

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

That was a true note struck in Mrs. Richmond's address at the Kensington Town Hall on May 11th, when the audience were told that they were entering upon the epoch of "The spirit of Spiritualism." There is in Spiritualists a curious lack of perspective in their mental view. Some are never tired of insisting on the importance of the physical phenomena; some affect to despise and scorn them. Some say of themselves that they have no interest in the philosophy expounded; others that the higher Spiritualism—so they call it—enchains their whole attention. And after all what is the simple truth? We are all on various planes of thought. To some a successful appeal is made by the demonstration of an unembodied intelligence by physical means. To some instruction comes by means that appeal solely to the intellect. To others the affections provide the avenues of conviction. But amidst all else this is sure: That he who remains content with the merely physical evidences loses much potential enlightenment, and even amongst his fancied proofs is very apt to go wrong. For of all things else it is most true of phenomenal Spiritualism that "things are not what they seem" always, and that much philosophy is needed to the understanding of even apparently simple "facts." Even to those most truly orthodox in their beliefs Spiritualism has its message. They do not need proof of what they already believe, but, as Mrs. Richmond well said:—

"Unto one who believes in immortal life, who already recognises the voice of the Holy Spirit, and the baptism that Christ revealed, Spiritualism may not convey the message of immortal life, but it conveys a tender and added revelation, and between the uttermost heaven of the theologian and your present abiding place, across that silent stream called death, an archway has been reared by your angel friends, bearing back to you the message of immortal life and the consciousness of the communion with the departed.

"Say what you will, though religious belief conveys evidence of individual salvation, it does not span the immediate separation that lies between you and those who are summoned by the white angel of death. Though you sing the hymns breathing of ministering spirits, though guardian angels are believed in, and taught of in the canonical writings of the Church, though the communion of saints is especially enjoined—

at the same time, the voice that is heard beyond this shadow of death, the form that reveals the face of your beloved one, is not a familiar thing in the experience even of the most devout Christian. When, therefore, Spiritualism declares that this space is bridged over, this interval between your present state and the Kingdom of Heaven is spanned by continued ministration, and that the realm has been revealed that lies between the outermost and innermost of being and between the more celestial state, and that that realm is inhabited by the departed friends, who are all ministering spirits, it is acceptable even to the devout Christian, provided the fear of evil can be put aside from his or her mind. Of course, this can only come by experience, and by the knowledge that everything is permitted by Deity that tends to exalt, uplift, and strengthen the divinest affections of humanity, and that, therefore, it is not indeed a denial, but rather a confirmation, of all religious revelation that the doorway of inspiration is once more open, and that men and women hold converse with spiritual beings."

It is this that is the special contention of the Spiritualist, most scoffed at by those who are most orthodox in their belief of reunion with those whom they have loved on earth, and most emphatically denied by those who share with them a belief in the phenomena, which they explain otherwise. The battle-ground of the future—of the present, indeed, if we omit the pure Materialist—is not that of fact, but of philosophy. The orthodox Christian says he does not want proof of what he already believes; but his faith is shallow and lost in a far-off future. The Theosophist denies that there is any communion with the departed; the ordinary non-Materialist who views evidence with an impartial eye, very often finds that there is.

According to the *Siecle* "M. 'le professeur,' Cumberland," in spite of princely introductions, and much beating of the big drum, has made no more impression than a common conjurer. Quite so; that is his status. All that he shewed the Parisians was some indifferent muscle-reading. And from London and Vienna he was trumpeted by enthusiastic admirers in letters where he was represented "comme l'homme extraordinaire fouillant dans le sanctuaire de la pensée, comme un voleur dans un tiroir." "Un devin, un sorcier, qui voyait à travers l'impénétrable!" cries the *Siecle*. "Fin, le sorcier. Pourquoi diable M. Cumberland est-il venu à Paris, cette Amphitrite de tant de soleils?" Why indeed? But if the Parisians want to see what has been done they should leave off dabbling with charlatany, and study the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research. There they will find plenty of cases of muscle-reading, and plenty also of genuine Thought-transference without any contact whatever between the two persons who conduct the experiment. They will see, too, how this unquestionably natural faculty of the human mind, which psychologists have so unaccountably neglected up to now, can be applied as a means of explanation of those psychical truths which they in their ignorance have relegated to the limbo of the superstitious or supernatural. If thought can be transferred under the stimulating influence of strong emotion it becomes not so difficult to understand that it may take an embodied form in, for instance, an apparition at the time of death of friend to friend.

"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.]

Special Note.—The time has apparently now come when it is desirable that the question of Occultism v. Spiritualism should be thoroughly threshed out. We shall give a fair field and no favour, but it must be distinctly understood that in this matter we can publish no letter to which is not attached the full name and address of the writer. It seems likely that the question will now be approached from a practical rather than, as before, from a speculative standpoint, and in these circumstances it is absolutely necessary that the facts brought forward should be, as far as possible, made over the signatures of Correspondents holding themselves responsible for statements made. [Ed. of "LIGHT."]

Slate Writing Concerning the Occult Brothers and their Agents.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It must be in the recollection of many of your readers how Slade, some six years ago, astonished all who sat with him, obtaining, as they did, messages in various languages, written with fragments of slate-pencil within closed slates, or upon the under-surfaces of slates placed on the table, and how all this was done in broad daylight, before the eyes and under the hands of the experimenters.

The sensations one experienced on these occasions were astounding, and the experimenter felt that he thus obtained an absolute proof of the operation of a mental or spiritual force working with and on matter, but independently of a direct physical organisation.

It was, doubtless, the extraordinary success of Slade, who not only became the talk of London but who seemed to be visibly and daily refuting the assertions of the agnostics, which acted on the jealousy of his opponents, and thus drove them to assault the medium and drag him into the police-court, on an accusation of fraud.

The public, to this day, are generally convinced that the charge of fraud was proved against Slade, but if they will take the trouble to refer to the report of the trial they will find that the judge declared that the evidence in favour of Slade's powers was overwhelming, but inasmuch as he confessed to occult practices he must condemn him, in the words of an old Act, "for practising palmistry or otherwise."

The loss to the cause of British Spiritualism by the driving of Slade out of England was immense, because his work not only created a very great inquiry into the subject, but because his powers convinced at once almost every one who sat with him.

This great loss we have suffered until now, but within the last few weeks Mr. Eglinton has been having most surprising successes in slate-writing, and just as Slade thus excited the enmity and malice of his opponents, so now the wonderful occult powers which accompany the presence of Eglinton would seem to excite the enmity and malice of certain members of the so-called Theosophical Society.

The leaders of that Society have recently arrived in this country from India and have become the fashionable talk of the upper ten thousand, who are for ever on the *qui vive* for a new sensation.

The doctrines taught by the leaders of this Society are : that the phenomena occurring in the presence of spirit mediums are but the nonsense of shadowy and decaying elementary creatures, whom they call spooks, but that the same phenomena occurring in the presence of Adepts and their representatives in the outer world are all performed by a knowledge obtained through a life of celibacy and abstinence and yogi training.

None of us have been favoured with the sight of a real adept, and we are told that such beings are so pure that they could not exist in the presence of Europeans, who live a married life and eat meat.

But as to the diet said by the "Theosophical" Society to be a *sine quâ non*, without which there can be no association with adepts or any real occult power, of a scientific nature, it has always struck me with surprise that the leaders of this Society should in my presence have frequently partaken of large quantities of animal food when in London six years ago, and continued to do so when they reached India, and do so up to the

present hour to my certain knowledge ; and yet Colonel Olcott told me the other day that Mr. Sinnett is not permitted to see Koot Hoomi because he eats beef !

But to bring these matters to a point, just as Slade was persecuted by the Agnostics, apparently because his phenomena refuted Materialism, so Eglinton, wonderful to say, has been, if the communications produced by occult means on slates is accepted, persecuted and threatened by some influential and occult being connected with the so-called Theosophical Society, because he asserts that Madame Blavatsky is no more than a physical medium, and that all the phenomena claimed by her as the result of occult training and knowledge can be produced by, or in the presence of, himself—such as the transmission of letters by occult means and the projection of the entranced soul to a distance as the double.

In a recent letter in "LIGHT," the method of this persecution is indicated, and since that letter was written, other threatening messages have been received within Eglinton's own slates. These threats quite upset Eglinton for the time, so much so that for some days he gave up sitting with inquirers, being afraid that these influences, indicating that they came from some important member of the Theosophical Society, might, by controlling him, compel him to seem to commit acts which might bring him into disgrace.

If these threats really came from the source indicated, then we have a society pretending to inculcate the severest morality and yet some one or more of its members endeavouring to compel a brother Spiritualist to commit frauds, and if the words of the Master against those who caused the innocent to sin, "that it were better for that man that a stone were hanged round his neck and he were cast into the depths of the sea," be true, what, I would ask, should be the judgment on those who, pretending to teach the highest wisdom, would at present seem to threaten the ruin of an innocent man by laying a trap for him that he may fall into a fraudulent life ?

The indignation against those who accused and persecuted Slade was intense, and among those who defended him were some who were prepared to encounter any opposition and run all risks in his defence ; and should this persecution against Eglinton continue these men will again, doubtless, come to the rescue.

Mr. Eglinton having told me of his troubles I said to him, "If you honestly do your duty and live a right life you can, without fear, defy those who now threaten you." He thanked me for my counsel, and begged I would sit with him, in order, if possible, that some light might be thrown on the mystery. I did so last Friday morning, and the result was as follows.

We sat at his table at 12, Old Quebec-street, and I assisted in washing and cleaning four slates. Eglinton then began by holding a slate *below* the flap of the table and closely pressed against the flap, the usual crumb of slate pencil being on the slate, when on my asking the question "Shall we obtain information as to the source of the late threatening messages against the medium?" the word "Yes" was written.

Eglinton then placed the slate *on the top of the table*, and the bit of pencil being placed thereon he covered this slate with another slate. He then placed his right hand on a corner of the upper slate, and I taking his left hand in both of mine, I pressed the three hands firmly downwards on the slates. Eglinton remarked that my magnetism was very strong and almost immediately we heard the writing going on. The time occupied seemed, to both of us, to be about one minute, and I therefore expected to receive only a sentence ; my surprise was therefore great when I found the slate covered with fine writing from top to bottom.

We read the communication, and finding it unfinished, Eglinton took another slate, and held it by one corner close below the flap of the table, while I held his other hand. Again we heard the busy writing, and then the three taps indicating that the message was finished. The time occupied was again about one minute, and again we found the slate covered with writing, as below, in which it will be seen how curiously the message was carried all round the slate, while the slate remained in a fixed position the whole time.

The first slate, as I have stated, was on the top of the table, under my own hands and eyes, and although the second slate was close *below* the flap of the table, it was yet held in its position by the fingers and thumb of Eglinton's right hand, which were visible to me the whole time. I therefore assert that these slates were written on by an occult process, and of this I am as certain as I am of my own existence. If further evidence were

required, it could be found in the fact that the writing on the two slates was completed in about two minutes, more or less, and that on experiment I find it takes about twenty minutes to copy it in quick writing.

The communication is as follows :—

SLATE, No. 1.

Dear Sir,—The explanation of the strange occurrences of the past few days is not by any means a difficult one. In giving, however, publicity to this explanation, inasmuch as you are an opponent of the Theosophy of Mr. Sinnett and Madame Blavatsky, we must request you to be good enough to guard against wounding the susceptibilities of those who are ardent in their support of the persons named; and moreover you must guard yourself against any forcible expression of opinion, since the medium through whom these manifestations have taken place is already the subject of attack, and from no fault of his. Consistently with what we have at all times considered to be our duty, we have felt that despite the discomfort and pain caused by such revelations, it was only just and proper that all sides of this subject should be presented—the more so to a student of Mr. Massey's

SLATE, No. 2.

to those who continue to assert our "spook"-ship.—Ernest.
eminence and ability; consequently when a desire was expressed by the controls acting under the influence of Madame Blavatsky that they should have the power of addressing the gentleman named, we allowed them to do so, with the result already made known to you. Finding, however, that the purpose for which the messages and the letters were written—both wonderful exhibitions of power—[failed] these controls of the lady had recourse to abuse and threats to explain away the errors of the previous communications, and their powerful presence affected the medium in the manner he has described to you, although he must not suppose we would have allowed the powers at work to over-ride our own. We do not wish it to be understood that we deny that there are adepts—on the contrary, we bear testimony to there being such—if well-developed "mediums" can be called by that name—but we are in a position to state that their powers are not only over-rated but shrouded in mystery for the

The slate writing being thus finished, it occurred to me to put a few questions to the intelligence present as follows :—
Is Koot Hoomi an adept?—No.
Is he a medium?—Yes.
Is he a Hindu?—No.
Is he a Thibetan?—No.
Is he a Punjaubi?—Yes.
Is he a strong man?—No.
Is he a weak man?—Yes.
Is that the reason he declines to subject himself to the scrutiny of the Western mind?—Yes.

It will be said that, as the communications given on the slates are entirely in accordance with my own teaching during the last two years, the revelation is no more than mind-reading, expressed in writing by an occult process.

In reply, I would say; it is true that I entirely agree with the views of the Occult writer, but certainly it was not the reading of my mind "not to express myself strongly" in the matter.

However, in deference to the medium and to his control, I will not permit myself to express over-strong views, but conclude with a brief recapitulation of the views expressed on the slates.

1. Madame Blavatsky is a strong physical medium and under the control of spirits, but she differs from an ordinary medium, inasmuch as she can control her controls and so far resembles the wonder workers of the Middle Ages; and thus so-called adeptship is only trained mediumship.

2. The doctrine she teaches regarding the occult phenomena which occur in her presence, and her teaching regarding the Himalayan Brothers—that the powers are obtained by a secret and profound occult science; and the assertion that the initiated possess this secret—seem to be a delusion of a fevered brain or only a jargon of words, invented perhaps by some "Occult Brother," to excite the wonder and cupidity of the credulous.

3. Koot Hoomi is a physical medium, but too weak to withstand the scrutiny of the Western mind, and therefore he hides himself.

The reply to the above by Madame Blavatsky will be that the communications given to me on the slates are merely a confirmation of the view that all mediumship is self-delusion and "spookship." If so, I can reply that as the phenomena occurring in the presence of Eglinton are identical in form with those produced by the agent of the "Occult Brothers," that agent, in thus judging Eglinton, at the same time exposes and condemns herself.

41, Courtfield-road, S.W. GEORGE WYLD, M.D.
May 15th, 1884.

P.S.—I have had the slates glazed, and shall be glad to show them to inquiring minds.

Theosophy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As the subject of Theosophy is revived, and we shall now probably hear more about the Himalayan Brothers and their disciples, I send a few observations made some time ago on Mr. Sinnett's book, "The Occult World." The contents of this volume shew, I think, that the question of the character and nature of Theosophy involves that of some curious psychological phenomena belonging to the state we call mediumship, or sensitiveness. There is no evidence of the occurrence of anything very different from what we knew of long ago, except, perhaps, in degree; and as Spiritualists and Theosophists are not of one mind as to the source of the adept's revelations, it may be useful to recall the memory of some things which occurred in the earlier days of the Spiritualist movement. Some persons may still remember the astonishment excited by the Poughkeepsie seer; how his utterances were quoted, discussed, and wondered at. They were wonderful, for they contained allusions which implied reading far beyond that of the medium, who, I believe, could not then read, and ideas which could not in all probability have come from himself.

But one fine day some one found in Swedenborg's writings a great deal of what had been written by Mr. Fishbough, from Mr. Davis' dictation; and then the seer was denounced as a sham with a retentive memory, or at best a copyist. But those who remember that he uttered these oracles when in an entranced state, and that they were taken down as they fell from his lips by an earnest, truthful man, will believe that imposture had nothing to do with the case, a case which would have helped Dr. Abercrombie to another volume, and would drive Dr. Maudsley wild, if he should ever condescend to examine it carefully. Since that time Andrew Jackson Davis has gone on uttering from time to time real predictions, whose fulfilment has proved their genuineness; teachings of profound wisdom, which it would be well for the world to follow; and, mixed up with these, all sorts of erroneous statements about chemistry, astronomy, geology, &c. But no one who knows anything of the laws of spiritual influence has ever believed Mr. Davis dishonest.

The history of mediumship and prophecy, if it could be written, would shew innumerable instances of the same kind. One, which has come to our knowledge in the last ten years, may be cited. It is found in a book called, "Hafed, Prince of Persia." It was given through the mediumship of a cabinet-

maker, and professed to narrate the adventures of Hafed, in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, and his meeting with the Saviour, &c. This volume was received by a few persons as a *bond fide* biography; but any one who was acquainted either with history or with the law of spiritual communications, saw that it was one of those myths or allegories of the soul's progress and discipline which form the usual subject of such writing. But when readers, who did not know or consider that the framework of this story was necessarily formed of such bits of information as could be found reflected in the mind of the medium, or of those about him, discovered among the illustrations an old representation of the Cave temple at Elephanta, they naturally thought there must be dishonesty somewhere. I was, as a child, familiar with this print,* and now suppose that, like other bits of printing or engraving, it had, without the medium's notice, impressed his mental eye, as the bodily eye which has been gazing without thought at a bright object retains an impression of it when the eyelids are closed. Whether higher spiritual influences reproduced these impressions, or whether they were by association given off spontaneously by the medium, I cannot now inquire.

We all know that whatever comes from a supposed spiritual source, as it *can* only be externalised through a human organism, contains two elements; the spiritual truth, which is the kernel or life of the message, and the words and imagery in which this is clothed by the medium's mind. I think we are *all* too apt to lose sight of this; and to judge of the words uttered, and the pictures drawn as if they professed to represent actual or objective facts. This applies to what is called *direct* writing, as well as to trance speaking, and drawings of spiritual states. Some years ago Baron von Guldenstübbe, a man of great classical learning and perfect integrity, published a volume of spirit writings, made, while the medium was standing apart, on paper laid on the tombs, in St. Denis. Kings, queens, and ancient sages wrote in this way, through the Baron's mediumship. The writings all differed from each other a little, as the impelling influences varied; and it would have been impossible to say that the medium's mind had any share in producing them, if the form of one Greek letter, or the contraction of a word, known to be peculiar to himself, had not shewn it.

The disagreement between old Spiritualists and modern Theosophists consists in the fact that, while Spiritualists believe the information and teaching to be essentially from spirits who have left the body, but retain the sympathies and characters they had here, and who infuse their ideas into our spirits; the Theosophists rely for instruction on teachers still in the body, who have lived for ages in the Himalayan Mountains, and who are too pure and exalted to shew themselves in human form; but who having by severe discipline, self-denial, and holiness acquired the power of leaving their bodies, can present an appearance which they call the *astral shell* to deserving persons. Besides this faculty of locomotion or whatever it may be called, these "Brothers" are said to have the power of moving letters and earthenware from place to place, of writing and transmitting voluminous epistles to their friends, and giving counsel generally on mundane and supramundane affairs without the intervention of any human being. Unlike one whose teaching they hold very cheap, but who was pure *enough* and holy *enough* to mix with the sinful and unholy, the "Brothers" declare themselves too exalted to meet any but highly-qualified persons called "Adepts."

Every one of the achievements claimed as their own by Adepts, has been accomplished through the agency of persons having no claim to special holiness, and known by the humbler name of mediums. It is true that the medium faculty seems to be developed in unusual strength, and in greater variety of manifestation (granting the truth of their narratives) among Theosophists, than we find it either here or in America. This merely refers to phenomena; the teaching is rather more questionable. And we have yet to learn what differences climate and race make in the unknown quality known as sensitiveness, and acknowledged from ancient times to have been found among the nations of the East.

We have now only to examine the writings of the Himalayan sages, and find how much of new knowledge comes from themselves, and how much of their doctrine from other sources. Koot Hoomi's letters to Mr. Sinnett in the *Occult World* will furnish specimens.

Mr. Henry Kiddle, a correspondent of "LIGHT," has already found, in a lecture delivered by himself, the almost verbatim copy of a long paragraph in one of these letters. This, like some of the instances I have referred to, *may* perhaps have been read at some time by the medium, retained unconsciously in the mind, and given out in what is called direct writing, without the help of the hand. This is a startling supposition, but it is just within the limit of possibility. The letter, in its whole composition, appears to contain many of these borrowed and curiously adapted quotations, the source of which will, no doubt, be found by any one who will search for them, in reports of lectures, periodicals, articles, or books—especially books of Buddhist theology. Even the phenomenon of their reproduction, as I have supposed, will be found *almost* as wonderful as would be a colony of undying recluses living in a mountain and

teaching the world all kinds of things. But unless we impute dishonesty, one of these two must be true.

Now for the consistency and accuracy of the writer. He describes himself and his compeers (p. 126) as "utterly unacquainted with Western, especially English, modes of thought and action." Two pages further on we read: "But will you permit me to sketch for you still more clearly the difference between the modes of physical (called exact often out of mere compliment) and metaphysical sciences? The latter, as you know, being incapable of verification before mixed audiences, is (*sic*) classed by Mr. Tyndal with the fictions of poetry."

Every one will agree that the above does not evince much acquaintance with English thought, but the ambitious explanations of the writer shew that anyhow he has meddled with it. His notions of "exact science" will be seen soon, but his "university education"* (p. 122) has not shewn him that "physical science" is *not* exact science, though "called so out of mere compliment." And it certainly required a Himalayan brother to tell us that metaphysics, "being incapable of verification before mixed audiences," is held altogether fictitious and poetical by Professor Tyndal, who, I suppose, prefers the Spectrum Analysis or the Theory of Germs to lecture upon, as more prosaic subjects, and included, we suppose, among those "exact" sciences which are "capable of verification before mixed audiences."

The recluses certainly must have a fair library of ancient and modern books, including periodicals, notwithstanding their ignorance of English modes of thought.

"Because we cannot take a savage from the centre of Africa, and make him comprehend at once the Principia of Newton or the Sociology of Herbert Spencer, or make an unlettered child write a new Iliad in old Achaian Greek, or an ordinary painter depict scenes in Saturn, because of all this our very existence is denied," &c.

It is really very bad treatment. Mrs. Prigg's disbelief of Mrs. Harris's existence was nothing to it. But one more specimen of occult learning;

"The positivist who applies his intellect to proving that $+ \times + = -$ is wasting and scattering energy," &c. (p. 131.)

Why should a *positivist*, of all persons in the world, be so wasteful? And why did not the small amount of University education enjoyed by Koot Hoomi enable him to see that the equation was reversed? Perhaps that is what is meant by waste of time.

The letters contain much more of this kind of thing. Mistaken assertions and erroneous references are mixed with sententious and (sometimes) sensible observations, all in very long words. If the whole of this production is composed, like the paragraphs quoted by Mr. Kiddle, of sentences or pages from other writings, these last have not always been quite accurate, or perhaps not accurately reproduced. For instance, Dr. Hooke, the author of the *Micrographia*, is called in two places Dr. Hookes. Robert Recorde, the mathematician, is said to have been allowed to starve in gaol by his colleagues. He died in the King's Bench Prison, it is true, but he did not *starve*, for he left by will several sums of money to his relations, and the cause of his imprisonment does not seem to have been any animosity on the part of his "colleagues" to his mathematical or other writings.†

Much of what I have said about the letters in *The Occult World* would apply to *Isis Unveiled*, a very curious production, shewing great industry and extensive reading of a very miscellaneous character, evidently the production, in some way, of a vigorous but inaccurate mind.

A patient investigation of this very remarkable case of mediumship will be far more useful to psychological science than the interchange of incivilities between Spiritualists and Theosophists. It will be wiser to find out how and whence all these *dicta* come than to "waste energy" in accusations of fraud or plagiarism.

Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.

S. E. DE MORGAN.

Slate-writing with Mr. Eglinton and the Question of Spirit Identity.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I sat yesterday knee to knee and face to face with Mr. Eglinton, while he held a slate, that I can avouch was clean, just under one end of the table with one hand, his other hand holding both mine. While the slate was being thus held, it was now and again taken up to the top of the table and looked at by us, because, the time being unusually long before anything occurred, Mr. Eglinton felt very tired from holding it in that position. I could see the edge of it all the while, and the hand that held it, as well as Mr. Eglinton's legs and feet. I can, therefore, swear that he did not write on the slate with either his hands or his feet—nor, indeed, with his mouth or nose, or any other part of his body!

Under these circumstances, just as we were going to give up trying to get anything, we heard the sound of difficult, rather slow and laboured writing on the slate. After three raps had been given, Mr. Eglinton slowly drew the slate from its position, and I can swear that he did not turn it. On the upper surface next the table I then found writing, which Mr. Eglinton recog-

* It may be found in an old book entitled "Polehampton's Gallery of Nature and Art."

* He says he is an Oxford graduate.
† See "Penny Cyclopædia." Art. Recorde.

nised as that of "Ernest," one of his own "guides" or "controls," and which purported to be dictated by one departed, and very dear to me. I should feel the message too sacred to be published—if it really were what it purported to be. But I am bound to say that, although I am absolutely convinced of the genuineness of the manifestation as evidence of intelligent employment of some abnormal power, there was nothing in it to prove, beyond reasonable doubt, the identity of the intelligence from whom it professed to emanate, unless, indeed, one particular word may be taken as some proof of it. And, personally, I may add that I have never obtained evidence of such identity in connection with spiritist phenomena, highly interesting, instructive, and unquestionably genuine as I know a great proportion of them to be. Yet published testimony does appear to me to afford such evidence in a few instances. And in such instances, as I have said before, the Spiritist hypothesis that the manifestations are what they seem, and profess to be, commends itself to my mind as the most probable, because, as compared with the hypotheses of Occultism and Theosophy, it has the great merit of being more simple and straightforward, less far-fetched and purely speculative. We know that the so-called dead "once lived;" and unless Materialism can prove that the destruction of the visible, tangible body is, or involves the destruction also of the conscious person, it requires surely no great stretch of imagination to conceive that our departed may be living still under other conditions,—so that when manifestations profess to come from them, and afford also good evidences of identity, it seems almost as much a matter of course to accept this "hypothesis" as to accept this other "hypothesis"—that when the flesh-and-blood Jack who talked to me in Fleet-street yesterday appears again to address me in the Strand to-day, it is really Jack, and not some metaphysical, or other entity, masquerading with his voice and body. Or Jack is gone to Australia—and I get a letter, professing to be from him. Well, it may be "Mary Jane," made out of the "auri" of somebody else, humbugging me. Yet it is more likely to be old Jack. Still it may be another human being personating Jack. That I admit. And there does seem strong proof that such personations are in favour "over there" with the intelligences who communicate. The question, no doubt, is full of difficulty. I believe in the intelligent animation of nature—therefore, in "elementals"—not, however, in what is usually taught by occultists on the subject. But (as yet) I see no proof that the intelligences communicating at séances are other than what they profess to be—departed human beings—though it is certainly strange that they so seldom enable us to identify them by their earthly records. Yet they afford pretty plain proof of their *humanity*, however low in the scale it may be. For I know the friend who died yesterday; he is a *vera causa* to me, as Bacon puts it; but (barring the authority of blessed masters in India) I do not know shells, or "Mary Janes," or even sylphs and gnomes, and the Astral Light. These are not *veræ causæ*, though they may, or may not exist. But then, of course, there must be good evidence of identity; and really that is not so easy to get. Spiritists, as a rule, seem to be somewhat easily satisfied.

After all, the *onus probandi* of "death" being absolute extinction of the person who "dies" surely lies with those who assert it. For since a person is a living, conscious person *now*, we ought to demand very clear proof that he ceases to be so when he ceases to communicate with us in the condition we call "death." And if he appears to do so after that, is it so very incredible and astonishing that we must invent all sorts of speculative theories to account for it rather than accept the fact as it seems to be? For death is an appearance, but the person who dies is substantial, one to whom the appearances of life and death occur.—I am, sir, yours truly,

57, Anerley Park, S.E.

RODEN NOEL.

P.S.—There seems good evidence in Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World," and elsewhere of abnormal, or "transcorporeal" powers in certain adepts, or persons of peculiar constitution and training. The letter, and message that came to us at Mr. Eglinton's lately may have had the origin they claimed for themselves in living persons. But because certain magicians can work marvels, it does not follow that all such marvels are the work of magicians, even when they claim for themselves a different origin.

Psychography.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—On Thursday last my daughter and I had a psychographic séance with Mr. Eglinton, of which I feel compelled to give some account. My daughter was rather sceptical as to the phenomena of Spiritualism, but came away convinced as to the truth, of slate-writing, at any rate. During the whole of the time, Mr. Eglinton's hands were in view, in broad daylight. Some of the writing was done while the slate was held just under the edge of the table by one of ourselves, as well as by Mr. Eglinton; some were on my own slate, which was placed on the table with a piece of pencil beneath it. We had many curious tests, such as several numbers, and the word "Victoria," which we asked for, and which were at once written on the slate. I then asked for the words, "Life is real," and there immediately appeared, "Life is real, *life is earnest*," thus completing the first line of Longfellow's "Psalm of Life." But the most wonderful manifestation was a long message from a relative

of mine, signed with Christian and surnames (both very peculiar and unusual ones), and giving the date of his death! These purported to be written through one of Mr. Eglinton's guides, but, on returning home and comparing the writing with that of my relative, I found them to be identical! I should say that I am quite unknown to Mr. Eglinton, also, that I did not remember the year of my relative's death, until I verified the statement by consulting my diary.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,
CONVINCED.

PROBLEMS FOR PROFESSIONAL CONJURERS.

In his pamphlet, "The Logic of Facts; a Reply to the Archduke John's 'Glance into Spiritualism,'" Baron Hellenbach adverts to the Archduke's suggestion that professional conjurers can successfully imitate all the mediumistic phenomena.

"The problems," says he, "which I could set to these performers are numerous; but I will content myself with the four following.

"1. The conjurer is to be seated in the doorway of two rooms, divided by a curtain; one of them dark, the other lighted up. He shall be on the dark side, but so that his feet shall be continually visible in the light room. His coat is to be sewn up in front, and his hands (by the sleeves) behind him. Then a string shall be fastened round one of his feet (visible as above said), and this string shall be held by one of the company. It is allowed during the sitting to examine the stitching, and, of course, all this is to be in my own house. Under these conditions the following things must happen. Tables in the light room must be moved; albums, books, and tinkling guitars must fly from one room into the other; grey-coloured hands and arms of super-human size being thrust through the curtain into the light room, two metres (more than six feet) above the conjurer. All this happened in three sittings with Eglinton, at Vienna, seven persons being present.

"2. A conjurer is to sit in my house in the dark room, the doorway into the light one being overspread with a gauze veil, fastened on the side of the light room. Under these conditions three distinct figures are to step from the dark room into the light one, without tearing the veil. That happened at Vienna with Bastian in the presence of three persons.

"3. A conjurer is to sit in my house in the dark room; a figure is to come out through the curtain, and to lead me to the conjurer, so that both shall remain visible. That happened at Vienna with Frau Topfer, in the presence of myself and three Professors.

"4. A conjurer is to sit in my brightly lighted room, at my side, both our chairs having high arms. He is to lay one hand on the arm of my chair, which is then to rise horizontally a foot high with me in it. That happened at Vienna with Slade at two sittings, with altogether about eight persons."

NEUMEYER HALL, HART STREET, BLOOMSBURY, W.C.—Mr. W. J. Colville will deliver two inspirational discourses in the above hall, on Sunday next, May 25th. Subjects, 11 a.m., "The Ascension of Christ into Heaven regarded Spiritually"; 3 p.m. (by request), "Progress and Poverty." The public cordially invited. All unreserved seats free.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE announces a grand soirée musicale for Wednesday next, May 28th, at Neumeyer Hall, Hart-street, Bloomsbury, W.C. An attractive musical programme has been arranged, and during an interval Mrs. C. L. V. Richmond will deliver an inspirational discourse on "The Birth of Music," together with an original poem.

THE Old Testament offers plain instances of mediumship. Moses, in Deuteronomy v. 5, says, "I stood between you and the Lord to shew you the word of the Lord." Isaiah v. 9, says, "In mine ears said the Lord," &c. Zachariah v. 9, says "And the angel that talked with me said unto me," &c.

It seems to be the amends which a bountiful nature makes to those whom she has not blessed with an expansive mind, that they shall think all wrong that comes not within their own comprehension and relish.—DR. YOUNG.

OFFICES OF "LIGHT"

3, GREAT JAMES STREET,
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LONDON, W.C.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Half-column, £1. Whole Column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

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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.

Light:

SATURDAY, MAY 24TH, 1884.

"KNOWLEDGE" ON "GHOSTS AND GOBLINS."

For some time past *Knowledge* has been laying down the law—and very bad law it is, too—on ghosts, &c., in a series of articles from the pen of the editor, Mr. R. A. Proctor. This gentleman is without doubt eminent as an astronomer, but as much cannot be said for him as a student of the occult. His conclusions are about as absurd as want of knowledge with regard to psychical phenomena can well make them. Amongst other matters, Mr. Proctor has been falling foul of Mr. R. Dale Owen, calling in question his care and forethought in collecting the evidence for the stories which appeared in "The Debateable Land" in general, and the "Bach narrative" in particular.

Miss Owen has replied, and her letter being of general interest, we transfer it to our columns:—

The Bach Incident and Mr. Owen.

[1,199]—In your paper of April 4th appears one of a series of articles. The one in question refers to the Bach incident, published by my father, Robert Dale Owen, in his "Debateable Land between this World and the Next." Will you be good enough to give me space in your paper to meet, if possible, a few of the objections which you present?

You kindly say "that the converts should not be ridiculed," hence I feel prompted to reply to so fair an opponent—a fairness with which Spiritualists do not always meet.

I was with my father a portion of the time while he was gathering the material for his books, and I can therefore testify that no one could use more indefatigable care in collecting facts. He sometimes spent days in verifying the most insignificant details, travelling from place to place, and sparing neither time nor trouble. I have never known a lawyer so conscientiously discriminating in collecting evidence as was my father. If human testimony may be trusted in a court of law, then surely it should be received when thus carefully gathered in the interests of a higher tribunal.

In many instances, lawyers, jury, and witnesses may be bribed; but in my father's case, and in that of many others, there was no temptation to prevaricate. Spiritualism is not so popular that a man would in any way perjure himself to be ranked among its converts. I can well remember when my father decided to publish the vast evidence collected through years of investigation, continued first through months in his own drawing-room, and afterwards in a more extended field. He had an established reputation as a statesman in America; he was Minister to Naples when he first accepted the fact of spirit communion, and he thought that through the avowal of his

belief he would lose the high position which had been won through years of public duty.

Even at this present time it requires some courage to acknowledge oneself a Spiritualist, but twenty-five years ago it required much more.

One great difficulty encountered by my father was to induce people to communicate their experience at all; they feared to incur the world's contempt, and in many cases obtained it for their avowals.

Under such circumstances witnesses, as a rule, do not manufacture evidence. I do not claim that there have not been some hysterical and morbidly imaginative people, whose testimony is not trustworthy, for there are many such both within and without the ranks of Spiritualists; but if human evidence taken *en masse* can ever be trusted, it is when such evidence is given at a personal sacrifice to the witnesses. No one likes to be laughed at, and Spiritualists share this trait with the rest of humanity.

I quite agree with you, however, that no one should believe "such stories" until he has investigated for himself, but neither should he disbelieve them until he has so investigated.

There are a sufficient number of sound-minded men and women in the ranks of Spiritualism at the present time to warrant respect, and to demand from other sound-minded men and women, who have not investigated its phenomena, an unprejudiced neutrality.

If you will give a little further thought to the subject, you may be inclined to reconsider the sentence in which you say, "It ought to be shewn that the well-being of the human race is to some important degree concerned in this matter . . . before the philosophers can be expected to devote much of their time to the inquiry suggested." Does it require any argument to shew that the question of the future life is a subject of a sufficient interest to engage the attention of even the most profound philosopher? And can there be any way of proving this all-important truth except as we can do so by communicating with those who have passed through the death of the body and yet live?

It is often the painful duty of Spiritualists to answer appeals from death-robbed unbelievers, whose philosophy is unable to give them comfort when suffering a heavy loss. A negation may suffice as a neutral background to positive well-being and happiness, but a negation has never filled a vital human want. Even within a few weeks I have been grieved for sceptical friends, who, in happier moments, believed their theories offered a safe refuge in time of need. One comes sorely to dread unbelief when one sees, as I have, the suffering of bereaved unbelievers.

Concerning your objection as to the triviality of the messages, I have found through a life-long experience that many of the thoughts suggested are not trivial. Believing that the soul passes into the life beyond in the same state that it passed out of this existence, we do not wonder that some of the communications are unimportant; we unfortunately find in this world many men and women who are not profound either in thought or feeling; and these shallow streams are as noisily obtrusive on that side as on this. Is it not a wise dispensation that this is the law? Growth cannot be an attribute of the infallible; were we, therefore, to have free intercommunion with angels, whose judgment in all things was perfect, and we were, therefore, not called upon to use our own reason and discrimination, would not such communion lift us by artificial means to an exalted position which we had in no wise won by that individual effort, that experimental progression, which only can give us full-rounded moral muscle? Man is not prepared as yet for plenary inspiration.

Further, if we are to reject a belief in intercommunion between this world and the next because those who communicate are not perfect, then we must also reject humanity for the same reason. But we can scarcely affirm that there are no human beings because some of them are foolish or wicked, neither would it be wise to isolate our lives because our fellow creatures are not quite satisfactory.

To a philosopher such imperfection should not be a stumbling block, but rather a test of genuineness, for philosophers should realise more fully than less careful students, how slow is the progression of any growth, how gradual and consecutive are the up-building processes even in the physical world. The law makes no leap.

Were Spiritualists to claim that a murderer becomes an angel in the twinkling of an eye, then the philosophers might object to investigating a theory so contrary to their own experience, but we make no such claim; we know that we are all interlinked in

a great progressive scheme wherein there are innumerable shades of differing growths, we feel that we must have an infinite patience with lower spirits, even as higher spirits have an infinite patience with us.

If you will give your attention to the study of the laws which bind the worlds of matter and spirit, you will find, I think, a wide and subtly interesting field of research, and I venture to affirm that you will discover it to be a subject, not only worthy of philosophers, but one requiring the most conscientious search of the greatest hearts, the most continued thought of the wisest brains in the world.

ROSAMOND DALE OWEN.

[I am myself unable to understand why any one who possesses evidence apparently substantiating spiritual or ghostly theories should hesitate to produce it. Holding it back implies doubt as to its validity. That my correspondent's father was not among those who sought to deceive, all who knew him know. But that he was not deceived is by no means so well attested. I do not wish spiritualistic notions to be discussed in these columns, for the simple reason that so much deception has been attempted and detected. But well attested facts are always admissible, as they have a scientific interest:—first, because there must be *some* explanation, and the search for an explanation of observed facts is good practice; secondly, because by noting the facts on which erroneous opinions have been based we learn how to gauge the average intellect.—R. P.]

Quite so; but why insinuate that the evidence is withheld, or that there is any hesitation in producing it? As a matter of fact, it is as open to Mr. Proctor as to anyone else, only he must seek it for himself. A man who shut himself up in a closed room and refused to believe in the existence of the stars unless they were brought to him, would rightly be considered very foolish, but that is the attitude adopted by some people as regards spiritual phenomena. If Mr. Proctor will examine facts now occurring daily in London, and which, if anything, are certainly "well attested," he will, we have no doubt, speedily find himself under the necessity of re-writing "Ghosts and Goblins." Until he has investigated these facts, however, he has no right to deny or undervalue them.

MR. W. EGLINTON AT ST. JAMES'S HALL.

Encouraged by the success attending his first attempt to obtain psychographic phenomena in public, on the occasion of the inaugural meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. Eglinton has arranged for a repetition of the experiment. As will be seen from an advertisement on another page, he proposes to give an address on "The Facts and Philosophy of Spiritualism," in the Banqueting Room, St. James's Hall, on Tuesday next, May 27th, at 8 p.m., to be followed by experiments in Psychography. This is a bold step, but if well managed and surrounded by proper conditions, we do not see why such a course should not be of valuable service in disseminating the facts of Spiritualism. Mr. Eglinton deserves every encouragement and we hope he will not fail to receive it by the gathering together of a large and sympathetic audience on this occasion. His success of late has been so phenomenal that we can hardly doubt that the experimental portion of the proceedings will be satisfactorily carried out. We shall be happy to forward tickets of admission to any readers of "LIGHT" who would like to be present.

PLYMOUTH.—On Sunday last, Mr. R. S. Clarke delivered two inspirational discourses in the Richmond Hall, the congregations on both occasions being very large and sympathetic. In the morning, the subject was "A Godless World," while in the evening "Man's True Saviour" formed the topic for consideration, the control, who in earth life had been a well-known social reformer, giving evidence of his continued interest in the welfare of humanity. The public circle in the afternoon was as usual productive of good results. Next Sunday morning the speaker will be Mr. W. Burt, and in the evening Mr. Clarke. Subject; "Outcast Souls."—THETA.

SERVICES BY MRS. RICHMOND

AT KENSINGTON TOWN HALL.

The guides of Mrs. Richmond desire to announce that this series of discourses is not intended in any sense to be a phenomenal illustration of Spiritualism, but will be of a nature to invite thought concerning the *inner teachings* of spirit. Therefore they wish to announce that the subject for the next discourse, which will be given on Sunday, May 25th, at 7 p.m., will be, "The Comforter: as Revealed by Spiritualism." Tickets for reserved seats may be had at the Office of this paper, 2s. each.

The guides of Mrs. Richmond announce that they have a work to perform in the provinces after the series of discourses in London (which may extend to the end of June) has been completed, and suggest that four or five centres of work be chosen by the Spiritualists desiring their ministrations, as they will not be able to visit every place. These visits to the North and Midland counties will begin about July 1st.

A NEW INTERPRETATION OF THE LOGOS, AS REVEALED BY SPIRITUALISM.

A discourse given through MRS. C. L. V. RICHMOND, at the Kensington Town Hall, Kensington, Sunday evening, May 18th, 1884, Mr. Webster Glynes in the chair.

Music under the direction of Mr. J. C. Ward.

The first chapter of the Gospel according to St. John was read by the chairman as the lesson of the evening.

Spiritualism reveals that the most ancient Word is not a written book, but the direct impetus or impulse of the Divine Mind toward expression. When you carefully study the first few verses of the chapter just read, you will discover that this ancient word, this original Logos, this Divine and cosmic meaning, is that which is the first intention toward expression in the form of man on earth, and that all the steps that precede that expression are the steps of the Logos. By the materialist this may be termed evolution, or natural law; by the strict worshipper at any special shrine it may be termed the edict of God; but by the intelligent careful observer of the meaning of the ancient language it must mean an intelligent purpose, directed to a certain object the attainment of which is fulfilled when the Logos is revealed. Whatever, therefore, between God and man intervenes, before the perfect expression of the Christ-life on earth, every step is a preparation for that Christ-life, and John, the possessor of the Divine secret, nearest and dearest unto the Christ, perceived the evidences of this Divinity in the Christ-Man as illustrative of the most ancient Word. But let us depart from mere personality of this fulfilment to the Diviner and broader conception that the Word implies in its promise to humanity.

There are many who conceive that this expression is only to be found in this Book, the Bible, in the form of rhetorical sentence expressly as *read*; that all that is intended by the Word, therefore is in this Book, and they declare that when that is written or read, all of God's expression is attained. Others take the literal form of Christ. "The Word becoming flesh" must have meant what John indicated, and that, therefore, no further meaning of this Word can be revealed from the ancient record than this written Testament concerning Christ. There are others who look with still broader vision toward the most ancient expressions of human faith and consciousness in Deity, who perceive that all along the pathway of creation the indications of this Life-Breath must be revealed.

Not that God required in the beginning this Word, but that in the beginning of things (whatever things may be implied in that Word for the time being) was intended the impulse proceeding from the Divine mind, and that first creative impulsion toward matter for the purpose of expressing in matter intelligence must be the ultimate or primal Logos, that through all stages of material development, when matter as yet was seemingly chaotic, and when the feeblest forms of life had expression, still this Logos was forcing itself through from the Divine universe of God's being, and finally expression in man.

Adam, the *first man*, being of the earth (*i.e.*, of the red clay), was the first expression of this consciousness, was the typical illustration of the Logos in the matured human form. Christ, the expression of the Spirit and not of the earth, the

second man, and therefore the man who reveals the life of God, is the illustration of the completion of that Word, Logos, in the flesh.

These two illustrations prove the beginnings and the endings of human existence. Where man begins is with the earth, Adam, the red clay : where man shall triumph is with the Christ, the Logos, the Word made flesh, the Divine consciousness of God revealed in man. Where man stumbles is in the absence of this light : where man is made aware and transcendent is in the presence of this light "that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This may have no reference to other worlds or systems or beginnings, but only to that beginning that is indicated in this record, the beginning of the intention of this Divine Logos as it affects humanity upon the earth, and if the life of this Word made flesh signifies anything to mankind, it is the prophecy, the hope, the consciousness, the Divine promise that He has made them "sons of God" by His presence and revelation of the Logos, and having thus shewn them the way to become the sons of God, this is a promise to all other souls upon the earth, that by the transcendent pathway here revealed and interpreted in the life of Christ, every human being is shewn the way unto that light.

Not only is this new interpretation afforded by the revelations of spiritual life, but the most ancient angels of God having charge over the earth shew that Christ made the earth, not as God, but as the Logos from God to prepare the earth for His own coming, as you might be sent forth to prepare a city, then there should be the recognition that you were to be the king or emperor of that city. So this sacred preparation of the earth, this which comes from God in the very beginnings of creative manner where angels assemble to behold the construction of worlds, where even while chaos reigns in the system that waits to be outwrought, the Christ-Man waits the formation of worlds, waits with the building power of the ages, with the consciousness of the Divine within Him, with the mission He is appointed at last to fulfil upon the earth, that work entirely revealed to Him, waits for the ages to unfold matter, and waits ages for man to be prepared for His coming.

It is consciousness that first reveals itself in the power of man over matter. The victory attained over mere material law, and this point where spirit and matter blend, where spirit asserts itself beyond matter and finally triumphs, is the point where man becomes first aware of the Divine intention of the Divine Logos that is revealed in the Christ-Man.

The earth possessed the nature and the Christ attainment long before the birth of Jesus upon the earth, the prophecy of this Logos was revealed to sage and seer. Buddha sought it beneath that wondrous tree, whose whispering leaves revealed to him the wonders of the signs of life, whose murmuring sounds held enthralled the long vistas of existences through which he had come to attain the Divine. Zarturst (or Zoroaster) sought it in the Divine flame of being, that leaping forth from Brahma gave unto life and form of matter the visible creation of the soul of man, and then restored it again, released and perfected, unto its Divine inheritance. It was shewn in Egypt under the veiled pinions of Osiris while Isis slept. The breath of God breathed upon the earth the wonders of creation. And then the soul sprang from this Divine source and gave unto matter its inheritance, and no longer was there death but immortal life with its encircling sphere, its two-fold pinions of existence. It was revealed unto Moses, who with Diviner power than Aaron's rod, with a loftier perception of Jehovah, perceived its wonders in the innermost temples of Egypt, combining them with the wonders of the God of Abraham. It was known to the Prophets who foresaw with Divine perception the image of God's presence revealed in human life and history; and how step by step through the long line of descent the wonders of the soul were revealed to man. It was seen by those "wise men of the East," who under the symbolism of the Kaballa perceived the sacred indications of the approach of the new Messiah, and traced again the footprints of the sons of God upon the earth. It was more distinctly revealed by Christ Himself, who declares Himself the expression of the Father, the ultimate voice, the mouth-piece for the Divine, the direct testimony and testament between God and man.

Setting aside all intervening ceremonials and declaring the Love of God for His children, it is now revealed, not in sacred rites and mystic shrines all that with which man has enveloped the meaning of the Logos, but in whatever is revealed to the human consciousness as emanating from the Divine. That Word of Truth, of Liberty, of Wisdom, of Justice, of Purity, of

Kindness, which elevates man one degree nearer to the Divine victory that he is to attain on earth ; that Word of God that speaks unto every human consciousness, nearest to those, perhaps, who are most silent ; and reveals itself in goodly deeds, in actions that shall finally blossom forth into Divine charity, that Word of God that makes wisdom, truth and love the arbiter of human destinies, instead of kings or rulers of hierarchies, that transcends beyond all external testimony and sign, beyond the letter of the law and the word by the spirit that is divine ; that Word that causes you to read with an illumined eye and vision made clear, the transcendent record of past time, beholding it not with the eye of human vision, but with the eye of that surpassing faith that comprehends from the beginning the dealings of God with man ; that Word also that reveals how step by step, overcoming continuously the temptations that beset your way, you are attaining at last the triumph which Christ revealed.

The sons of God must have two distinct meanings in the ancient record, or else the theologians must be sadly at fault in ascribing to Christ merely the title of the Son of God, for here the Apostle distinctly declares that Christ has revealed to them the way to become the sons of God. If that be true, then His pathway was only exceptional because, more Divine than theirs, it was intended to light the world, shewing the way in which they should go also to attain that light, and we believe that the early Christian fathers, notably the congregation at Jerusalem, accepted this as the ministration of Christ, *i.e.*, that He pointed the way in which *all* might walk. That He revealed the light "that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." That He shewed the Word as expressed in human form, by which *all* might also receive that Word in the perfect love of God the Infinite Father. He brought the title of Father instead of King, of Friend instead of Ruler, of Him who would attend your immediate wants, hear your cries instead of Him who gave forth angry announcements and commands. He brought the Beatitudes instead of the Levitical law. The Three Christian Graces, the chief of which is Charity, instead of the ordinances of hatred, instead of the various commands of physical life ; brought the sublime exaltation of hope, of prophecy, the salvation for humanity from the darkness of earth instead of condemnation. And this Word became flesh because the Word implied completeness of God's love.

Around that mystic Logos must cluster all conceptions of the thought of Divinity. Whatever is most sacred and dearest unto the human soul ; whatever is remembered from the existence or Divine inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven ; whatever separates the soul from matter and makes the inheritance of the former outlive and survive all changes of the latter ; whatever is Divine and sacred enclosed within the material form, yet seeking expression here, this must be the Divine meaning of the Logos. That which Luther vainly sought ; that which Melancthon endeavoured to solve ; that which every reformer has sought to achieve, the esoteric meaning of the Logos ; that which the Protestant Church from Luther's time to the present has been endeavouring to solve, the simplest child may read in the truthful statement that springs spontaneously to its lips, and in the loving light that gleams from its eyes. For it is known there in the transparent soul, the clear voice reaching from the past eternity down through the corridors of material being, resounding clear and full of musical harmonies ; The Love of the Infinite ; The possession of the Divine ; The perfect crystal water revealed in the pure life of Christ.

See where the past opens before you, how its light is no longer entangled in the long labyrinth and vista of theological dogmatism ; how, unravelling yourselves from the labyrinth of creed and catechism, you see with the simple light of the child the truth of Christ and the love of God to man, and see more and more whereby the same pathway ye also are the sons of God. That lamp shining in your midst, the lamp of conscience ; that guide revealing itself to your lives, the guide of pure thinking. That which blossoms out in goodly deeds, in the love of your fellow beings. That which triumphs over selfishness by ministering to others, the divinest achievements of every Christ-like life. Self-forgetfulness, the divinest victory of every child-like being. The recognition of the love of God. And all learned disquisitions, all thought of evolution and natural law, must sink before the Divine mandate of this one mighty Will, that for the sake of complete expression and triumph vanquishes matter, reveals itself step by step in the struggles of the ages, makes landmarks of seers, prophets, philosophers, and sages, and finally the crowning light upon Olivet—of the Christ-Man triumphing over earthly

temptation; and upon Calvary--the Christ-Man, triumphant over every earthly sorrow, overcoming the world. The victory that is wrought through matter that the soul may gleam as transparently there as the clear electric light gleams through the atmosphere of earth.

Wonderful Logos! Thou hast spoken in the past eternity, in the beginning of organic life, when the atoms were unformed, when the suns had not their places, when Chaos and Night, the most ancient divinities, prevailed. Thou hast spoken, and then the intention was the Christ-Man, even then; but the glimmering lines of light were gradually formed, the spheres of matter gradually unfolded themselves into organic being. Those rings were gradually broken that finally became planets and orbs of fire by this one mandate. Not yet was the Logos here. Then organic forms appeared, the laws of matter, and were clear and distinct; then the ages that transpired at last produced forms of beings. Still the Logos has not appeared. At last the soul arrives from its home--that of the Deity, transcendent in its power,--where angels have watched the process of creation forming those wonderful worlds; and there the Light takes its place on the earth. There the Logos kindles the first feeble fires of human consciousness, the presence from Adam unto Christ; the voice of God through the primal nations is heard only; at last the triumph becomes complete. Ages alone would suffice for its expression, thousands and thousands of æons for its unfoldment, but this is the smallest portion of that eternity which, as yet, is only begun. Then upon the earth man bends before this triumph, this victory; the unseen has conquered the seen; the invisible has triumphed over the visible; it ascends unto its place again, eternal in the heavens, but the trailing marks of its presence are seen in the lines of light along human history. The watch towers by which you are guided unto the eternal harbour, the signals by which you know, in your voyages of material existence, whence the soul cometh and whither it goeth. From this great and Divine source of life your beings so behold how the wonders of the new dispensations are formed.

The Logos announces itself not only in the Christ, but in all men who love their kind; not only in the One revealed upon Calvary, but in all who in their various trials of human existence triumph over death and doubt and darkness; not only in Jesus' power, whether in the Divine Sermon on the Mount, or when He triumphs over His enemies and declares Himself to be the Prince of Peace and of Love, but also that which reveals this to your own life, the triumph of love in your own hearts, the purity that worketh good and that vanquisheth every evil, the purity that triumphs over every shadow and corruption, the victory accorded to every child of earth. And this promise here recorded we dare to interpret in its broadest and most literal sense, that not a child of earth nor any human being whatsoever, in any state of mortal or spiritual being, but one day shall in this light realise this victory. There is no human being, however degraded, but shall one day stand where Christ stood,--aware of the Logos in their lives and may be shewn the way of life, that however feeble the voice of this consciousness of the immortal being is, however futile this Logos seems to be, however dimly it reaches now your outward consciousness, that still from the very beginning of your earthly state, when the soul, summoned from its celestial home to the contact with matter, this voice knew and held sway for the Divine perfection of your being in the earthly state, and that crown and that the triumph is you shall one day vanquish matter as Christ has shewn the way. And you shall one day place selfishness and pride, and worldliness and uncharitableness, beneath your feet; one day you shall triumph over every darkness that now environs you; one day shall see the planets and suns and systems pass before that Divine Logos which imperishable the eternal live for evermore.

God spoke to man through prophets, seers, and sages; it is this that is within every soul; is heard, is here now in your hearts and lives, is in words of John, is in the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, is in the wonderful prayer breathed by Jesus. If this voice were not in your soul neither would you perceive it in the records of past life, nor would the lives of martyrs, whose souls sprang heavenward in clouds of flame, be of value but for this searching, ministering power that knows within your lives that victory also shall come to the highest and the best.

See where the Logos is traced upon all forms of life; yonder stars that move to their appointed places in the vast heavens by laws as perfect and as complete as can be conceived; mathe-

matics revealed in the systems by which worlds are governed, and the petals of the flower numbered so that their type and genus can be known to man; yet it is said boastingly by man, that no intelligence created the hly to have six leaves and the wild rose five. We say that where nature geometrises, there is God; we say that where the crystal has revealed laws of mathematical accuracy, there is intention and the Logos; we say that where man's moral nature blossoms out into certainty of triumph as accurately as the lilies into bloom, there is God's Word traced in your lives and you become angels because of God's Word.

This angelic state is your inheritance. This Logos you have brought with you. The Divine is yours always. The imperfection you will cast from you. Nothing that has shadows can you bear to eternity, but the light must forever grow more resplendent, and with its triumph and victory the revealed Word of God will shine out in every life, and the wonders of this "Light that Lighteth every man into the world" will be remembered from the beginning.

LINNAEUS, the great Swedish naturalist, held that man had glimpses of the unseen world through presentiments, second sight and dreams. In his "Nemesis Divina" he says, "As the body is accompanied by its shadow, which is not always visible, so every soul is accompanied by a spirit, which communicates with it by open or secret warnings, by voice, or by apparition."

TRANCE.—Buddha taught his disciples to practise the Dhyāna or Trance, in which the spirit of the entranced one communicates with those of the departed, and which is a sort of preparation for Nirvana. Is there not in the trance a temporary obliteration of the selfhood of the subject and substitution of another personality? and is it not by the trance that the mystics of every religion put themselves in communication with the world of spirits?—*Bonnemère*.

LEIBNITZ, in his letters, published by Grotefend, referring to the notion of Paradise as commonly taught, says:—"The soul can never be in a motionless condition, in a state of barren, idle contemplation. Our happiness will never, can never, consist in a state of enjoyment in which there is nothing more to desire; that would be stupifying; but in a perpetual progress towards new perfections and new delights."

CANINE PERCEPTION.—We are reminded by a correspondent, of the following:—In our issue of June, 1860, this instance of "Canine Perception of a Spirit" is related. A young man of Marseilles died. After he had been deceased eight months his three sisters, mediums for the Planchette, received communications from him. On each occasion a little pet dog, the deceased brother's, would jump upon the table, sniff at the Planchette and make little moans. "My good little dog knows me," was written on the first occasion. Upon being asked how, the answer written was, "My magnetism and the delicate sensibility of his scent."—*Revue Spirite*.

A DREAM.—M. Rabbagia writes:—"Three years ago we left Paris through the death of our son. Looking recently over a box of valuables, my wife missed an article. She thought none but the nurse could have taken it. In bed at night she heard the words, 'Mother, do not charge any one; what is gone is melted; nurse only knows of the loss.' Thinking it a dream she composed herself to sleep, but awoke with the same words in her ears. In the morning she spoke of her loss to the nurse, who said that she herself missed it during the packing at Paris, but deferred mentioning it at the time not to add to her mistress' trouble."—*Revue Spirite*.

A MEDIUM OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.—Bridget, Princess Gudmarsen, allied to the Royal family of Sweden, lived in the fifteenth century, married early, had several children, then, withdrawing from the world, entered a religious house. She founded the "Order of the Saviour" in Sweden. She was an ecstatic, and received communications from the spirit world. These were collected and published at Nuremberg in 1524, under the title of "Eight Books of Revelations. In the 'Lives of the Saints' these are said to have been 'not the fruits of vigils, but given by the spirit, who acted in her while she slept.' At Rome, Bridget fell into trance while in St. Peter's, in which she had a vision of a herd of mitred swine; the vision was accompanied by the words, 'Such are the bishops and abbots of to-day.' Other of her visions and spirit-sayings were recorded which touched ecclesiastics to the quick; so after her death the proposition to canonise her was much opposed. The Archbishop of Paris wrote a treatise, "Trying the Spirits," in which he said, "We ought to look closely into the character of those who have visions, and the quality of their visions, whether they are conformable to the truths of the faith." Notwithstanding opposition she was canonised and became St. Bridget; indeed she was thrice canonised. There was at the time a great schism in the Romish Church; it lasted forty years, during which there were two Popes; and part of the time there were three, each infallible in the minds of his devotees. Ambassadors from Sweden, in their zeal to make sure, obtained her canonisation from each of them.—*Eugène Bonnemère*.

SPIRITUALISM AT HOME.

In "LIGHT" of March 3rd, I narrated a remarkable fact, viz., the translation, by spirit power, of a musical box from my house in Blackheath to my cottage at Haslemere, and I recorded the protest of the spirit when it occurred, against seeking for such physical power. It was not of *our* seeking; we have learned in a long course of investigation not to ask too persistently for any particular thing to be done; but it was excusable in our medium to take such an opportunity as seemed to be then afforded of asking for some such crucial physical test. I refer to it again to chronicle its effects. Ever since that time our medium has been seriously indisposed, and her state has created much anxiety. By direct writing we were told to take care of her, *before* the ill effects appeared; which, I need not add, we have done, and they are now moderating. Our family séance, held only once a week, does more to restore her than any other treatment, which points to the cause and really adds testimony to the reality of the remarkable phenomenon. As there are many who are now somewhat wildly forcing psychic phenomena I may be excused this little brief reference to family experience.

I hope my Persian friend, Saadi, is not forgotten by your readers! He asked, a week or two ago, if he might bring a friend with him to one of our sittings, to which we assented. The introduction was curious, and took place in this wise.

Last Sunday evening, soon after the medium was entranced, a knock came on the floor of the room, some distance from the circle. Not having these knocks or rappings often, we noticed it, and I asked if *it* wanted anything.

"Yes—the Alphabet."

I found on going on with this slow process of communication that the spirit was spelling out something which was not English! and I said I must give it up. The letters I had taken down with difficulty were nearly right, as afterwards appeared, but your readers will not wonder at my perplexity when they appeared in my note book thus:—W-a-l-m-i-k-z-e-r-d; the *l* is the only letter which was wrong.

The spirit then spoke through the medium and said he would *write* in the cabinet, where we had placed paper and pencil. The medium was then taken into the cabinet, and we soon heard the paper fluttering about, after which it was very soon handed to us by the medium. She had been only a few minutes in the cabinet, certainly not long enough to write *one* of the communications which now appeared upon the paper. I wish I could give you a *facsimile* of this half sheet of paper, which was a *specially marked* piece: but if I could I should hesitate, because of *some* of the communications upon it.

There are four distinct messages; one from our spirit daughter Louisa, followed by two writings by two ancient spirits who sign their names, and on the reverse side is a communication clearly written in every respect, excepting the figures at the end, which Saadi tells us are meant for "636." The writing is as follows. I give it as it is even to the pointing and spelling:—

From Wamik, Saadi (s) Friend.

"At home the point of junction is the hearth
For there you find the family collected,
O heavenly happiness! still upon earth,
Best in domestic happiness reflected,
Fire to no guest its friendly warmth denies,
But forwards every act of hospitality
Heats ovens, dresses food, melts ores and ice
And man untill he learned its usefull quality
Ate acorns raw, and flesh in all undressed reality

As without fire mankind is sunk to beast
So is he slime and senseless clay alone
If the ethereal spark of heaven at least
Fire not his mind to glories of its own.
Reason and speech an earthly sign remain
Of the creations lord in light revealed
Thy Zend Avesta, thy living fire domain
Burns fiercely glowing now, now half concealed
As Genii blazing bright with adamantine shield

WAMIK ZERDUSHT.'

Wamik was burnt to death at Abyssinia; he lived in this life before 636.

The conceit of this poetry is not English, but those of your readers who have read the *Gulistan*, will at once recognise it as Eastern. Especially notice the first four lines of the second stanza: it is exactly similar to the phrases constantly occurring in the *Gulistan*, and Saadi tells us Wamik was one of the earliest Persian poets. It is curious, to say the least, that in this nineteenth century, we should have direct spirit-writing in an English home from two Eastern poets who lived in the seventh and twelfth centuries respectively; and who come together to earth as friends, and who profess to be acting in concert with spirit-friends of ours who have passed into spirit-life in the nineteenth century! The reference to fire seems not inappropriate, in a house, too, where for the last three months the fires have been *more often lit by spirits* than by the inmates of the house themselves! How curious this must read to non-spiritualists! But we who are in the midst of it begin to see the persistent and consistent plan of all these psychic forces, and how they interweave and supplement each other. I have not had any opportunity of testing the identity of Wamik, as I did that of Saadi, before giving you this family record, nor does his name appear in my cyclopædia as Saadi's does; we are told he is one of the earliest Persian poets referred to in Persian history, but I should be glad if any of your readers could confirm it; possibly before the next meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, where I am asked to refer to these family experiences, I may be able to do so. I propose to take a few specimens of these writings with me, on that occasion.

MORELL THEOBALD.

62, Granville Park, May 11th, 1884.

"ANIMAL MAGNETISM," by the late Professor Gregory, has for some time been out of print. It is now to be re-issued in serial form, and it is hoped that it will consequently have a much wider circulation than it has previously attained.

LEEDS (Edinburgh Hall, Sheepcar).—Mrs. Craven, of Leeds, occupied this platform on Sunday last, May 18th, and in the afternoon delivered a short address. The evening service was devoted to answering questions, and proved very interesting. On Sunday next Mrs. Groom, of Birmingham, will be here, and on Monday, May 26th, the first social gathering of this society will take place, when Mrs. Groom will be present.—CORRESPONDENT.

MISS R. DALE OWEN, who is now on a provincial lecturing tour, has received a warm welcome in Newcastle. The *Daily Chronicle* of that city says that her appearance as a teacher on temperance, the training of children, and on Spiritualism, illustrates the heredity theory on which so much that is interesting has lately been written. "Miss Rosamond Dale Owen has not a little of her grandfather's peculiar powers, albeit her literary style bears more resemblance to her father's modes of thought and expression. She has, however, the same confidence in principles, and the same assurance of their ultimate triumph, that constituted her grandsire's strength. The ideas of which Miss Owen is the representative, began to exhibit themselves about the time when 'Socialism' as taught by its English apostle, had waned. Before his death, Robert Owen became a convert to Spiritualism. By that conversion the gloaming of his life was irradiated. The consolation so mysteriously conveyed to the octogenarian philanthropist proved eminently solacing. In 1854, Robert Owen admitted that in his earlier career he was deficient in knowledge of the overwhelming importance of 'the spiritual condition' in forming the human character. There is indeed no necessary contradiction between Owen's industrial system and the most elevated spiritual conceptions. We are not, therefore, at all surprised that his grand-daughter sympathises with both. 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World' is the title of the ablest and most erudite work on Spiritualism which has yet appeared. In that work her father has shewn us the faith which shed on the evening of Robert Owen's life the light of the land where the clouds of fear never penetrate, and the shadows of doubt never overcast."

[ADVT.]

TESTIMONIES OF THE ANCIENT FATHERS

TO THE

PERSONAL EXISTENCE OF JESUS
AND HIS APOSTLES.

CONTRIBUTED BY "LILY."

[A portion of these testimonies will be published weekly, until the series is ended. They are translations from the Latin and Greek Fathers, and have been made directly from the original texts, where these have come down to us. This remark, perhaps, is necessary, as translators are frequently content with a second-hand rendering from some modern language, and often, in the case of the Greek Fathers, from the Latin. The translator is Joseph Manning, Esq., who was specially selected for this work by one of the principals of the literary department of the British Museum.]

XIII.—ACTS OF ST. JUSTIN the MARTYR.

When Justin, brought before Rusticus, Prefect of Rome, told him that after examining every kind of philosophy he had at last adopted that of Christ, the Acts tell us :

"Then Rusticus said, 'Poor wretch ! Is it in that style of learning you take delight ?' 'Most certainly,' said Justin, 'since I follow the true dogma.' The Prefect thereon : 'What then is this dogma ?' Justin answered : 'The right dogma which we Christian men with piety preserve is that we deem God to be One, the

Maker and Creator of all that is seen and of all that is not discovered by our corporal eyes ; and we confess the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, of old foretold by the prophets, who the herald of salvation will both come, the Judge of the human race, and the Master of all those who shall have learned of Him.' " All Justin's companions said they were Christians. Hierax, being asked who his parents were, said : "My true father is Christ, and my mother the faith in which I believe, but my earthly parents are dead." The martyrdom of St. Justin is placed at A.D. 167 by Ruinart, and at A.D. 170 by Papibrock.

XIV.—LETTER OF THE CHURCHES OF VIENNE AND LYONS.

On the occasion of a persecution of the Christians in Gaul many martyrs were crowned in these Churches.

They sent an account of the sufferings of these martyrs to various other Churches. Among others they despatched an epistle to Pope Eleutherius, and another to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia, which Eusebius has preserved in his Ecclesiastical History (V. 1). This letter often makes mention of Christ, for Whom the martyrs suffered.

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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 Wailace, 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.