken and the lower influences gain sway. The stronger magnetic power of some mortal may lead wide astray and leave the medium a despised victim of the most degrading passions.

Examples of this method will at once suggest themselves to the experienced reader. They are only too many, and the once shining lights now in darkness present the saddest picture in the pages of Spiritualism.

The second method for the cultivation of mediumship is that of individual growth, which may be called the positive method. Individuality is not yielded, nor the will benumbed. The sensitive faculty becomes a means of receptivity, instead of passivity. It is like a new sense, yielding its proper mental stimulus, as the hearing or sight. Such mediumship is strengthened by study and thought. It may come unrecognised, or like a flash of light bear great thoughts to the mind. The great souls standing along the stream of time like beacon flames, lighting the wastes of darkness, were of this class. Thought, intense study, self-absorption, unconsciously to them prepared their minds for the inflowing of the tide of spiritual intelligence, and also for its understanding and radiation.

Often it is said in sorrow or with a sneer, that if the utterances of the trance-speaker are those of Webster or of Parker, they have lost their wits; and that the prescriptions of once eminent physicians are the recipes of quacks and pretenders. Think of this subject for a moment! Would the spirit Webster follow the wanderings of a frail woman, for the purpose of speaking to an audience, affected only with wonder, or his name? Would he not rather find the Senate Chamber the most agreeable, and if he had a measure to suggest, would he not find a receptive mind on the floor, to whom he could impart it?

Is it not correct in reason to suppose that the statesmen of the past will gather at the Capitol, and impart their ideas to those who can at once place them before the country? But it is said in reply, the senators and representatives are not mediums. True, not the passive tools such are popularly supposed to be, but who shall say that the far-reaching statesmanship, which at times cuts through the fog and darkness, is not an impression from a superior source. The spirits of statesmen would be drawn to those who made government a study, and to them would they impart their ideas.

In the same manner the spirit of the skilful physician returns, not to further the selfish ends of some ignorant charlatan, but to the thoughtful practitioner, and astonishes him with the accuracy of diagnosis or effect of prescriptions which the recipient thinks are from his own mind.

The *passive* medium may write or speak in verse, claiming some great poet as the source, to the disgust of those who read or listen, and Spiritualism is scorned for the barrenness of thought and rudeness of expression. Not so fast. The spirit poet would seek the poet, and with responsive soul, enlarge and beautify his thoughts. When the exquisite verse crystallises, and on winged words departs as a messenger to the world, the astonished poet trembles with delight at the beauty of what he supposes his own creation, while really it is a joint product.

Hence will be seen the absolute necessity of thorough culture of all the faculties of the mind conjointly and harmoniously with the receptive or sensitive state

Mediumship should be a state of exalted concentration, hence mediums have great need of self-control and self-reliance. The mistaken ideas of the character and requirements of mediumship have borne bitter fruits, and it is to be hoped that their correct understanding will not only clear away the accumulated rubbish, but bear the cause to higher grounds.

[The following letter contributed by Mr. Tuttle to the *Harbinger of Light* is also to the point, and should be read in conjunction with the above.—ED. OF "LIGHT.]

Mediumship.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—I find in reading the pages of your excellent journal, a constant demand for mediums, and regrets that mediumship is not more common. I am deeply impressed by this state of affairs, to write a brief communication on the subject. The desire for foreign mediums about whom wonderful things are recorded, is well enough, and perhaps should such be secured good results might follow. Yet as the conditions of mediumship are so varied, evanescent, and as yet undetermined, no one can safely predict results. I have watched with great interest the effects of public mediumship, and contrasted it with what may be called that of home growth, and I am in favour of the latter. While public mediumship has its place, and has accomplished a great work, I think the home circle is the more appropriate place for satisfactory investigation.

All are more or less sensitive, and it would be difficult to select six or eight persons, without securing at least one whose sensitiveness would develop into noteworthy mediumship.

Now I have to recommend this to the Australian friends who are seeking for light. Do not wait the coming of some remarkable personage; they may not come, and should they the chances are you will be disappointed. Form a circle of your family, or such friends as sympathise with you. The arbitrary rules laid down are of little force, in regard to numbers, arrangement in the circle, &c. Of course true and worthy persons should be selected, who are in earnest and desirous of arriving at the truth. The number of ladies and gentlemen should be equal and not to exceed ten or twelve, nor less than six. The circle should be formed around a table by resting hands on its top; joining hands is not especially recommended; singing is of benefit by its harmonising influence; an eager, over-expectant state of mind is to be carefully avoided, and in order to do so, light conversation and a happy disposition are to be cultivated. The circles should be held with stated regularity, for it is presumable the engagement will be kept on the part of the spirit-friends, who form a most important element in the result.

We have known circles receiving excellent manifestations, some member being at once developed as a speaking or writing medium, at the first séance, but such a result is not to be expected. The members ought not to become discouraged if they meet many times without receiving any manifestations. The spirit-friends are quite as anxious to give as we are to receive, but they are as unacquainted with the laws of control, perhaps, as we, and time is necessary. A person may have the possibilities of sensitiveness, yet uncultivated, and it is only by means of sitting that a higher sensitiveness can be gained. A certain relation must become established between the medium and the spirit.

Then an important element of success is patience; we became acquainted with a circle of twelve earnest people who met once each week for a year before they received the least sign, and then it seemed as though a flood of manifestations came. The fact was their earnestness was a bar against them, which required time to wear away.

There is probably a medium in every family in Australia, and if proper means be employed to develop their latent faculty, the effort will be repaid many fold.

There is far more satisfaction in sitting in a circle with relatives and known friends, than with strangers. When will our departed friends come, if not to the home circle? If they come and communicate with us through strangers, it is because they have no choice, they not being able to approach the dearer friends. It is a duty we owe them to provide the means for their communion with us by forming home circles. Then we shall find that the vacant chair holds unseen the dear one gone, with heart tender and true, anxious to make known to us his presence.

HUDSON TUTTLE.

Berlin Heights, Ohio, U.S.A.,

July 24th, 1883.

VOICES IN THE AIR.

I have, bound up with other curiosities of occult literature, a pamphlet, published in London in 1706, entitled, "A Wonderful Account from Orthez, in Bearn, and the Cevennes, of Voices heard in the Air, Singing the Praises of God, in the Words and Tunes of the Psalms used by those of the Reformed Religion, at the time of their cruel and inhuman Persecution, and the Destruction of their public Worship, by the French King. Credibly attested by the Certificates of Monsieur Jerien, and many other Ministers and People, Inhabitants of those Places, who heard the said Singing in the Air, which some of them call the Singing of Angels."

As I do not remember to have seen this record elsewhere cited, I will give the substance of the account, which is too long to be copied entirely. (Compare it with a similar manifestation which brought comfort to the monks of the Charterhouse, on the eve of the suppression of their establishment. Froude's History of England, ed. 1870, Vol. II. c. 9.)

It seems that the report of these mysterious singings had been already prevalent after the suppression of the public worship of the Protestants at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in many places, before M. Jerien, one of the banished French ministers, made from Holland a particular inquiry into the evidence for the phenomenon at Orthez and parts of the Cevennes. Several original testimonies of persons of credit and repute, who themselves heard the voices, are printed at length, as well as much general hearsay. The singing was heard usually in the night-time, but occasionally at mid-day. It attracted multitudes of people, who resorted every night to the parts of the city where it was to be heard. These assemblies were prohibited by the magistrates. Not only the Protestants heard it, but even bigoted Papists, as they were constrained to admit, ascribing it (of course) to the devil. Every precaution is said to have been taken against artifice; but the character of the phenomenon, and the places where it was heard, made this supposition quite inadmissible. The singing is described as up in the air, consisting of many voices in harmony. The tunes were identified as those of the psalms and hymns usually sung in the Protestant churches, and many of the witnesses professed to distinguish the words. "I confess," says one of the witnesses, "I only heard a charming music that represented a great number of voices that agreed exceedingly well, but I could not distinguish the words; there was one that raised his voice above the rest, and made himself observed when the rest had done. After I had a long while heard the melody with rapture, I perceived that these voices drew off, and abated by little and little, till they were insensibly lost in the air. The same evening, returning to my own house, and discoursing at the gate with many of my neighbours of the marvellous things we had heard; on a sudden the same voices again saluted our ears, and filled us with new delight for a quarter of an hour, and then withdrew as before. The Tuesday following, in the

evening (being calm), being with one of my relatives at the door of my own house, we both heard a number of voices in the air, which resounded with strength, and made themselves heard with greatest clearness." One of the witnesses estimated the voices at two or three thousand. "After the church at Orthez was razed to the ground, this singing ceased, till about October following, and then was again heard by many of that city, and by many that came out of the country to market, and stayed all night on purpose. It ordinarily happened about the same hour, between eight and nine at night; some heard the words, others the tune of the psalms; and there is scarce a house in Orthez in which some of the family hath not heard it. . . . To conclude, it is impossible to doubt of a truth, which the far greatest part of the inhabitants of Orthez are able to certify, and to which the Parliament of Bearn have also given their testimony by a decree, which forbids men to hear these psalms, or to say they have heard them, on the forfeiture of 500 crowns, and the Councils of Orthez published these ordinances in their city." (That is how unacceptable evidence was dealt with in the seventeenth century. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same spirit is alive now; though it is the bigotry of a shallow "enlightenment" that issues its decrees; and its penalties—ridicule and scorn and pseudo-scientific denunciation—are more dreaded by many than would be "the forfeiture of 500 crowns.")

"The same thing hath happened in the Cevennes. As this country is full of mountains, where there are echoes, which multiply and return the voice, and as night assemblies have continually been made there, where they sing psalms with a loud voice, therefore the relation of singings [in the air] may seem the more doubtful. But the affair of Orthez, which is a close country and without mountains, being well proved, I see no reason" (says M. Jerien) "to question that of Cevennes; and shall therefore without scruple produce the certificates which come from that country."

"But as to the business of singing the praises of God," writes one of M. Jerien's correspondents from the Cevennes, "it is necessary that I speak to you of the miracle which makes so much noise in this country. Which is, that since the entire loss of our churches and our pastors, there has been heard in the air, voices and sounds of instruments, very melodious; and that which is most extraordinary is that many persons distinguish the tunes of the psalms. I can assure you of the truth thereof, since I myself have distinguished more than thirty. It has been told me that my brother, M. de Mont Vaillant, distinguishes them all perfectly well. . . . I had forgotten to tell you that the noise of a drum is here heard so clearly, that nobody can doubt thereof, no more than about the singing of psalms; for there are so many persons of good understandings convinced thereof that we ought to give up ourselves to the power of truth. I do avow that the thing passes all imagination; but be assured that all care imaginable has been taken to prevent delusion."

I have given but fragments of the evidence printed in this pamphlet. C. C. M.

INTERESTING MANIFESTATIONS.

Since the publication of Mr. S. C. Hall's account of "Interesting Manifestations," in our issue of November 17th, he has received the following letter bearing upon the subject, and has kindly forwarded it to us for publication:—

DEAR MR. HALL,—Thank you very much for sending me "LIGHT," containing your very interesting letter. It has given me great comfort, for I have long seen the same sort of things, and have been puzzled to account for them, half fearing that the lights were the imaginings of my own brain, but I am learning now to distinguish between the two.

There is a white light, which seems to come from my own eyes in regular beats sometimes, but every night I see a great deal of clear light, filled with innumerable pin points of greater light, and flashes like miniature lightning and sudden stars, and across the light go backwards and forwards faint shadows; and

one night I saw for one instant, close to me, a lovely face behind the moving air, which was like a cloud over it. I do not know the face—a woman's—but I saw the shining brown hair in a low knot at the back of the head, and the perfect forehead, nose, and mouth, and wonderful clear eyes—all like a living face, not shadowy. Your letter makes me hope that I, too, shall be privileged to see my dearest husband, who, I know, is with me continually. Why, even as I write in broad daylight, a beautiful white star flashes out before me, and often I see an intensely blue star. My medium (my daughter) is gone, so I have no scances, but the lights increase more and more. Ah! how good is God to give us so much.—I am, dear Sir, yours very truly,

November 23rd.

Mrs. A. M. Howitt Watts has also written to Mr. S. C. Hall as follows, respecting his recent article on "Children":—

I have just finished reading your most touching and truly heavenly-spirited paper on "Children" in "LIGHT," and cannot resist my impulse to tell you how beautiful and true I feel it!

The words given from my dear father are very beautiful, and from their likeness to himself I recognise at once his identity in them. He loved children with all his heart, and nothing would be more accordant with his spirit than to comfort you by speaking of your charming daughter. This paper of yours I trust will bring conviction to many hearts.

In the set of spirit communications which my parents received (many years ago), professing to be from their children in Heaven (reference to which is made in my biographical sketch of my dear father), there are descriptions of the life in Heaven, identical with the glimpses you give in this paper. Infants who had passed from earth—having only breathed its atmosphere for a few hours or days—were there encountered as spirits of a most innocent and celestial order—having gone on maturing in the sunshine of God, and under the instructions of angels, and awaiting reunion with their relatives in the completed circle of love. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard (fully), nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for those who love Him." But we do have glimpses indeed granted us: and not far-off glimpses either.

Of course you know Miss Theobald's little book about children in Heaven—one of the series called "Heaven Opened." Her descriptions are also in entire accord with yours.

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 Popular Life of Buddha.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—After the sympathetic, and I must add highly flattering, notices of the "Popular Life of Buddha" that have been printed in "LIGHT," it seems to me that I must appear to their authors (the editor and "M.A. (Oxon)") the most ungrateful of mortals if I utter a word of protest; but I wish to point out that the work has a higher aim than merely to correct the Buddhism of the Christian Knowledge Society.

For many years I had studied the question, what were the ancient "mysteries," and the ancient "wisdom"? In this fascinating quest I had ransacked many works on the Rosicrucians, the Gnostics, the Kabbalists, and the Magicians. I had dived into T. Taylor and the Mysteries of Eleusis, and seen the "Apocalypse," "Isis," and "Freemasonry" unveiled over and over again. Glimpses of light flashed about here and there, no doubt; but when the "Adept," the "Occultist," the "Esoteric" teacher approached the Adytum of the temple he always put on a look of alarming profundity and announced that some secrets were too great for mortal utterance. This proceeding suggested a doubt that was rife when a certain lawyer was Chancellor of England: "It is impossible for anyone," said Pitt, "to be so wise as Thurlowe looks!" I must confess that until I was fortunate enough to read M. Foucaux's translation of the *Lalita Vistara*, or *Life of Buddha*, I made little progress in my occultist studies; and it was not until I had read it carefully two or three times over when preparing my most recent volume that its full importance dawned upon me. I consider it by far the most valuable work that the student of ancient mysteries can study.

In very plain language, the work itself makes this claim. It professes to "reveal" the "secrets" of the Adepts or Buddhas. It professes to shew a mortal how to gain "supernatural powers," the "divine vision," calmness, purity, self-mastery. It professes to shew him how to gain the eight spiritual, or as modern mystics would say, the eight *interior* states, the "Kusa mat of Indra, the Conqueror" ("he who overcometh" of the Apocalypse), the "Kusa mat of Brahmā," and so on. (Foucaux's translation, pp. 7, 401, et seq.) Oddly enough, too, it exhausts

all the vocabulary of Christian mystics and talks of the "mystical annihilation," "the mystical death," like Madame Guyon and St. François de Sales. My work is an attempt to give a digest of it, elucidated with extracts from other prominent Buddhist and Brahmanical mystical works; but I recommend everybody to study the work itself in Foucaux's translation.

From the earliest days, man knew that he had a great destiny before him. This was to unite himself at length, without loss of individuality, with the Great Spirit of the Universe. Thus a delicate problem arose, namely, how to find some analogy or symbolic connection between the bifurcate mammal, man, and the splendid mountains and seas and stars that clothed the Great Spirit. The solution was twofold:—

1. The mystic got to image God as a transcendental man in whom vicegerency of the universe, the fatherly and motherly principles, and the seven legions of immortal spirits were combined. This is the Adam Kadmon of the Kabbalist, who united in his person the ten Sephiroths. This is also the Purusha of India.

2. The second solution took for symbol that portion of heaven seen by night with the ecliptic for rim and the Dragon for apex, and called it the Temple of God. This accounts for the ecliptic being the point of departure for all the symbolism of the mystic. In Buddhism he is called, "He who has turned in the Zodiac." The early Christians according to Bingham were called "Temples of God." The culminating point of the year was the Feast of the Tabernacle, the Feast of the Tree. It was feigned that an imaginary diameter passing through Virgo (the Indian Tree) divided the circle of the ecliptic into two kingdoms, or cities of the soul, the Kāmaloka, the domain of the mystic Jezebel, and the Brahmalo, the Apocalyptic New Jerusalem. Buddhism throws a valuable light upon the way in which the Essenes and early Christians viewed these two mystic domains, and on an infinity of mystical ideas. In one city was wealth, luxury, and rich food, palaces, jewelled wives, the cringing of courtiers and the proffered sceptre of Kapila vastu. The other city promised famine, beggary, and nakedness, "blows with a stick," say the Buddhist books, and "persecutions without end," the terrible visions of the fasting ascetic, the forms that in marble and jade still grotesquely guard the portals of Christian and Buddhist temples. An absolute line of demarcation was drawn between these two cities by Christ and Buddha because each knew the peril of attempting to enter the mystic portal without the pantacles and tetra grammations of continence and self-mastery. The "mystic contemplation," as Clement of Alexandria calls it, the self mesmerism of Yoga that induces visions and occult powers, was under each system merely means to an end. Buddha's movement was not Quietism but a protest against the Quietism that he found in India. His "beggars" in rags were ordered to march forth and preach Dharma to every nation under Heaven. A second school of Buddhism by-and-by arose which restored the ancient Quietism and Occultism. If the "Brothers" of Tibet are due, as claimed, to the movement of Tsoukhapa, they must belong to this school. I know that my exposition of Buddhism is called "Exoteric" by the Theosophists. I might turn the tables and shew Tibetan books which lay down the mystifications which the tyro is to be first of all amused with, before he is told much. I will, however, content myself with pointing out that my "Exoteric" Buddhism won India and the "Esoteric" Buddhism lost it.

ARTHUR LILLIE.

A Perplexing Experience.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—May I send a few words to your excellent paper, with a view to throwing light upon the perplexity of your contributor, "E. D."

His patience in continuing to sit for writing under such annoying difficulties deserves high praise. As my own experience was very similar, I will briefly relate it, and trust to your kindness to insert my remarks.

A few years ago, without the least expectation or wish on my part, my hand and arm were controlled to write. It would be tedious to relate all the particulars, suffice it to say that I was seized upon and made to write, but only the most confused stuff. I came to the conclusion that I would consult an experienced Spiritualist who had written books, automatically. I did so, and he very kindly advised me to put myself into the hands of a developing medium, and he gave me the name of one. I followed the advice, and after (I think) two or three sittings with the medium, I could write quite legibly in what I should describe as a large round hand, not my own writing at all. My writings used to remind me of telegrams—no stops, &c.

By this means I got a coherent message from a departed friend, and when it was finished the control left me, and has not returned.

If "E. D." will try the plan, I think he would at least get to know if the spirits had anything to say through him.

As to "hellish influences," "the devil," &c., it is well known that undeveloped spirits often call themselves freely by the name of that mythical personage, as they use the names of Robert Burns or Martin Luther. They seem to think it makes them important to use the names of distinguished persons.—I remain, Sir,

ONE OF YOUR SUBSCRIBERS AND ASSOCIATE OF S. P. R.

Hair Growing from Casts.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Signor Damiani will be interested to learn that the above is by no means a singular phenomenon, nor is he the first who has observed it. The fact has been repeatedly noticed, and has given rise to some interesting discussion by correspondents in "Notes and Queries." Not to occupy your space with the pros and cons, and the various suggestions offered, I will give Signor Damiani the following references which I have noted on the subject:—*Notes and Queries*, Fourth Series, Vol. VI., p. 524; Vol. VII., pp. 66, 83, 130, 222, 290, 315, 476; Vol. VIII., p. 335; Vol. XI., pp. 106, 186. Fifth Series, XI., p. 507; XII., p. 293 (in which last place appears a letter on the subject from Mr. Henry G. Atkinson). "Is it likely," writes "G. H. H." (last reference but one), "that a distinguished sculptor and myself are labouring under delusion in half believing that human hair grows long after death, and under the following peculiar circumstances? The friends of a nobleman who died about five years ago, employed the sculptor to make a bust of their deceased relative. For this end a mould was taken, shortly after death, of the head and face, and from this mould a cast was made. It came out clean, and with no sign of hair adhering to it. About three years ago the sculptor first mentioned to me as a matter of common occurrence, not only observed by himself, but by others, that hair often grew from casts. I smiled at the idea, of course, as many of your readers will doubtless. Taking up a cast—the one referred to—and holding it to the light, I saw numerous hairs, about half an inch long, springing in, apparently, a natural manner from the head and face, chiefly on the temples and eyebrows. A week ago we examined this cast again, and we both at once remarked that the hair had increased in length, particularly over the eyebrows. I may add that we examined other casts, made under similar conditions, and found hair on nearly all of them. I enclose, with his permission, the sculptor's name."

I shall cut out Signor Damiani's communication in "LIGHT," and forward it to *Notes and Queries*, as the latest contribution to this curious discovery, though I am myself far from attributing the fact to "spiritual" agency. C. C. M.

Resurrection.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have constantly read "LIGHT" since the first copy was issued, and have never found a number without interest. May I ask you to let your readers know of a book lately put into my hands, which I am convinced will give immense satisfaction to the students of Spiritualism in its highest aspects. It is by the Regius Professor of Divinity, Cambridge, B. Westcott—"The Gospel of the Resurrection." A short quotation may allow your readers to judge of what manner of book it is. (P. 50, paragraph 28) "While we admit that the tendency of a scientific age is adverse to a living belief in miracles, we see that this tendency is due, not to the antagonism of science and miracle, but to the neglect, and consequent obscurity by science, of that region of thought (in which the miraculous finds scope). And even here, the power of feeling makes itself most distinctly felt, against the power of abstract reason. Exactly when material views of the Universe seem to be gaining ground, and an absolute ascendancy; popular instinct finds expression, now in this form of extravagant credulity, and now in that. Arrogant phisicism is met by superstitious spiritualism; and there is right on both sides. The harmony of a true faith finds a witness to its fulness in this independent assertion of the antithetic elements, which it tempers and refines. There are causes which impress a very distinct character on different cycles of miracles, and on the form which the belief in the miraculous assumes at different periods. This investigation is full of interest, and contributes in a remarkable degree to illustrate the progressive forms of revelation. If miracles are neither unnatural, nor impossible, it follows that the record of them cannot be inherently incredible.

"Is the present and the finite the definite limit of (not only the mode) but of the object of humanity? Is there no faculty by which a man can contemplate the temporal a true image of the eternal? Is there no fact which unites the seen and unseen? Can the soul reach forward to fuller forms of being?—Can it with joy regard its proper heritage, a future appearance in the fulness of a glorified humanity before God?"

J. E. F.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN'S APPOINTMENTS.—Mrs. Hardinge Britten will lecture in Manchester, Tuesday, January 6th, 1884; in Newcastle, Sunday, January 13th and 20th; and Manchester, the 27th inst. Also in Liverpool and Manchester on the alternate Sundays of February.

GATESHEAD-ON-TYNE.—On Sunday evening last the Spiritualists of Gateshead listened to a farewell lecture on the "Immortality of Man," which was given in the Central Buildings, by Mr. Henry Burton, who leaves during the week for Queensland. The lecturer from three premises, viz., nature, reason, and revelation, proved admirably that man enjoyed an innate immortality and that behind all evanescent forms of matter there ever existed distinctive permanency. One word expresses the influence of the lecture; it was "masterly." Affectionate and hearty votes of thanks were accorded to Mr. Burton at the close.

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

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

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

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

Is it Conjuring?

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

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

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

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

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

(Continued from page 11.)

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