

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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PRICE TWOPENCE.

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

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I have had the advantage of perusing the article of M. Binet, in the *Revue Philosophique*, an abstract of which appeared in *Mind*. On this it may be remembered that I recently commented, pointing out what seemed to me the conclusions to which M. Binet's experiments irresistibly tended, viz., to demonstrate the objective character of certain so-called hallucinations in some cases. A study of the more extended and elaborate account of his experiments which M. Binet gives in the *Revue Philosophique*, confirms the impression made on my mind by the abstracts. For instance, he found that the imaginary object always occupied the same position in space. If a portrait were suggested as existing on a particular white card, and that card was placed afterwards among six or seven others, the hypnotised subject would always pick it out. Again, if the suggested portrait were examined with a lens, when the glass was placed near the object, the patient declared that it was magnified. If the lens were inclined, the portrait was seen to be distorted. If the distance were increased to twice the proper focus, the portrait would be seen inverted. With a microscope, the foot of a suggested spider was seen to be enormously magnified.

Another part of the paper to which I have made no reference is that which deals with the memory of the subject when the hypnotic state is over. It seems that recollection of suggestions is frequently preserved with vividness, and that such memory lasts for several days. Further, it is possible to excite the emotions of anger, love, hate, disgust by a mere suggestion. M. Binet suggested to one of his patients that a certain person present had certain physical peculiarities. On being awakened the hypnotised patient burst out laughing when she saw him, and turned from him with a disgust which sometimes lasted for days. On this very suggestive fact M. Binet makes reflections which I translate *verbatim*, as their importance demands.

"In one of my recent experiments on C—— I made her see the portrait of M. Charcot. Some time after her awakening I saw her looking for something on the table, with the help of the laboratory assistant. It was nothing more nor less than the photograph of M. Charcot that she wanted to carry away. Another of my patients, whom I had made to talk during her sleep with one of her friends, spoke to me of this friend a week

after, and believed she had really seen him. I had the greatest difficulty in undeceiving her. This last kind of error has some importance from the point of view of medical jurisprudence. Is it not possible that a witness, in perfectly good faith, may depose to imaginary facts, of which the origin is to be traced to a hypnotic séance? What grave questions may be thus raised! —questions of *alibi*, of identity, and even of the accusation of innocent persons. It is of prime importance that doctors and magistrates should understand all about these phenomena, which it is quite possible may be made use of before long. From a purely psychological point of view it is interesting to investigate the duration of these part-hypnotic hallucinations. It is not without astonishment that one sees a woman apparently in the full enjoyment of her reason, preserve still, many days after the séance, traces of the delirium that had been artificially produced in her."

This seems to me a most pregnant suggestion of possible complications that may proceed from familiarity with the subject on which M. Binet is experimenting. If one mind can so influence another as to cause it to take for fact and truth whatever that mind may please to suggest, it would seem that the subject is deprived of individual liberty, and reduced to a state of positive slavery. He may be made to work out any wicked scheme, to carry into execution any act of revenge, to convict an innocent man of crime, to swear away a guiltless life. We have read of the devilish machinations of the Black Magician; how by his unholy arts he can wound and destroy life, blast reputation, and strike his victim when that victim can least discern his antagonist or protect himself from the blow. Exaggerated stories are, doubtless, told of Black Magic, but none who are well informed will deny that there is beneath them a substratum of fact. Have we not here, I may suggest, something akin, something that in the study of mesmeric and telepathic phenomena points to the necessity for great care, for fencing the study round with grave precaution, and for exercising discretion as to the persons experimented on, as well as those who conduct the experiments? In old days these matters were secretly studied: elaborate care was exercised that the secrets should not be betrayed to unworthy men; and the Adepts were persons of unblemished life who were dedicated to the work. Now matters are different. That is unavoidable. But we must see to it that the results are not obtained at the cost of that which would make them too dear;—at a price indeed which we have no right to pay—the degradation of the subject, or his injury in mind, body, or moral consciousness.

M. Binet's hint is one that it might be easy to make too much of, and his suggestion that the phenomena of mesmerism should be carefully studied robs the danger of much of its terror. It is because these subjects are not properly studied that there lurk in them unknown dangers. If I am not mistaken one of the medical journals has called attention to the fact that some practitioners have been called in to prescribe for cases when the effects of a prolonged mesmeric trance have not passed away on the apparent return of consciousness. They have found such patients hysterical, nervous and depressed. Probably, they have been ignorantly experimented upon; but none the less is there a hint of danger there, and a warning against careless experiments. I look forward to a time when a careful and systematic study of these subjects shall make it impossible that accidental malpractice shall occur in mesmeric

experiments. But I see no defence against the intentional abuse of the influence gained over a susceptible subject by an unscrupulous person who is not ashamed so to misuse his power. Then we can have only the same defence that we have against other persons who are placed in positions of confidence and trust.

The remarks that have been made apply not alone to the mesmeric subject, but in an increased degree to the practice of mediumship. A long and close study of mediumship has convinced me that its exercise, especially in promiscuous circles, is attended with risk. Few are aware of the terrible drain on the vital forces of the medium that a séance for materialisation makes. Few think of the power that a controlling spirit gets over a passive medium. If the spirit be wise to direct, powerful to protect, as well as pure and good, the influence is beneficent; but if not, it is just the reverse. The undue exercise of the gift, which such a spirit would prevent, saps the strength of body and will, and, like excess of every kind, leaves behind it reaction and depression. Or the influence of unprogressed spirits, whom the guardian is not powerful enough to repulse, saps the moral principles and degrades the mind. These are grave dangers; dangers that increased knowledge can guard against; but none the less risks that we shall be wise in reckoning with. In this matter, as in others, the ancients were wiser than we. They trained their mediums in seclusion; they protected them from possible pollution; they guarded them from contact with the world; and when they would "inquire of the Lord," they approached with reverence and awe, in all the solemnity of mind befitting one who would hold communion with the world of spirit. We shall revert, when our eyes are open, to these venerable methods, for knowledge will have taught us what risks we ignorantly run. I wonder much what one of the many schools of seers and prophets that the ancient world at various times contained would have said to a materialising séance of twenty chance sitters at five shillings a head, held in a little stuffy room on an evening in August as soon as possible after a fleshly dinner and plenty of wine.

I may direct attention to one fruit borne by the prolonged and careful study of mesmeric phenomena pursued by the Mesmeric Committee of the Society for Psychical Research. Mr. Edmund Gurney contributes to the current number of *Mind* a long and elaborate paper on "The Problems of Hypnotism." As the article is too closely-reasoned for condensation, and extends to thirty pages, I am unable to do more than direct attention to it, and to bespeak for it careful study by Spiritualists who wish to face these problems, and to learn, if possible, how to solve them.

The same magazine contains a short notice of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research (Parts IV.-VI.), which speaks favourably of Mr. Guthrie's experiments; and of Messrs. Gurney and Myers' "Theory of Apparitions." After saying that the writers seek to connect phantasms of the living through a graduated series of other related experiences as mean terms with the simple experimental facts of Thought-transference, the writer adds, "It is not possible to regard the 'physical theory' here set up to account for the facts as very satisfactory," in spite of "the mediation of the extremes being worked out with no little skill, and that the object is pursued with a strictly scientific intention."

"M.A. (OXON.)"

On Saturday, November 1st, Alderman Barkas will deliver a lecture to foremen engineers and mechanical draughtsmen, at the Lecture Hall of the Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne, on "Psychography, the Despair of Orthodox Science." Discussion after the lecture is invited.

THE "KENSINGTON NEWS" ON SPIRITUALISM.

A curious indication and result of the growing interest in Spiritualism come to us in the "Science Gossip" of the *Kensington News*, one of the best of the local weekly newspapers scattered over the Metropolis. It is a large sheet, with seven broad columns to a page, and an article based upon Mr. S. C. Hall's recent work, "The Use of Spiritualism," fills four columns and a-quarter, or about two-thirds of a page, treating of—

"Mr. Hall's Challenge to Messrs. Maskelyne and Cook; Necromancy, or Communication with the Spirits of the Dead; Mr. Kesteven, in *Science Monthly*, on Apparitions; 'Optical Illusions'; Rarity of Hallucinations; Mistakes, Illusions, and Hallucinations Distinguished; The Hallucination Theory of Apparitions; The Society for Psychical Research; The Interaction of Mind and Matter; Singular that we can Act Directly only on our own Bodies, and *vice versa*; Spiritualists and Others Assert a Wider Power of Acting; Our Activity Concentrated and Regulated by being tied to a Body; Asserted Signs of a Wider Activity; Thought-reading, Mesmerism, Mediums, Inspiration, Possessions, Clairvoyants, Apparitions; Conclusion."

It does not matter in the least whether the writer favours Spiritualism or opposes it; whether he accepts the facts or denies them. He shews by writing such an article that there is a growing interest in all sorts of supermundane phenomena, and he increases that interest. No one can read the Gossip of "Mathetes" without having a strong desire to witness some of these manifestations, and to judge for himself in regard to their genuineness.

Mr. S. C. Hall had excellent opportunities. The séances held at his most tasteful and hospitable Kensington residence were among the best ever given in the Metropolis, and they were attended by such men as the late and present Earls of Dunraven, the Earl of Balcarres, Lord Lytton, and many other literary and scientific notabilities—men and women quite as capable of judging of the reality of the facts, as any writer of science gossip. An account of some of these séances will be found in the *Spiritual Record*, copied from that volume so rich in facts, published for private circulation by the late Earl of Dunraven.

The ordinary science gossipier has made up his mind, or had it made up for him long ago, that the every-day observed phenomena of Spiritualism are *impossible*. Quite satisfied on that point, he sees no need or use of any investigation, and has only to exercise his ingenuity in explaining how clever people can be humbugged by crafty mediums. Of course, he is too awfully clever to be deceived by "such devices, palmistry or otherwise," and as for taking up any of the offers of Spiritualists to pay fifty or five hundred pounds for such an exposure, he scorns the idea of such a mercenary enterprise. Not even his great anxiety to enlighten the public ever carries him beyond vague charges of fraud for which there is no foundation.

How easily any person in good faith can have proof of the reality of spirit-communications, I, whose name the editor is hereby authorised to give to any candid inquirer, had last week a good example. I wanted some information that only some persons in the spirit-world could give. I wrote to Mr. W. Eglinton, 12, Old Quebec-street, W., asking him to appoint an hour for a séance. Sitting with him alone at his table in full daylight, I wrote three questions respecting a matter wholly unknown to the medium, on a double slate, into which a bit of pencil was dropped, and the two leaves were locked with a Brahma lock. The slate was held under the table, the sound of writing was heard, and, on unlocking the slate, this message was found within: "—— will endeavour to answer your questions."

Mr. Eglinton then cleaned a common single slate, and held it with one hand under the leaf of the table, placing his

other hand on both of mine. Sound of writing and tiny raps. Message written: "Take two slates." Two clean slates, with a bit of pencil, were then firmly tied together with cord, and laid in full sight upon the table. I laid my hands upon the slates, and Mr. Eglinton his hands upon the slates and my hands. The sound of writing began. When Mr. Eglinton broke contact between his hands and mine the sound instantly ceased. The moment he touched me and remade the connection, the sound of writing re-commenced. When the little raps were made by the bit of pencil, I untied the cord. My hands and eyes had never left the two slates for an instant. On taking them apart I found one side filled with a closely-written letter to me, signed by a name well-known to me, and the whole in a handwriting as familiar as my own, giving the most definite, complete and satisfactory answers to my three questions.

Now I defy all the science gossipers in the world to find the least chance for any possibility of fraud in producing this manifestation. No human being living in this world could have written that letter, under the stated conditions, or could know its subject-matter. The handwriting, the mechanical operation, and the knowledge conveyed were impossible to any person in this life, and only possible to spirit-intelligence and spirit-power. If any reader doubts my statement he can go to Mr. Eglinton and see for himself.

It is pleasant to know that *some* clergymen prefer to learn something of Spiritualism before they condemn it. Those who share the papal infallibility, of course, have no need of evidence, or any occasion to examine what they discover. It is also much easier to denounce than to examine. But clergymen who assert the right of private judgment must feel some responsibility as to the methods by which that judgment should be formed.

I was glad to learn that one of the most able Congregational ministers in Lancashire came to London last week to have a materialising séance with Mr. Eglinton, and that he was completely satisfied with what he saw and heard. There were fifteen materialisations. The medium was led out of the cabinet by a materialised spirit, so that both could be clearly seen. The minister saw, heard, and was tenderly embraced by a materialised form, and the last shred of doubt as to the reality of Spiritualism was removed.

Believe me, though faith may be good, knowledge is better. A stronger man, more firmly planted in the knowledge of immortality, stood in his pulpit last Sunday. He *knows* that those we call dead are living, because he has seen, and heard, and felt. What more grand and ennobling knowledge can come to the mind of man?

In justice to the *Kensington News* scientific gossip, I think I ought to give the final paragraph of his article, the "conclusion of the whole matter." Here it is:—

"I suppose I need not say that by far the greater part of the 'manifestations' of ghosts, 'spirits,' mesmerists, mediums, clairvoyants, witches, *et hoc genus omne*, are merely a mass of fraud, or are natural phenomena misrepresented. After these are discounted, is there a residuum of truth? It is difficult to say that there is not; and if there is, it is inevitable that such truth should be wrapped and soaked in wickedness, imposture, and delusion. Let it be granted for the sake of argument, that a medium can summon spirits from the vasty deep, and that they will occasionally come. What will she do when they do not come? Play tricks, possibly. And once having learnt deceit, she will eke out with that deceit what is or appears to her to be real. And even if the veil that separates us from the other world is awayed sometimes by breathings from the other side, or even if we can lift a corner of it, we only hear voices we cannot be sure of, and see forms we are unable to identify. Suppose that 'spirits' move chairs and turn tables; what is their motive? Are these mere silly elfish tricks? If they want to afford proof of the existence of spirits, why do they not go to the materialists? Who are they? If they assume a familiar form, how is anyone to know that they really possessed that form in life, if, indeed, they ever lived a human life? Can they discover secrets, and use them for purposes of personation? Can they imitate hand-

writing? When they talk piety, how much of it do they really mean, seeing that those whom they select as their interpreters are usually disreputable humbugs? If they have any sense, surely they should have enough to keep out of the company of such persons as we have all heard of. So that the truth is, that the whole thing is most suspicious and to be avoided; and that, without judging of individual cases, such as Mr. Hall's or others which could be named, the common way of human life is the only right and safe one."

"Lame and impotent conclusion." Why doesn't the man take the small trouble of seeing, hearing, and judging for himself? Or if really a scientific man, why not read the experiments of men like Wallace, Crookes, and Zöllner? The frauds in Spiritualism are too stupid for notice. The very least intelligence can detect them in a moment. And Spiritualism is really becoming "the common way of human life," and therefore "a right and safe one."—M.D.

AN INTERESTING SEANCE WITH MR. W. EGLINTON.

By S. J. D. *

The Psychography produced through the mediumship of Mr. W. Eglinton, is now so well authenticated to all readers of "LIGHT," that I refrain from giving minute details of a most interesting séance I had with that gentleman, on the afternoon of October 9th.

I had previously called on Mr. Eglinton on the afternoon of October 8th, accompanied by an old friend, designated Mr. M.

We sat for nearly two hours, hoping Ernest, or his kindred companions, would give us the manifestations we so patiently sought, but in vain.

At two o'clock on Thursday (the next day), we again met, I being accompanied on that occasion also by another friend.

We sat as usual. Questions, often beyond the knowledge of the medium, were asked, and the answers received on a small folding slate I had brought for the purpose.

At my request answers were given in alternate colours of crayon previously placed between the slates by my own hand.

Not to test Mr. Eglinton's honesty (for of that all who know him are assured), but for the purpose of rendering the experiments more complete, I put in a small grain of pencil, the tip of which I had previously prepared by immersing it in ink. With this piece of pencil, between two slates of my own bringing, I requested the intelligences to write.

They immediately did so, and on removing the slate I found the inked grain of pencil worn quite away at the faceted point, thus clearly shewing that it was the same piece I had inserted that had been used.

Between the famous slate presented to Mr. Eglinton by a distinguished personage, with a strong Brahma lock securely fastened by myself, we obtained messages in the well-known handwriting of Joey.

After sitting for upwards of an hour, we concluded that a most successful séance was at an end. The medium, however, continued under control, and taking a large slate, after carefully cleaning it, I placed it under the flap of the table, holding it closely there, and requested that, if possible, a lengthy message might be written, also hinting that if it were partly in Greek it would be very interesting.

Scarcely a minute elapsed before the pencil began to move, and wrote with great rapidity.

I looked under the table, holding the slate firmly with my hands. Mr. Eglinton's hand, which rested on mine, was perfectly quiescent.

The writing had continued for about fifty seconds, when it paused, and commenced again in a different style. I re-

* The writer, for family reasons, does not wish his name published. It has however, been sent to us as a guarantee of good faith.

He gave name at p. 267

rate, it is certain that good *must* follow any effort of this kind. As far as care and attention will ensure success, it should follow the circulation of the book in question. I can positively assure contributors that the work has been thoroughly done, for I personally superintended the whole, going to Carlisle for that purpose. One indication in this direction may be gathered from the fact that only six of the post packets have been returned to me through the Manchester Dead Letter Office, in spite of a special application for undelivered packages. I must here acknowledge the kind help and assistance rendered me throughout by Mr. Eglington, who accompanied me to Carlisle to give séances, should opportunity offer. A few of the incidents of our visit were recorded in "LIGHT" for October 4th. I need not, therefore, reiterate the circumstances.

Indirectly the results have already been considerable. Numerous letters have been received by me from clergymen and others, asking advice, and expressing a desire for further information, a notice having been printed on the face of each book sent out to the effect that clergymen interested in Spiritualism could obtain other works free on application to the editor of "LIGHT." These applications may be regarded as a slight test of the interest excited, and in due course I hope to be able to lay a further report on the subject before the readers of this paper. The £20 (see items marked * on page 438) specially given for this last-named purpose I have used in sending copies of such works as "Spirit Teachings," "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism," "Bringing it to Book," &c., &c., to these inquirers. Unfortunately, however, the cost of the first-named work is heavy, and £20 has not gone very far.

For the rest Spiritualism has obtained a permanent footing at Carlisle. A dépôt for spiritual literature has been established there, and "LIGHT" is regularly kept on sale at the railway bookstall. That in itself is no inconsiderable gain.

As a kind of test as to how Spiritualism would be received, Mr. Eglington and myself distributed a number of copies of "LIGHT" at one of the largest of the meetings. Thanks to the thorough system of advertising adopted, it was obvious that the paper was well-known to the majority of those to whom we offered it. It is difficult to conceive how it could have been otherwise. With two exceptions only, every one received it courteously, some even gladly.

Through the efforts made during the Congress week, the subject of Spiritualism is shortly to be brought before a large literary society in Carlisle.

I must also acknowledge the receipt from Mr. John Fowler, of Liverpool, of a parcel of 300 copies of the "New Basis," and 100 copies of "Spiritualism at Home" from Mr. Morell Theobald. The former, not being required at Carlisle, were given away to members of the Congregational Union, in London, and the latter I am now sending to inquirers and others.

JOHN S. FARMER.

4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

ANTI-SPIRITUAL LITERATURE.—Talking recently with a bookseller in "The Row," who has published several works written against Spiritualism, he informed us that the sale of such books was very small. He expressed an opinion that the facts had now been so well established that the public generally passed by any attempt to disprove them, and even those books which started their argument on the Satanic theory were lightly thought of save in exceptional quarters. Another sign of progress.

ELECTRO-BIOLOGY, electro-psychology, and mesmerism may all be regarded as the same, or the last as including the former. Each may have its peculiar advantages. All should be studied with the conviction that, like all natural truths, they must prove beneficial to mankind, and the more so the better they are known. The danger, if danger there be, and I cannot, for my part, conceive the existence of a dangerous truth, lies, we may be assured, in ignorance, not in knowledge. "A little knowledge," it has been said, "is a dangerous thing;" but why? because it is little: make it more and the danger diminishes; make it perfect, and no danger could possibly exist.—Dr. Gregory.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

"The Lines on which 'Light' is Conducted,"
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Pardon me for taking exception to the editorial note appended to Mr. Webster's letter in to-day's "LIGHT," as in contradiction with the printed description of your paper as a journal of *mystical* research, since the note in question, by taking sides, virtually prohibits such research, and assumes infallibility in respect of precisely the class of subjects concerning which "LIGHT" is expressly instituted to aid inquiry, thereby renouncing a scientific for a dogmatic attitude.

I feel sure that it is necessary only to call your attention to the slip to have it rectified by disavowal of such limitation of freedom. Intellectual light, to be light at all, must be free from any bondage of pre-conception or pre-judgment. We must suffer the Spirit to "make all things new" if it will.

October 18th.

E. M.

[With all deference to the exception taken by our esteemed correspondent to our remarks, we maintain that the editorial note in question is in full accord, not only with the printed description of "LIGHT" as a "Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research," but also with the position outlined by "E.M." as the true attitude of scientific inquiry. Mr. Webster quoted as "absolute facts" statements with regard to the personal existence of Jesus and the Gospel narratives which, in face of the vast amount of evidence on record, can certainly not be so regarded. The "dogmatic attitude," therefore, if any, rests upon Mr. Webster. Surely the fact that notwithstanding the adverse conclusion of this and many other writers on Theosophy to the views held by the majority of our readers, we have given abundant space for their letters, is sufficient proof that we have no desire to "assume infallibility," or to "limit the freedom" of research. Such an attitude would ill-become a journal aspiring to the position of an exponent of a science in which the more one learns the more it is felt there is to learn. "Light, more light," is our motto, and if we can learn truth from Theosophy, or anywhere else, we (and Spiritualists generally) are open to receive it. But mere assumptions and assertions cannot take the place of evidence.—ED. of "LIGHT."]

The Mahatmas.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Pray allow me to offer a remark on the extraordinary statement in Mr. Webster's otherwise sensible letter, that "*any-one* who chooses to live the necessary life can soon obtain personal evidence of the existence and power of the Himalayan Mahatmas, and can, under their direction, be put into the way to attain for himself the knowledge of the hereafter."

As I read this utterance it contains two errors of first-rate magnitude. It makes salvation dependent on the chance of certain other persons existing and being accessible in some abnormal way; and it assumes that the images formed in the mind under strong previous impression are really the persons thought of, instead of being but astral emanations of *one's own system*, having no necessary relation to extraneous personalities. It is of course open to your correspondent to call his objectivised ideas Himalayan Mahatmas, just as it was possible for St. Theresa to call hers Jesus Christ, and for Swedenborg to call his David, Paul, or the Virgin Mary. But the practice shews a complete want of knowledge respecting the occult side of human nature, and the image-making powers of the subtler elements of one's own system, as well also as the teaching capabilities of *one's own spirit*. I shall, however, in common, I am sure, with many other of your readers, be happy to hear further of the grounds of Mr. Webster's convictions on this matter.

E. M.

BUENOS AYRES.—Here are two societies, *La Constancia*, founded in 1877, and *La Fraternidad*, in 1880, each with its publication. Both are making progress, for *La Constancia*, which had been paying 160 francs a-month rent, now occupies more commodious premises, for which it pays 560 francs a month. *La Fraternidad* has established a school in which the best elementary teaching is given in harmony with the spiritual doctrine.—*Revue Spirite*.

SPIRITUALISM AND POLITICS.—Though Spiritualism has not a political "aspect" it is a curious fact that in many cases Conservative journals treat the subject more fairly than Liberal organs. A case in point occurs at Blackburn, the *Times* of that town refusing to report the meetings of the Spiritualists, or even to allow any discussion of the subject, whilst the *Blackburn Standard* (C) pursues a more liberal policy, and admits such matter to its columns. The *Frome Times* is another instance, and we could name others. We are very glad to make our acknowledgments in this respect to the two papers, and to regret the illiberality of thought characterising their political opponents.

All communications to be addressed to:—

THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"
4, AVE MARIA LANE,
LONDON, E.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 sances.

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

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.

Orders for Papers and Advertisements may be addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to HENRY BARNES, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from R. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

Light :

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25TH, 1884.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The appeal of Mr. Stainton Moses on behalf of the Sustentation Fund of "LIGHT" can be read with indifference by no person who has derived entertainment and instruction from its pages. I am glad of the opportunity of expressing my sense of the public value of the labours of those who have conducted this journal with such conspicuous ability and good taste, and upon whom it is unreasonable that there should be imposed in addition to their gratuitous services the burdens of pecuniary responsibility. I shall be happy to double my subscription as you suggest, and beg that the balance of the enclosed cheque (for £5) be handed over to the Sustentation Fund.—I am, sir, yours sincerely

19, Cheyne-walk, Chelsea, S.W.
October 18th.

A. A. WATTS.

PSYCHOGRAPHY UNDER LOCK AND KEY

We have received a long narrative from Major F.G. Irwin, of Bristol, recording his experience during a recent visit to London. We exceedingly regret that the extreme pressure on our columns at the present time compels us to curtail almost every communication sent to us, and we are especially sorry that the necessity should exist in the present instance. We find room, however, for the following satisfactory experiment with Mr. Eglinton in Psychography. Major Irwin writes:—

Two slates were fastened together by a lock and key, and then placed in a case which was locked by myself and the key put in my pocket. The box lay on the table in full view; the hands of Messrs. Eglinton and Hockley, and my own resting on the top of the box. While in this position writing was distinctly heard, and upon opening the box and taking out the slates the words "Will this do, Mr. Tommy?" were discovered on the inside of one of the slates.*

Major Irwin concludes his testimony as follows:—

I went to London strongly inclined to think that Spiritualists were made up of fools, knaves, and those having an ill-balanced mind—leaving out a few that I knew could not possibly be included in either of the three classes. I left London fully convinced that all that is claimed for Spiritualism in "LIGHT" is supported by facts, that, as Mr. Stainton Moses once wrote to me, could "be proved beyond a doubt."

* Mr. G. Tommy, a well-known Spiritualist in Bristol, had sent the locked box for this experiment, under the care of Major Irwin.

REVIEWS.

"IN A GLASS DARKLY." By J. S. Le Fanu. (London: R. Bentley and Son. 6s. May also be obtained from The Psychological Press, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.)

This is a work of fiction by a well-known writer, the chief interest of which, for our readers, will be the particular mould in which it is cast. Like Hugh Conway and F. Marion Crauford, Mr. Le Fanu has found the occult a profitable and interesting mine to work. The present collection of stories are so true to the life that we strongly suspect they are founded on fact. Anyhow, the writer has studied his subject to some purpose to be able to produce so natural and finished a piece of work.

For instance, a man must have thoroughly grasped much more than the mere rudiments of spiritual science to be able to pen such words as the writer puts into the mouth of one of his characters. For example:—

"I believe the entire natural world is but the ultimate expression of that spiritual world from which, and in which, alone it has its life. I believe that the essential man is a spirit, that the spirit is an organised substance, but as different in point of material from what we ordinarily understand by matter as light and electricity is; that the material body is, in the most literal sense, a vesture, and death consequently no interruption of the living man's existence, but simply his extrication from the natural body—a process which commences at the moment we call death, and the completion of which, at furthest, a few days later, is the resurrection 'in power.'"

Although full of indications of *knowledge*, such as this passage displays, the stories are by no means dull or tiresome. On the contrary, they are of absorbing interest, and form one of the best illustrations of the facility with which the facts and deductions of spiritual science can be inculcated under the guise of fiction, that we have met with for a long time, albeit the author tends to the dark rather than the lighter sides of the subject.

"MAN, PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY AND SPIRITUALLY CONSIDERED." By B. Copson Garratt. (London: Elliot Stock.)

We have little concern with the greater portion of this book, which, however, contains a chapter on "The Unseen, or the Phenomena of Spiritualism, Mesmerism, and Magnetism." If we are to measure the writer's fitness to deal with the other portions of his subject by the knowledge he displays in this particular section, his claims to a respectful hearing rest upon a very shadowy basis indeed. To give an illustration, he says:—

"Spiritualists are often distinguished by a pallid countenance, an oppressed respiration, dilated pupils, nervous twitchings, &c. . . . Table talkers and visionaries supply the phantoms and spirits, as children do their dolls and cats, with those mysterious prattlings announced in high sounding phrases as the dictates of the spirits . . ." &c., &c.

When a man can permit himself to write such nonsense as this he must not be surprised if thoughtful people only laugh at his wild display of ignorance and conceit in writing about that he does not understand.

"SPIRIT MESSAGES, RELATING TO THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S PERSON." By F. J. Theobald. 6d. (London: E. W. Allen, and may be obtained from the Psychological Press, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.)

This is the first instalment of the larger book Miss Theobald has in view, to be entitled "Homes and Work in the Future Life." Its scope is sufficiently indicated by the title, and Miss Theobald's present selection was made chiefly with a view "to refute at least one or two of the many false charges brought against Spiritualism," such, for instance, as that all communications given by spirits are frivolous and unmeaning, and that its tendency is anti-Christian. One of the best answers is that given by Miss Theobald in her description of the influence inspired by the presence of the spirit author of these messages. She finds it pure and good. Those

who knew the man and his writings in his earth-life—and his initials E.N.D. will reveal his name to many—will find much in these communications to confirm their belief in the identity question.

"SPIRITUALISM: IS IT OF GOD OR THE DEVIL?" By a Layman. (London: John F. Shaw.)

We are heartily tired of the "Bogey" argument. Flatly and pointedly, we don't believe in it, nor does any one with any knowledge of the subject that is worth calling by that name. Therefore, we don't know that anything more need be said. There is no use in arguing from such a standpoint.

MISS ROSAMOND D. OWEN AT CAVENDISH ROOMS.

Miss R. D. Owen, in accordance with announcements, lectured at Cavendish Rooms on Sunday, October 19th, instead of Mr. Morse, who introduced her to his audience. Every seat in the hall was filled.

In the audience were several veteran disciples of Robert Owen, who had also listened to R. Dale Owen's lectures on America—his charming young wife sitting by him, then newly married—at his father's institution in Gray's Inn-road, in 1834. Miss Owen bears a resemblance to her father at that period, which became more striking during her eloquent and moving address. In this she introduced an interesting sketch of her childhood, with some of her experience as a medium. Part of this experience was during an illness of nine years, during which she had to submit to constant repose and seclusion from light. Early in this secluded state, debarred from all occupation and reading, she became clairvoyant and clairaudient. To her darkened room came spirit visitants, and through them her mental faculties were developed and exercised, a happy substitute for book-reading and other outer forms of instruction. With other hereditary gifts, Miss Owen has the philanthropy of her grandfather, which urges her to use her faculties in helping to remove poverty; but, to her, the most striking poverty is a barren unbelief in spiritual existence. Her name makes her welcome to secularist audiences, to whom she imparts what spiritual light she can. Her address was most cordially received by the audience, and a vote of thanks was accompanied by a hope that her visit might be repeated. The charm of the evening was added to by some excellent singing by two friends from America, Messrs. Tyler and Walker.

Mr. Morse took the opportunity of his hall being so well filled to make an appeal for continued support in keeping it open as a Sunday Spiritual lecture hall, the only one, at present, in the Metropolis.

The meeting on Sunday next will be a "Question Night," to commence at 7 p.m.

THE CURRENT AND NEXT ISSUES OF "LIGHT."

We have printed an extra quantity of this week's issue of "LIGHT," and can supply friends at the rate of 2s. 6d. per 25 copies.

Our next issue will contain some special articles, one by the Editor, entitled "Conditions Observed at Spiritual Séances," being illustrated by diagrams. Some accounts of recent remarkable phenomena will also appear, and the number will be rendered specially suitable for general circulation. We can supply copies for free distribution at the above rate, but we must ask intending purchasers to notify us of their requirements, as we shall only print the exact number ordered.

We regret to have to record the passing away on Saturday, the 11th inst., of Mrs. Frances Wynch, the mother of Lieut. Col. Wynch, late of Knowle, Somerset.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

III.

MR. J. ENMORE JONES, joining in a controversy on "Ghosts" in the *Croydon Advertiser*, declares that he and many others have seen what his opponent declares "impossible"—the movement of material bodies by invisible forces intelligently exercised. It would not be difficult to gather "a million of facts" to prove what any number of more or less scientific persons deny, but then one fact is of more value than the opinions of any number of millions of ignorant and prejudiced persons. There is, therefore, no better work than the observation and preservation of the facts on which all knowledge must be based. Money and lives have been expended on Polar expeditions, with little result. The "unseen world" is much better worth exploring.

* * *

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Rock* says the committee of a Psychological Society at Liverpool has got through the movements of a table various information and words in foreign languages, provided the facts or the languages were known to one of the experimenters. Thought-reading and involuntary action may account for this—but it is the observation of the present writer that sentences in five languages have been written, without possibility of contact by any visible person, and when no one present knew the facts or could write the languages.

* * *

FOR example, a sentence in Greek has been written on a carefully enclosed and firmly held slate, which no one present could read. A blank card is dropped into a work box, held with both hands on the cover. Then the question was asked—"What do you wish to have written?" Answer—"A message in German." The sound of writing is heard for a moment, and then the card is taken from the box with four lines in German, which no person visibly present could read. Here was force, action, thought, quite beyond those who observed the phenomena.

* * *

THE facilities for investigation are such at this time in the Metropolis that there is no excuse for ignorance. The intelligent witnesses to the facts of Spiritualism in London alone must count by thousands. It is true that from force of circumstances the greater part of them belong to the Nicodemus Club, but yet there are many who do not fear to tell the truth, even when it happens to be a truth of considerable interest and importance.

* * *

THE remarkable thing is, that the most strenuous deniers or denouncers of present and observable facts of spirit existence and power are, in many cases, those who are most earnest in persuading people to believe similar miracles which happened 2,000 or 4,000 years ago. We are bound to believe what took place in Egypt, Arabia, and Palestine; but we are strenuously urged not to give the least credit to miracles wrought in London at the present hour, which may be observed and examined by any intelligent person who will take the trouble to do so. Prejudice, the most unscientific and unphilosophical of all mental habits or conditions, is like the hide of the rhinoceros—the arrows of truth vainly clatter against it, and fall distorted or broken to the ground. Physical blindness is a slight misfortune compared with the mental cataract that excludes the truth. "None are so blind as those who will not see."

* * *

WHAT can we do about it? Only this. Accumulate facts and testimony. One by one, clear and fair-minded persons will come to a knowledge of the truth, and these will enlighten others. The dawn spreads over the sky. The snowball gathers as it rolls. One carefully-observed and well-attested fact has more power than a thousand prejudices and superstitions. There is plenty of goodness in the world—what it wants is *light*.

* * *

DR. GEORGE MACDONALD, poet, novelist, actor, and preacher, has written an introduction to a highly popular work, which he recommends in his sermons, entitled "Letters from Hell," said to have been written by a Danish Bishop, who, like Dante, has been there. Dr. Macdonald began his distinguished career as a Congregational preacher, and he taught in "David Elginbrod" that if we are to do as we would be done by, God should set us the example. Just now, inspired by the letters of the Danish Bishop, he preaches the necessity and beneficence of hell, which must last, he says, as long as sin remains for it to conquer. God has mercifully given us hell because we cannot be purified and

saved without it—so he thanks God for hell, and strongly recommends those letters.

* * *

BUT it is a comfort to learn that hell and sin are finite, and that even Satan must at last be saved, and thereby hell abolished. Dr. Macdonald, if we understand him accurately, does not believe in atonement, or forgiveness, or being saved by faith, or imputed righteousness. Suffering is the sole remedy for sin, and Christ came into this world to inaugurate hell, and thereby cleanse the human race and make it fit for Heaven. This, as far as we can understand, is the very latest development of the somewhat nebulous Congregational theology, as preached last Sunday in Rev. Mr. Simon's chapel in Westminster.

* * *

A ROMAN CATHOLIC Bishop holds that there may, probably, be a hell because he sometimes has a headache. There is so much pain in this world that it may be greater and more lasting in the next. There remains, however, the difficulty of imagining a God creating beings with the foreknowledge of their destiny to sin and suffer. But Dr. Macdonald insists that God does the best He can. He works and suffers. "Do you think it was an easy thing for God to make the universe?" he asks, "No, it was worked out with fatigue and pain." Of course, there is Scriptural authority for the fatigue, since He rested on the seventh day. It may also be presumed that God is in sympathy with all His creatures.

* * *

WE read about "freethought"—by which is, of course, meant the free expression of thoughts—for no one can hinder me from thinking what I am obliged to think, however I may find it convenient to keep my thoughts to myself. If Mr. Spurgeon were to attend a séance and become as satisfied of the reality of spiritual manifestations as Mr. S. C. Hall is, or Wm. Howitt was, would he give his congregation at the Tabernacle the benefit of his discovery? Would Dr. Parker, of the City Temple, or Rev. Newman Hall? Would the Archbishop of Canterbury? Would any one of these reverend and most reverend gentlemen "free his mind" in any congregation? Or would he keep the knowledge of the most important fact which has ever come to the world a profound secret? Which?

* * *

THE fact is that we want one more Spiritualist society. We want a Nicodemus Society, limited to those who can keep a perilous secret. Probably it was a mistake ever to make the fact of spiritual manifestations public. They should have been kept as secret as Freemasonry, or the Egyptian or Eleusinian mysteries. Séances should have been protected by oaths, passwords, and grips. Had Spiritualism been kept mysterious, select, exclusive, the probability is that it would have made much greater progress than it really has under this discouraging publicity. It is true that the Scripture says of Christ, "The common people heard Him gladly," but it is also true that in the early days of the Church it had its inner circle and its sacred mysteries.

* * *

THE moral character of a medium has about as much to do with the reality or excellence of his mediumship as the moral character of a singer or actor has to do with the quality of his art. We do not doubt the strength or skill of a gymnast because he is reported to have broken one or two of the commandments. Even the reverend names of parsons get into police reports—and the way the clergy, Episcopal and Presbyterian, drank a century ago may be read in the biographies of the period. "Drunk as a parson" was nearly as common a saying as "drunk as a lord." It is probable that the peculiar qualities of mediumship make the persons who possess them more liable than most others to certain forms of irregularity or disorder.

* * *

BUT "the spirits ought to guard their mediums," it is said. Well, how do we know but they do, as far as they can? A medium, however, may exercise his free will in a disorderly way, like the rest of us. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" "Lead us not into temptation!" "Deliver us from evil." If prayers avail, how account for all the evil in the world? If Christians and clergymen sometimes go to the very bad, why not Spiritualists and mediums? Human nature, with all its temptations, pervades the Church and the world. All that we can claim for Spiritualism is that it gives us special motives, and we believe also, in many cases, special aids.

* * *

ALL Spiritualists must feel indebted to Miss Florence Marryat for her clear, orderly, graphic, and evidently accurate account of a wonderful materialising séance, published and reprinted in recent numbers of "LIGHT"; but I happen to know that she has among her papers an account of another séance, in ~~no~~ **no** ways quite as remarkable, and which would have for many

readers a special charm, and for others great value as a vindication of the *bona fides* of a medium who has not only done much for Spiritualism, but suffered deeply. Every great cause has its martyrs. If we cannot save them from persecution, we may at least try to do them justice. I wish Miss Marryat would give us that particular séance.

* * *

THERE are many reasons why the clergy of the Established Church may be more ready to examine and profess an unpopular truth, than most Nonconformist ministers. They are secure in their positions, they cannot easily be deprived of their livings, popular prejudices and clamour do not affect them. Therefore Spiritualism has been boldly asserted and freely discussed in a Church Congress, but never, that I can remember, in any Nonconformist gathering. Of course the Spiritualism of two or three thousand years ago, and the manifestations recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, are preached in all pulpits, even those which have adopted Mr. Matthew Arnold's dictum, "Miracles never happen." But why not give us the miracles of yesterday or last week, with their living witnesses?

* * *

THE solid basis of all religious belief is in the reality of a continued existence. Prove that, and time expands into eternity. Prove that, and the life of the future becomes of infinite importance. There is an instant expansion of thought, hope and endeavour. What can cramp the intellect and paralyse the aspirations of a man more effectually than the belief that his existence may terminate at any moment? "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." And why should anyone hesitate to put an end to this life at any moment when it has become uncomfortable, if he has no belief in a life to come?

* * *

IF there be no existence beyond the grave, why punish an attempt at suicide? Why put a painless end to the existence of a criminal who deserves to be punished? Why hang a man who gives evidence that his soul is ready for Paradise? Why with prayers and sacraments send the soul of a murderer by a seven-foot fall to Abraham's bosom? And why not have a dynamo or battery in every prison, to make the end of life and suffering more instantaneous?

* * *

WE must revise all this. The knowledge of Spiritualism ends all dread of death. It is no longer a punishment. A Spiritualist may wish to do all his duties in the present life—but he cannot fail to look forward with the perfect assurance of knowledge to a continued and progressive existence, with superior conditions and exalted powers. Every undoubted manifestation of spirit life and power carries with it the triumphant exclamation—"O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory?"

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

J. G. SPEED.—Pamphlet to hand.

W. OXLEY.—Received. Will appear next week.

T. SHERRATT.—Extract received. Thanks.

J. R. P.—Your narrative will appear next week.

H. E. N.—Thanks.

CROWDED OUT.—Review of "Egypt," "Letters from Hell" (Dr. G. Macdonald), also several letters.

C. ROWE.—We are much obliged for your courtesy in sending us your spare copy of "LIGHT" for October 11th.

EXCHANGE.—Wanted, to exchange Part I. for Part III. of "Proceedings of Society for Psychical Research." Apply Office of "LIGHT."

GERMANY.—We have received a P.O.O. for 10s. 10d. from Germany, but no advice as to who sends it. We are consequently unable to send "LIGHT" as is evidently desired.

K. P. (Weston-super-Mare).—The Lourdes water will be sent in a day or two. We tender our thanks for the donation to Church Congress Fund. As regards other point see paragraph in the current issue.

A STUDENT (Barnes).—It is a rule from which we can admit no departure, that in this particular controversy each communication must be authenticated by the publication of the real name of the writer. Do you authorise this in your case?

ALLAN KARDEC'S *Spiritisme à sa plus simple expression* has been translated into the Tchec language, and is on sale at Nortert Kamardi's, Prague. *Le Spiritisme*.

BLACKBURN.—Spiritualism in this, as in most Lancashire towns, has taken a deep hold of the people. The meeting-room has been so over-crowded every Sunday for some time past that Mr. R. Walsh, a Spiritualist of many years' standing, has promised to build a hall capable of holding 1,000 persons. The building will be commenced at once. When will some of our wealthy London Spiritualists do the same for the Metropolis?

PHASES OF MATERIALIZATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH

IN THE

OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY "M.A. (OXON.)"

(Continued from page 392.)

Unlikeness to the Medium in Stature, Bulk, Sex, and General Appearance.—Continued.

From these cases I turn to another group, an instance of which will suffice. It has been frequently remarked that in the presence of some mediums so many forms present themselves that the very number of them precludes the idea of trickery. So many confederates of all ages and sizes, and of both sexes, would be required; so much stage property, dresses, jewellery, and the like must be ready at hand, that the deception could not be organised, and, if it were, could not hold together for a week. A fair instance of this is supplied by Colonel Olcott's visit to the Eddy Brothers, recorded in his "People from the Other World." I have selected, almost at random, from the book* a group of figures presented at the first séance that Colonel Olcott attended,† William Eddy being the medium. It is made clear that the light was sufficient to distinguish the forms, most of which were so dissimilar from the medium as to make his personation of them a matter of impossibility. On that occasion there was Houto, "young, dark-complexioned, of marked Indian features, little and springy in movement, full of fun, natural in manners, and full of inquisitiveness. . . . She measures 5ft. 3in. in height. . . . To William Eddy she bears not the slightest resemblance in any particular." Colonel Olcott says afterwards, that he saw her about thirty times, and had ample opportunity for close comparison. Next, two squaws, Bright-star and Day-break: and then Santum, a stalwart Indian of 6ft. 3in., in a hunting-skirt of dressed buckskin, with leggings, and a headdress of feathers. Then more Indians, and following them some white men—"three Reynoldses, two being brothers, and recognised by a younger brother present." Next, one William Brown, a tall figure, 6ft. high, with white hair and Quaker dress. "At first, he could not speak at all; then he uttered a few words in a faint whisper, and at length he conversed in a strong, full, natural voice." Immediately after him, two children, one a baby, the other a child of twelve or thirteen. Behind them, the form of an old woman, who held up the curtain with her left hand, and supported the baby with her right.

On another occasion, "seventeen forms, all whites," of both sexes, and of infinite variety in stature, clothing, and general appearance were presented. They were not dummies, for many spoke, some danced, others bowed and moved about the platform. Due precautions had been taken to prevent access to the cabinet, and personation by the medium was impossible.

I could cite, if it were needful to amplify this class of evidence, the dissimilarity between the eyes of Mr. Williams, which are of light colour, and the dark, almost black colour of the eyes of John King, as he appeared about the year 1874. I have noticed this marked difference more than once when John King has requested me to look straight into his eyes as he faced me over the table at which the circle was sitting.‡

Or again, evidence of a precisely similar kind is available from experiments made with other mediums; with Miss Wood, in the house of Mr. Ridley, of Portobello, where, among other forms, were that of a little child with flexible, warm features, and that of a tall Egyptian, as well as that of a woman recognised by one of the sitters as his wife.

Two well-known mediums I have reserved for final mention, Miss Showers and Miss Florence Cook. With Miss Showers many experiments are on record. One, which I took pains to make as complete as I could, and which I had ample facilities for making complete, is recorded in the *Spiritualist* of April 3rd, 1874. The séance was held at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square. A cabinet was made by partitioning off the back drawing-room with a thin framework covered with ordinary wall-paper. In this framework was a door, and an aperture at which the spirit-face ordinarily appears. Within the room were a piano, a sofa, and some chairs. There was no means of egress from the room, except by means of the door, which led into the room in which we sat.

Miss Showers (after Mrs. Gregory had declined to accede to her request that she should be searched) was placed on a chair in the most distant corner of the room, and I left her sitting there with a black silk dress on, her hair loosely flowing over her shoulders. My chair was within two feet of the door leading into the cabinet. After some singing, I heard the voice of Florence (the spirit who usually attends Miss Showers) speaking, and I opened the door. I saw within the cabinet in the dim light a form clad from head to foot in white. By degrees it floated, rather than stepped through the door into the room in which we sat. The projecting framework, which was a little awkward to step over, seemed to present no impediment. The figure was now so close to me that I could touch it with ease. It remained within my reach for an hour and a-half, during which time I scrutinised it with great care. Moreover, all the sitters (fourteen in number) came, saw, and touched it. It sat down on a chair which I handed to it, and otherwise comported itself as a living and intelligent member of the circle.

Among other noteworthy points, I may remark that I carefully measured the spirit-form, and found a difference of not less than four inches between it and the medium.

When Florence first appeared I asked her to shake hands with me, and what I then described as "a cold, clammy claw, rather than a hand, was stiffly jerked from the side, as though a string had been pulled. I touched it, and found it to be unnaturally formed, cold to the touch, and unlike human flesh." It gradually acquired vital heat during the evening.

The face never assumed a natural expression during the evening, and its pasty complexion, compressed lips, and staring, glassy eyes, were painful to look upon. During a part of the evening I believe the materialization to have been incomplete. The figure had an odd appearance of floating. It seemed to be off the floor, and I passed my foot under it without meeting with any obstacle, yet the body was fully organised in other respects. I could feel the breath in the chest rise and fall in respiration, and hear the beating of the heart.

Yet the organism did not seem to be under perfect control in the early part of the evening. When I offered my chair the process of sitting down was most remarkable. It was, as I described it on the spot, as if the figure had "doubled up." I have noticed this in other cases.

Captain James records* a séance at the same place, where, in addition to the spirit Florence, another one, named Leonore, appeared. The latter differed in general appearance, temperament, and size from the former, and indeed formed a marked contrast with her. Captain James avers:—

"I could not discern the slightest resemblance between spirit and medium. Florence allowed me to pass my forefinger down from the root to the tip of the nose, which I found by the evidence of both sight and touch to be of totally different shape to that of the medium. . . . Leonore's general appearance, features, height, and manners formed a marked contrast to her

* "People from the Other World," p. 132.

† September 17th, 1874.

‡ See also *Spiritualist*, June 8th, 1874, p. 274.* *Medium and Daybreak*, March 5th, 1875.

sister spirit. . . . It was observed that Florence, who is much taller than her medium, occasionally dwindled down some inches shorter than her original height, and as she gained power would become as tall as at her first appearance."

I shall have occasion to recur to this matter of Miss Showers' mediumship. For the present I pass on to adduce a couple of cases of Miss Florence Cook's phenomena, reserving much, in her case also, for future treatment. To Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., we are especially indebted for exact testimony with reference to materialization phenomena, which he observed, with every scientific precaution and elaborate care, in his own house, and over a long period of time. To his work* the reader must be referred for full details of his investigations. But I may quote here, as a very precise piece of testimony, what he says regarding the difference between the spirit form and the medium.

"I wish to give some of the points of difference which I have observed between Miss Cook and Katie. Katie's height varies; in my house I have seen her six inches taller than Miss Cook. Katie's neck was bare last night; the skin was perfectly smooth to touch and sight, whilst on Miss Cook's neck is a large blister, which, under similar circumstances, is distinctly visible and rough to the touch. Katie's ears are unpierced, whilst Miss Cook habitually wears earrings. Katie's complexion is very fair, while that of Miss Cook is very dark. Katie's fingers are much longer than Miss Cook's and her face is also larger. In manners and ways of expression there are also many decided differences."

And again (p. 110):—

"Having seen so much of Katie lately when she has been illuminated by the electric light, I am enabled to add to the points of difference between her and the medium which I mentioned in a former article. I have the most absolute certainty that Miss Cook and Katie are two separate individuals so far as their bodies are concerned. Several little marks on Miss Cook's face are absent on Katie's. Miss Cook's hair is so dark a brown as almost to appear black; a lock of Katie's, which is now before me, and which she allowed me to cut from her luxuriant tresses (having first traced it up to the scalp, and satisfied myself that it actually grew there), is a rich golden auburn."

And of a scene familiar to many Spiritualists, who can yet bear testimony to its singular pathos and impressiveness, Mr. Benjamin Coleman gave, at the time, an account which I reproduce here. The séance, which was under Mr. Crookes' charge, was held at Hackney, at the house of Mr. Cook, on May 9th, 1874. Mr. Coleman describes Miss Cook as of small figure, handsome countenance, brunette complexion, with dark eyes, and very dark brown hair. Her ears were pierced, and she wore earrings. She wore a high-fitting blue merino dress. When Katie appeared she was dressed in pure white, with short sleeves, naked feet, in every movement recalling the idea of a supple, flexible limbed young woman, of graceful and childlike habits.

During the evening she frequently went behind the curtain to her medium, and Mr. Coleman testifies that:—

"Once whilst she was there, Mr. Crookes raised the curtain, and he and I, and four others who sat by me, saw at one and the same time the figure of Katie, clad in her white dress, bending over the sleeping form of the medium, whose dress was blue, with a red shawl over her head. This incident was repeated with an increased amount of gas-light which went streaming into the inner room, and thus the fact is at length established that both the living form of Miss Cook and the spirit-form of the materialized Katie were seen by Mr. Crookes and myself and others, twice on the evening of the 9th of May last. . . . We had on this particular evening the most satisfactory proof of the distinct individuality of Katie, who is taller than the medium, is a blonde, with blue eyes, ears that are not pierced, well-formed finger-nails, which Miss Cook has not, and hair of a golden hue."

(To be continued.)

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

The Sydney correspondent of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* writes, August 15th:—

"Mr. Gerald Massey has opened his campaign here with a course of lectures on Shakespeare, meeting with a warm welcome.

"Miss Wood, the medium for materialisations, has left for Queensland for a short time, and now we have no publicly known medium but Mr. Brown, the clairvoyant. His daughter, favourably known on the lecture platform in England before going to the Cape, where she married, is expected here shortly.

"The Melbourne Spiritualists have still the valued services of Mr. Spriggs, the Welsh medium, whose careful sittings for the phenomena of independent voices have resulted in obtaining conversations with various spirits. This kind of mediumship is very conclusive, and is worthy of cultivation.

"In Queensland, Spiritualism and Freethought are extending, and also in New Zealand, where mediumship of a marked character has developed itself in the family of a well-known journalist. Mr. Charles Bright. He and his wife did much to further the cause of spiritual light and freedom.

"The Sydney Theatre Royal is now, on Mr. Charles Wright's return, open on Sunday evenings for his lectures, and his audiences are overflowing.

"Certain travelling 'exposers' named Baldwin, are now in Sydney; when here three years ago they had the patronage of clergymen, but this is withheld now."

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

GOSWELL HALL.—The friends living in this district will be pleased to hear that an opportunity is to be afforded them of spending a social evening on November 13th, and no doubt many will take advantage of the attractions offered. There is to be a concert, at which Mr. Walter Howells, the celebrated tenor, has consented to sing, and among others we notice the names of Miss Freeman, Mr. Crane, and Mr. Frank Everitt. Mr. W. Eglinton has also signified his intention of being present and participating in the concert if his engagements permit. The evening will conclude with a dance. Tickets are to be had of Mr. W. Davis, 23, King Henry's-walk, Ball's Pond, N.

STONEHOUSE (DEVON).—On Sunday morning last the guides of Mr. Burt announced a new departure in the order of their service, inasmuch as they deemed the time had come when the people should see for themselves some of the truths of the philosophy of Spiritualism. Therefore it was their desire that one hour in the morning and one hour in the evening should be devoted to table manifestations. As an inauguration of such resolve on the part of the spirit-friends, a "circle for investigation" was formed, previous to which an inspirational address was delivered by the control of Mr. Burt, the subject being a suggestion of mine, "The Love of God and the Power of Truth." Eloquently and beautifully flowed the discourse upon these Divine subjects for about half-an-hour. The address concluded, a circle was formed, at which various manifestations of spirit-power took place. At the evening service, to a somewhat larger audience, the guides addressed a powerful discourse upon the "Phenomena of Spiritualism," contending that they were no advocates for dispensing with the Bible, it being full of inspiration and true prophecy from beginning to end. The old saying, that "Angels' visits were few and far between" was not true, for angelic ministration came to man from his creation; to all the prophets and seers of ancient times; to Jesus, the Holy One, throughout His earthly life, and at the Cross and sepulchre; to the Apostles in prison, unloosing their fetters and opening the prison doors, &c. When educational systems were expanded, "Modern Spiritualism," so-called, would be known to be a revival of that which had ever existed. Man was a divine being. A false interpretation had been made of some parts of the Scriptures. The day was swiftly coming when, by the teachings of true Spiritualism, all men would recognise and rejoice in a universal brotherhood. The doctrines of the beautiful philosophy of Spiritualism were of a truth making rapid strides through the world, for were not the angels flying through space, preaching the everlasting Gospel, teaching men and women how to live in this world that they may indeed be worthy of a place in the beautiful home beyond the skies! May this truly joyful time be near at hand will be the soul's sincere desire of every humble follower of the Master.—CHARLES J. ATKINSON, President.

MARLEYBONE.—We erroneously stated last week that the tea meeting at Providence Hall would be held on Monday, October 27th. It should have been announced for Sunday, October 26th.

THE Hon. Judge Paul, who devoted some time to the investigation of psychic phenomena in this country, has arrived in Brisbane, and has resumed his official duties there.

MRS. FLORENCE MARRYAT LEAN left Liverpool on Thursday, the 16th inst., in the ss. Britannia, on an extended visit to the United States. We understand that upon her return she will issue a volume relating to her impressions of America.

"IN THE TWILIGHT."—The little poem with this title, by Miss Caroline Corner, which lately appeared in these columns, has been translated into German, and has appeared in the *Vienna Journal* for September 15th, together with the original and some highly complimentary remarks. Miss Corner will be gratified on her part, and we also plead guilty to a similar feeling, that "LIGHT" finds readers in the most unlikely quarters.

* Crookes' "Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism," pp. 107-107.

[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.]

XLI.—ORIGEN.

Origen was son of the martyr Leonidas. Born at Alexandria, in 184 or 185, he was made head of the Catechetical school of that city by Demetrius, the bishop, who afterwards persecuted him bitterly. Origen retired to the East, where he was welcomed, and taught many years at Cesarea. In the persecution of Decius he suffered severely for the Faith. His health broke down under his privations, and he survived but for a

few years, dying about A.D. 254. His works are very numerous, but his most celebrated labours are those he undertook in connection with the Scriptures, of which he collected the versions executed previous to his time into one book, named the Hexapla, from being divided into six columns, each devoted to a particular version.

A second volume compiled by him, containing four versions, was named the Tetrapla. These were works of enormous labour and immense advantage.

Needless to say every part of the New Testament is quoted abundantly in Origen's writings. In his work against Celsus, defending the miracles of Christ against the attacks of that adversary, he says (ij. 49):—

"Jesus, then, in turning aside His disciples from those who would proclaim themselves to be the Christ of God, said, indeed, in one place, 'If any one should say to you, 'Behold here is the Christ, or there!' believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders so as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect.'—Luke x. 19."

(To be continued.)

Publishers' Column.

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SCIENCE AND THE PHENOMENA TERMED SPIRITUAL. †

An Address delivered by MAJOR-GENERAL DRAYSON, at a Meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday October 23rd.

During the past forty years a great number of persons, have investigated the Phenomena termed Spiritual. This investigation has been carried on with more or less care, and certain conclusions have been arrived at by the individuals who have thus investigated.

These conclusions may be classed under the following heads :—

- 1st. That no real phenomena occur. That the whole thing is a trick.
- 2nd. That the persons who believe they have seen certain effects occur, are the victims of their own delusions.
- 3rd. That certain occurrences take place which are to be explained by known laws.
- 4th. That the effects which do occur, are the result of some force emanating solely from the individuals assembled. ("Mary Jane" theory.)
- 5th. That some intelligence, outside of ourselves, does exist, which reads our minds, and tells us that which we ourselves know, but nothing more.
- 6th. That individuals who have lived on earth can, under certain conditions, communicate with us, and that when these conditions are fulfilled, we can receive messages from those who have been dead—no matter how long.
- 7th. That the communications which do come are not given by the persons who profess to give them, but are given by inferior spiritual beings, termed shells, spooks, &c.
- 8th. That our own organisation is capable of giving all the communications and information which have ever been given, and that individual spirits have no power to communicate with us.
- 9th. That Science is utterly opposed to what are termed Spiritual Phenomena, and that when the so-called facts are examined on scientific principles, these so-called facts either do not occur, or are to be explained by known laws, coincidences, or trickery.

I must invert the order in which I have given these conclusions and deal first with No. 9 on the list, because I am desirous of calling attention to the fact that Science has been sometimes condemned by those persons who have carefully investigated the Phenomena, and they have even gone so far as to state that scientific men would not, or could not, accept the facts which were presented to them. This is an error.

What is termed Science, is no secret knowledge, such as Freemasonry or the knowledge claimed by the Indian Adepts. Nor is a scientific investigation a secret method of examining any subject. The method of investigating scientifically is, to first examine, by the aid of our senses, the facts which occur under certain conditions, then to invent some theory which will best and most simply explain all these facts. We thus first study effects, and then submit a cause as an explanation.

This assumed cause is good, only so long as no facts occur which the theory either fails to explain, or which could not occur if the cause which we have assumed were correct.

Now the history of scientific progress tends to prove that in all ages there have been certain types of mind, which were considered at their respective dates highly scientific, but which in reality were the most feeble and unscientific. Such minds ignored the very first principles

of Science, and inverted the order in which investigations and conclusions should be made.

These minds collected some few facts, then rushed into a theory, and asserted that this theory was infallible. When new facts were brought to light, these were denied, or ignored. The persons who gave evidence of having been witnesses of these facts were accused of being incapable of observing, or of being impostors, and the erroneous theory was then maintained, often for centuries.

I cannot give a better example of this system than that relative to the earth being supposed a flat surface.

A story is told of a gentleman who was a geologist, and who framed a theory of the geology of the whole earth from the facts which he had examined five miles round Edinburgh. When any facts were submitted to him relative to formations in other parts of the world, which did not accord with those which he had seen round Edinburgh, he denied the accuracy of these facts, and asserted that the observers were incompetent.

If now any person asserted, in consequence of the above examples, that Science was opposed to geology, or astronomy, he would be stating that which is not correct. It would not be true that Science was so opposed, but that certain men claiming to be scientific, were merely quacks in science, and were ignorant of the mere elementary principles on which scientific investigations can alone be conducted.

It was about the year 1851 that I was first present at some table-turning, which at that date occupied much attention. The table moved, but I suspected that some of the party pushed the table. After several trials, I came to the conclusion that there was some power besides mere muscular pressure which caused the effects.

Shortly after these personal experiments, Mr. Faraday wrote to the newspapers, stating that he had constructed an apparatus by which he could discover whether any person used pressure, consciously or unconsciously, to make a table move in any one direction, and he found on the occasion when he tried the experiments that pressure was used by those sitting at the table. Therefore, say Mr. Faraday and his followers, everything that occurs in connection with table-moving is accounted for by unconscious pressure.

It was in the year 1856 that I was invited to be present at what was termed a "séance," at the house of a friend at Blackheath. At that séance a large dining-table rose from the ground several times, our hands being held above the table. I at once decided that if this phenomenon were not produced by some trick, the theory of unconscious pressure was erroneous, and I determined to test this fact in a manner that would render trickery impossible. I invited the medium to stay at my house, and there, with various tables, I tested the facts. I found that on every occasion the tables would rise, sometimes remaining in the air several minutes. On three occasions in my own house I saw a table, six feet long and four broad, rise from the floor and move several feet towards me. I being at the time several yards from the table, and no other person near me, trickery or machinery was in these cases impossible, and although as a cadet I had been a pupil of Mr. Faraday's, and had admired his great skill as a chemical experimentalist, I was forced to conclude that, as regards the phenomena of table-moving, he had committed the elementary error of theorising from an imperfect examination of facts, and really occupied the same position as the gentleman who had given a theory of the geology of the whole earth based on his investigations round Edinburgh.

I WISH TO CALL PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THIS SYSTEM OF ERROR,

because it has been repeated over and over again by individuals in their investigations, "so termed," of these phenomena. I know two or three instances where gentle-

men supposed to be scientific, and having a great reputation as scientific men, have devoted a few hours, or a few weeks, to observing the phenomena, and have then set themselves up as authorities on this subject, and have written or lectured about it. With an audacity which ever accompanies self-sufficiency and an illogical mind, they have not hesitated to intimate that those persons whose investigations had extended beyond their own, and had been repeatedly witnesses of additional facts, were either fools or impostors.

To argue from the assertions of such scientific quacks, that Science is opposed to the phenomena, would be as illogical as to assert that Science was opposed to the theory of the earth's rotation. It was not Science which was so opposed, but certain incompetent persons who had unjustly obtained a reputation as scientific men.

When we find, as in the present day, men asserting that Mr. Faraday has explained the whole of the phenomena of tables, and other articles moving and rising in the air, by unconscious pressure or involuntary muscular action, we know that such men are as mentally incompetent to judge of facts, as is the savage who tells us that a railway train running at forty miles an hour is a delusion of our senses, as he knows it cannot occur.

When also we find that the mental condition of these individuals is such as to render them unwilling to collect or examine facts, before they theorise, we are naturally disposed to question the competence of such minds to form conclusions on any branch of Science.

We know that, as regards the phenomena here dealt with, certain persons claiming to be called scientific have, during an hour or two, been present when scarcely any phenomena occurred—a result due in most cases from these so-called investigators not having complied with the conditions essential to the production of such phenomena. These individuals have then rushed into theories, and in some instances have had the audacity to claim that they have exposed the whole thing.

Suppose, for example, I was a disbeliever in photography, and asserted that it was a trick. I proceed to a photographer's to examine the subject. The photographer places his collodionized plate in the nitrate of silver bath, places this plate in the camera, and then proceeds to the dark room to develop the image. I stop him and say, "No, you shall not take that plate into the dark room; bring it out in the light. Let me see the plate and the image on it at once. If I cannot see the image on the plate now, I shall expose you as an impostor." The photographer would tell me that he must develop his image in a darkened room. I object to such a proceeding, and leave the photographer's and write a long article for the instruction of the general public, informing them that by the scientific system which I adopted in investigation I had prevented the photographer from imposing on me, and could positively assert that no such thing as photography really occurred—the whole thing was a trick.

THIS IS BY NO MEANS AN EXAGGERATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS CLAIMING TO BE SCIENTIFIC; and I speak with certainty, because I have been present on several occasions, when exactly such a course has been adopted.

The cry has frequently been raised, Why don't you get scientific men to examine the question? "By all means," has been the reply. But the question must be examined on scientific principles, and the men examining must be really scientific men. We must not have every principle of science and logic ignored immediately an investigation of these phenomena is commenced. We cannot admit that mere opinions are to take the place of facts, or that a theory is to be put forward, before the facts have been fully examined. Where can we find a more careful and searching investigation, carried on in the most scientific manner, than that carried

out by Professor Crookes, whose scientific inquiries, and conclusions, when compared with those of many other professors, are like the theories and conclusions of Galileo, compared to the nonsense urged against him by the Sizzis and other theorists, who asserted that the earth could not move?

The utter absence of real scientific knowledge exhibited by some of the so-called learned men, when they have attempted to examine these phenomena, naturally causes us to doubt their capacity for judging correctly on those matters of science, of which they claim profound knowledge.

Two thousand years ago there were men who claimed to know exactly the influence which every star or planet produced on the earth. But they were ignorant not only of the form of the earth, but also that it rotated on its axis. And such men ridiculed the really scientific astronomers such as Pythagoras, who asserted that the earth did rotate. So in the present day there are similar classes of minds, who claim to teach us the relative age of the planets, how comets are formed, and how long the sun will last, when—and I speak with certainty—they do not know that a movement of the earth is occurring, which is the cause of those great climatic changes on earth which geology proves have occurred in the past. Is it probable that men who have exhibited such an utter want of capacity when examining one class of phenomena, should suddenly become infallible when dealing with another subject?

When we find that men who thus ignore the true scientific principle of investigation put themselves forward as the teachers of the general public, it is a case of the blind leading the blind.

Those persons who have had much to do with education must have observed how the human mind may be divided into classes. One class of mind invariably makes the same mistakes, another class always fails to perceive some important fact bearing on a problem. Two individuals, though living on opposite sides of the world and having never met, will yet commit the same errors when judging what to each is a novelty. I have had many amusing examples of this kind in my experience. When as a young officer I was in South Africa, I once astonished some Caffres by using a magnet to lift an iron nail. These men were alarmed, and called out that it was "witchcraft." I informed them that it was not witchcraft, but was a force termed "magnetism." The Caffres repeated the word after me and were much pleased with the explanation. Some days after this I happened to open a bottle of soda water, which, whilst effervescing, I drank. The Caffres shouted, "He makes boiling water instantly and then drinks it, it is witchcraft." One of my former Caffre friends was present, and with a self-satisfied smile he announced that it was magnetism, not witchcraft, which enabled me to drink boiling water.

Having on another occasion made a rather successful pencil sketch of a Caffre chief I was again accused of witchcraft. But one of my learned Caffre friends was near who explained that witchcraft had nothing to do with this sketch, it was all done by magnetism.

Only a few months ago I was staying at a country house in England, when the subject of table-turning was raised. I stated that in my own house I had seen a table rise in the air and remain suspended several minutes, when no person was touching it, and this fact I had seen not once only, but hundreds of times, and under such conditions that any trick was impossible. There was a gentleman present who claimed to be scientific, and who told me he was much surprised that I was not aware that Faraday had fully explained this fact by unconscious pressure. "Then," I said, "if I place my hands a foot above a table, and the table rises from the ground and comes up to my hands, the fact is explained by unconscious pressure?"

"Certainly," said the gentleman, "and Faraday proved it by some instruments."

When I have told some of my Caffre acquaintances that I had seen railway carriages running along as fast as a horse could gallop, and that these carriages were made to travel by the aid of fire and water, they have told me that if they saw this with their own eyes, they should know they had been bewitched by the Rainmaker of their tribe.

Not long since, I told a sceptical friend that I had seen various phenomena termed spiritual, and probably well-known to the majority of my audience.

"If," said my friend, "I had seen these with my own eyes, I should go to a doctor, for I should be convinced that my brain and liver were diseased, and this," said he, with an air of profundity, "I consider the true scientific way of examining phenomena."

There are two terms used by electricians to define two kinds of electricity. These are "quantity" and "intensity." The meaning of these terms may perhaps be better understood if I speak of them as applied to brandy. Intensity corresponds to brandy above proof. Quantity to the actual quantity of brandy. Now with regard to the human mind, there seem to be some minds which possess intensity; others which only possess quantity. The mind gifted with intensity comprehends, where the mind possessing quantity only can no more understand than a dog could understand a quadratic equation. When men with minds possessing quantity only, examine some of the phenomena which I have referred to—phenomena ruled by the most subtle and delicate laws—they are as incapable of examining, as an elephant would be of playing with his foot on a harp. They fail to discover anything, and then conclude that there is nothing to discover. Let us take an example.

If I raise my hand I do so in consequence of my will (acting by some subtle power which we may term vital force, or anything else we like to call it) raising my hand. If I take in my hand a pen or a pencil, I can trace certain words or sentences, which my mind as it were creates. If my mind neither wills that my hand should be raised, nor that sentences should be written, and yet my hand is raised, or certain words and sentences are written, then this would be termed unconscious action. We have thus given a name to a something which we don't understand, just as my old friend, the Caffres explained my sketch as due to magnetism.

Now, when my hand moves without any mental action that I know of on my part, it *may* be that my mind is acting without my being aware of the fact; but it also may be some power outside of my own mind which causes my hand to move. A man's limbs may, by the action of electricity, be made to move without any mental exertion on the part of the possessor of those limbs. And if my hand is raised, or words are written when my mind does not will that either result should occur, it may be that my limbs move, in consequence of my mind acting without my being aware of it; but it may also be that some power outside of myself is causing this movement.

If my hand thus writes in a language with which I am unacquainted, or if it writes truthfully on subjects with which I am entirely unacquainted, it is more than probable that the force or power which causes this movement is outside of myself. If I fixed to my hand some instrument which would indicate when my hand moved, and wrote sentences, and if I then explained this movement by calling it unconscious action or pressure, I should consider that my assumed explanation of the phenomena was unreasonable. I might on the same theory assert that the jumping of a leg, when electrified, was caused by unconscious action.

When a table was found to move, when several persons were sitting round it, and some instruments shewed that a

force was exerted which caused this movement, it was assumed that this force emanated from an unconscious mental action on the part of the sitters. It did not follow that this theory was correct. It might be a force outside of the sitters, acting on the hands of the sitters. When, however, we have hundreds of examples of a table rising in the air when the hands are above the table, the unconscious pressure theory becomes ridiculous, and that there should be found some men who still assert that the raising of a table in the air is fully explained by unconscious pressure, is an example of feeble intelligence, more remarkable than perhaps any which can be given in the present day.

Let me then once more point out that the laws of Science are immutable, that it is neither Science nor scientific men who are opposed to examine or theorise on the phenomena termed spiritual. The true philosopher and man of science will examine, and has examined. Those who will neither examine facts, nor take evidence, or who glance only at negative evidence and then theorise, are not really scientific men, but are too often those who, having borrowed the majority of the ideas they put forward, are disposed to side with the majority, and gain a temporary applause as cautious men. Had they lived 1,800 years ago, they would have been the loudest in their cry of "Crucify Him!"

The arguments which are too often brought forward by similar classes of minds, to prove that none of these phenomena really occur, are so illogical that it is marvellous how they are repeated time after time; and yet the people who bring forward these arguments will assure you that they are too practical to believe your phenomena. As an example of this style of argument, I give the following:—"You tell me," says the practical man, "that it is possible to receive a communication from a spirit. Well, then, tell me what horse is going to win the Derby?" I reply, "I do not think this could be known." "Then," says the gentleman, "it proves the whole thing is a delusion."

I have asked such men whether they believed in the possibility of telegraphing by the cable from here to New York. "Certainly," they reply. "Then," I remark, "telegraph to New York and find out what horse is to win the Derby, and if you cannot find out, then it proves the impossibility of telegraphing."

Now, if we analyse what was in the mind of this man, it will be found that it was a theory to the following effect:—We will suppose his sister, or mother, or any other relative had lately died. He assumes, on no evidence whatever, that this relative, immediately he or she has entered the next world, has not only become thoroughly acquainted with horses, but can foretell what these horses can do six months in advance, and he asserts that unless his fertile imagination has been correct, then absolute facts are to be ignored. And this is a proceeding which some men term practical and scientific.

IT MAY BE CONFIDENTLY ASSERTED THAT SCIENCE AND SCIENTIFIC MEN ARE NOT OPPOSED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PHENOMENA TERMED SPIRITUAL. The objection to it, and the disinclination to examine, do not come from Science or scientific men, but from schemers, and from men incompetent to reason, who having obtained a reputation for their theories, are doing their best to burke facts which, if once acknowledged, would prove their theories ridiculous and without foundation.

The first and second assumed explanations of the phenomena are easily answered.

No real phenomena occur, says the theorist.

Thousands of witnesses testify that they do occur.

A story is told of an Irishman who was seen by three witnesses to steal a kettle. "Sure, your honour," said the man, "you are not going to convict me of theft because these three men say they saw me steal the kettle, for I can bring fifty witnesses who did not see me steal it, so the

mass of evidence is in my favour." Such is the argument used by those who have never seen any of the phenomena.

Persons who think they see phenomena are, it is alleged, deluded by their own senses.

If this be a fact, then all evidence must be ignored. If I and twenty other witnesses can swear that we saw A stab B, our evidence must be ignored, if a theory is popular that A could not stab B; we must have been the victims of delusion. Yet men are hung when such evidence is forthcoming.

The whole of the phenomena can be explained, it is said, by known laws.

I am tolerably well acquainted with "known laws," and I should like to hear which of the "known laws" will explain any of the following facts:—

A table rises in the air, without contact, and responds to questions by movements.

A chair is moved from one end of a room to another, without contact of any kind; any trickery in these cases being rendered impossible.

An accordion is carried by invisible agency round near the ceiling of a room, playing any tune that may be asked for.

A locked piano plays any tune which may be asked for.

A pencil and a sheet of marked paper are placed in a corner of a room. There is no writing on the paper when it is placed in the corner. In thirty seconds the paper is taken up and examined, and on it are more than 300 words written in the handwriting of a deceased friend, and containing information on subjects impossible to be known by the medium. Copying this message in ordinary writing occupied twelve minutes.

Six people are sitting at a table, and their twelve hands are on the table. From under the table there comes a living human hand. I call it living as it is warm to the touch, does not yield to pressure, moves as does a human hand. It takes a pencil and writes a long message on paper, and signs a name to this message, the signature being so definite that it could be sworn to if on a cheque, and this signature being that of a deceased relative.

These are only a few of the elementary facts which occur.

Now, let us ask, which of the "known laws" will explain these facts? To assert that all these facts are no facts at all, but are the results of trickery or delusion, exhibits a type of mind similar to that which a savage would exhibit who asserted that the various chemical experiments exhibited at a lecture did not occur, but were all tricks or delusion. If the "known laws" which will explain these facts cannot be given, then the man who makes the assertion that "known laws" do explain them, is merely an impostor claiming a knowledge which he does not possess.

Many years ago a party assembled to produce phenomena, and after some time succeeded. Having collected certain data, a theory was started, which at the time was called the "Mary Jane" theory. The theory put forward was that no communication of any kind was ever given which was not previously known to someone at the table, and it was, therefore, concluded that a something possessing intelligence was, as it were, created by the persons present, and that the limit of the intelligence and knowledge of those forming the circle, was the limit of the knowledge of the something created.

This theory may be accepted, only so long as no fact contradicts it. Immediately one fact, which is an undoubted fact, occurs which could not occur if the theory were correct, then the theory is untenable.

Let us now see whether this theory will explain the following fact in my own experience: Many years ago I received one morning a telegram, announcing to me the death of a great friend of mine, a clergyman in the North of England. On the same day I called on a lady friend who claimed to have the gift of seeing spirits, and speaking

with them. When I called on this lady my mind was full of the thought of my clerical friend's death. After some conversation with the lady, I inquired if she saw near me any spirit which had lately left this world. She replied that there was one which had only lately done so. My clerical friend was my idea. The lady then said that this spirit appeared in a military uniform, that he told her he had died a violent death, and she then told me his Christian and surname, and in addition a familiar name by which I, as also other of his brother officers, used to address him. On asking for further details as to his death, I was told that his head had been cut off and his body thrown into a canal, and that it was in the East, but not in India. It was three years since I had seen this officer, and the last I had heard of him was that he was in India.

On inquiring, on my return from this visit, I was told at Woolwich that the officer in question was in India, but was likely to go to China. Some weeks after this, the news arrived that this officer had been taken prisoner by the Chinese. A large ransom was offered for him, but he was never found.

Many years after this I met in India the brother of this officer, and I inquired if anything had ever been ascertained relative to the death of his brother in China. He told me that his father had been to China, and had obtained evidence that a Tartar chief, enraged at the loss of some of his friends, had ordered the head of his prisoner to be cut off on the banks of a canal, and that his body was thrown into the canal.

This is one among some dozen instances of a similar kind which have come under my personal experience, and I want to know whether the Mary Jane theory will explain the facts. I also should like to know which among the known laws will explain it. This and other similar facts exist, and any theory which does not include and explain them is worthless. It is the old error of theorising on incomplete data.

I must now venture on a few remarks relative to the latest problem connected with this subject. These remarks must be few, as I have already occupied much of your time.

There has lately been introduced to us a theory that the human mind is capable of producing all the phenomena which have occurred in our experience during the past forty years. It is stated that there are certain learned men in the East, who possess such a knowledge of the laws of nature as to enable them to perform all the phenomena which we have seen; that it is only a very low order of beings, termed spooks or shells, who ever communicate through mediums, and that people who imagine they communicate with relatives or friends are deceived.

This is the theory put forward by various persons who claim to have been instructed by these learned men in the East. Divesting it of its mystery, it is merely an assertion which claims that there are certain individuals in the East who have performed all those phenomena of which we have been witnesses, in England and America, during the past forty years; or these phenomena, and the information given in connection with them, have been given by spooks, elementals, and shells. Now, I would not for a moment cast doubt on any one of the statements made by those who have seen these Adepts. I have myself seen in the East various phenomena which cannot possibly be explained by any recognised laws, but they were nearly the same phenomena as I have seen occur in the presence of mediums in England. I am also fully prepared to admit that the power which can be exercised by the human will is far greater than the most imaginative individual has ever dreamed of. But it seems to me that our friends who conclude that all the phenomena which we have witnessed have been due to the Adepts or to shells, have again committed the error of theorising from imperfect data. I am convinced, also, that these theorists had not seen all

the phenomena which have been seen in connection with so-called spiritual mediums. When we find mediums who, without going into a trance or in any way losing their mental government, can see a spirit and can converse with it as freely as with one of us, and when this spirit gives us information of the highest order both on scientific and other subjects, and tells us the name it bore on earth, we are driven to one of two conclusions—either that the so-called shells, or spooks, are of a very high order, and know more than the scientific men on earth; or else, that this assumed spirit is an Adept who comes with a lie in his mouth and tells us he is a relative when he is only an astral body. I cannot accept either of these explanations.

Another difficulty presented by this theory is, that even granting for a while, and for the sake of argument, that all the manifestations have been due to the powers of the Adepts, I would venture to ask whether these powers can be used only when the astral body is united with the material body. If the Adept die, does he at once lose all his power? If he does do so, it seems a singular thing that a change to a more advanced state should cause a loss of power. If, as a spirit, he retains his power, why cannot he act as a spirit in the same manner as he acted when in the body, and produce phenomena of a similar nature? If he can so produce these, it seems to be a rather sweeping assertion to claim that he and his brothers alone can thus act, that in the whole universe there are no other spiritual beings who can thus produce phenomena. And when we receive from what we consider a spirit an instant solution of some scientific problem, which has puzzled the learned men of Europe during a hundred years, we are to be told that this solution has been given by a spook or shell, or else that one of the Adepts has kindly and generously enlightened us. I readily grant the possibility of certain men possessing a knowledge of laws which may enable them to perform what are popularly spoken of as miracles, but it appears to me that these men cannot deny that there are other beings in the universe who possess similar and greater power.

There seems, also, to be a tendency on the part of the Adepts to claim infallibility. I have heard it stated that an Adept cannot be wrong, and I have noticed a disposition on the part of the believers in these Adepts to claim the same infallibility. I say this with no ill-feeling, but merely to deal with this subject on sound philosophical principles. I have heard it stated that it was a great comfort to have arrived at this perfect truth, after all the delusions by which Spiritualists had been led. I have seen it stated that the grandest revelation ever given to mortals was contained in some hundred pages of print, these hundred pages containing mere sketchy outlines on subjects which, through a medium, I had received and written twenty years before the "grandest revelation" was printed. I believe that such remarks have tended to produce antagonism between the believers in the Adepts and those who are believers in the spiritual theory—a condition which ought not to exist. The proceedings of the believers in the Adepts partake too much of the character of certain men who claim to be scientific, and who state that they know all the laws of nature, and that people who think they see a table rise in the air or see an instrument play without contact are merely ignorant idiots. We naturally lose some of the respect which we may have had for men who thus claim infallibility when their very assertion shews their want of knowledge of the subject on which they claim to be judges.

From the very earliest date at which the phenomena termed spiritual attracted public attention in America, individuals who have investigated these phenomena and become convinced of their reality, have done their best to make them generally known. Men have risked their professional reputation, and in many cases have been absolutely ruined in consequence of proclaiming their conviction in the reality of the phenomena. They have

submitted to the abuse of arrogant ignorance, and self-satisfied stock knowledge. They have freely given money and their time to enable publications to be carried on for the purpose of making known that which occurs. There has been no secrecy in the matter, no probation before the facts have been submitted for examination, but an open investigation has been courted. It does not appear that this course has been adopted by the Adepts and their converts. Living in seclusion and privacy in the East, they may not even be seen by average mortals. Secrecy is maintained, and a severe preparation must be gone through before even the fact of their power is proved.

I quite grant the prudence of not intrusting power to any person, until it has been proved that the person will use this power only for a right purpose; but to prove that the power exists is quite another question, and the evidence that this power really exists is at present very weak.

There are certain laws connected with science and logic which cannot be ignored. For example, we are told that the Adepts are infallible, and cannot make a mistake. Here an absolute law is asserted, and we must adhere to this law. Shortly afterwards we are told that this great revelation of the power and knowledge of these Adepts is given to the Western world, not by the united action of the whole of these Adepts, because only a few are in favour of its being given, others are against its being given. If it be right that it should be given, then those who object are wrong. If it be an error to give it, then those who wish to give it are wrong. Both sides cannot be right. Yet all are infallible. I fear that all the skill claimed for the Adepts cannot enable them to prove that two people who hold utterly different opinions on one fact, can be both infallible. And I am disposed to think that those individuals who believe in this infallibility, must give us facts not theories, and must present proofs not opinions, before we can accept as true that which they themselves believe.

The facts which have been presented to us relative to the powers possessed by 'the Adepts are somewhat limited. Yet these are sufficient to make investigators hesitate before coming to any conclusion. If the believers in the Spiritual Phenomena were to assert that the Adepts were utterly mistaken, that all the power which they exhibited was spiritual, and not in any way dependent on their own will, such assertions would be dogmatic and based on incomplete evidence. But the believers in the Adepts do not hesitate to assert that all the phenomena which have occurred in the Western world have been due to a low order of spiritual creature, or to the action of the Adepts themselves, or have been the action of one's own astral body. It is possible that the solution of this problem may be in the middle course. Those persons who have attended many séances with highly advanced mediums must have seen instances where one's own mind influenced the message. What influenced the mind is a difficulty. But also in many cases the very opposite information has been given to that which was either wished for or expected by those desiring a message, and the theory of one's own will-power producing this message seems to present a contradiction.

Considering the errors that are being spread broadcast by certain materialistic papers, and the dogmatic assumptions of supreme knowledge which the writers in these papers adopt, it seems advisable that the Adepts should give some more proof of their power than has hitherto been given. The course adopted by many investigators into the phenomena termed spiritual proves that there are hundreds who for a truth are prepared to make the greatest sacrifices. It seems scarcely reasonable that not one of these should be permitted to have the proofs which Thomas asked for and was given. A few years ago I was at the Narkunda Bungalow, in the Himalaya, probably not many miles from the home of the Adepts. I attended a séance there one evening. If the Adepts were aware of this they might have

made a very useful convert of me had they given me the slightest evidence of their power.

The assertions which have been made relative to the phenomena termed spiritual being due to a low order of spook or shell, is another example of the error of theorising on incomplete data. Some individuals having, perhaps, been acquainted with spiritual phenomena during many years, have been unfortunate in one or two ways. They have either failed to meet any mediums except those who are *en rapport* with a low order of spirit, or the individual's own mediumistic nature attracts only a low order of spirit. Either of these results having been obtained during a long course of inquiry, the investigator imagines that his personal experience embraces the whole subject, and he lays it down as a law that only a very low order of being communicates through a medium.

The communications which I have seen given through several mediums are of a far higher type, intellectually and morally, than anything I have ever seen hinted at as coming from the East. To tell me that such communications come from a low type of shell is to prove to me that the person so stating knows nothing about the subject, and I cannot then help having my doubt whether he is competent to judge on another question when I find him so unsound on the one about which I have had far more experience than he has. What would any gentleman think of my capacity for reasoning, if I were to tell him that though he is acquainted with the powers of the Adepts, yet, from what I had seen of native conjurers in my "compound" in India, I could assure him that all that the Adepts accomplished was nothing more than a low order of conjuring?

If I were to make such a statement he would justly conclude that I was not only somewhat self-sufficient, but was not qualified to form an opinion on a difficult question.

I have seen nothing of the powers claimed by the Adepts, but I can see no reason, if a disembodied spirit can perform certain phenomena which the outside world would call miracles, why the means by which this is performed may not be imparted to a human being in the body. But I can see no reason why, if a human being can perform such things, a spirit is to be denied having such power. Those who make these assertions act just as do men claiming to be scientific, who claim to know all the laws of nature, and who state that they know that a table cannot rise in the air, or any of the phenomena occur which thousands of persons have repeatedly witnessed.

If it be true that the human will can so develop as to perform wonders hitherto not believed possible, we are indebted to those persons who have brought such knowledge before us; but it will require very much more to be demonstrated than has yet been given before the multitude of facts with which we are acquainted can be set on one side, or are to be accounted for as the work of spooks or Adepts. The power claimed for the Adepts and the power which is called spiritual seem to me in no way antagonistic. The former may exist, without ignoring the latter, and the two, if working in harmony, may do much. The assumption that everything which has occurred and which is termed spiritual is to be explained by spooks or Adepts, is, I am convinced, a delusion, arrived at by the common error of theorising from incomplete data.

THE *Western Mail*, of September 20th, adds one more narrative to the long list of mysterious hauntings so plentifully recorded of late in the newspaper Press. Assuming at first that the story was a hoax, the "special reporter" of the *Mail* "changed his mind" after an investigation of the case. The details have no special interest for our readers.

"A LIVING TELEGRAPH" is the subject of a short sermon in a recent number of the *Chester Parish Magazine*, in which the Rural Dean of Market Weighton illustrates his text by quoting a narrative recently published by the Society for Psychical Research. Slowly but surely the aid given by spiritual phenomena to faith is being recognised.

PHENOMENA IN BRUSSELS. 7

Le Messager (Liège) reports séances with Madame Bablin. To meet the views of some investigators, instead of using the ordinary curtained cabinet, one was constructed, the panels, top, and door of which were of wire work, one inch in the mesh. In this, after examination and approval by the sceptical investigators, the medium seated herself; then the door was secured with padlocks, brought by the investigators. At the first three séances the manifestations were feeble perhaps because of the medium being out of health, and the strangeness of the cabinet; but at the fourth, under the same conditions, as soon as the medium passed into the trance and the light was turned down, lights appeared within and without the cage, and the sound of rapid pencil writing was heard upon paper placed upon the head of one of the sitters, all hands in the circle being inter-linked. A spirit was faintly visible within and then without the cage; the sitters near it were touched; a bell was taken from the table, rung, and dropped upon the knees of one in the circle, and something fell into the lap of another; then two objects were heard to fall in front of the sitters. On lighting up it was found that these objects were the jacket and the slippers which the medium wore when she was locked into the cage, and that the writing was a piece, in Alexandrian verse, signed by Lermont Firmin, one of the medium's guides.

"The investigators then ascertained and acknowledged that the cage was in the same state as when they padlocked it, and that no opening existed in it capable of allowing the passage of such objects.

"During the séance there were other phenomena, but these are the most striking."

The reporter of the séances continues:—An additional testimony to Madame Bablin's mediumship comes in a singular way from America. From the *Banner of Light* of June 21st last I translate the following letter:—

"Two years ago, when in Paris, I was one of a circle of eighteen at Madame Bablin's, when—it was in mid-winter—fresh flowers and fruits were showered upon us so abundantly, that on leaving, we each took some away, and left enough for Madame Bablin's own table.

"In my share was a Mandarin orange. When I got to my lodging I enjoyed my orange, and put the peel into a little box to keep as a *souvenir*. The other day I found the box, and put it in my pocket, thinking to show it to some friends. The first upon whom I called was Mrs. Reid, a remarkable medium, but not a professional one. While she talked I thought I would relate the above fact of my own experience; so drew forth my little *souvenir* and said, as I placed it on the table, 'You have often surprised me, but you would surprise me still more if you could tell me what I have here.' Presently Mrs. Reid said, 'That takes me across the ocean. It came rapidly through space and fell before you. It was brought by a spirit into a séance room, along with a quantity of flowers; it came from a conservatory; it was there dematerialized and transported through space by a continuous rapid rotation into the room, and there re-materialised.

"For six years I have investigated and have received many tests, but none more striking than this through Mrs. Reid."

THEODORE MOLLER.

73, Willoughby-street, Brooklyn.
May, 1884."

A NEW BOOK.—It is rumoured that a very important addition to the literature of Spiritualism will shortly be made by the publication of a unique volume by a well-known writer, dealing with the facts in the career of a celebrated medium. We believe the book is to be profusely illustrated with diagrams and sketches, and such a volume is much needed at the present time when the spirit of inquiry has never been keener. We hope to announce particulars shortly.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

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THIS Alliance has been formed for the purpose of uniting professed Spiritualists who are not represented by any existing society: for providing them with opportunities of meeting together socially: and for offering them from time to time information respecting the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism by means of papers and discussions. It is also intended to circulate, or rather to aid in circulating, the literature of the subject, and especially the journal of the ALLIANCE—"LIGHT"—in districts where such help is needed.

At present it is deemed wise to confine the efforts of the Society to social and discussion meetings. But it is contemplated to take rooms in a central position, and to provide a home for Spiritualists and their friends, where they can read the special journals and newspapers of the movement, and use the library of works on Psychical and Occult Science which, by the kindness of the late *Central Association of Spiritualists*, the ALLIANCE has acquired. This reading-room they hope to make a central meeting-place for Spiritualists visiting London, as well as a centre of work for the benefit of the cause.

The subscription of members is fixed at an uniform rate of One Guinea per annum. No appeals for money will be made beyond this amount, but the Council will gladly take charge of and administer any donations entrusted to them for the purpose of aiding poor districts with grants of literature or copies of "LIGHT." Indeed the usefulness of the ALLIANCE in this direction will largely depend on the amount of money, outside of that accruing from subscriptions, which may be placed in the hands of the Council.

Information will be gladly afforded by the President, W. Stainton Moses, M.A., 21, Birchington-road, N.W.; Morell Theobald, Hon. Sec., 62, Granville Park, Blackheath, S.E.; or any member of the Council.

Subscriptions should be paid to the Hon. Treasurer, Henry Withall, Gravel-lane, Southwark.

Notices of all meetings will appear regularly in "LIGHT."

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Is it Conjuring?

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

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

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

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

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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