

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOSE MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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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.]

MATTER THROUGH MATTER.

In the last number of "LIGHT," "C.C.M." says, in effect, in reference to my ring experiments with Mr. Husk, "Dr. Wyld's evidence is complete and without flaw," but Mr. Gurney, on the contrary, regrets that "the conditions were not more completely unexceptionable," and he adds, "the account as it stands is far from conclusive."

Now with reference to this most occult subject, the difficulties in the way of belief are so great as to render perfect tests absolutely necessary; but, as I have already said, it has taken me four years to arrive at my present conclusions, and therefore I think even Mr. Gurney should admit that I have shown considerable prudence and discretion, and that when he criticises one having some claims to being an expert on any given spiritualistic subjects he should be very careful to be very exact and logical.

Still, I feel, perhaps more deeply than Mr. Gurney does, that so stupendous a secret of nature should be tested and re-tested, and therefore it is my intention, if possible, to arrange some sittings with Mr. Husk for "ring phenomena," and I feel this, that if he could make these experiments his speciality he would then, if successful, occupy a position in relation to spiritualistic phenomena as important as that now occupied by Mr. Eglinton.

I am in the hope that Mr. Husk could, by practice, at last produce these ring experiments in a lighted room, the hands of the operators and the rings only being in darkness, as produced by an efficiently constructed or arranged hollow cover. I am induced to hazard this opinion, because when on one occasion a friend of mine having got, while holding the medium's hand, my ring placed on his wrist, and not being able to remove it, asked me what he was to do, I advised him to hold the medium's hand, the room being in full light, behind the dark window curtain, which he doing, the ring immediately fell to the ground, the hands being still joined.*

But although I agree with Mr. Gurney that we cannot be too rigid in our tests, I must yet repeat that those who criticise carefully conducted experiments, should themselves endeavour to be very exact and very logical, and these qualities I think Mr. Gurney has not shown in the present instance.

Mr. Gurney opens his criticism thus: "Dr. Wyld tells us that he has been in the habit of carrying about his ring for purposes of experiment." But if Mr. Gurney will

re-peruse my narrative he will find that he does not *exactly* represent me, for my words are, "For years I have been experimenting with my iron rings"—not ring, but rings. The fact is that I have experimented with three iron rings and many rings made of copper wire, so twisted as to fit the wrists of the medium exactly, and thus render their passage, when intact, over the hands impossible. This remark is important, for as Mr. Gurney's criticisms are chiefly based on the probability of the medium having deceived me by making a duplicate of my ring, it so far renders this interpretation less probable when there are many rings.

Mr. Gurney goes on to say: "Dr. Wyld does not tell us that he has invariably preserved his ring from examination. One would be glad to know how he has assured himself that his private marks have not been detected and imitated." To this I reply that I have taken no precautions to keep my rings secret, but, on the contrary, have freely exhibited them to sitters and mediums, and on the late occasion I insisted on Mr. Husk taking my ring home with him and keeping it constantly next his person for a week, in order that his "magnetism" should render my ring familiar to his controlling spirit.

Mr. Gurney may perhaps smile at my simplicity, but those who understand these subjects know that I acted wisely in so doing, and that, moreover, there is great wisdom in these matters in putting yourself in sympathy with mediums, and at least appearing to have a little "childlike, credulous affection," as Longfellow says.

Then as to Mr. Husk dishonestly manufacturing a duplicate of my ring, I am morally sure he would not if he could, and perfectly sure he could not if he would; for as the said ring has on its surface probably 1,000 minute markings, some of them as small as pin-points, but distinguishable from their position, besides my own all but invisible marks, I am sure that neither Mr. Husk nor any human being could manufacture an exact duplicate—except, perhaps, Madame Blavatsky, assisted by an Occult Brother!

My critic then says, in reply to my statement that the ring was put into and taken from my hand by "Irresistible," "Dr. Wyld does not say how he knew this." Well, I wrote "Irresistible" between inverted commas to indicate that the ring was placed in my hand by some one calling himself "Irresistible," but, for the matter of that, it was entirely a matter of indifference to me whether "Irresistible" did it or Mr. Husk did it, and no doubt Mr. Gurney will admit that it would be equally difficult for either party by non-occult means to pass my iron ring through Mr. Husk's wrist.

Mr. Gurney next objects to my being "satisfied" that the ring put into my hand by "Irresistible" immediately previous to the final operation, was my own ring. Now, I am still morally satisfied that it was my own ring, but here again the identity of the ring outside Mr. Husk's wrist is not a question of *primary* importance, provided I am satisfied that *no* ring existed on Mr. Husk's arm previous to the *grand coup*, but that on the completion of the *coup* my own ring was found on his wrist.

Mr. Gurney admits that my "examination of the medium's wrist immediately preceding the experiment and my being satisfied that there was no ring there was more

* See *Spiritualist*, November 29th, 1880.

satisfactory," but he thinks it would have been still more satisfactory if "I had explored the *nude* arm as far as the elbow." Well, I did not explore the *nude* arm, because the medium wore a shirt and a coat sleeve, and to remove these while I held his left hand would have been a feat requiring the presence of the Davenport Brothers; but fortunately so impossible an experiment was not necessary, as an experimenter who could not detect a thick iron ring, considerably larger than the medium's wrist, through his coat sleeve would be one of so blunt a perception as to be unworthy of consideration.

My critic next observes: "Considering the ease with which a conjurer can deceive the unwary as to which of his two hands they are holding, we would be glad to know that Dr. Wyld made sure *throughout* that it was the medium's left hand that he held." To which I can only reply that I held the medium's hand throughout with a determined energy, as if life and death depended on it, and did not relax my hold for one moment.

Mr. Gurney then remarks, "that in these matters it is impossible to place implicit reliance on the report of a single sense of a single person." I think this is an incorrect assertion, for I can answer for myself that if Mr. Gurney told me that he had held a man's hand in the dark for one minute without relaxing his hold for an instant, I should believe him; and Mr. Gurney, I think, would himself believe it; for otherwise it would be an admission that he was an incompetent observer, and what Mr. Gurney would now say would probably be, "I can implicitly rely on the evidence of one sense in my own case, but in no one else's."

My critic then remarks that "it would have been much more satisfactory if some others present had satisfied themselves, by examination, that there was no ring on Husk's arm previous to the final experiment." I don't think I can admit this, and I will put it to Mr. Gurney, if he would have been much affected had I said that Captain James and Mrs. FitzGerald had supplemented my examination?

However, as I was making a crucial experiment for my own satisfaction, I took very good care that no outsider should, by contact, interfere with the magnetic *rapport* between myself and Mr. Husk, as I held his hand, and all who understand these subtle subjects will applaud my resolution.

Finally, Mr. Gurney says, that as there are persons who can get their hands through what look like impossible apertures, therefore my attempt to confirm the experiment by measurements, to show that to pass my small ring over Mr. Husk's large hand was impossible, "has no real value, and the mention of it rather weakens than strengthens the case."

This seems to me a very illogical observation, viz., that because there are some pliable hands which can be squeezed through small rings, therefore Mr. Husk's large hand could have been squeezed through my small ring! But Mr. Gurney not having examined either Mr. Husk's hand or my ring, nor compared the two, has evidently, on this point, no logical right to express an opinion. Moreover, I will call on Mr. Gurney to show how this point in my demonstration, even if he found, by experiment, that I might be mistaken, could possibly weaken the case as stated up to this point?

Is it not self-evident that the weight of an argument cannot be lessened by the addition of a subsequent argument which has little or no weight?

Mr. Gurney might as well say a pound of sugar would weigh less than a pound, if there were added to it some bubbles of atmospheric air!

However, I will believe in Mr. Gurney's logic, and in the fourth dimension, when he can show that a rigid body,

measuring, say nine, can be forced through a rigid body, measuring, say eight, without fracture or injury to either body.

Finally, I would remind Mr. Gurney that it is unsafe to use *extreme* terms in occult subjects, and when he says that tests by measurement in these matters can *never* have any real value, I would ask him if he would not admit that an iron or copper ring, fitting tightly to a human wrist, could not, without occult power, possibly be forced off that wrist and over the hand intact without the destruction of the hand?

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

Dr. Wyld will, no doubt, deal himself with Mr. Edmund Gurney's criticism of his experiment. But the question, what constitutes good evidence of these phenomena, is of such general interest and importance that a third person can hardly be considered intrusive for joining in the discussion. And Mr. Gurney is so competent and powerful a critic that any objections offered by him cannot be too carefully examined. For those of us who consider that these facts have already been superabundantly verified, must still recognise the prudence, if not the obligation, of allowing nothing put forward as a test experiment to pass without the severest scrutiny. But equally must we see that the evidence is not disparaged upon any illegitimate assumptions. At least one such assumption is, I think, contained in Mr. Gurney's letter. I will endeavour to show this, and shall also offer some remarks upon other points of his criticism.

"Considering," says Mr. Gurney, "the ease with which a conjurer can deceive the unwary as to *which* of his two hands they are holding, one would be glad to know that Dr. Wyld made sure *throughout* that it was the medium's left hand he held." Mr. Gurney is never irrelevant, and his general proposition must therefore be determined in relation to the evidence before him. That is to say, he must credit the conjurer with this ability in a case in which the fingers are not merely loosely linked, but "held in a firm and determined grasp." And then, we should like to know, in our turn, how much unwariness the conjurer will require in the dupe for his purpose. For instance, if the conjurer says, "I want to scratch my nose," and gets his hand released by this or some other pretext, unwariness having risen to the point of idiocy, the test is effectually destroyed. Without any extravagant estimate of Dr. Wyld's intelligence and experience in these investigations, I think that to such a supposition in this case, certain remarks of Zöllner and of Mr. Crookes, which will be found on p. 79 of "Transcendental Physics" (translation), are fairly applicable. But short of such a supposition being implied, Mr. Gurney can only mean by his "unwary" persons, those who are not on their guard against the more recondite expedients of conjuring, being ignorant thereof. And what I say is a pure assumption, unjustified by experience, is the notion that such expedients include means by which one hand, the fingers of which are firmly grasped with the very object of securely detaining them, can be changed for another without observation. The art of the conjurer consists largely in diverting attention at the critical moment. As to visual observation, without knowledge of just the one particular essential to be observed, this is comparatively easy. But when strong tactual sensation has to be withdrawn from a consciousness concentrated upon it, or at least to be much disturbed, it is quite another matter, and I don't believe that Mr. Gurney will find a conjurer in the world who will undertake to effect a change of hands unobserved under the conditions and circumstances described, and with a subject of average intelligence. The fact is, professional conjurers do not themselves claim for

their art anything like the powers loosely ascribed to it by the public.*

Agreeing with Mr. Gurney, that there could be no satisfactory identification in the dark of the ring taken from Dr. Wyld, I observe that the latter does not, in his summary of the evidence, himself even mention *this* supposed identification as one of the circumstances on which he relies. *Apart from this circumstance*, however, I think Dr. Wyld must see that the identification of the ring found on the wrist with his own ring is a point quite unimportant, provided the dimensions are the same, and the rim of the ring found is ascertained to be perfectly solid. This being so, as it is not stated that the ring was not in the medium's possession before the séance, for evidential purposes the case would be just as good if the ring had been the medium's, except that it might then have been suggested that the dimensions had been fixed with reference to what the medium had found himself able to do by way of manipulation. By having himself fixed the dimensions, Dr. Wyld has excluded that suggestion, and we need not trouble ourselves further with questions of identification. Putting aside, for a moment, the evidence afforded by the measurements, the case hangs upon two points, (1) Could there have been a change of hands without observation; (2) Could Dr. Wyld have been deceived as to the non-presence of the ring when he examined the medium's arm and wrist? The first point has been dealt with. As to the second, Mr. Gurney requires an exploration of the *nude* arm up to the elbow. What Dr. Wyld says is, "I then passed my left hand over the medium's arm and wrist to satisfy myself that no ring was thereon."

We may take it that it was not the nude arm, and it is probable that a circular prominence of 5-16ths of an inch might be rendered imperceptible to a light touch by padding the sleeve. But the degree of pressure which may be supposed, considering the object expressly in view, and Dr. Wyld's knowledge of the thickness of the iron to be detected by his search, would certainly betray either the ring or the fact of a padded sleeve. Yet there can be no doubt of the propriety of the question raised by Mr. Gurney on this point, as nothing should be left to favourable presumption, even when that naturally arises, as I think it does, from the language of the witness. Even apart from the measurements, however, I see no flaw in the evidence, though confirmation may fairly be asked of what we should naturally, though not necessarily, understand from the account given.

As to the measurements, Mr. Gurney says: "But as there are undoubtedly persons who can get their hands through what look like impossible apertures, and as the degree to which this power is possessed cannot be ascertained except with the *bona fide* assistance of the person to be tested, the test can never have any real value;" and he even adds, "the mention of it rather weakens than strengthens the case." (How it can *weaken* the case that to explain it away requires the additional presumption that Mr. Husk has an exceptional hand, I cannot understand. For this power of compression, though facilitated by practice, probably presupposes an original conformation not commonly found.)

Now, according to Mr. Gurney, the fact that hands have been passed through apparently impossible apertures destroys the validity of proof by measurement that any given aperture is impossible for any given hand. Physical compressibility of a hand having been shown to exist to *some* apparently impossible degree, we are required to admit that *no* apparent impossibility of *this kind* can be depended

on. Had the respective dimensions been five inches and eleven inches, instead of seven and nine, Mr. Gurney would still, it seems, not allow us to dispense with the actual negative demonstration which he says cannot be afforded. Now I submit that Dr. Wyld is entitled, as a man of science, to reply, "An indefinite fact is for scientific application no fact at all. In this case, the whole proof is one of degree. I give you exact dimensions. You tell me vaguely of a compressibility beyond what antecedently would be supposed possible. Very well. A difference of half-an-inch would suffice for that. I give you over two inches. Just as in regard to the conjurer's art, I call on you to determine your general statement by relation to the evidence before you, so here I say that your statement is only relevant if referring to a compressibility at least approximate to the disproportion here alleged. In that case I deny your fact and its possibility, and ask for your proof."

On the whole, then, I see no reason to alter the opinion I expressed last week, that Dr. Wyld's case is one of very high evidential value. But we should be not the less obliged to Mr. Gurney for bringing his critical acumen to bear upon it.

C. C. M.

P.S.—Allow me to correct an inaccuracy in my letter last week. I spoke of the impossibility of a ring of seven inches diameter being on the arm under the sleeve. What I should have said was that its passage through the wrist end of the sleeve was impossible.

SPANISH BIGOTRY.

We learn from the October number of *El Criterio Espiritista* that Don Guillermo del Passo, for many years the manager of that publication, passed to the higher life October 1st, 1884, after a short but painful sickness. The deceased was one of the first in his country who became acquainted with Spiritualism; and as he took an active part in spreading the truths of the new philosophy, he thereby made many enemies, particularly among the clergy. Unable to combat his arguments, they had recourse to persecution, which followed him even after his death. As the ruling power in Spain, and claiming to control everything, both here and hereafter, not content with damning his soul, the "Church" refused interment for his body, insisting that as the cemetery where it was proposed to place it was consecrated (?) ground, it would be defiled by having him buried there. The remains were accordingly carefully laid away in a new cemetery—presumably in *unconsecrated* ground. The *Criterio*, after giving a full account of this inhuman treatment, without any strictures, simply adds: "This conduct does not seem to us to be just; but we think that by acting thus the Church has only injured herself."—*Banner of Light*.

An inducement to give anything but the simple results of spiritual forces should be removed from mediums. It is a question whether salaries should not be substituted for individual remuneration. I do not say this in disparagement, in any way, of those who have the gift of mediumship; they are human and in conditions common to humanity; they are neither better nor worse than preachers, lawyers, and doctors; who, as we know, sometimes avail themselves, with others, of the weaknesses and ignorance of clients.—J. Allyn, in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THE venerable Dr. Buchanan has brought out a new work, "Therapeutic Sarcognomy." "Upon the Psychic functions of the brain," says the *Eclectic Medical Advocate* (N.Y.), "Professor Buchanan is the highest living authority. His present work is an exposition of the mystery of the conjoint operation of soul, brain, and body, introducing us to a new world of science. Its leading philosophical idea is that life is primarily of the soul, for all action of the body ceases on its departure. It shows the exact seat and operation of the vital principle in the nervous system, and the special vitality manifested in each region of the body."

* Just before the Slade prosecution at Bow-street, I described to a friend the conditions of one of the successful psychographic experiments, and asked him if a conjurer could do that. He thought that one might. A few days later I put the same case to Mr. Maskelyne, in the witness-box, asking if his art was adequate to the result. "No," he at once replied, "not as you describe it," adding, with a smile, "but I should like to see it done."

A REMARKABLE SEANCE WITH MR. EGLINTON :

"MATTER THROUGH MATTER" AGAIN.

By J. FRED COLLINGWOOD, F.G.S.

On the 7th inst. I paid a visit with my wife and two nieces, Misses Mary and Lizzie Johnson, to Mr. Eglinton, at his residence, 11, Langham-street, Portland-place, for experiments in psychography; and as I met with much success and obtained some evidence beyond the immediate object of my visit well worth recording, I submit the following brief account for publication in "LIGHT":—

I may premise that the conduct of Mr. Eglinton's séances is so well known to your readers that I forbear to enter into familiar details, such as position at the table, the holding of the slate, &c., &c., especially as they have been so well set forth by Mr. Rolph in the current number.

After several questions had been put by us and replied to very pertinently in each case, I wrote, as hitherto, on one of my own new slates, the following question: "Is it right for Lizzie to sit for physical manifestations?"—wrote it away from the table so that nobody should know. The slate being held as usual, we heard the writing and received this reply: "Yes, it is quite right for her to sit for physical manifestations, Mr. Collingwood."

Mrs. Collingwood then wrote (also out of our sight) on Mr. Eglinton's double Bramah lock slate; and after a bit of pencil had been dropped in, locked it, placed the key upon the table in sight of us all, and handed the slate to Mr. Eglinton, who with Mary held it upon the table. No reply was immediately obtained and the slate was left upon the table.

I then produced my own book-slate, already tied with string, and with a bit of pencil inside, and it was held by Mr. Eglinton under the table. The string was removed from it while so held, Mr. Eglinton's left hand being grasped by that of Mary, and this sentence was written:—

"I shall take charge of Mary, JOEY."

no question having been asked.

Here we made an experiment with the intention, if possible, more completely to exclude the "thought-reading" element. I went to the bookcase, placed my back against it, and took a book at random. Mary wrote on a slate the number of a supposed page known only to herself, while Lizzie wrote the number of a line on the unknown page. The book was put by me on the slate containing the numbers, strict care being taken that it was not seen by anybody, and held under the table by both Mr. Eglinton and Mary, a request being made that the line indicated by the number might be quoted. The following was written:—

"There is no such page as 59 in the book."

On opening the book it was found that the *pagination* began at 65. The number chosen *had* been 59, and the forms of the figures were *exactly imitated*—a manifestly conclusive answer!

Mr. Eglinton, embodying an expressed wish of mine, asked whether "Ernest" would give us any hints as to the further development of "power" in my nieces. The following long answer was given:—

"You may rest assured that we shall do all we can to aid the development of your niece and that you will soon observe how we have been able to do this. There are not signs wanting that she will make a capital instrument for us to work through, but she will need careful development and in this you must trust us to use our judgment. Try and feel in regard to yourselves that we will help you all in our power, as also to a further elucidation of the truth which we propagate. And now God bless you.

"Your friend,
"ERNEST."

The above message was written *within two slates held*

by Mr. Eglinton on the shoulder of Mary, her hand also grasping the slate and one of his two hands that held it. The writing was very distinctly heard by all present in this experiment, as in the others.

I asked, "Which niece is meant?" The reply was written in two different hands:—

"Mary, I look after."

"JOEY."

"Ernest means Lizzie."

It was remarked while the writing was being done that a pause occurred in the middle of the message. And now the locked slate, having remained untouched in the meantime, was again taken up from the table by Mr. Eglinton, and held by him and Mary upon it. Writing was heard by us, and on the slate being opened by Mrs. Collingwood, a pertinent answer to her written question was found, and we saw lying inside the slate *the piece of string that had been removed from my book-slate.*

Finally, I asked whether my presence *en séance* was in any way a hindrance. The reply, written in my book-slate was

"No, good-bye."

While these experiments were going on, I had in my mind the grave aspersions which appear in *Truth* of January 1st. It is there stated that Mr. Eglinton, "like all Spiritualist humbugs, is not prepared to perform his feats under conditions which render jugglery impossible. . . . The stock-in-trade of all Spiritualists consists in evading such an inquiry." And the writer further remarks: "I wonder that a few people of sense do not go to Eglinton and expose him. Probably he changes the slates when there is a long message, and writes the message with a piece of slate pencil on his nail when there is a short one. To do the former is not difficult; a common slate can be taken out of its frame and another substituted in about one minute."

I ask that a careful comparison be made between the actual conditions as described in my account of our *séance* and the supposed methods of a totally ignorant or clumsy imitator of the real thing as expounded in the above quotation. Considerations of space forbidding me to enlarge, I can only hope that it will be patent to all who read this how vast is the difference.

Our sitting extended over an hour with scarcely an interruption in the phenomena, the chief of which I have here faithfully recorded. The interest in such results is great to most of us; the facts to some of us are enormous in their importance; and the advantages which undeveloped psychics may receive through contact with Mr. Eglinton will, in my opinion, be precious to them if they go to him with earnest, careful, patient, diligent search after truth, and reasonably accept in this matter, as in others of high concern, the teachings of nature.

January 10th, 1885.

ERRATUM.—In Mr. Theobald's article last week for "September" read "December," as is obvious.

THE CHROMO PLATES.—In answer to inquiries we wish to state that we did not announce the publication of these plates for any special date in January. We simply advertised their issue *during* the current month. The artist has found more time requisite than he at first thought would be necessary, but we hope not to be compelled to request any extension of time. They will appear as a supplement to "LIGHT" gratis (for subscribers only).

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND READERS OF "LIGHT."—We are extremely sorry to be again obliged to defer the publication of several articles and letters, especially an important piece of evidence on Esoteric Theosophy by Mr. Wm. Oxley. A review of that gentleman's "Egypt" also stands over till next week, as well as communications from W. R. T., A. E. Evans, J. Temperley Grey, H. B. L., J. Thompson, J. T. B. Paynter, R. Donaldson, and others. The pressure on our space of current topics has rendered this course unavoidable; we, therefore, beg the consideration of our friends, on the distinct understanding that we will not longer delay the publication of their communications than is absolutely necessary.

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.]

"Ebor's" Difficulties.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am very much afraid that if "Ebor" does not mend his system of investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism, he will gain no satisfactory results, and his case will be hopeless. The member of a circle who could snatch at the garment of a spirit supposed to be manifesting itself, and not have patience enough to wait for the final issue of the phenomenon, is evidently in a very crude and rudimentary state of development.

However sincere, earnest, and prayerful such investigators may be, they will reap nothing but confusion while they conduct themselves in the fashion described. They had better let the subject entirely alone: they will do it more harm than good.

It appears to me that the root of all "Ebor's" difficulties is his impression that he can elicit more from the phenomena than they are intended to convey. He seems to be under the belief that spiritual things can be grasped by mechanical processes—that psychical problems can be solved by physical methods. No state of mind can be more open to the inroad of fallacies. We ought to understand that the phenomena of Spiritualism are abnormal, and cannot, therefore, of themselves be a reliable source of normal guidance and teaching. They are surely intended simply as a revelation of the existence of human beings who formerly lived on this earth. Having attained a knowledge of this great fact we must then devote ourselves to the acquisition of the philosophy and religion which underlie the fact, which influences ought to be our guides through the confusion of contradictory phenomena.

If we could always depend upon obtaining from spirits accurate information respecting the affairs of this life and the next, the exercise of our own faculties and energies in this mundane sphere would be comparatively neglected. The spirits do tell us sufficient of their occupations in the spiritual world to satisfy us that they devote themselves to our assistance and succour according to our deserts and qualities, and I doubt whether they can possibly do more overtly. We must bear in mind that our language is the growth of our life and experience here, and can only be used to express corresponding experiences; but if the special and peculiar existence of disembodied spirits is entirely different from ours and inconceivable by us, then their language to express this difference must be also different, and would be unintelligible to our understanding. Their mode of communicating with us must necessarily be limited by this condition; but, as far as they can gain access to our minds, through cultivation, study, and discipline, their teaching is of the highest, noblest, and most useful order. By steady faith in the co-operation of ministering spirits, art, science, literature, and religion may be cultivated to the highest standard; not, however, so much by attendance at séances as by the careful training of the human mind under the best practical influences, among which I specially reckon Christianity as expounded by its Founder. "Ebor" alludes to the apparent inefficacy of prayer in securing satisfactory results at séances. Admitted; but nothing is gained by being prayerful one minute and vulgarly inquisitive the next. One state of mind swamps the other. Sincerity and earnestness will be of little avail unless they are sustained.

I cannot conclude this letter without saying how much I admire and sympathise with the ideas expressed by your correspondent "Lily."—Yours, &c.,

London, January 3rd, 1885.

TRIDENT.

The Spiritualistic Challenge.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As a Spiritualist of more than twelve years' standing, I must respectfully yet indignantly protest against an exhibition on so profound a subject, such as that contemplated by Mr. Cumberland and Mr. Labouchere, especially as recent letters appearing in different journals show that the challenge thrown down is in a fair way towards being accepted. Has the cause descended so low that the arena of a betting-ring is to become the *modus operandi* for settling disputed phenomena? Have we really, as Spiritualists, sunk so low as to prostitute these gifts before an uncompromising and materialistic age? Will not so candid and truth-seeking a man as Signor Damiani see

this when it is fairly stated? Is it possible that the honoured and revered Mr. S. C. Hall will again give expression to the sentiments which recently appeared in your journal? Rather let us remain under the stigma of delusionists and visionaries than submit to an ordeal which can only have the tendency to leave the passions of the multitude still more inflamed, without a corresponding good result in the furtherance of the cause! Rather let us remain the receivers and not the exhibitors of forces and powers which the wisest amongst us are incapable of definitely comprehending, understanding, or solving! If the combined forces of Spiritualists and sceptics, possessing more of this world's pecuniary gifts than is necessary for them, are desirous of perpetuating their names and influence, they can do it in a more practical form than that contemplated, by administering the fund to be staked towards the alleviation of the misery endured by the children of the indigent poor. Two thousand pounds from each side would go far towards establishing kitchens to be attached to many of our Board schools in different parishes, and afford cheap dinners to those who are compulsorily scantily clothed and ill-fed.

Rest assured, sir, the fact that the movement is so ill-received at present by a large section of a cold and unsympathising public is not without a purpose. The seed now being sown will spread, fructify, and ripen in good time—not at the bidding of a betting fraternity, of one or any number of individuals; not to gratify the whims and caprices of individuals of fashion, who court it in too many instances simply as an amusement for the hour. In many cases the would-be scoffer receives something which, like the electric spark, strikes home; and the scientist, with all his boasted knowledge and profound research, cannot, in face of these facts, determine that certain laws go so far and no farther. To such I would quote the lines in Gray's "Elegy":—

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene," &c., &c.

But of such as these the movement is independent; and its powers, forces, and phenomena are given, received, and felt far more often in the lowly cottage than the patrician's hall. Without reserve, it imparts to all, to none more especially than to those who seek. Held up to ridicule, its adherents subjected to the vilest slander and persecutions, its votaries classed as "rogues," "cheats," "vagabonds," it still rears its head, and in the words of Galileo after his recantation before a Romish Inquisition we can truly say "*E pur se muove!*" ("It still moves for all that!")—I am, sir, yours obediently,

Stanbridge House, Canning-crescent,
Wood Green, N.,
January 10th, 1885.

H. E.

The Testimonial to Mr. J. J. Morse.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in forwarding you a completed list of subscribers. R. A., £3; F. G. S., £5; A Friend, £2; Liverpool Friends, £3 10s.; T. Everitt, Esq., 10s. 6d.; The Misses Ponder, £2; T. Amos, Esq., £1 1s.; Anonyma, 5s.; A Friend, per Mr. D. Younger, £10; Joseph Swinburne, £1 1s.; Glasgow Friends, per Mr. J. Robertson, £5; L. W., £1 5s.; Glasgow Friends (2nd donation), £1 5s. With my very best thanks on behalf of Mr. J. J. Morse, to all those friends who have so kindly and generously responded to my appeal.—Yours faithfully,

FRANK EVERITT.

26, Penton-street,
January 13th, 1885.

OUR German contemporary, *Die Spiritualistische Blätter*, is more occupied with the progress of the movement in England and America than in Germany. A materialisation medium, Emil Schnapps, is, however, attracting attention at Hamburg, where it still seems usual to bind and secure the medium in various ingenious ways. On one occasion, however, Emil Schnapps was seated, unbound, in the corner of an absolutely empty room, the spectators forming a half-circle before him. After about ten minutes a shining ball of phosphorus arose from the head of the medium. It ascended to nearly the height of the ceiling and there divided into two, then three, portions, each of which wandered independently about the room, touching the various spectators. In some cases two persons, seated at opposite sides of the room, were touched together. Then a heavy musical clock rose playing into the air, and wandered, performing colossal beats, over the heads of the circle. A sceptic rashly struck a light, whereupon the medium was seen seated pale and cold on his chair as at the beginning. Knockings and a sound like a detonating signal were heard, and so the sitting closed.

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.

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Tight :

SATURDAY, JANUARY 17TH, 1885.

THE LEGAL DISABILITIES ATTACHED TO SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION.

The *Whitehall Review*, wise in its generation, and discerning, in a measure, the signs of the times, has awoke to the fact that "the believers in Spiritualism" are "an influential body of people." Whether we accept this statement literally or not, it is undeniable that the investigators of occult phenomena are very numerous, and as their purpose is simply and solely the discovery and diffusion of the truth, it surely behoves them to realise their legal status, and, if necessary, to take such steps as may be desirable to remove the disabilities under which they labour.

The question is one that concerns every Spiritualist, and every student of psychical science; and as, at no distant date, it may be necessary for them to use what "influence" they possess in a public agitation, our remarks, which are only intended to introduce the question and to state it in popular terms, may not, at this time, be out of place. "Forewarned is Forearmed."

In this connection let us for the present confine our attention to one phase of the weird and mysterious phenomena usually called "Spiritual," that of abnormal writing, or writing executed without the intervention of any person or power visibly present; and we refer to this phenomenon chiefly because, since the experiments made in the presence of Mr. Gladstone, it is the one which has excited the greatest amount of interest and attention. That writing is so given, in the presence of certain persons, known as psychics, or more popularly as mediums, has been witnessed and testified by many hundreds of people in every rank of life, including men eminent in science, whose capacity for observation would not be disputed in relation to any other matter. Nor is it possible to imagine that they were deceived by the arts of prestidigitation, seeing that some of the

most skilful conjurers of the age, including Robert Houdin, Professor Jacobs, Samuel Bellachini (Court Conjurer at Berlin), Harry Kellar, and others, after patiently investigating the phenomena, have declared them to be totally beyond the resources of the art of prestidigitation.

This being so, as we know it to be from numberless experiments, it is surely of the first importance that we should be free to pursue our investigations with the view to determine the laws which govern the production of the writing and the nature and source of the power by which it is given. And yet our inquiries, if not prevented, are from time to time somewhat impeded, by threats of prosecution; because, forsooth, some old Act of Parliament, manifestly never intended for such cases, has been, and may again be, so construed to apply. We refer, of course, to Section 4 of 5 Geo. IV. c. 83, commonly known as the Vagrant Act, which provides that "any person pretending or professing to tell fortunes, or using any subtle craft, means, or device, by palmistry or otherwise, to deceive or impose on any of his Majesty's subjects" shall be punished on conviction by imprisonment with hard labour.

Now we protest emphatically against any attempt to suppress the search after truth—in whatever realm, natural or supernatural, the truth expressed in these phenomena may lie—by an appeal to the strong arm of the law; and if the Act to which we have referred is fairly open to such abuse, then it is high time that it should be repealed. But we maintain that the Act is so interpreted only because our magistrates and judges know nothing whatever of the matter with which they may be called upon to deal. The clause makes it penal to profess to tell fortunes; but every person who is at all familiar with this phenomenon knows that the medium makes no such profession. Questions, which the medium has no means of seeing, may be written on the inside of a folding slate, which having been locked, writing is heard going on within while the slate is still locked, and of the nature of the answer the medium knows nothing, just as he knew nothing of the question. If the observer is foolish enough to ask what horse will win the Derby, or will inquire as to the health of the Pope, the medium is equally irresponsible. He has no conscious part in the proceedings, and is as greatly puzzled as the veriest tyro to explain by what means the writing is accomplished.

Again, the Act makes it unlawful to use any subtle craft, means, or device to deceive or impose on, &c. But the medium uses no subtle craft, means, or device. He is simply there to afford the evidence that in his presence there is an abnormal, intelligent power—which he does not use, and over which he has no control—and which can and does write, between locked slates, even in broad daylight, the writing being heard in the process of execution. To those who have witnessed the phenomenon it is obvious enough that this abnormal writing is a fact, however inexplicable it may be, and that there is no attempt whatever at deception; and we assert, therefore, that it is a flagrant perversion of justice, and a scandalous disgrace, to punish a man by imprisonment because he happens to be the centre of certain phenomena which are, as Mr. Flowers once spoke of them, "contrary to the known course of nature," meaning, no doubt, contrary to the course of nature so far as Mr. Flowers knows it.

We have spoken above of genuine mediums. That there may be charlatans we do not doubt. Let such be punished, and punished severely, by all means. If a man professes to be a medium in whose presence certain occult phenomena occur without active co-operation on his part, and if he is caught red-handed in simulating such phenomena, and thus in attempting to deceive or impose upon her Majesty's subjects, scarcely any punishment can be too severe for him. None will witness his exposure with more satisfaction than we shall.

SIGNOR DAMIANI AND MR. LABOUCHERE.

The letters from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, reprinted below, are the result of Signor Damiani's "Challenge" to Mr. Labouchere, the details of which appeared in our last issue. The correspondence speaks for itself, and we reprint it in these columns more as a matter of "history" than from any sympathy with such a method of testing truth, or from any belief that it will lead to a tangible result, much less prove of real benefit to the cause of Spiritualism. Indeed, we have, on more than one occasion, deprecated such appeals, at the same time confessing as a deplorable fact that the argument which touches the pocket is the only one that counts in many quarters now-a-days. But the principle involved is, nevertheless, a bad one; and experience has shown that even at the best of times, and under the most favourable conditions, these "challenges" lead to, and prove—*nothing!*

By these strictures we do not wish to imply the least lack of appreciation of Signor Damiani's motives in thus publicly attesting his confidence in his own powers of observation and the integrity of Mr. Eglinton. None who know him can doubt that he is actuated by the purest sincerity of purpose, and a simple whole-hearted desire to serve Spiritualism to the best of his ability. But while recognising these facts, fidelity to what we believe to be the true interests of the movement forbids us to blind our eyes to another fact—viz., that his offer, generous and spontaneous though it be, can only tend, and that through no fault of his, to the degradation and prostitution of our cause.

The true standpoint is, to our minds, that taken by Mr. Eglinton in his admirable and dignified reply to Mr. Stuart Cumberland, which, however, seems to have been lost sight of. He said (we quote in full for convenience sake):—

"In the second place, I cannot consent that any of the parties to an investigation should, even voluntarily, be pledged to the forfeit of £1,000 in the event of the decision being against them. They would be more than human if the mere possibility of such a forfeit did not, even unconsciously to themselves, in some measure dim their eyes against the recognition of an unwelcome truth.

"What I propose is this—that a committee of six be appointed, three to be chosen by myself and three by—I do not care by whom, so that they are gentlemen of good reputation and have not committed themselves to a hostile attitude before the experiments are commenced. I will meet this committee at any place that may be mutually agreed upon, and they shall be at liberty to provide their own slates. But as I am not a conjurer, as the phenomena do not come at my command, and as I do not use 'any subtle craft, means, or device, by palmistry or otherwise,' the committee shall agree to meet on six separate occasions before they shall conclude that the experiments are futile. If the experiments succeed they shall report the fact to Mr. Cumberland; shall call upon him, in accordance with his promise, to 'explain away such demonstrations by natural means to the satisfaction of the committee'; and shall require him to produce the same phenomena, observing the same conditions, as were produced and observed in my presence."

This we believe to be the true ground to take. It is equitable to all; and, moreover, takes the question out of the region of quackery in which Mr. Labouchere and Mr. Stuart Cumberland would be only too glad to keep it. A perusal of the former gentleman's subsequent letters to the *Pall Mall Gazette* will show the attitude of mind in which he approaches the subject. If Signor Damiani thinks he can trust such a man to coolly and patiently search for the truth in this matter we fear he is mistaken. We give the letters in the order in which they appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Since writing the above Professor Ray Lankester has also contributed his share (see p. 32) to the correspondence. If anything were needed to confirm our views, surely his letter would be ample. He has thereby posted himself on the Black Book of Science in company with Mr. R. A. Proctor and Mr. Labouchere. It is well that the fact

should be placed on record, together with his avowal of the methods he desiderates—amongst others, sailing under false colours and physical force!

To the EDITOR of the *PALL MALL GAZETTE*.

SIR,—I have not received the letter from Professor G. Damiani, copy of which appears in your issue to-day, but I shall be delighted to accept his challenge, provided that we can agree upon conditions and upon a jury. If Professor Damiani and I were both to appoint four gentlemen to form the jury, it might possibly happen there would be no verdict; it would also be desirable that we should agree upon the slates to be used, and upon proper precautions against the possibility of trickery, for I need hardly point out that the art of legerdemain is to do a trick in such a manner that the *modus operandi* is not perceived. Professor Ray Lankester is a gentleman of great scientific and practical acumen, and he has always shown an interest in investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism. I would suggest that Professor Damiani should agree upon a jury and upon conditions with Professor Lankester. Anything which satisfies him will satisfy me, and I shall then be quite ready to deposit my £1,000 against the £1,000 of Professor Damiani, my sole object being to prevent a lengthy discussion about conditions ending in smoke, and to have the issue raised in the presence of gentlemen able by their training to guard against fraud; for without adopting the dictum that no amount of human evidence can prove a miracle, all will, I think, admit that the fact that inhabitants of the immaterial world are in the habit of writing messages and drawing pictures on material slates placed under tables is only likely to be credited upon the most incontrovertible and most experienced evidence.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

10, Queen Anne's-gate,
January 8th.

H. LABOUCHERE.

To the EDITOR of the *PALL MALL GAZETTE*.

SIR,—Even before reading it in your issue of this evening I was made aware of Mr. Labouchere's acceptance of my challenge, as I had learned it from a gentleman of the Press who came early in the morning to interview me. Mr. Labouchere says that if we each appointed four gentlemen to form a jury it might possibly happen there would be no verdict. I do not think so, for if Mr. Labouchere appoints four English gentlemen on his side, such is my opinion of the honour of an English gentleman that I am sure that one of them will at least decide for what is right, true, and just. Mr. Labouchere proposes that Professor Ray Lankester should meet me to agree upon a jury and upon conditions. Nothing will give me greater pleasure than to accede to Mr. Labouchere's request. Let it be clearly understood, however, that, although Professor Lankester is the fit man to propose the strictest test conditions for a trial of that sort, I must decidedly object to him or any other man acting on the jury who has already given publicly a verdict against the possibility of abnormal phenomena. In a letter I have just received from Mr. Labouchere, in answer to one I had written to him, he seems to object to my having Spiritualists on the jury. What would he say if I objected to his having Materialists on his side? Of course I shall have Spiritualists as sure as he will have Materialists to compose the jury. The question is not one of opinion, but one of fact. If under the strictest scientific conditions, with double slates bought by Mr. Labouchere himself, locked or sealed by him, and never lost from view of the jury, writing is found within them, what matters the previous opinion of any jury if composed of honest men who have not given already an adverse verdict founded upon incomplete observation? Surely such a logician as Mr. Labouchere will not gainsay the reasonableness of this proposition. Awaiting Mr. Labouchere and Professor Ray Lankester's pleasure, I am, sir, your obedient servant,

29, Colville-road, Notting Hill, W.,
January 9th.

G. DAMIANI.

To the EDITOR of the *PALL MALL GAZETTE*.

SIR,—In reply to Professor Damiani's letter in your issue of to-day, I most certainly should object to a jury half composed of Spiritualists. A judge might just as soon agree to the state of mind of a supposed lunatic being tried by a jury half composed of madmen. I never suggested that there should be Materialists—by which I presume Professor Damiani means men who deny the possibility of the existence of anything beyond matter

—on the jury. A conjurer's art is to deceive the eye. Whether a result is produced by jugglery or by ghosts can only be decided by those who, by their acquaintance with jugglers' tricks and by special training, are able to detect fraud. It is to such a jury that I would submit the slate-writing "phenomenon." Professor Damiani is not apparently aware that some years ago one Slade practised this trick and deceived many by it. After being condemned here by a London magistrate as a rogue and a vagabond, for he was caught in the act of writing himself on the slate, he finally went to Canada, where he confessed his imposture. No one, therefore, is likely to credit the pretensions of a new slate-writing "professor"—unless he performs his "phenomenon" in the presence of those able to detect imposture. The reason why so many believe in ghosts flapping about rooms and writing on slates is that few are able to perceive the manner in which a conjuring trick is performed, and they fancy that because of this what they see is not conjuring but something supernatural. And yet they have only to go to one or two performances of Mr. Maskelyne to see tricks which they cannot explain, and yet which are not performed by supernatural agency.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

January 10th.

H. LABOUCHERE.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Allow me to make a suggestion with reference to the Spiritualistic challenge. As Mr. Labouchere observes, if the committee is to consist of four gentlemen chosen by himself and four by Mr. Damiani, there will probably be no verdict. With £2,000 at stake, plus prejudices, agreement among friends of the opposite parties is scarcely under any circumstances to be expected. I would therefore suggest, first, that there should be no money stake; the public are already sufficiently assured of a genuine antagonism without so heavy a premium on failure of the contest. Next I would suggest that, over and above the committee chosen by the opposite sides, there should be admitted a limited number of more independent witnesses. These might be chosen by ballot from among volunteers belonging to some such representative body as the Royal Society, a sufficient number of the Fellows of which would probably send in their names to furnish at least half-a-dozen unbiassed opinions. The report of such witnesses would have much more influence on the public mind than a verdict of "not proven" by the proposed committee. Even if the money stake were to stand, these independent witnesses might still be admitted, when the function of the committee would resolve itself into deciding what is to become of the stake.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

ANTI-SPIRITUALIST.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—Mr. Labouchere, in his communication of the 10th inst., says that to admit four Spiritualists upon the jury in the matter of slate-writing would be to have a jury half composed of madmen to agree on the sanity of a supposed lunatic. He further avers that he never proposed his jury to consist of Materialists. In reply I would say that if the four jurors on his own side were chosen by him they could not be anything but matter and force men, and I might add that I objected to them as a judge would to a jury composed half of blind men to judge of colours. Yet I did not make any exception about the state of mind of Mr. Labouchere's jury, provided they were men of honour, the which I promise to do on my side. I will go further in my concessions. I will not object to see on Mr. Labouchere's jury those princes of conjurers Maskelyne and Cooke. There! Would that we were now at the end of the difficulties.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

G. DAMIANI.

29, Colville-road, Notting Hill,
January 12th.

[Mr. Damiani sends us a long vindication of Slade, denying that Slade has ever "avowed his imposture," and offering to send Mr. Labouchere Massey's translation of Zollner's "Transcendental Physics," in which he says he will find the truth about Slade fully and correctly set forth.]

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I am much obliged to Messrs. Cumberland, Labouchere, and Damiani for the expression of confidence in me contained in their recent letters to you. I have, however, no intention of taking part in their enterprise, because I consider that any such proceedings as they propose are at the best a waste of time, and

may very possibly lead to fallacious results. For my own part, I should no more think of proposing a wager to Sludge, the medium, in regard to the honesty of his performance than I should think of making a similar proposition to a pickpocket. Sludge has been convicted in the police-courts over and over again. He is a curious and unsavoury specimen of natural history, and if you wish to study him, you must take him unawares, as you would any other vermin. You cannot catch him at his little games if you plainly tell him that you have your eyes open and mean to watch him closely. In order to see him at work and in his glory, you must lull his suspicions to sleep; you must draw him out by making him believe that you are his dupe, whilst the stupid fellow exposes one after another his clumsy artifices to your unsuspected gaze. This highly entertaining sport cannot be enjoyed on many occasions. I have had my turn at it with that "thoroughly game old medium" Slade, whom I "caught in the act," and by the aid of Bow-street Police-court drove from this country. Any one who will take the pains can, I have no doubt, have the same amusing experience with Eglinton. The great point to remember is that as a Cambridge Little-go examiner once remarked to me concerning cribbing, "It is easy enough to stop 'em; any one can do that. The thing is to catch 'em at it; that's really a hard business. I've caught six in my time." It seems to me that all your challenges and wagers and juries in this matter can only result, if the precautions taken are thorough-going, in stopping the medium from "exhibiting his powers." This proves nothing. What one wants is, to have the "phenomena" fully and freely exhibited by the medium. To do this one must assume the garb of a believer. Then at the appropriate moment, when one has thoroughly and leisurely examined the "phenomena," one introduces "a new factor"—for example, cochineal, a light, a blow from the fist or a firm grasp of the hand; and immediately the "phenomena" are demonstrated beyond all doubt to be the cunning devices of the unsavoury Sludge. I have done my share of the skunk-hunting, let others follow.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

E. RAY LANKESTER.

January 12th.

The following letter was sent to the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, but did not appear:—

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I have read Mr. Labouchere's letter in your issue of to-day's date in reply to Signor Damiani. With the objections which he raises to that gentleman's proposals as to the composition of the jury, I do not propose to deal. That is a matter which they must settle between themselves. My purpose now is to call attention to an error into which Mr. Labouchere has fallen in respect to Slade, and which shows plainly the attitude of his (Mr. Labouchere's) mind towards the subject, and the ignorance under which he writes. It is quite true that Dr. Slade was condemned by Mr. Flowers as "a rogue and vagabond" because under the state of the law Mr. Flowers had no other alternative; but it is not true that Slade was caught in the act of writing himself on the slate. That was a conclusion which, for want of experience on the part of the magistrate and the prosecutors, was arrived at without any just ground whatever. Because Dr. Slade was seized, and the writing had been partly accomplished, it was simply assumed that he had himself done it. Experience amongst those who take the trouble to investigate the matter carefully and patiently has abundantly shown that there was no evidence against Slade whatever. And it is not true, moreover, as Mr. Labouchere states, that Dr. Slade finally went to Canada and there "confessed his imposture." Dr. Slade never did confess his imposture, as there was no imposture to confess. In his anxiety to damage an innocent man, Mr. Labouchere has confounded Dr. Slade with one who, assuming the same name, went about imitating the same phenomena, and was, I believe, detected in his swindle. It is gross misrepresentations of this kind of which Spiritualists so justly complain.

Yours truly,

THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT."

January 10th.

"M.A. (OXON)"—We are again unable to render a satisfactory account of "M.A. (Oxon)". He leaves his bed only to have it made, and is in continual torture from gout, which flies about in every part of the system. We can only reiterate, on behalf of our readers, our earnest sympathy and desire for his recovery. Personally, we very much miss his active co-operation and advice.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XII.

Mr. E. Foster, of Preston, a really model Spiritualist, who loses no opportunity of bringing other world facts before the people who might, could, would, or should be interested in them, has a long letter, full of the strongest testimony, in a recent number of the *Preston Chronicle*, which he prefaces with the following suggestive quotations:—

The thirst for the infinite proves infinity.—VICTOR HUGO.

Facts have been denied with a heat and pertinacity that I could never understand.—SIR CHAS. BELL.

The advent of Spiritualism is through facts and not theories. Its purpose is positive knowledge.—HUDSON TUTTLE.

A presumptuous scepticism that rejects facts without examination of their truth is, in some respects, more injurious than unquestioning credulity.—HUMBOLDT.

Up to the time when I first became acquainted with the facts of Spiritualism, I was a confirmed philosophical sceptic. Facts, however, beat me and compelled me to accept them as facts long before I could accept the spiritual explanation of them.—ALFRED R. WALLACE, F.R.S.

In the whole universe all is contingent; nothing is unnecessary; nothing the cause of itself. To explain the causes of all, therefore, we must admit a cause which may be necessarily a cause of itself and of all things. This cause being, since it is necessary, it follows that God is, for it is God.—LEIBNITZ.

* * *

In his letter Mr. Foster describes two physical facts observed by himself and his friends in his library; viz.—the passage through the closed and barricaded doors of his book-case, of three large volumes and a heavy roll of paper, which were brought and laid upon the table round which he and his friends were sitting. He offered Professor Tyndall 500 guineas to explain this phenomenon scientifically, or show how it could be done. This is a perfectly fair offer—but, of course, Professor Tyndall would scorn to even look at 500 guineas.

* * *

Mr. Foster is, like the late Mr. Fowler of Liverpool, a thoroughly responsible man—and he makes a similar offer and double the amount to Professor Huxley. The Professor has said that the only case of Spiritualism he ever explained was a gross imposture—as one might say the only bank note he ever took was a counterfeit. Mr. Foster says:—

"Let him try again, as Surgeon-General Wolseley did a few weeks ago, and as the Premier did still more recently, and if he do receive entire satisfaction, as I am confident he will, then undertake to do the same afterwards, and tell us how it is done, he can have 1,000 guineas for his trouble. Now, gentlemen—Professors Tyndall and Huxley—you have a chance of securing 1,500 guineas between you. Surely that will compensate for the time and trouble involved in conducting your experiments; and when you have done the above I shall be glad to submit a variety of others of a still more perplexing character."

* * *

Here is no question of a wager, but the offer of a generous reward to two men of science for information they ought to be most happy to furnish. Needless to say that were the offer £1,000,000 it would no more be claimed than the 1,500 guineas, because, with a few most honourable exceptions, men of science have "made up their minds," and no number of adverse facts will ever change them.

* * *

What with offers of gifts and challenges for a thousand pounds, Spiritualism is becoming almost as interesting as boxing or horse-racing! Doubtless, some look upon this mixing up of money with the phenomena which demonstrates the reality of the spirit life as a desecration. "Thy money perish with thee," quotes one noted champion of the cause—but would any one like to say that to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who gets £15,000 a-year for performing spiritual functions?

* * *

The offers of rewards of hundreds or thousands of pounds by well-known Spiritualists for the reproduction of spiritual phenomena by "exposers" under the same conditions that they occur in the presence of mediums, have never been accepted. There has not been the least effort in that direction. Fancy Mr. Maskelyne undertaking to write within a locked slate answers to Mr. Gladstone's three questions in Italian, Spanish, and Greek, when he was utterly ignorant of each language!

* * *

Or this, which I have seen done on several occasions with

Mr. Eglinton. A blank card is placed between two slates, the sitter places his two hands upon them, and is then asked: "What do you desire to be written?" He says: "A message to myself in German, French, Italian, Greek"—as the case may be. Still holding the slate firmly under his hand he hears the writing being done. Raising the upper slate he finds a message addressed to him in the language he had selected. Will any "exposer" do that for a year's salary of the Archbishop of Canterbury?

* * *

Or take this case which occurred recently to the present writer. Wishing for information in a personal matter which no one in this life could give me, I went to Mr. Eglinton and privately wrote three strictly private and personal questions on his double slate, and locked it. Under my hands I heard the sound of writing, and found, in a handwriting perfectly familiar to me, the answers to my three questions.

* * *

An avowed Materialist like Mr. Labouchere can only say "It is impossible. It is contrary to the unchanging laws of nature. It would be a miracle, and there are no such things as miracles. Those who pretend to have them are impostors, and those who believe in them are idiots. All Spiritualists are either knaves or fools." And Mr. Labouchere is quite willing to bet 1,000 pounds to prove it, if he can have Professor Ray Lankester to choose the jury.

* * *

The writers in some of the Evangelical periodicals take very different ground from that of the Materialists of the type of the two members for Northampton. "A Layman," replying to the "Spirit Teachings" of "M. A. (Oxon.)," says:—

"There is no difference in character whatever between any of the spirits—they are all cast in the same mould, all have the same object in view—the ruin of the souls of men: however much their tactics may vary in details, in their pursuits thereof

'The air they breathe is every atom curst,

There's no degree of ills, for all is worst.'

And this is the keynote to the whole question, the means by which we can alone elucidate the question."

So he goes on to elucidate by the repetition of his declaration that all the manifestations are diabolical.

* * *

Real, but diabolical. Undoubtedly genuine, but as undoubtedly the work of the devil, and a clear proof of his existence and power. Fancy old Clooty writing Greek between two locked slates to entrap the soul of Mr. Gladstone. Of course, God Who made the devil allows him to do all this mischief. If I were to permit a crime to be committed which I could prevent, I should be held responsible.

* * *

Nothing is gained by attributing the mischief of Spiritualism to the devil. Infinite power and wisdom carry infinite responsibility. To say that God "permits" evil is an evasion. He who creates is completely responsible for all the results of His creation. Poor Friday asked Robinson Crusoe why God did not kill the devil. Why did God make him? would be a more reasonable question.

* * *

Qui fecit per alium fecit per se. If in God "we live and move and have our being," the same must be true of all intelligences, good or evil; so that nothing is gained by attributing slate-writing to Satan, and our pious friends had better sail on another tack. Suppose the manifestations are diabolical, why denounce that which proves the existence of the devil, which all infidels deny? If any of your friends deny it, all you have to do is to take them to Mr. Eglinton, or any good medium, and have his existence demonstrated.

* * *

Do the diabolists really think that the devil is fool enough to show his horns and hoof when he can just as easily "transform himself into an angel of light," and deceive, if it were possible, the very elect—perhaps even the denouncers of Spiritualism in the Evangelical papers?

* * *

The *Banner of Light* gives two curious statements regarding Mr. Mansfield, an American writing medium, who gets answers to sealed letters addressed to spirit friends, sent to him by people all over the world. He says he sat fifty-three times with his wife, an hour at each séance, before he was controlled to write. One of his latest feats was to give in public a verbatim copy of a letter from Ohio, carefully enclosed and the seal unbroken, while it was in the pocket of the gentleman to whom it was sent.

THE SPIRIT OF PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF SPIRITUALISM.

Recently, in a paper misnamed *Truth*, there appeared a notice of a materialisation séance, in which truth was made conspicuous by its absence. Were it worth while every paragraph in which an alleged fact is stated could be challenged, and every sneer turned upon the person who wrote it, but this controversy would be futile.

I wish to refer more particularly to another platform of discussion where we, who are Christians as well as Spiritualists, might look for better things—I mean where Spiritualism is brought forward for calm consideration in a literary society connected with a Christian assembly. In the present frenzied state of the Church in relation to everything spiritualistic, it is wisest, I think, to avoid theories as much as possible and keep to *facts*. Scientific men claim, rightly, to argue from the known to the unknown, but they wrongly desire, I think, to make an addendum of the word *laws*: if they would accept *facts*, sufficiently proved, and base their conclusions on them, they would then come to truths which must be accounted for, and would possibly discover by such a mode of research other laws not yet recognised by science, but which are recognised in the domain of faith. In the Church we ask for more science; in the scientific world for more faith!

In a recent discussion on "Ghosts," Mr. Podmore, invited by a Literary Society of which I am a member, ably represented the Society for Psychical Research, and moved the following resolution:—

"That the latest scientific investigation clearly proves the existence of Ghosts,"

and in doing so, stated the present position of matters, which, as far as I could gather (he will correct me if I am wrong), is this: they have discovered that there is a substratum of truth in the almost universal belief in ghosts, but up to the point they have as yet gone to, the ghosts are subjective, and not objective, *i.e.*, people see ghosts of their own creation. There *may* be rare instances of an objective ghost, but they are in the shade! And thus far have also the Theosophists arrived, with the addition of a shell or astral body, which we can assist to approach us by giving subjective conditions, only, however, to retard the spirit in its career towards *Nirvana*. This theory gives a material power over spirits which Christians will be the last to admit.

After Mr. Podmore had spoken, I ventured into the arena as the champion of ghosts! although the term draws us rather into the *night side* of the subject in which we Spiritualists are interested. I gave three cases from my own personal experience. The first case partook somewhat of the character ascribed to them by Mr. Podmore, but case No. 2 was an instance of a more real ghost, one seen only by *sensitives*. It haunted a cottage in the country when I first entered it, and objected to my being there. We had a séance at the cottage under spirit direction, and the ghost came and spoke through our entranced medium. The story of the education of this spirit in seeking the higher life and of its ceasing to annoy my *sensitive* visitors, is a long, interesting history. He was seen by four clairvoyants at different times, none of whom were told of his existence previously, and one gentleman, a sensitive, was startled by the ghost having *materialised a hand and arm* which he thrust out from under the dressing-table as he was standing in front of the toilet-glass; that being the only instance in which he became visible, except to our medium, who had talks and parleys with him many times; but, of course, this was *shady* by the side of the *hand and arm* which my friend saw. This ghost has since risen to a higher life. He came recently to one of our séances at home, and was announced by our little spirit daughter as "having come with a new dress," whiter,

because his character was improved. In a few minutes he further proved his presence by writing the following letter, or rather by having it written for him by another spirit well-known to us, he scrawling his signature to it.

The letter I read to the meeting, handing it round for inspection, and here it is. Upon the *same* sheet of paper are three other direct spirit-written letters, each in different styles of writing and signed by the various spirits writing them. The paper bears a private mark of my own, by which I identified it at the time as *having been blank a few minutes before*. The following is a copy of the ghost's letter:—

"DEAR SIR AND MADAM,—You will be glad to know I am improving, and with God's help I will continue to do so. All is well at—; my dress is changing. I am going up higher. I shall not be able to be so often at the old house, but may come sometimes. God bless you all for what you have done for me. Thank Mary, your medium, for first showing me light in my darkness. Farewell for a time.

"B—, by J. W. E."

I may remark that his presence, which was at first objectionable, was recently quite the reverse, and his interest in our family life was shown one night rather ludicrously. Mary was rubbing my daughter's cheek *outside* with toothache pencil, when B— appeared to Mary (not to N.) and spoke: "*That be'ant no good, put it on the jar!*" which Mary interpreted aright as *jaw*, and so applied it, with success.

Now I consider that ghost pretty well proved, especially with the addition of other details I here omit in consideration for space.

The third case was the one already recorded in these columns on the 13th December, the account of which I read from print. This one was *seen* by eight and recognised by *four* of those present; it shook hands also with myself and was a real substantial ghost! or spirit, as I prefer to call him.

I had previously asked *this* spirit to give me a direct writing to show to the meeting, and on the morning of the day, at 8 a.m., I found on my study table a long message, filling three pages, signed by him and written on marked paper, which was certainly blank overnight. In the midst of it occurs the following, which I should rely on, among other things, as proof to an inquirer of the spirit origin of the writing, no one in the house knowing Greek, and no one having access to my room, which was locked, until it was found.

"DEAR FRIENDS,—We, who are passed away, all take a new name in our new home. Read Rev. *μεν πρωτον Ουτω εαυτον επικαλει επειδαν δε διεφεργε και εβω ην βελους Οδυσσων ονομαζεσθαι εφη.*

"The English of this I shall leave you wise ones to find out.

* * * * *

dictated a great part by E. M.

This spirit in life-time knew Greek; the word under-scored *may* end *ea*, but I cannot quite determine how to read it.

But to come to the pith of this paper. There are certainly some remarkable facts stated above, and detailed at *greater* length to the meeting, which one would have thought should have been met on their own ground. But it seems to me the usual thing is for the speaker, in *polite terms*, to be called either a fool or a liar. One of my dearest friends got up and spoke thus:—

"We all know Mr. Theobald, his word is above suspicion, and we know he is speaking what he believes to be the truth," &c., &c. So far so good; but then he added how *he* once produced simulations of the phenomena; and another one told us how he and a party met for the very purpose of trying to cheat one another, and "that is how it is done!"

This kind of twaddle, and also another favourite mode of reply by raising up ghosts and then knocking down *such self-made* ghosts (very easy and very amusing, no doubt), are

not what we should expect from serious people. Yet this is what is received with rough guffaws and peals of laughter. Such methods we might expect from *Truth*, but not from intimate personal friends. The most serious attempt to reply to the fact of my having shaken hands with a spirit is that I was deceived! Well, I might have been, but how about the *four others* present who testified to the same thing? and if four are not enough, how many are sufficient to establish such a fact? And how about the Greek, which I am told is incorrect because *μεν* cannot stand first?

I apprehend the spirit can put it where it likes; and if it is suggested that it is copied, and *μεν* cannot in the original be found standing first, it seems to prove to me it is not copied.

Let me add that my transcription may be faulty by confusing *ν* and *υ*, which are not always clear in the original writing, and I am not Greek scholar enough to decide.

To return to the question of the amount of testimony necessary to establish a fact. There were *two* disciples only journeying to Emmaus, and their testimony that they saw *Christ's* risen body is accepted by the *same* people who refuse to accept the evidence of *four* to a similar fact; and if *seven* witnesses in my house testify to an unusual phenomenon, we are all *very politely* looked upon as *non compos mentis*!

Is this such a pleasant position for us to be placed in that we should be likely to covet it or even to bear our testimony for such fruits? If we could accept the theory of hallucination would it not be far simpler? But we dare not—we could not. We look to the *truth* to make us free. It is the old story of persecution on the advent of anything new, and an endeavour to put down by the strong arm of the law, civil or religious, for both are equally vindictive, God's new revelation to the world, given to a sceptical age which yearns for such proofs of an after life.

December 24th, 1884.

MORELL THEOBALD.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have had the following direct spirit-writing put into my drawer; it relates to the Greek quoted above:—

At first he was called Outis, but as soon as he had escaped, and was out of the javelin's reach he said he was named Odusens—Ulysses.

We meant by it, on earth we are known by only one name, but when we enter to our higher life we change or have a new name, and if you read Revelations you will see that all have a new name in the Lamb's Book of Life.

By J. W. E.,
for Saadi.

A BRADFORD gentleman (an inquirer) is anxious to meet some Spiritualists in the neighbourhood for advice and instruction. We shall be pleased if any of our correspondents can help in this case.

STUART CUMBERLAND left Berlin, writes a correspondent, with pockets well-filled by his sances in thought-reading and explanations of spirit-phenomena. His visit has done good; for many who were dissatisfied with his representations have added to the numbers of subscribers to the German Spiritualist journals.—*Le Messenger*.

"LA CONSTANCIA" OF BUENOS AYRES.—*La Constancia* is one of the established journals of the Allan Kardec school, which is turning more attention to what by that school is termed "Experimental Spiritualism." Its last number makes extracts from *Facts*, Peoria, U.S., among them the following:—Spirit Identity.—Mrs. Kate Stiles, of Boston, was at a sance, when a medium was controlled by a spirit who said, through her, that she was Mrs. Stiles' daughter: to identify herself she drew near her, asked her not to be alarmed, put her hand into Mrs. Stiles' pocket, drew out her pocket-book and picked out from it an obituary notice of herself, which Mrs. Stiles had cut out of a newspaper, and said, "See here, dear mother, the proof of what you have called my death." The medium was a stranger. "Her presence," continues Mrs. Stiles, "proved, however, the continuance of her life. She has since communicated to me through two other mediums, to my great joy."

AN UNDENIABLE FACT.

Under this heading Mr. J. J. Owen published an interesting letter in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of July 26th, 1884. He related his experiences as follows:—

"Twelve years ago I numbered among my intimate friends a distinguished Senator of California, who also had a flourishing banking business at San Jose. He was a deep thinker, a man of decisive judgment, but a hard materialist. He believed with Job that all consciousness ceased with the grave, and hence also the individual life. Dr. Knox was a frequent and always a welcome visitor in my study, where Spiritualism was mostly the theme of our discourse, and I could only oppose to his sharp logic my own actual experiences and those of others. Gradually he felt the end of his days approaching, for he suffered from a slow developing lung disease. He often spoke trustfully of the everlasting sleep which awaited him, with its eternal forgetfulness; nor did he experience any fear of dying. On one of these occasions I said to him, 'Doctor, although you are certain that you have solved the riddle of your future existence, I, on the other hand, am equally convinced that you will one day see your error and become conscious that another life begins beyond the grave; let us, therefore, come to an understanding, that if you find yourself alive there, you will, if possible, communicate with me in these few words, 'I still live.' He earnestly made me this promise, assuring me that he should feel it a solemn duty to impart this knowledge to mortals before their death.

"A few months after, the faithful friend had 'passed over' bravely and peacefully. He died, as he had lived, without hope and fear as to the future. Three years passed away without my finding an opportunity of 'proving the spirits.' Knox also seemed in no wise moved to 'give a sign.' Meanwhile a younger brother of his passed away and soon returned as the chief control for direct slate-writing of the medium, Mrs. Clara L. Reid, who now lives at San Francisco. I was becoming extremely anxious to hear something of the dead friend, the more so when once a materialisation medium came from the East, whom I knew to be genuine. This medium told me that he was sometimes allowed by his control to give proofs through the direct slate-writing, and would attempt it for my benefit.

"This offer I thankfully accepted. I cleaned a slate, put a morsel of pencil on it, and pressed it under the leaf of the table. The medium placed one of his hands over mine under the table, and the other on the upper surface of the table. After a few minutes we heard some gentle raps. My thoughts were meanwhile fixed on my dead friend, and I asked if the knocking came from him. The reply was *one* stroke, the well-known signal for 'No.' I next asked the spirit to communicate by means of the alphabet. *Three* raps followed, and the word 'Knox' was spelt out. Then we heard the sound of writing, and I found on the slate the following:—

"'Friend Owen! The facts which nature shows us are irresistible, and the would-be wise philosopher struggles often with one who disturbs his pet theories, and then leaves him to flounder about in a great sea of doubt and uncertainty. This was not exactly my case, for although my views as to a future life were unmercifully overthrown, yet I must acknowledge that my dis-illusion was an agreeable one, and that I rejoice to be able to say to you, my friend, 'I still live!'—Your friend as formerly, Wm. Knox."

"It must be observed that this medium only came to California three years after my friend's death; that he never knew him; also that the handwriting on the slate was so completely that of my dead friend that it was recognised as his at the bank of which he was president."

"RARE BITS" is giving "Glimpses of the Supernatural" everyweek, and does not hesitate to draw upon avowedly spiritualistic sources. In the last issue a narrative, first contributed to these columns, by our esteemed co-worker Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, is quoted with but slight abridgment.

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 cold 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 sometime 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.

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. Elliottson, 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; 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.