

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 167.—VOL. IV.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1884.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

This journal is not a suitable vehicle for any detailed account of Mr. Watts' life of his father.* Those who find themselves in sympathy with that age which the author suggestively describes as an age of Sentiment eventuating in an age of Taste, in the course of which development sham sentimentalism, clad in tawdry and stilted imagery, gave place to tender and true feeling in its appropriate dress of natural and refined language, will find in Mr. Watts a guide thoroughly equipped, and competent at all points. They will be instructed as he discourses of the great personalities that clustered round his father, and will read with pleasure letters and anecdotes of W. Lisle Bowles, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, Sidney Walker, and Winthrop Macworth Praed among men of letters; of Maclise and Constable among artists; of Dr. Stanley Lees Giffard, first editor of the *Standard*; and of the eccentric author of "Lacon," the Rev. Charles Caleb Colton; to say nothing of other stars of equal or inferior magnitude. Their way through this epoch will be illuminated by many a wise saying, by many a touch of delicate and dry humour, which, unless they be dull indeed, will call up a not infrequent smile of satisfaction. But it is not my province to dwell on all this. I have a far humbler end in view—to extract, namely, and to preserve for the readers of "LIGHT" those indications of a belief or record of an experience which the author holds in common with them, and which some narratives in his volumes pleasingly illustrate.

Even in the volumes which deal with times that now seem to us so distant—for events move rapidly, and our developments have been of the swiftest since this century entered on its second or third decade—even here we find a hint of the practical acquaintance of the author and his family with Spiritualism. His mother writing to an intimate friend, Mrs. Newnham (vol. ii., p. 319), says, "I read a good deal in my small way, and take a vivid interest in the social and political questions, and even philosophies of the day, yes, including Spiritualism. I read all that comes out on it, and cannot doubt the facts, though I am often surprised at some of its revelations. I have seen

* "Alaric Watts: a Narrative of his Life." By his son, Alaric Alfred Watts. 2 vols. (R. Bentley and Son, 1884.)

some extraordinary things at the house of a friend of my son, Mr. Virtue Tebbs: the medium, a Miss Nichols." Mrs. Watts, indeed, was by extraction, a member of a religious body, the Society of Friends, to whom the things of the spirit could hardly come in other than familiar guise when the first shock of their phenomenal presentation had passed. The Friends were, by meditation, and by a habit of silent communing with the world of spirit, prepared to understand its more refined and purely spiritual manifestations on the plane of matter. Visions and mental impressions were not strange to them: how then could they be surprised, if in an extraordinary epoch of the race extraordinary evidence of spiritual power were vouchsafed? Very early in these volumes we are introduced to Mrs. Wiffen, a widow, and member of the Society of Friends, who lived at Woburn. Not far off, at Crawley, were living Mr. and Mrs. B., also Friends. The subjoined narrative gives a good instance of the spiritual impressions which the quiet meditative lives of the Friends fitted them to receive.

"The evening meal was just over at the Widow Wiffen's one night at the close of the year when my grandmother—for such she was" (says the author)—"to the surprise of her children, bade them put up in a basket a supply of cold meat, bread, butter, and cheese, and a bottle of home-made wine, and announced that she was going to Crawley. It was done as she desired, and she started on her way, sure only that, from some cause which she could not fathom, it was then and there her duty to obey a strange impulse which prompted her to carry to the Friends at Crawley the materials for their evening meal. As she approached the house, after a dreary walk, her courage began to fail her. There was no personal intimacy between her and Mr. and Mrs. B. They were in some sort in a superior position of life to her own, and she had no reason to suppose that a visit from her would be acceptable at such an hour, still less that they could require anything within her power to communicate. She hesitated, half resolved to return as she came, when she observed a light underneath the door, shewing that the family had not retired to rest. She summoned courage and knocked. On being admitted, she found the Friends seated by the fire, with the table laid for supper, but no food upon it. 'I have come to take my supper with you,' she said, depositing her basket on the table. They looked at each other, and burst into tears. It subsequently transpired that their little capital had become gradually exhausted; one economy had succeeded another, until on that particular evening, so reduced had they become, as to be without food or the means of procuring it. It appeared on comparing notes that at about the time the impression had presented itself to my grandmother to start from Woburn with their supper, they, under some corresponding impression, had deliberately prepared the table as usual for their evening meal, and were awaiting the issue."

Among the erratic geniuses who figure in this book, one of the most conspicuous is Sidney Walker. A contemporary at Eton of Macaulay, Praed, and Moultrie, he was a most precocious boy—a most unpleasant boy, I should think. Any child who read aloud the History of England at the

age of two, and at ten had his pockets stuffed with his own translations of the Odes of Anacreon, must have been an unpleasant and portentous phenomenon. One is not surprised to learn that his career at Cambridge is described as "infructuous;" nor that when, shortly after, he is introduced to Mr. Watts, that gentleman finds him "a most pitiable object; nervous to a degree which seemed to shake his whole frame when addressed by a stranger; almost blind, feeble, and ungraceful in his gait, dragging himself sideways like a crab." This was the result of a system of training, or rather of the absence of all restraint on a precocious mind, which displays incredible ignorance or carelessness on the part of his parents. Whether his nervous sensitiveness deceived him or not, he became towards the close of life "almost without any power of will whatsoever." He believed in his later days that he was subject to the predominating influence and control of a "spirit" which continually withstood him, and rendered him often powerless to carry out his ideas and to do work which he felt able and inclined to perform. "What," he says in one of his letters, "can a man do who cannot open a book without being liable to have it, as it were, taken from him before he has read two pages?" Again, "My demon, who, by the way, leads me a bitter life, is most unpropitious to letter-writing!" Of this, his friend, Derwent Coleridge, says, "Monomania would, of course, be the name given to this strange hallucination; but I could never myself detect the slightest symptom of cerebral disturbance. It was impossible" (he adds) "not to be reminded of the modern notion of spiritual possession, as an actual form or cause of insanity, or what passes for such at the present day." It is impossible, too, I may add, not to be thankful that spirit-guidance or control, or whatever it is proper to call Mr. Walker's special and peculiar affection, does not often take a form so objectionable.

In the closing scenes of their lives both Mr. and Mrs. Alaric Watts would seem to have received spiritual premonition of the great change that was approaching. The author touchingly describes how towards the close of March, 1864, Mr. Watts came into his office. "I remarked an expression in his face that a little perplexed me as being something new and strange. . . . It was as though another and an older man were looking out of his eyes. . . . Two or three days after, and before we had again met, he was seized with a slight stroke of paralysis, and had an awkward fall. He rallied speedily, and was soon out of his room. In the interval, a circumstance, if I may so describe it, happened which evidently made an impression on him, and which he mentioned to me at the time as I sat by his bedside. 'You know,' he said, 'the convent bell which rings every day at noon?' I knew it perfectly. 'This morning after it had ceased I heard a voice which said, "This is thy passing-bell." It was a clear distinct voice, and I looked round in surprise, expecting to see that your mother was in the room. There was no person.' He passed away on the third day following this warning. Mrs. Watts, in a different manner, was impressed as to the nearness of her departure. One morning, at the commencement of her illness, but before any apprehensions were entertained of the result, she called her daughter-in-law into her room and said to her, 'I have seen Alaric. He came to me last night in a dream, and said, 'I have taken a house for us, with which I am sure you will be pleased. There is only one thing that you will not like—it is eight miles' drive from the railway terminus.' It was in the early morning, before sunrise of the ninth day from that on which her illness had pronounced itself, that she reached her new house and joined him. So I remember well, almost immediately before my dear father passed away, he spoke of the little house, 'a nice, comfortable little house,' with which he seemed much gratified, and which he referred to more than once. I thought then that he was speaking of the little house in which he had lived for the last quarter of a century. I know now that he was speaking of the 'house not made with hands' to which he was making ready to depart, the place that had, doubtless, been prepared for him."

"M. A. (OXON.)."

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.]

Natural Objects Existant.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I can hardly hope to succeed where the late Mr. Hinton failed, but I can assure Mrs. Penny generally that Idealism leaves the world just as real as ever it was believed to be before people fancied it necessary to formulate the belief. Then the trouble began, and did not cease (as it should have done, as far as *this* point was concerned) when Berkeley came forward to vindicate the common-sense opinion against the fictions of the philosophers. If Mrs. Penny will recall to mind, or read again, the dialogues between Hylas and Philonous, in Berkeley's works, she will surely see what is meant.

All that Idealism asserts is that there is nothing *behind* the objective world of sense but just the law and process of its construction, which are shewn to belong to intelligence. But let us suppose for a moment a real "thing in itself" standing *out there* (space being also supposed an absolute reality). I think everyone will admit that to quite differently constituted percipients this thing in itself would *appear* quite differently. But to each the *appearance* would be the "object." According to visual differences, this object would be close at hand or miles off; of different sizes, of one colour or another; according to tactual or muscular differences, it would be hard or soft, and so on. Heterogeneous percipients would be living each in a different world of his own. No single object of one would be at all identifiable by another. The most elementary psychology is able to demonstrate that, though probably no one, judging even from the variations of perception which result from morbid conditions, would doubt it. But what is left, as the real substratum underlying these "apparent" differences? For a long time philosophers tried to distinguish between the "secondary" qualities of matter, such as colour, taste, hardness or softness, &c., which were admitted to be sensations of the percipient, and the so-called "primary" qualities, such as extension, impenetrability, &c. Berkeley, however, shewed that these were equally subjective, and now nothing was left for the "thing in itself" but a purely abstract "substance" without any definable quality, except the mere power of affecting the senses of percipients, and producing their "phenomena." Berkeley said that these phenomena were just what everyone except a philosopher meant by the real world outside him. The "thing in itself" became a mere hypothetical cause of our perceptions, while the *object* of everyone's belief is just what he and others *see*. Kant followed with the demonstration that Space and Time themselves are subjective forms, and that for the construction of any "object" whatever the formal constitution of the understanding is indispensable. That Kant shewed it to be also *adequate* I do not quite assert; he himself assuming a something "given," which, however, as known, and even in the first consciousness prior to the knowledge of it as object, is still sensation. It is not worth while to go further into the subject till we know what we are disputing about. If Mrs. Penny means the world as perceived, Idealism does not disturb it in the least. If she means some unknown substance, the question assumes a different aspect; but then those who maintain that must drop the appeal to "common sense," and enter on systematic metaphysics. I observe Mrs. Penny seems to suppose that idealists concede a greater "reality" to the body than to other objects. That is entirely a mistake. I recognise the value of her contributions from Böhme's writings, but they do not in the slightest degree affect the idealist position, when that is rightly understood.

C. C. M.

Idealism and Science.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

I have read Mr. Haughton's rejoinder to "C. C. M." and should like to explain to him and other "realists" that the legitimate conclusions of science (wherein she does not obtrude beyond her own province) are absolutely unaffected by the philosophy of idealism. Whatever may be discovered (or rather conjectured) about the ether that fills space, we are as much prepared to accept as the most "common-sense"

partisan of the existence of dead matter can be. Neither Kant, nor any other idealist, ever dreamed of denying the "reality" of space, and all that it may contain: nor is the question of its "ideality" at all affected by that other question of whether it is a vacuum, or a plenum. If there were no fixed stars with definite distances between them, of course a part of our idea of space would be lost; but it does not follow, as Mr. Haughton supposes, that if there are these phenomena, space must be outside, and not inside the intelligences who have the conception of it. Why, in short, should space be more "real" outside conception than inside it? What we idealists deny is not the "reality" of matter at all—we are not such lunatics as all that. If Berkeley had said there "was no matter," Byron would have been quite right in poking fun at him, but—poor man—he said nothing of the sort! All he said was that matter is not outside intelligence, but inside. How does that take away from its "reality"? What we say is that if it were outside all intelligence (not, observe, outside yours or mine), then it would not be "real," it would be nothing; but that it is very "real," because its substance is intelligent spirits, or persons—who alone are substantial; it is our object, an object to human, Divine, angelic intelligence, even to the higher orders of animals below man (including Mrs. Penny's dogs, cats, and mice). When Johnson struck his stick on the ground to prove that there was matter, he proved only what no one ever denied, will, or can deny, that there was an extended coloured surface, and associated with this a muscular sensation, suggesting resistance to one's own exerted force. That this proved a power external to his own I full-admit, but it did not prove that this power belonged to a metaphysical abstraction called "dead matter"—or even that it was another metaphysical abstraction called "blind Force," inherent in no substantial, intelligent agent whatsoever—it did not prove that Colour, a sensation, or a coloured surface implying space, which is a mental construction (mostly arrived at, as J. Mill has shewn, by muscular motion of the limbs and eyes), are outside all conceiving and feeling intelligences whatsoever. A blind man passes a hand or foot along a surface, and so gets his idea of space; a seeing man perceives coloured surfaces because his optic nerve is in good order; but if you strike him on the eye he will also see colours. Now a colour must have some extent, or quantity, and to get the sensation of hard or soft by touch you must also have the concept of extent, so you cannot well separate the two elements of secondary and primary qualities in thought. Therefore, if a sensation that is excited in you when someone hits you in the eye can scarcely be attributed to a dead stone (because it is a discriminated one, it is a feeling of blue, or green, or yellow, which implies a comparison of sensations belonging to one and the same conscious person, who remembers his former sensations, and compares them), neither can the concept of extent or space be attributed thereto—for this also involves discrimination, and classification of ideas on the part of one and the same knowing person, remembering and comparing and judging that this coloured or hard surface is of such and such extent. Is a dead stone up to that? A dead stone is yours, or an angel's, or a demon's, or a dog's, or a god's idea—involving hardness, (therefore don't stumble over it!)

The only pseudo-scientific conclusion that idealism disproves is the doctrine that blind Forces existed long before consciousness of any kind, and developed gradually into it, consciousness being destined finally to resolve into Force again. This doctrine of Herbert Spencer, and Hartmann, in the West, as of the Thibetan Occultists in the East (made known to us by Mr. Sinnett and the *Theosophist Journal*), is certainly inconsistent with idealism, for the latter holds Force to be a concept pertaining necessarily to conscious intelligence, therefore non-existent before it, and, therefore, of course, unable to develop into it. But I am sure Mrs. Penny, and, I presume, Mr. Haughton as a clergyman, are not over-anxious to defend it. (So I think the latter's allusion to the Eastern ascetics as the prompters of "C.C.M.'s" idealism a rather unfortunate one!)

But now I must say a word on the extremely interesting letter of Mrs. Penny. One is very glad to know what the great seer Böhme believed on this question. I always knew he was not a pure idealist. Let it be remembered that I am speaking throughout this letter for myself—I am not professing now to follow Kant, or to bind him to my conceptions—except so far as I have tried to defend the more general position of idealism. I am aware that idealists, like other people, differ. Mrs. Penny, then, following Böhme, attributes a spiritual Ego to every organism, or atom of life, however lowly—a *fortiori* to "a cabbage." Now, for my own part, I find myself in perfect accordance with her (as with all that she here quotes from Böhme,) because she carefully limits her assertion, I observe, to the organic world. Every organism, however lowly, is an (undeveloped) spiritual Ego, and therefore has, I suppose, according to its measure, its own sensations—while some extra-human organisms have perceptions of a material world—though, unless conscious of resistance to its own force, I presume that an organised creature could only have subjective sensations, and not objective perceptions. But, this being granted, how does this disprove the position of idealism? It only proves that animals and vegetables, as well

as men, have, so far, a "common constitution," that they can all feel—and, in some cases, even perceive. If that is proved of other kinds of intelligences also—as Mrs. Penny rightly argues is now proved by Spiritualism—this still does not disprove idealism. A blind man's world is certainly not that of a seeing man. Red is to him like the sound of a trumpet. (So it is to the poet, by the way!) Is a dog's world the same as ours? Like it, but perhaps not the same. Surely an oyster's, or anemone's, or a flower's, is not the same as ours?

However, I see that Mrs. Penny (in one of her last sentences) does include "a stone" in her doctrine of the spiritual selfhood of all the world. Well, if you regard a stone as *living* I have no objection; indeed, I too regard it as living; only I think it unphilosophical to consider any inorganic thing as an individuality; that is the privilege of the organic. Occultists, like savages, are wrong here. A stone, or other inorganic thing, is indeed living, for even it is the manifestation of reasonable, co-operant, teleological, and therefore intelligent forces or powers, but it is not an unity, an individuality, it is not in itself a cycle of mutually implied and supporting parts, or organs with mutually necessary functions. Thus the food makes chyle and blood, the blood makes tissue and bone; but to the making of the blood itself the organs are necessary. A stone is but arbitrarily regarded by us as an unit, though it is a temporary phase of the manifestation to us of certain rationally working and reason appealing powers. But what may be the Egos, or personalities, the individualities behind this manifestation we do not and cannot know. Only the subjectivity of the organic, as being in harmony with our own actual condition, can be at all conjectured by us in its own true nature—the inorganic at present must remain a mystery; the conceptions it gives us are only symbols and manifestations of some unknown individualities behind them. These bodies of spirits, as they must be, may not to themselves appear as they do to us, I suppose; but when the concepts of them are transferred to us, they appear to us as the work of inorganic or physical forces with which we are familiar, because only so can we apprehend them; our moral and intellectual constitution being adapted thus to perceive them. But if our *spiritual* eyes were opened, very different indeed would they seem to us. The elements in the stone are not more individual there than they were in their former fiery or aqueous phase, nor than they will be when the stone crumbles. But individuality is the only conceivable substantial centre of power, or active manifestation.

And now as to the Divine Word, which is profoundly said in our Scriptures, and in Böhme, to be creative of the world. I see that to be so. But as every human seer can speak only "by the framework and the chord," so the Divine Seer can speak only to and through each intelligence, in proportion as that intelligence is able to hear Him and reflect His revelation. Thus the world, as we know it, is not the world in itself, as God knows it. The phenomenal world is not the real world. Yet the real world is not dead matter, or blind Forces. It is the world as God sees it. It is the Divine Idea, of which our world of Appearance is but the feeble reflection, the faint adumbration. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard"—"but God hath revealed unto us by His Spirit"—yet partially. When that which is perfect is come, the knowledge that is in part shall vanish away. The mist of sense will melt, and the sun of Heaven shine. We see now through a mist. The visible scene will be rolled asunder, and the true world appear. The Divine Word creates through finite intelligence and degraded heart. Wherefore it is but a poor shadow and parable of the Truth, beautiful and wondrous though it be, that is addressed to us in nature.

I believe, moreover, that the primal revelation has not only to be interpreted by our inadequate faculties, but also that it is filtered through many orders of intelligence before reaching us as nature. I observe that even Mrs. Penny and Böhme pay "the Ether" great respect. I hope I have no undue prejudice against Ether. But after all, "an idol is nothing in the world!" At best, it is but a convenient hypothesis, enabling us to arrange better the details of our experience—a phenomenon, or appearance, though not of sight and feeling like air, yet of conception, or imagination. And it is a serious mistake to exalt unduly the gaseous, which we conceive by its effects, at the expense of the solid or liquid, which we see or touch. Ether is but an "allotropic," more subtle form of matter. Only conscious, intelligent will, or the profounder conscious Intuition to which we cannot yet attain, but which belongs to Divine manhood, is operative power, substantial being.

RODEN NOEL.

NOTE.—What is "Science" The arrangement, and classification of the phenomena of human experience. And whether these take place outside any experience just as they do inside it, or not can make no difference to science. What we call the "laws of nature" are true relatively to our experience—whether they are so absolutely is another question altogether. To ask that is to ask whether our experience be an exact measure of the Divine knowledge or wisdom. And my reply would be, no. Another sense, or several others might make a great difference in our estimate of "natural law." But it does not follow that we may not be right according to our measure, the measure proper to humanity as now conditioned. Spiritualism modifies

...of the "science." To cap Mr. Haughton's
 ...Byron, one has only to quote Pope :—
 "and presents vanquish Berkeley with a grin."
 ...the world outside all conscious experience, why
 ...have an external world as vividly in dream as in a
 ...The experience of other orders of intelligence
 ...is perfectly as valid for them as ours is for us, yet very
 ...and indeed our experience may be a translation of
 ...the only possible one for us. But all these
 ...experiences may enter as necessary constituent elements
 ...the Divine, though in that they are transfigured and made
 ...That Divine Intuition, however, belongs to all of us by
 ...of our solidarity, and substantial individuality : all are
 ...destined to realise it, for all are in God.

Fires Lighted by Supernatural Agency.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

"More servants wait on man
 Than he'll take notice of."—SHAKESPEARE.

SIR,—The article in this month's *Nineteenth Century*, by Mr. Frederick Harrison, is a curious exhibition of a devout mind and *Spiritualism* feeling after God : let the truth of Spiritualism be established, and such arguments on the Unknowable will become henceforth impossible. It would be useless to refer him to the 6th chapter of Judges, 11th to 24th verses, and even Christian people in our own day will look upon such a record as an extinguished history : but let them read that and then turn to John's Gospel, 21st chapter 9th verse, and they will then be prepared to accept, what I now propose to record, as not *infra dig.* even to spirits in the present day, for the servants are not above the Master.

As in my last communication I restricted myself to direct spirit writing, I will confine this letter to a distinct phase of Spiritualism, a remarkable one with which we have been acquainted now for four months, and which contains more lessons than are to be gathered by a bare recital of the phenomenon.

On the 24th November last, our servant on coming down found the kitchen fire already alight ; the kettle, which was empty over night, full and upon the point of boiling, and a large clothes-horse, six feet high, and in three flaps, which had been left round the fire-place over night, was folded up and placed safely against the wall. This was our first introduction to a phenomenon which has continued up to the present time. I find that it was repeated four times in December ; eleven times in January ; fourteen times in February ; and daily this month with two exceptions ; frequently also the gas stove and gas burners have been lit at the same time.

Anxious to get personal proof I have come downstairs at all hours of the night, but as yet I have recorded in my note-book no actual "seeing the thing done," though after one record to that effect in my private diary I have it written in minute *direct spirit writing*, "Will do it yet, don't watch so closely."

Let me give an account of one of these close watchings.

On February 5th I went down very early, as silently as possible, but not sufficiently so to prevent a large dog, which is locked up in the housemaid's pantry in the night, barking furiously. In the pitch dark I entered the kitchen, which seemed full of tiny sparks : I retired to the stairs and watched, but with no further result. On retiring to my room I met the servant on the stairs and asked her to call me if anything occurred. Two minutes after she came rushing up to call me. I ran down and found, during that short space of time, the breakfast-cloth had been laid (not by Mary, she said), several things taken out of the sideboard cupboard (which was shut) and put on the table, and one silver sugar basin on the floor, left there *in transitu* as I appeared on the scene ; while in the drawing-room, which I then unlocked, I found a curious arrangement of all sorts of ornaments in their wrong places !—and in my study, which I then also unlocked, a similar indication of abnormal power. What I watched for I failed to obtain, but I received proof to my mind of presence *outside* our own. This kind of reply to my watching has been frequent : I seldom get exactly what I seek, but something equally satisfactory in the way of proof. Finding I could not myself obtain proof of the fire lighting, I adopted other means.

One morning my wife went down at six—no sign of fire lighting ; she returned to our room and stayed there with the *door open*, so that no one could go down without our knowing it. She went down again at seven, no one having been down since she returned to her bedroom, and found the fire *alight*, and the water nearly boiling, and also the gas alight in three rooms all of which were locked up. That to us was absolute proof, for it all had been done between six and seven while we were watching ; but I still asked the spirits to let us *see it done*. We had many tests absolute to us. One morning I heard my daughter going down early *with* the servant ; I called to her, and told her to watch closely, which she did with this result. They both went into the kitchen together. The night previously my wife and I had together been round to see all the fires out. We found the kitchen fire *laid*, but no paper under it. Soon we noticed the wood crackling, and thought it might possibly at last light under our eyes ; we waited five or ten minutes in vain and left it. This morning, when both went into the kitchen together, the fire-

place was found *empty*, the fire having burnt completely out, and the grate was cold. The spirits had probably tried to light it before us the night before, and failed. Mary laid the fire and went to the drawer to get newspaper with which to light it, but something in the paper catching her eye she stayed by the window to read it. While so engaged, and while my daughter was watching the fire-place, up burst the flames suddenly and the fire was blazing in a minute. Here were two witnesses of the phenomenon, and Mary also saw the spirit lighters themselves, and recognised who they were.

The next morning Mary was alone in the *dining-room* (query alone!) ; she had laid the fire and taken the match-box ready to light it, when lo ! it lit under her eyes. This has been repeated more than once.

I consider the fact established, and though many of my friends think it a very frivolous thing for spirits to do, I apprehend God will find a place for every fact. Good old George Herbert, who believed in the divinity of service, would not have refused to help light a fire, nor have been astonished probably at such homely proofs of spirit nearness. He wrote :—

"All may of Thee partake,
 Nothing can be so mean
 Which with this tincture (for Thy sake)
 Will not grow bright and clean.

"A servant with this clause
 Makes drudgery divine :
 Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
 Makes that and th' action fine."

But we look for spirits in the clouds ! Surely they will return in a cloud with a *golden* rather than a silver lining, which has hitherto symbolised the acme of bliss ! I was talking last evening on this frivolous phase to one of our spirit group, who said, "*Never mind, we know what we are about ; there is more to come of it.*"

So I think ; these phenomena are really only the outside for the world to see or hear of—they are as the trumpet blast which shall crumble Materialism into dust and usher in the spiritual forces. Within them now dwells a peace and holy communion whose nature is Divine.

MORELL THEOBALD.

Granville Park, Blackheath.

P.S.—Since writing the above, while sitting for our usual Sunday evening séance, we had the following letter written by an old friend, now one of my spirit guides. It was brought into the room with closed door, and the other half of the paper was found in my book-case cupboard in the midst of a packet of half a ream of new crested paper ; it bears on the above letter, so I send it, with the spirits' concurrence :—

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Fetched from cupboard in your room. Clock struck seven. The other half is up there.</p> | <p>Sunday eve. Two past seven began, finished five past seven.</p> |
|--|--|

DEAR FRIENDS,—Do not accuse us of being frivolous. What we do may appear childish to you, but rest assured it is not so to us. However small the things are that we do, we do them not in our own strength, and the smallest and meanest thing is done through the power of God. So we all ask you to take things as they come, and be thankful that we are able to come to you in the spirit of love, to help you and guide you ; to keep your feet in the ways of peace and holiness. Never mind what the world will say of you ; others before you have been counted mad, even Christ himself, so surely you can stand against it. For if God is for us, what matters who are against us, and however small a thing you have in future, do not wish it was something else, but thank God that you and your house have been chosen for the work. Now, old friend, cheer up, we will help to sweep the cobwebs away, and to open the door that new truths may come in ; we can see now the good of the work ; we who have passed beyond the veil can see now clearly what was only before as through a glass darkly. Now our eyes are open and we wish to help others to see as well as ourselves, but the eyes of all are hard to open. The world is afraid to venture too closely to the unseen, but the time will come when the cloud of your darkness shall be rent in twain and you shall all see us as we are.

Dear friends, I cannot stay longer with you this eve, my time is short ; I will come again.—Your true spirit as well as earth friend,
 T. T. L.

A Remarkable Cure of a Case of Obsession.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I attend the séances held at the house of a well-known magnetic healer, Mr. Younger. A month ago a man of gentlemanly address, of about thirty-five, came to Mr. Younger exhibiting tremulous nervous agitation. He brought a note of introduction from the office of "LIGHT." After conversation with him Mr. Younger magnetised him. After this I resumed conversation with him ; he imparted to me the history of his trouble—given in greater detail at his subsequent visits—and I have written it here, thinking it of interest to students of psychological phenomena. The narrative is in Mr. A.'s (so I will call him) own words, with some condensation.

"I was engaged to go to Brazil early in 1882, to be employed on some works of an English company. When I arrived there, finding the diet of the country unsuitable, I arranged with a married Englishman, named Crook, a smith, with whom my duties brought me in contact, to take my meals at his and his wife's table. But I found his manners and language so coarse and violent, that I abruptly withdrew from the arrangement.

This roused his anger. I then learned that I had already been the cause of offence to him, for the manager had ordered him to vacate a hut, which he liked, that I might be accommodated with it on my arrival. I was told that he was nursing wrath, and constantly muttering threats against me.

"One night after I had gone to rest, one of the wooden sides of my hut was rudely beaten, and I heard Crook's harsh voice uttering oaths and threats. Next day I moved into the little hotel of the place; but when there he took every opportunity to shew his animosity. Apprehending physical violence from him, I showed him a revolver and told him that I was prepared to use it if necessary; and I engaged a man on the works to keep an eye upon his movements.

"My engagement ended in six months, when I returned to England and resumed my employment there in September of the same year, and my experience in Brazil had passed from my mind.

"In January of the present year, being in London, I took a temporary lodging in the vicinity of Holborn. On going to rest the first night I heard talking outside the house, and thought I recognised the harsh voice of Crook. In alarm I rose. I asked the landlord for another room. The only room at his disposal was in an opposite house, to which I at once went. I saw no one in the street. In this room I heard again that repulsive voice. Bewildered, I got up and left the house. In the street I heard the words 'I'll break his . . . heart and then his neck.' This was repeated over and over again, and must have been heard by a man passing, for he said to a companion 'Whose neck is going to be broken?' Coming to a policeman, I told him I was being followed and annoyed by some one, and asked him to keep a look out. Walking up Southampton-row, I again heard the voice. I went back; the policeman said there was no one in sight, except a man then getting into an omnibus. The omnibus went on, but still I heard the voice, and so loudly that I turned round, and saw for a moment Crook and his wife. I then went to a coffee house in Museum-street for a bed. Here I heard more than one voice, and so did some of the people of the house. Next day these threatening, cursing voices followed me to an office in the Strand, where they were heard by another in the office. In the afternoon I had to go to South Kensington, and while on the platforms of two of the stations I heard the dreaded voices. On my return, thinking to baffle my mysterious enemies, I walked part of the way back. I changed my sleeping place again that night, but the voices prevented me from sleeping. In the morning I went to the nearest magistrate. He heard my complaint and granted me a summons; which was of no use. After several days more of this misery it came into my head that the voices were supernatural, and that I had better consult those who studied such things. The inquiries I made brought me eventually to the office of "LIGHT." As I had approached it the voices were more outrageous than ever. The editor kindly introduced me to Mr. Towns, whose description of my persecutors proved that they were visible to him. He described Crook and a low companion of his in Brazil named Murphy. Mr. Towns said that I was under their obsession, and recommended me to get magnetised. The editor, with further kindness, gave me a note of introduction to Mr. Younger, but I could not avail myself of it for three days—days of torment. The utterers of the voices knew my thoughts; for while speculating as to what might have become of Atkinson, the man in Brazil who promised me to keep an eye upon Crook, the voice ejaculated 'I shot the. . .' I have ascertained at the company's office that Crook and Murphy are reported 'dead.'

So far Mr. "A.'s" narrative. A week from the commencement of his being magnetised, Mr. Younger invited him to join our circle, when his mediumship was manifest. He described the lights which other mediums saw, the table moved under his hands, his mental questions were answered, and predictions were made about his family affairs which he tells me have come to pass.

I watched the effect of the treatment day by day, and his progressive improvement was remarkable; at the end of a fortnight his painfully tremulous agitation was changed for pleasant rational composure. Mr. Younger has favoured me with the following note on the case:—

Dear Signor Damiani,—Knowing your interest in Mr. A.'s case, I offer you my observations on it. He came quite a stranger. Seeing his irritable excitement, and having listened to his account, I was careful to ascertain if he were of sound mind. Phrenologically, I found he had a well-balanced brain; clairvoyantly, I saw that all his interior organs were healthy; altogether I had to regard him as a subject the least likely to be under hallucination. Failing to discover any physical cause for his peculiar state, I inferred that he was under obsession, and magnetised him under that view. The result of the first day's treatment was, he said, to make the voices seem more distant; the same for the second; on the third, he said, they seemed to be striving to make themselves more audible; on the fourth day, he had to mix with certain low people, and while with them the voices were clear and loud, threatening destruction if he returned to the magnetiser, but again sounded distantly on his leaving it. Half-a-dozen more treatments have quite freed him from this visitation, and I pray that it may be lasting.—Very truly yours,

23, Ledbury-road, Bayswater, W.
February 7th, 1884.

D. YOUNGER.

Now, with respect to the *eni bono* of Spiritualism, let me cite a contrasting picture. I was once present at an ecclesiastical treatment of obsession. The subject was made to kneel for hours on the pavement of the church, a lighted taper in one hand and a scourge in the other, with which he had to thrash his own back, while a priest stood by vociferating exorcising prayers. Such priestly treatment failing, the course was to hand the victim over to secular doctors, to be shut up as insane, with the probable result of real madness ending only with earthly life.

By the light of modern Spiritualism we see that a fortnight's treatment by a good magnetiser can save a husband, father, and citizen in mental health, and restore him to usefulness.—Very truly yours,

29, Colville-road, Notting Hill,
February 27th, 1884.

G. DAMIANI.

[We believe this case to be a thoroughly deserving one. The obsessing influence under which Mr. A. was labouring had effectually prevented him from obtaining work, and when he came to our office he was (although we did not learn this for some time afterwards) without any means of subsistence. Having put him in the way of obtaining relief from his mental trouble, one or two friends thought it very desirable to give the man a fresh start, and very kindly contributed a small sum to keep him afloat while looking for work. This has been exhausted, and in these circumstances, perhaps, some of our readers can help. Mr. A. has excellent testimonials, and if he can be kept from actual poverty, has every chance of obtaining suitable employment and regaining his position in society.—ED. of "LIGHT."]

The Direct Writing of Sanskrit.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am happy to comply with your request and give a short account of the séance that I had with Mr. Eglinton two weeks back. We sat in the broad daylight. Two slates were cleaned and then placed on the table. A crumb of slate pencil had been inserted between the slates. Mr. Eglinton held one corner of the slate and I held the other. Soon the sound of writing was heard. This is the message:—

"DEAR SIR,—There is someone here who appears to take an interest in your Oriental work, and we yield up to him the power to write the following."

After this came a verse of Sanskrit poetry, written in the Bengali character. This is the translation:—

"I (have) neither confusion, nor doubt, nor divisions of . . . (word illegible). I (have) neither father, nor mother, nor bride. I have no relations, or friends, or teacher, or pupil.

"I am 'Siva, I am 'Siva! My form is Joy and Thought."

After the Sanskrit the letter thus continued:—

"Let this be a proof of our power to those who doubt. To those earnestly inclined we are willing to help all in our power, and, not only so, to reveal to them the true principles of so-called Spiritualism."

This is word for word what was written on the slate.—Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR LILLIE.

MR. W. C. ROBSON contributed to the *Newcastle Examiner* of March 7th a very able article, entitled "The Aim and Scope of Religion," in which, after tracing the course of religious ideas through the ages, he attempts to shew that Spiritualism, with its light and added knowledge, is the mightiest lever for the uplifting of humanity that the world has ever seen.

IN "Religious Thought and Life in India," Professor Monier Williams gives some interesting—though not quite new—facts connected with the belief in the "Evil Eye," and other demoniacal influences and their counteraction. The following passage is also interesting notwithstanding the evident bias with which it is written:—"A Christian, when he prays for deliverance from evil, means not only deliverance from a personal evil spirit, but from the evil of sin and from the general evil existing in the world around him. A Hindu, on the other hand, has no idea of deliverance from any evil except that inflicted by demons. To expect any miraculous deliverance from sin or the effects of sin either in himself or other men would be to him simple foolishness. He is too firmly convinced that the consequences of his own acts cling to him by an immutable and inexorable law, the operation of which nothing can set aside. The plain fact undoubtedly is that the great majority of the inhabitants of India are, from the cradle to the burning-ground, victims of a form of mental disease which is best expressed by the term demonophobia. They are haunted and oppressed by a perpetual dread of demons. They are firmly convinced that evil spirits of all kinds, from malignant fiends to merely mischievous imps and elves, are ever on the watch to harm, harass and torment them, to cause plague, sickness, famine and disaster, to impede, injure and mar every good work. Hence a tutelary god among the Hindus is simply one that delivers from the calamities, actual and potential, believed to be due to demons."

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LONDON, W.C.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Manager of "LIGHT" will be obliged if those Subscribers who have not paid their subscriptions for 1884 will kindly do so at once and save him the necessity of making written application.

Light:

SATURDAY, MARCH 15TH, 1884.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The time has arrived when it becomes my pleasing duty to announce the constitution of the London Spiritualist Alliance, with a list of members which already includes most of the old and influential Spiritualists of the Metropolis, together with several well-known names from the provinces, and which will, I have little doubt, receive rapid accessions now that the committee is able to announce that work is about to be begun.

It will be remembered that I proposed the formation of the Society on the dissolution of the Central Association at the close of last year. The primary object in view was to keep together that body of Spiritualists who had acted in concert ever since the formation of the British National Association in the year 1873. The responses made to the circular issued shew that "there are a number of Spiritualists who have been associated together at various times during the past ten years who desire to perpetuate or to resume that association under changed conditions adapted to changed times."

Our first object, then, is association for mutual counsel and support. To this end the committee proposes to commence with a conversazione during the first week in May, particulars of which will be announced in due course. Advantage will be taken of that meeting to ascertain the wishes of members respecting the work to be done by the Society, the engagement of rooms for its library and papers, and other matters which the committee have in mind.

For the present it is deemed sufficient to engage a public room for our social meetings. We shall thus avoid the expense of renting rooms of our own until our income is large enough to warrant the expenditure, and the demand for such accommodation is such as to make us sure that it will be freely used and appreciated. The committee is fully impressed with a determination not to incur any expense that can reasonably be avoided, and in no case to exceed the small income on which they can rely. All that can be spent will be spent on useful work, and the extent of that work must depend absolutely on the amount of funds at our disposal.

The month of May has been fixed as the date of the first of what we trust may be a long series of social meetings, at which topics of interest may be discussed, and members may share one another's experience and know-

ledge, because it may fairly be hoped that the winter will then be past, and the season will be more suitable for an evening gathering of those who must come, in many cases, from a long distance. It will be matter for consideration whether the convenience of some who cannot comfortably attend in the evening may not be met by an occasional afternoon meeting.

These and such topics will be usefully discussed when we meet face to face.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,
March 8th, 1884. "M.A. (Oxon)."

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

FIRST LIST OF MEMBERS.

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mrs. Acworth | Miss Maltby |
| Miss Allen | Mr. March |
| Mr. F. Berkeley | Mr. C. C. Massey |
| Mr. J. J. Bodmer | Mr. Maurice |
| Mrs. Hardinge Britten | Mr. Stewart Menteth |
| Countess of Caithness | Mrs. Nichols |
| Mr. A. Calder | Mrs. Parrick |
| *Professor Cassal | Mr. Richard Pearce |
| Mr. Walter Coffin | Mr. Cornelius Pearson |
| Miss A. M. Collingwood | Miss Peppercorn |
| Mr. J. F. Collingwood | Mr. Francis Percival |
| Mr. J. Crisp | Duchesse de Pomar |
| Mr. Newton Crosland | *Mr. E. Dawson Rogers |
| Signor Damiani | Mrs. Dawson Rogers |
| Mr. Fabian Dawe | Signor Rondi |
| Mr. James Deane | Mrs. Sainsbury |
| Dr. Dixon | Mrs. Martin Smith |
| *Major-Gen. Drayson | Mrs. S. Smith |
| Mr. T. H. Edmands | *Dr. Stanhope Speer |
| Mr. J. C. Eno | Mrs. Speer |
| Mrs. Frances Everitt | Miss Speer |
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| Mr. J. F. Haskins | Mrs. Morell Theobald |
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| Rev. G. D. Haughton | Mrs. Wm. Theobald |
| Dr. Hayle | Mr. E. Tietkens |
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| Mr. Fred. Hockley | Mrs. Trinder |
| Mrs. Honeywood | Mr. J. P. Turner |
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| Mr. Aladar Madach | Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P. |
| Mr. Ed. Maitland | Mr. D. Younger |
| Mrs. Maltby | |

And eight others who do not wish their names published.

Applications for membership may be forwarded to the Hon. Sec., Mr. Morell Theobald, 23, St. Swithin's-lane, E.C.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—GENERAL MEETING.—The General Meeting of the Society, to be held at the Garden Mansion, Queen Anne's Mansions, St. James' Park, on Friday, March 28th, at 8.30 p.m., will supersede the "Occasional Meeting," which was to have been held at the same place on Wednesday, March 19th. There will be an opportunity for informal conversation and discussion after the General Meeting.

METROPOLITAN SPIRITUAL LYCEUM.—We have much pleasure in specially drawing the attention of our readers to the announcement of the forthcoming meetings in connection with this Society, full details of which will be found in our advertisement columns. It is to be hoped that the enterprise and indefatigable energy of the President and Hon. Sec. will be amply repaid by crowded audiences. "Dick the Pit Lad" has been unusually successful in his clairvoyant readings of the numbers, dates, and amounts of bank notes and cheques.

* Members of Committee are thus designated.

AN AUTHENTIC REPORT OF THE BASTIAN AFFAIR AT VIENNA.

Under this heading, the *Süddeutsche Presse*,* of a recent date, prints an account (of which the following is a translation), by a writer who had obtained the facts from Baron V. Hellenbach.

The Baron was asked by the Archduke John to afford him an opportunity of witnessing some of the facts on which Spiritualists rely. Hellenbach explained that although there were in that country individuals through whom these phenomena occurred, yet for long and systematic experimental investigation only professional mediums were available; and such must be brought from abroad. He suggested two Americans and one German. One of the former was Mr. Bastian, although his power had greatly failed as far back as 1882, and he had declared his intention to give no more sésances. Through a third party, Baron H. learned that Bastian had found another means of support in an English hospital, and in sixteen months had given but one sitting, but that a highly successful one, on the occasion of a visit from an American friend on the 4th July, 1883. He heard also that Bastian was in a state of distress. He was thus induced to send a message to Bastian, asking if the latter felt himself strong enough to give one séance a week. The reply being in the affirmative he was invited over. Hellenbach, however, explained beforehand that the sittings with Bastian, though highly interesting, were seldom of a conclusive character, and that for the most convincing phenomena those mediums were best adapted who could bear the full light. This should be remembered later on.

In the first dark séance nothing particular occurred. In the light séance several forms appeared, but did not come outside the curtain, and Hellenbach's position at the side, and the pushing out of the curtains, prevented his seeing more than the left shoulder of certain figures.

Bastian was searched before the séance by two of the company.

The second dark séance was more interesting. Nothing, indeed, was proved by the fact that the gentlemen surrounding Bastian received objects from the writing-table, no one being able to assert that they were on the table immediately before the séance. But the apparition of flowers from a basket outside the circle was more remarkable. Two of the company desired particular flowers which they thought of, and one of them received his; that received by the other was not the one desired, but the latter was found by him after the séance, as he said, in the basket in a changed condition—whether stripped of leaves, cut, or how, Hellenbach does not know. Most difficult to explain is the fact that during the dark séance one of the sitters pushed the bell, which lay in the circle, with his feet under his chair, and then desired that it might ring, and the bell flew, ringing, back into the circle, although Bastian was clapping his hands in the centre, and could not know where the bell was. Before the materialisation séance, Bastian was bound to his chair by an officer of marines, in whose opinion the ligature could not be loosened by Bastian. Nevertheless, not only was he in a few minutes free, but afterwards his two hands were again fastened together in such a manner that the knots had to be cut. No forms were visible.

In the third séance nothing special happened in the dark; in the light séance four forms appeared. Since these would not come well out, at Hellenbach's suggestion the light was weakened by partial closing of the doors of the illuminated room adjoining. At last came the fifth form; on which one of the sitters sprang up, pulled a string, and the door between the cabinet and the figure

closed. This was the work of a second. Another of the party seized the form, which was hidden from Hellenbach by the curtain; it only seemed to him as if the form was not quite upright, but was bent in a backward position.

Owing to the curtain, it was in all about three or four seconds before Hellenbach got full view of the figure, which he then saw to be Bastian in his coat, and with his waistcoat buttoned, just as when he entered the cabinet; but without shoes, as was first remarked upon searching the cabinet, when nothing but the shoes was found, one of these being near the chair, the other further off.

Since Bastian was not seized in the costume of the figure, and Hellenbach doubted the possibility of a metamorphosis being so swiftly effected, he proposed that Bastian should be undressed; but this was rejected as superfluous. He was searched, however, and nothing was found upon him but two gloves and a purse. Hellenbach ransacked his coat, waistcoat, and shirt, but found nothing.

In Hellenbach's opinion, the inculpatory circumstances are the following:—(1) The identity of the form and the person. (2) The shoes being off. (3) The non-emergence of the [other] figure, and the brief space during which they were visible. (4) That according to the assertion of the captor, Bastian's coat was hanging down off the shoulder.

To which must be added, as affording further grounds of suspicion, the facts that but one materialisation had been obtained during the two previous years; that he had abandoned his mediumship for sixteen months, and was under the temptation of indigence. On the other hand there was the metamorphosis into at least five different figures, no costume being discovered.

As regards the relative value of these opposite considerations, Hellenbach expressed himself as follows:—

The identity of the medium and the figure is of no importance, since it rarely happens that there is a complete separation of the phantom from its subject. Hellenbach had observed it decisively only twice with Bastian, with Toepper only once. And it is known that the English physicist, Mr. Crookes, observed it with a medium, who some years later was seized as the phantom, likewise without discovery of any means of disguise, the same being the case with Miss Esperance and others.

In America, the distinction between materialisation and transmutation or transfiguration has been long familiar. The latter phase is to be considered in connection with mediumistic writing, trance-speaking (as also happened with the priests and priestesses of antiquity), with so-called possession. For all who are unacquainted with the literature of the subject in America and India, the identity of the person of the medium with the phantom will be regarded as a fact decisive of fraud. And yet Hellenbach had taken care to explain to some of the party before the séance that in case of a seizure the medium would in all probability be found in their hands, otherwise he might be dangerously injured.

The physical co-operation of Bastian in the production of the forms has been demonstrated in 1882 by means of an electrical apparatus, which recorded on a diagram (graphisch darstellte) the standing up of the medium at the moment the form appeared. The whole séance lasted twenty-two minutes. The first form appeared after 5½ minutes, and within the next ten minutes ten forms appeared, three of them within thirty seconds. These forms stepped out, some of them of gigantic, but all of proportional build,* and the personation of them would have required a whole basketful of requisites of unknown construction. The identity of the medium with the

* "Waren mitunter von riesenhafter, immer aber proportionaler Gestalt" I take this to mean, that though some exceeded the medium in size, all resembled him in general conformation.

phantom had thus for Hellenbach nothing surprising, either theoretically or practically.

The other circumstances of suspicion are not indeed to be overlooked, but they are not decisive, since for this it would be necessary that Bastian should have been caught in costume, or that the means of disguise should have been shewn. There can be scarcely any doubt that the absence of this proof will exonerate Bastian in the opinion of all who have an intimate knowledge of these phenomena. In regard to the possibility of a concealed disguise, Hellenbach considers it to be regretted that Bastian was not completely undressed. It was, no doubt, conceivable that cambric drapery could be drawn under the shirt by a string in a second—and, indeed, Hellenbach did feel a thin fold under the shirt at the breast when he was making his examination. But what was to become of the different knots and fastenings? Hellenbach distinguishes between "incomprehensibility" and "impossibility." The metamorphosis by trickery is not impossible because incomprehensible, and many, even of those who are not deceived by the identity of the medium and the phantom, may yet be *subjectively* persuaded that a fraud was perpetrated.

An *objective* proof for all would be the discovery of the material. If the instantaneous, untraceable disappearance of the disguise is impossible, then is the guilt of the medium impossible. The possibility of the first alone makes possible the second, and the other circumstances might make this perhaps probable, yet not, therefore, certain. Three years ago, in his pamphlet upon Bastian, entitled, "Manifestations of an Intelligible World," Hellenbach had already explained that these phantoms are not of demonstrative cogency unless they come through a grating as happened at Hamburg in the presence of competent witnesses of the academical profession. On this account, after that decisive séance, he ceased to take active interest in the research, and it was only at the instance of third persons that he had invited Bastian in the years 1882 and 1884.

The question whether Bastian is a mere impostor—not to say all other mediums—cannot even be entertained in view of the accumulated testimony of 20 years. At most it may be doubted whether he has not, like many others, degenerated into an impostor.

Nor does Hellenbach believe that the late events will prevent the development of the subject. Real and apparent exposures have taken place for years past, but the positive evidence on the other side is not thereby destroyed. Both facts must stand together, and a sufficient explanation must be able to account for both. Such episodes, moreover, have their use for the experience of the investigators, and the repression of impostors, and the general interest in the subject is in the end awakened by them. It is a fact that little was heard of the so-called animal magnetism for a hundred years, and that general attention was first called to it by the performances of Hansen in Vienna and elsewhere.* Then also the journalists cried out against the swindle; the courts confirmed this view by their sentences, and yet, after a few years, the subject is recognised, at least under the form of hypnotism.

Hellenbach thinks that the character of the transition can already be indicated. The branches of science which are concerned with organic forms are beginning more and more to recognise the transcendental formative basis long asserted by philosophy. Now it is impossible to limit this formative power of nature—whether of the individual or pantheistic sort—to cellular representations. The impressions of hands and feet obtained in paraffin, &c., by Crookes, Wallace, William Weber, and Zöllner (of whose competence in physical observations no reader of his

scientific books can have a doubt) are objective proofs of this plastic projection on a larger scale. But if of hands and feet, why not of whole forms? Hellenbach asserts that the explanation of these phenomena lies already in the brief saying of Kant that soul and "Ego" may belong to one and the same "subject," yet not to one and the same "person." And he believes that all the phenomena of mysticism, from clairvoyance to the objective manifestations, may be explained by the possibly different position of the transcendental basis inherent in man with regard to the organism and to the external world.* He is of opinion that these facts will, in due course, be rehabilitated in their interior truth under the new name, phenomena of transcendental nature, or psychometry (*Geistmässigkeit*); and that the term "Spiritualism" is nonsense, since material action contradicts the notion of spirit.† Hellenbach declares, moreover, that in India these questions have been already solved, centuries ago, quite in agreement with the above suggestion. He has now ready for the Press a book comprehensively dealing with the subject, under the title, "The Double Nature of Man," in which he hopes to bring within the sphere of objective observation, facts heretofore conceived as belonging to religion.‡ But the practical work will have to be done by the English, French, and Germans, since in Austria the police supervision is much too great, and will not allow the investigation, or will, at least, make it as difficult as possible.

To the question, how it comes that the séances yield such different results, he replied that this was quite naturally the case, since these phenomena did not always originate with the medium, who is only the focus and point of connection; the true magician is the circle, which gives the impulse through the strength of its concentrated will§—so that each circle will get pretty much what it seeks.

Being asked whether he knew beforehand of the preparations made at the séance in question, Hellenbach replied that neither he nor the greater number of those present knew of them. Had he been consulted, he would have recommended a different method; possibly instead of the closed door, a removal of the curtain, with simultaneous electrical illumination.

Libre-penseurs, free-thinkers, in France are not necessarily against religion; the title is assumed by the *parti-laïque*, as opposed to the *parti-clerique*. The battle-ground, just now, between the two, is national education, which the laical party want to be freed from the indoctrination of the clerical party. French Spiritists are *libre-penseurs* in the sense of their doctrines having freed them from the bondage of the clerical party.

¶ IN the *Spiritual Record* for March, Dr. Nichols has an interesting article upon the remarkable manifestations he recently witnessed in the presence of Mr. W. Eglinton, also mentioning that this medium had given séances in Germany to the professors of Leipzig. No reference, however, was made to the successful work accomplished by Mr. Eglinton in Sweden, by which Professors Edland, Seligsman, and Berlin became converts to Spiritualism, and wrote a series of exhaustive articles upon the convincing nature of the phenomena in the Swedish papers at the time. The same might be said of Mr. Eglinton's work in Austria, when the celebrated anatomist, Professor Mosetig, became a convert to the facts he witnessed. So did the well-known Dr. Kell drew, of Zwickaw, Saxony. We just mention these incidents in justice to the memory of those who, in defiance of the positions they had to lose, bravely came forward and did their share in the battle for truth. No doubt the investigations of Zöllner with Dr. Slade and Mr. Eglinton have caused world-wide attention, but there are many other scientists of equal renown who deserve as much credit for their courage, and those gentlemen mentioned not the least so.

* I have found it impossible adequately to represent the idea intended to be conveyed in a succinct translation. It belongs to a subject of which Baron du Prel's forthcoming "Philosophy of Mysticism" will, I believe, give a full exposition.—TRANS.

† This proposition would require some elucidation to be rightly understood.—TRANS.

‡ What I imagine Hellenbach really to have said, or meant, is that facts hitherto accounted supernatural will be shewn in strict connection with an enlarged scientific conception of nature.—TRANS.

§ Of course we are not to understand by this necessarily conscious, or purposeful will, but the effective influence of a unanimous disposition. That explains why "harmony" is so much insisted upon at séances.—TRANS.

* This may, no doubt, have been the case in Germany; but it cannot be said of France and England, where the subject has had repeated intervals of popularity.—TRANS.

PHASES OF MATERIALISATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH
IN THE
OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M.A. (OXON.)"

(Continued from page 102.)

I. MEDIUM PRESENT IN CIRCLE.

I. Masks and Non-flexible Features Unrecognisable.

One of the earliest cases that I have noted is mentioned by Dr. Crowell.* The sittings were held with Henry Slade as medium, and the conditions were those under which he always sits. The appearance is of the shadowy, misty nature that is usual with the medium, and is not to be referred to the category of hard mask-like features, which I shall presently have to notice.

The conditions under which this and all his séances were held are thus described :—

"All our sittings for materialisations were held in a back room on the second floor of the medium's residence, with the only two doors and two windows well secured. One of the doors opened on the well-lighted hall, and the others, being sliding-doors, divided the back from the front room; the latter also well-lighted and nearly always occupied by visitors. I never took my seat until I had inspected the room; four chairs, a table, and sofa being the only furniture; and we two were the only persons present until after many sittings. At no time was the gas turned so low as to render us unable to discern clearly the forms or objects in the room, and generally, so complete was the silence that I could hear the slightest rustle of a garment or the sound of the lightest footstep."

"In another minute something passed over the back of my head that felt like a feather dusting-brush, and I then saw indistinctly above and in front of me, at a distance of about two feet, a head, neck, and bust. Soon it became more distinct, and I perceived quite plainly the top and each side of the head. . . . I perceived no features." (A. D. 1871.)

"I perceived a head and a bust arise from the opposite side of the room, and after rising to the height of about five feet above the level of the table, it floated towards us and over the table, until it reached a point over and in front of me, about fifteen inches from my face. I could plainly recognise it as that of a female, the head covered with a veil distinctly perceptible, and the appearance altogether being like that of an alabaster head and bust as seen from under a covering of gauze, the head, features, and neck, and shoulders being distinctly visible, but a slight mistiness of appearance existed, just sufficient to prevent my catching the expression. . . . The figure remained steadily thus in view suspended in mid-air, looking directly into my eyes for at least five minutes, when it seemed to melt away."

When the Holmes mediums, of unhappy memory, were in this country, I remember seeing various cases of the presentation of these masks through the mediumship of Nelson Holmes, sometimes in conjunction with Miss F. Cook. They are described† by the editor of the *Spiritualist* in terms which agree with my own recollection :—

"The faces have a white drapery about them, and the spirits appear in the costume of every-day life. They do not talk, and as a rule the muscles appear rigid and motionless. They glide to the opening and bow gravely and deliberately in answer to questions. Some of them are stony white, and others flesh-coloured." (A. D. 1872.)

When Miss Cook sat with Mr. Holmes outside the cabinet (which was an empty room with the folding doors partly open, and so arranged as to form an aperture where the faces could be conveniently shewn) the result was the same. The faces are recorded as being "stone-white," "rigid and motionless."

This was the condition of things during the following year, and even in the year 1871 through other mediumship

altogether, the result was much the same. Miss Showers was then obtaining very striking form manifestations, and I find myself recording* that the face of Florence Maple (so the materialised form‡ was named) was of this rigid, death-like type :—

"The face presented throughout the evening a completely abnormal appearance. The complexion was pasty and like bad wax-work; the lips compressed, so as to give an appearance of pain: and the glassy eyes, with their perpetual stare, gave the face a most unnatural look. I tried all in my power to make the eyes blink, but in vain. The whites were unnaturally large and no eyelids were perceptible. The face was hardly human throughout the night, though at other times I have seen it look natural and pretty."

At times, however, manifestations of a different kind are recorded. Mrs. Guppy, then in the plenitude of her remarkable psychical power, had succeeded in developing this phenomenon; and, by this time, (A. D. 1875,) we find that flexibility in the features is growing more common. Mrs. Berry† records that when sitting alone with Mrs. Guppy a face was materialised with great distinctness. As it faded away there came over the features "a sorrowful expression."

About the same time, Mr. S. C. Hall‡ records that in the presence of Mr. D. D. Home, he saw "a face of a wrinkled woman with a 'mutch' on her head." But the faces and forms seen through the mediumship of Mr. Home are of a different character from those which properly belong to this present section. They were always, I believe, more shadowy, and transient, by no means solid and not so like a lay-figure. When I have seen them they have been ghost-like and weird. The objects in the room could be dimly discerned through their misty drapery, and they rapidly vanished from gaze.

Two other records, differing from those already detailed, claim notice under this section, though I am by no means sure that the features, if carefully observed, would have been found to be rigid. As recorded, however, this seems to be the place for two manifestations through the mediumship of Mr. C. E. Williams. Both occurred at private houses, and in both cases the medium was securely held while he formed part of the circle.

The first séance was held at the house of Mr. Desmond FitzGerald in the year 1872.

"A large light was visible to the right of Mr. FitzGerald. . . . Holding the hand of the medium in one of his, whilst I held Mr. Williams' other hand, Mr. FitzGerald extended his disengaged hand . . . almost immediately . . . the spirit hand touched his. . . . To me the light appeared to issue from a dark ball, the interior assuming the appearance of a sun. Mr. Desmond FitzGerald describes it as a draped form about the size and shape of a veiled head, dark, but partially lighted up. . . . He says that the light seemed to open out, becoming intensely brilliant, and assuming an undefined outline, the *embodiment of a face being incomplete.*" The phenomenon was repeated four times. (A. D. 1872.)

The other séance was at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, the medium being held in the circle by Mr. Serjeant Cox and Mrs. Ramsay.

"Materialised heads and shoulders were seen occasionally by all present while Mr. Williams was seated between Mrs. Ramsay and Mr. Serjeant Cox and held by them. The forms were dimly illuminated by a phosphorescent-looking light held in their hands. Mr. Serjeant Cox says he saw these forms coming from and returning to the medium while he held him." (A. D. 1872.)

(To be continued.)

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER, who sails for America in the course of a few weeks, is now located at 14, Greek-street, London-road, Liverpool, where friends can address letters, or call personally, from 2 to 7 p.m. Miss Fowler is now in good health, and her unrivalled clairvoyant powers give the highest satisfaction.

* "Primitive Christianity," Vol. 1., pp. 130-2.
† *Spiritualist*, January 1st, 1873.

* *Spiritualist*, April 3, 1871. † *Medium*, July 9th, 1875.
‡ *Spiritualist*, November 30th, 1875.

REPORT OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH ON THE "SHROPSHIRE MYSTERY."

The Hon. Sec. of the Physical Phenomena Committee has presented to the Society the report of his personal and careful investigations into the mysterious disturbances which occurred in a farmer's house in Shropshire last November. It is summed up in the following terms:—

"I consider that there is abundant evidence of some trickery on the part of the girl, E. D., at Wood's Farm; but that some portion of the phenomena cannot be referred to this cause if the statements of Mrs. Hampson and Priscilla Evans as to what occurred in E. D.'s absence, and the description given by Priscilla Evans of the crockery coming out of the cupboard, can be at all relied on. Still, if the case were an isolated one, the evidence is not of so satisfactory a nature as to justify the assumption that phenomena unexplainable by trickery actually took place; but, on the hypothesis that there are cases on record in which trickery and genuine preternatural phenomena were combined, this case might, with some degree of probability, be included amongst them.

"FRANK S. HUGHES, B.A. (Cantab).

"December 3rd, 1883."

The Editor of the *Journal of Society for Psychical Research* appends the following note:—

"[Whatever opinion may be formed upon this case, this much is clear—that the statements of newspaper reporters must be received with extreme caution when they deal with matters of this kind. It was asserted that Emma Davies confessed to having, by trickery, produced *all* the mysterious phenomena, that she had learnt how to do the tricks from a waggoner who had seen them done at a fair, that Priscilla Evans admitted she was a confederate, and that 'other mystery there was none.' All these assertions appear to be incorrect.—ED.]"

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

SHEFFIELD.—A public discussion on Modern Spiritualism took place in the Wentworth Temperance Hotel, Holly-street, on Wednesday evening, February 27th, and Tuesday evening, March 4th, between Mr. James Houston, a missionary, and Mr. J. F. Fitton, a Spiritualist (of Oldham, and Lecturer to the Psychological Society), the subject for debate being, "Is Modern Spiritualism in Harmony with the Bible and Science?" Last Sunday Mr. Chapman, a local medium, gave a lecture on "Modern Spiritualism." The room was full and many could not get in. The cause is spreading in all quarters and there are many private circles in the town.

PLYMOUTH.—On Sunday morning last, a young lady medium (Miss Marshall) made her *début* as a speaker, and gave an interesting inspirational address, wherein the necessity of labouring for the good of others was clearly and forcibly set forth. The attendance was very good. In the evening, despite the inclement weather, the hall was comfortably filled, and the subject of Mr. R. S. Clarke's discourse, chosen by the congregation, was: "The Relation of Spiritualism to True Christianity." The oration was unusually powerful, and at the close the medium was heartily congratulated by his friends, who unanimously pronounced it to be one of the most eloquent ever delivered through his organism. During the preliminary proceedings, Mr. Clarke, under the influence of his guides, named a child in an impressive manner. Next Sunday morning, Mr. Burt will speak, and in the evening, as usual, our lecturer will occupy the rostrum. The *Mercury*, of a recent date, referred to the Plymouth Society as follows:—"Our spiritualistic friends meeting at the Richmond Hall are apparently determined not to be outdone by the other religious bodies in the town in the matter of juvenile education, and so have opened a Sunday-school, or rather a 'Progressive Lyceum,' as it is termed, for children. We understand that the attendance on the first day was large and encouraging, and judging from the gratifying circumstances surrounding the inauguration, the institution will not only be highly successful, but also the means of swelling the ranks of the adherents of the cause. We may say (and that without any expression of opinion as to the merits or demerits of Spiritualism) that the local society has made rapid strides within the past twelve months, and will, if the present advance continues, ere many years have passed, become a formidable power in our midst. The anniversary services take place at the end of March, when Mrs. Groom, of Birmingham, is expected to officiate, and when fresh plans for future work will, in all probability, be announced. In consequence of the public interest manifested, especially of late, Mr. Clarke has been delivering a course of lectures upon the 'Religion of Spiritualism,' and his efforts, or to speak more correctly, the efforts of the band of spirits who he claims make use of his organism, have been rewarded with

the attention of very large congregations. It is perhaps a sign of increasing vitality that this gentleman has recently been re-engaged as regular lecturer (the title of minister is to all intents and purposes rejected) for a period extending over some months."

SPIRITUALISM IN ROCHESTER.—In this somewhat populous centre of Lancashire great impetus has of late been given to the Spiritual movement. The inspirational discourses delivered by Mrs. Britten, occasionally, have aroused a spirit of inquiry, and much interest is being evinced in regard to our philosophy. There is abundant reason to conclude that the time has passed when Spiritualism is little known and investigated. The utterances through local and other mediums have been productive of much good. The masses are becoming awake to the fact that Spiritualists are not the deluded class of persons they have been considered to be, but that, on the contrary, they are fairly intelligent, and quite as able as their opponents to place spiritual matters before the public. The literature of the movement is here sought after, and strangers to spirit communion are deriving great benefit from its perusal. Truly it may be said the fields are white unto the harvest, but in connection with our Society here we are sorry we have not a greater number of willing workers in the cause. It is with a degree of pleasure we notice the great change that has become manifest in the realm of theological thought; how the speculative is giving place to the practical, and how the masses are coming to realise that man is immortal, and destined to progress eternally in after states and spheres of existence. "Let there be light," said the Divine Soul, and truly o'er long-darkened humanity a spiritual sun has arisen, and is lighting up the world's hemisphere of thought with his benign, resplendent rays. Through spirit-teaching, many in this locality have been led to endorse the views we hold as Spiritualists, and others are anxiously searching after truth. Many a parent has recognised that the chasm caused by so-called death is bridged over, and that the loved ones, mourned as dead, are immortal, and still live in spiritually-adapted realms. If, as Spiritualists, we continue to tread the path of duty, our efforts must be successful, and considerably aid in bringing about a true, spiritual millennium. We have very recently had Mr. Robert Harper, of Birmingham, amongst us, a long tried veteran in the spiritual ranks, and one who has many ardent admirers, and on Sunday next, March 16th, Mrs. Groom, of the same place, is to be with us. Her spiritual gifts make her a most acceptable medium and exponent of spirit-teaching, and her presence once more amongst us will, no doubt, bring friends from a distance, for whom tea will be provided at the Society's rooms at a nominal charge. On Sunday, March 23rd, Mrs. E. H. Britten is engaged to deliver two discourses at the Central Stores, Toad-lane, at 2.30 and six. This will be her farewell visit to us prior to her return, shortly, to America.—COR.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—The Editor of "LIGHT" cannot, save in exceptional cases, undertake to answer correspondence through the post. All inquiries reaching this office not later than Wednesday morning, will, as far as practicable, be answered in the ensuing number of "LIGHT."

A. F.—Will appear next week.

J. C.—The information you ask for is given in "A True Account of the Bastian Affair" in this issue. He wore ordinary evening dress.

ON Sunday, March 9th, Miss Allen gave an eloquent address, which was characterised by the thoughtful reasoning and earnestness which so generally distinguish her discourses. Miss Allen's lectures shew a fund of intellect and research, and bring to bear upon the subject a weight of reason and knowledge which must help many to see the truths of Spiritualism.

THE *Chronique Locale de la Meuse* of February 16th, has the following:—"Is Spiritualism a serious thing? Belgium has four Spiritualist journals and reviews, France five, Holland two, Spain eight, Italy two, Germany four; England, Austria, Russia, the United States, Mexico, the Antilles, Chili, Brazil, Uruguay, the Argentine Republic, Australia, India, and the Cape all have theirs. Does not this extensive movement, this universal vitality, shew that Spiritualism is something more than illusion? Let it be seriously investigated."

OUR READERS will notice with interest that among the recent adhesions to the S.P.R. are four distinguished professors. The election of Professor Schuster, F.R.S., of Owen's College, and Professor Lodge, D.Sc., of University College, Liverpool, were recorded in the previous number of the journal. At the last Council meeting Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., was elected a Vice-President of the Society. Lord Rayleigh is the successor of Professor Clerk Maxwell in the chair of Experimental Physics in the University of Cambridge, and is President of the British Association for this year. Dr. Macalister, F.R.S., who has also joined the S.P.R., held for several years the chair of Anatomy in the University of Dublin; he now holds the chair of Anatomy in the University of Cambridge, is a Fellow of St. John's College, and like Lord Rayleigh has an European reputation.—*Journal of Society for Psychical Research.*

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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; The Countess of Caithness; 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.

The PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESS ASSOCIATION beg respectfully to announce that they now offer for publication by Subscription,

"PRESENT DAY PROBLEMS,"

BY JOHN S. FARMER,

AUTHOR OF

'A New Basis of Belief in Immortality;' "How to Investigate Spiritualism;" "Hints on Mesmerism Practical and Theoretical;" "Ex Oriente Lux," &c., &c.

This work, first announced a year ago, has been unavoidably delayed, owing to the Author's numerous engagements. It is now, however, ready for press, as soon as a sufficient number of copies have been subscribed for. The plan of the work has been considerably enlarged; its scope may be gleaned from the following draft synopsis of the sections into which it is divided. It will form a volume uniform in style with "Spirit Teachings."

I.—Introductory: Giving brief résumé of ground to be traversed, and present position of Psychological Science, embracing—(a) What is known based on personal observation; (b) What is believed on reasonable grounds; (c) What is speculation only; (d) The Tendency of Material Science towards the Realm of Spirit.

II.—Methods and modes of investigation, with suggestions.

III.—General difficulties experienced by investigators (a) on Scientific grounds, (b) on Religious grounds.

IV.—The Present Day Problems and their general bearing on Modern Thought.

V.—Mesmerism. Its Rise, Progress, and Present Position. Recent Investigations, Comparison and Analyses of Results, &c.

VI.—Thought Transference.

VII.—Clairvoyance.

VIII.—Reichenbach's Researches and the Luminosity of the Magnetic Field.

IX.—Apparitions, Hauntings, &c.

X.—Spiritual Phenomena.

XI.—Summary.

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