

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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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.]

THE PRAISE OF OUR LADY OF MAY.

ONE OF THE SWEETEST OF THE CHILDREN OF THE ALMIGHTY FATHER.

[From the unpublished MSS. of the late Mrs. Howitt Watts.]

Walking along the road of Life, my soul began to bless and to praise our Lord, the Creator, for His Holy Virgin Daughter, the Lady of Spring, whom He each year sendeth to us upon earth.

The bright and gloriously arrayed Lady May, whose tenderhands are instinct with magic of life, and whose every touch, whose every breath calleth forth glory and beauty; whose breathing is odorous of Heaven; whose deep blue eyes gaze out of the skies full of benediction; whose warm, translucent tears make the earth to rejoice instead of to mourn, as do the tears of mortals; whose soft, warm, odorous bosom holdeth within its recesses generations of yet unawakened life; whose light and dancing feet moving along harmoniously call forth myriads of gentle and fair children of the hours, blossoms and buds, and green leaves, for the sustainment, healing, and blessing of animals and of man; and whose shining brow is crowned with the heavy coronal of snowy and roseate bloom until the breezes are overladen with fragrance from opal dawn until dewy eve.

Yea, my love towards this fair Angel of God, whose radiance reneweth the gladness of youth even within the slowly throbbing heart of age, so drew me out of myself, that I cried aloud unto my God, and unto hers, blessing Him with a threefold blessing for her presence amongst men; for that foretaste of the joys of eternal youth and of a heavenly paradise, which her sweet creation maketh evident unto man, and of which she hath ever from the dawn of time been the earnest and sure promise. For whence she came must very many more like unto herself abide, making most joyous and blissful the courts of the House of God, and preparing yet unborn sweetness for the countless coming generations of men, be they inspired poets or unlettered clowns, for verily, she is no respecter of persons though she be so mighty an enchantress and daughter of the glorious Creator of the World. Yea, she is bounteous because she, in degree, is like unto her Creator.

"O, thou best beloved of the fair daughters of the Sun! Thou golden-haired Lady of the May," I cried out, in my rapture, "I would kiss the traces of thy virginal footsteps whilst I pluck handfuls of the white, fragrant lilies—the symbols of thy fair self—which spring up beneath thy feet filled with the flame of vernal life,

"What riches of heart and of imagination hast thou not for ever been bestowing upon mankind at each joyous time of thy advent along the circling, ceaseless cycles of the ages? Who can contemplate and compute the depths of thy tenderness, of thy evernascent splendours of blossoming promises of fruition? Thou passest away—yet only for a season!

"Though thou withdrawest thyself within the veil of another kind of beauty, we know full well that thou goest but to return again in an eternal youthfulness, that thy festival may be a lasting promise to the world. It is a song that hath its appointed pauses, only through the consummate art of the Divine Artist, in order that we may yearn with tender languishing for its recurrent sweetness;—as a picture to be repainted in the imagination by Memory with even yet more beauty, because it is pathetic, than was perceived in the brilliancy of its living presence.

Yea, thou dearly beloved and bounteously dowered Daughter of the Sun, we yearn unto thee and extol thy loveliness as sign and symbol given forth by the Divine Artist of His yet more wonderful and gloriously translucent Proceeding—the Spirit of Light and of Love, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit, and the Bride!

Even, as in days of yore, thy votaries went forth, O Spring, with pipes and with merry shawms, with garlands and with dancing, with sacred cakes and with wine, and with incense and with troops of fair white-robed youths and maidens into the lush, teeming meadows, and fresh-leaved and far-spreading forests, there to worship Thee, with libations, and offerings and joyous hymns—so do but let my spirit worship God Almighty, thy Holy Parent, as spirit within thee,—most fair, most tender revelation of Divine bounteousness and beauty. Let my white-robed and garlanded thoughts make a merry sound of rejoicing in thy praise, and magnify to the glory of thy Creator thy soft white veil of clouds, thy coronal of blossoms of all fruitful and sweet-scented trees and herbs; thy musical voice of all birds, beasts and insects, of waters, of rustling and softly murmuring breezes, and of the pattering of showers—thy many coloured raiment woven of the most glorious colours of Heaven and of earth, and of the sea, all thy bridal bravery!

O vernal Messenger from on high; Iris of Heaven; Comforter of the heart of mortality! as thou leanest out of the windows of thy palace of Heaven, smiling upon the grey-garmented mortals of earth, thou dost verily draw ever upwards, and ravish away our hearts from earthly things whispering unto us the word—IMMORTALITY!

"THE PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you allow me to correct an error in your to-day's issue, of small importance but for the use which Dr. Wyld has made of it? He quotes me as saying, with respect to the ring-question, that the verdict of Mr. Maskelyne and that of Professor Barrett and myself were "entirely coincident." What I did say was that they were "entirely concordant," which has the advantage of being English as well as accurate.—Yours obediently,

April 25th.

EDMUND GURNEY.

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.]

A Reading Room and Book Depot for Spiritualists.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am glad to hear there is some idea of establishing a depôt for the sale of spiritualistic literature, for I feel certain there is a great want of such a place, as well as of other facilities for enabling those who feel an interest in the subject to obtain information with regard to Spiritualism.

When my attention was first called to this subject, now about eighteen months since, through accidentally meeting with "A New Basis" left on the table in a drawing-room in a hydropathic establishment, I was at a great loss how to obtain any further information, and though a complete sceptic at the time, the subject seemed to me to be worth inquiry.

I was in London the following Christmas, and seeing the addresses of 4, New Bridge-street, and 4, Ave Maria-lane, on a spiritualistic publication, I made an expedition into the City (I well remember it, on a cold wintry morning), hoping at least to be able to see some books and buy them if they looked worth the reading. I went first to New Bridge-street, expecting to find a bookseller's shop, but there was nothing but a café, where formerly, I believe, the publishing business had been carried on in an upper storey. I then proceeded to the publishers in Ave Maria-lane, but could get no books or information there, excepting that a book I inquired for was not yet published. Rather discouraged, I left London the next day, and spent the ensuing four months at St. Leonards and Bournemouth, but curiously enough the subject was not altogether allowed to drop out of my mind through accidental encounters with people who were interested in it, and at the latter place I met a lady who was a Spiritualist and who lent me a copy of "LIGHT," in which I found a notice that books were to be bought and information given at 3, Great James-street. I went again to London in the beginning of June, and the day after my arrival I called at the office of "LIGHT" in Great James-street. There I fortunately found the editor (yourself), and through following your advice, I became shortly after thoroughly convinced of the great, and I may say, blessed truths of Spiritualism. Had I, however, put off my visit for another week or two I should have found this place likewise closed, and should, I am convinced, have abandoned the search in disgust. Though very happy in my new belief, I found myself somewhat solitary. I thought it my duty to inform my nearest relations and friends of my experiences, but was met with such incredulity and indifference that I determined never again to mention the subject to them; should they be moved as I was by a desire to know the truth, they will know where to come for assistance and sympathy. In this dearth of spiritualistic companionship I determined to become a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance, which I did. I knew nothing about its proceedings, but I thought there would be a place of meeting for members, where they could exchange ideas and relate experiences, as well, perhaps, have an opportunity of seeing spiritualistic literature. I found, however, nothing of the sort, nor had I any opportunity for meeting Spiritualists except at the periodical conversaziones given by the Alliance at St. James's Hall. I hope something in the way I have hinted at may shortly be considered by the Society; it would be a great boon to many. I must apologise for troubling you with so long and egotistical a letter, but my experience is, I feel sure, only that of one among scores, and I hope that many do not give up the search after truth in consequence of the difficulty they find in obtaining literature and information.—With kind regards, believe me, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

M. B.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of the 11th inst. I ventured to trouble your readers for information as to whether there was any public library, reading-room, or depôt for the sale of books in connection with Spiritualism in London, but I regret to find my query has been unanswered, and this leaves me no choice but to conclude that I was correct in my supposition. Such a state of affairs is a disgrace to the movement, and is not warranted to

inspire subscribers with the belief that it is a growing power.—
I am, sir, yours faithfully,
Charing Cross Hotel.
April 26th, 1885.

AN INQUIRING STRANGER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Personally, I am adverse to proselytising, but I think the weakest point in the cause is that those seeking to investigate the matter have great difficulty in obtaining information, or suitable literature. The latter will be met, I trust, by the proposed depôt, for which the "Dissemination Fund" was started. I think it is a disgrace to the cause that, at least in the Metropolis, they are not able to secure a good house in a central position, where those interested could meet to discuss, and where a good reference library and the current papers could be seen, and where strangers on introduction by a member could obtain information. When members are willing to wager their thousands with a Labouchere could not some of them be persuaded to give their tens for such an object? I do not belong to the London Spiritualist Alliance, as I do not quite understand what their aim and object is, but would gladly do so if they would turn their attention to some such scheme as I have roughly outlined.

W.

19th April, 1885.

["An Inquiring Stranger," "M.B.," and "W." undoubtedly touch upon a great need. We have often ourselves been puzzled at the attitude of Spiritualists in these matters. It seems beyond comprehension. We shall, however, be violating no confidence when we announce (unofficially, at present) that the London Spiritualist Alliance have taken the first step towards supplying some of the necessities of the case. A small room has been taken close to Charing Cross where the library will be placed, council meetings held, and where strangers may occasionally, in the evening, meet with one or more of the officials. This is all they can do at present. They have pledged themselves to live within their income, and a membership of 150 does not allow much margin for rent, gas, attendance, &c., after providing for eight or ten conversaziones—a popular feature of the Alliance which the Council do not think it wise to curtail for any other purpose whatever.

The rooms opened by the Psychological Press in Great James-street, referred to by "M.B.," were closed because one individual could not keep them open longer at his own expense. Small, and inconvenient of access though they were, they proved very useful, and the daily attendance clearly showed the need which existed for such a central office. This was felt so important that a few months ago "A Barrister" started a "Dissemination Fund" to provide a permanent depôt for the sale and diffusion of spiritual literature. £300 were asked for, but not more than £120 are up to now available for the purpose. This is discouraging, but it has been determined to carry out the proposal as far as means will allow, and a modification of the original plan has been adopted, which in some respects, especially as far as publicity goes, is some improvement on the scheme as first proposed. In connection with this "Dissemination Fund," rooms on the ground floor of the same building in which the London Spiritualist Alliance are located, have been secured for use as a depôt for the sale and distribution of spiritual literature.

Both these moves are steps in the right direction, but neither the Alliance nor the Psychological Press can do anything like the work that is waiting to be done; and although what they individually purpose doing is good as far as it goes, it does not, in either case, go far enough. In no other city in the world do Spiritualists allow their work to be carried on under such cramped conditions. Abroad, there are not a few instances of generous Spiritualists having contributed large sums for the effective carrying on of spiritualistic work. One man alone, in Boston, gave upwards of £40,000 for building a Spiritual Temple, and, on an appeal being made for a fund of £5,000 to furnish the place, sums varying in amount from £1,000 to £10 were at once freely subscribed. Now we learn that another friend of the cause is building in San Francisco a still more beautiful building for the use of the Spiritualists in the City of the Golden Horn. Nor are these munificent gifts confined to America. In Australia, and frequently on the Continent, large sums have been given for use in spiritualistic work, while in England alone, the active workers are expected to transact the business of the movement without even a home or proper assistance. Let us make a little confession. It is somewhat personal, and although we have often been asked to state the facts we have always shrunk from doing so. Possibly, however, the statement may awaken a few of our friends to a sense of the responsibility which the possession of a great truth entails upon them.

Although "LIGHT" is worked by a public company it is no

secret that the shareholders generally, took up the shares more from a wish to benefit the cause than from any desire to receive dividends. From the commencement, as is usually the case, it has been uphill work, and had it not been that the directors and officials were, one and all, thoroughly imbued with a desire to work heartily and diligently for Spiritualism, combined with the generosity of a few friends and well-wishers in subscribing a Sustentation Fund to cover the loss, the company, and with it "LIGHT," would long since have been things of the past. Everyone connected with "LIGHT" looked upon the work as a labour of love, and department after department of the business of the paper was voluntarily undertaken in that spirit. With all newspapers the direction of affairs necessarily falls on one man, but in no other instance are we aware that a single individual is expected not only to take the general control, but also to perform the whole of the detail work besides. That, however, was the case during the year 1884 with "LIGHT." In addition to editing the paper—a task in itself sufficient to occupy the energies of one man—the book-keeping, correspondence, and numerous other duties connected with a newspaper fell to our lot. Such a work ordinarily finds employment for a staff of clerks, and the position of matters is only emphasised by the fact that we had no means of providing even a single room in which we could do our work, but we had to execute it when, where, and how we could. The result of the year's working was published last week and we are exceedingly glad that it was so encouraging. But we feel constrained to say that it was attained by sacrifices and exertion on our part, the like of which neither we, nor two, nor even three persons should be called upon to bear alone; and, to tell the truth, considering the few facilities at command wherewith to work the paper, we are astonished that it did so well. This year, our friend and colleague, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, at great personal sacrifice and inconvenience, undertook a portion of the clerical work, but it is, we hold, unfair to him and ourselves that we should be obliged to perform mere clerk's work when our time could be more profitably employed in other directions.

We wish it to be clearly understood that in making this statement none of those concerned will see it until it is in type; that we (the editor) are alone responsible for it, and that our object is simply to draw attention to the fact that, to our personal knowledge, the London Spiritualist Alliance is similarly crippled, and the burden of the work cast upon a few, when, if Spiritualism is worth anything, they should be supported by many willing hands and hearts. The same might be said of the "Dissemination Fund." For ourselves we say nothing. We are glad to do the work, and will continue to perform it so long as strength and opportunity will permit; but at the same time we hope these anomalies will not be permitted, by Spiritualists at large, to continue much longer in regard to other workers. One thing, however, is certain—that it is impossible to "make bricks without straw," and, although the work or a portion of it may be done, yet the whole movement must and does suffer because of the insufficiency of the means provided.

There are a few who have loyally and generously contributed according to their means. They have the satisfaction of knowing that to them is largely due the fact that this paper exists; that there is a society doing good work, and that the literature of the subject is not altogether neglected. But while rendering due acknowledgment to them, we wish we could fire the hearts of the many with a little righteous zeal for their fellows. Open doors for work exist in abundance; there are workers willing to devote strength and time to it if enabled to do so; the one thing needful is a little more practical sympathy on the part of Spiritualists at large. We trust our friends will bear with us in making this statement; we shall not refer to it again.—ED. of "LIGHT."]

What is the Use of Spiritualism?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It was my intention some time ago, when the subject cropped up in your interesting paper, at the instigation of, I think, "Ebor," to write to you to point out that, as far, at least, as I know, an answer has never been given to the question, "What, after all, is the use of Spiritualism?" There are many persons like myself who have taken up the subject earnestly, and, having come to a certain point, drop it, not from any carelessness, but from the fact that it seems a metaphysical *cul-de-sac*. When it was asked, has anything not known by, and of general interest to, mankind ever been discovered by the so-called spirits? two instances, and those not of the most convincing type, were given by General Drayson; while, on the religious side of Spiritualism, as far as I have seen, there has been no improvement of either doctrine or morals, and, indeed, it surprised me to read in "LIGHT" that the experiences of Judge Edmonds were now considered by Spiritualists to be

somewhat out of date. I must say that, for myself, his writings are much more elevating than this continual discussion about materialisations, and minute details concerning the temperature of a "portrait figure" in a dark séance. It is this absence of satisfaction which makes many, like Mr. Haweis, after having proved for themselves that there is intelligence apart from matter, drop the subject for ever, or incline to the belief that we only have to do with an elemental of lower intelligence than ourselves and that a further pursuit of the subject must be detrimental to themselves.

Let me give an instance of the curious attitude of Spiritualism. When first interested in the subject, I, with some other friends, paid a visit to a well-known and deservedly-respected Spiritualist (Mr. Keulemans), and, in the course of a most interesting conversation, he told us, and I think I remember perfectly what he said, for it struck us much at the time, and formed the subject for a long discussion, that "John King" was sent by him (or a friend, I forget which) to Australia to get an answer to a question, and that he performed the double journey in twenty-four hours or so. Now, being perfectly convinced of the integrity of the relator of this fact, the question which naturally arises in one's mind is, why, when England, and indeed the whole of the civilised world yearned for tidings of the true fate of Gordon in Khartoum, did not the Spiritualists once and for all place their belief beyond the reach of question, and tell a waiting world the news?

But no, it was not because Spiritualism, as such, was a piece of trickery, but because the intelligence of man is higher than that to which we appeal in séances. Has "John King" enlightened us as regards the details of life in the reign of Elizabeth: Has "Joey" or "Irresistible" ever told us one word which can really put aside our doubts as to the reality of a terminated earthly existence?

It is a hard subject to treat of fully, but the main question may be put thus: Having arrived at a belief in the reality of the so-called spiritual manifestations, is it worth while risking one's health (for there is a risk, which I know too well to be the fact) and incur loss of time considering a subject which can, as far as one can judge, never bring satisfaction?—I am sir, yours faithfully,

3, Hare Court, The Temple.

A. G. W.

A Record of a Private Séance.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was recently present at two séances in a private house, and I think some account of what took place at them might interest your readers. One of the difficulties which meet the inquirer into spiritual phenomena is that of proving the identity of the spirit professing to communicate. This is not from any lack of evidence on the subject, but from the fact that such proofs of identity are chiefly to be met with at private séances, and are very seldom, therefore, communicated to the general public. I was spending a few days recently at the country house of Mr. W., in company with a Mr. and Mrs. S., like myself, Spiritualists, and we were joined by Mr. Eglinton, the well-known medium, who came on a visit of a couple of days. On the evening of the first day he asked whether we would like to have a short séance, a proposition which was gladly assented to. We, therefore, went into the library, which has a parquet floor, and took our seats round a large lloo table. The company assembled were—Mr. and Mrs. W., Mr. and Mrs. S., Mr. Eglinton, and myself. We placed our hands on the table, and, the gas being turned out, raps were heard shortly after on different parts of the table. Mr. W. then inquired, by means of the alphabet, who wished to communicate, and received for answer the name of his wife's father, from whom she has often received messages. This gentleman was lord of the manor in a small village in the West of England, and passed to the other world about eight years since. The first message was of an ordinary character; but the next was a very curious one. It was as follows: "I wish you to send five pounds to cripple 'B.," the alphabet being called over at every letter, three raps giving the signal when the right one was named. Mrs. W., seemed equally surprised with the rest of the company, and told us that "B." was the name of a poor cripple in the village in whom her father had formerly taken great interest. The power, I suppose, being by this time stronger, the control, "Joey," was able to give the other messages by speaking, and told Mrs. W. that her father (whom he mentioned by name) wished the money to be sent to this poor man for the purpose of buying him a wheeled chair, the one he had previously had

being completely worn out. Many details followed, and "Joey" spoke to the rest of us about private matters concerning ourselves. He then said he should like us very much to meet again the following evening, when we should be more *en rapport*, and might hope for even more striking manifestations. The next evening, therefore, we assembled about nine o'clock in the same room, the only difference being that two of the gentlemen moved from the drawing-room a very large and handsome musical-box on a stand. It had four sets of cylinders, and, when either of these was wound up, it continued playing all the tunes, I think, right on each cylinder till it had run down. We sat, as before, with our hands simply placed flat on the large and heavy table, with the gas alight. Mr. W. wound up the musical-box, and in a few minutes the table began moving, first in one direction and then another, and even answered "Yes" and "No" to questions by tilting as well as by raps. As soon as one tune was finished the musical-box ceased playing, instead of going on as it ought to have done. Mr. W., therefore, asked if the control wished to manage it himself, and received an answer in the affirmative as well as the instruction to put the gas out. This he did, and during the remainder of the séance, "Joey" set the music going whenever he felt inclined. Mr. Eglinton became entranced, and "Joey" then held a long conversation with Mr. and Mrs. W. concerning the money to be sent for the chair, and the people living in the village, the messages coming from Mrs. W.'s father as before, speaking of them by name, and mentioning the most minute particulars of their characters and appearance, which could have only been known by one on intimate terms with them. All these particulars were confirmed by Mrs. W. later on. He also talked to the rest of us about personal matters, and I was favoured in a singular manner. A dear spirit friend of mine, who I knew was present, was able to make his presence known to me, not only by touching me on the forehead and hands in a way I can always recognise, but even by speaking audibly to me. In answer to my question, whose voice it was I heard close to my ear, he said his own name distinctly, and "Yes" when I asked him something else. This took place while "Joey" was conversing with Mrs. S. Several times lights appeared moving about, not only a pretty little flickering light something like a firefly, but a luminous mass as big as a man's hand, with another bright light on its left side; this once came close to my face and floated about in different directions. I often felt the usual cool breeze across my hands, and Mr. S., who was sitting next me, and is strongly mediumistic, said he could see a form between himself and me. The séance lasted about an hour and a-half, and was terminated by a tune from the musical-box, which died slowly away as "Joey" said good-bye to each of us.

A few days later on I had a visit from Mrs. W., bringing a letter to show me from Mrs. B., the mother of the poor cripple, thanking her in the most grateful terms for the generous gift, which she said was most opportune, as the chair which the cripple was wheeled about in was completely worn out, and it was dangerous for him to attempt to go out in it. I append the names and addresses of those who took part in these séances, not, of course, for publication, and I remain, dear sir, yours faithfully,

Z.

The Difficulties of Inquirers.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—When Mr. Watson's first letter appeared in your columns I was tempted to reply to it, but imagining that he would receive many offers of abler assistance than mine, I refrained. This time, however, I will not keep silence, for three reasons. Firstly, because I was for a long period in the same frame of mind as Mr. Watson now appears to be; secondly, because my experience of the difficulty of personally obtaining conclusive phenomenal evidence is identical with his; thirdly, and chiefly, because I can point out to him a very simple way in which, by patience and perseverance (for here, as elsewhere, there is no royal road to knowledge), he can bring home to himself the conviction that there is, beyond a doubt, an intelligence wholly and altogether outside ourselves. Further than this I have as yet myself scarcely attained, and cannot be the guide of another; but I think he will find this enough to strive for at the outset, and having achieved this will be able to work his way onwards unassisted.

I became personally acquainted with Spiritualism at a very striking dark séance; I was then convinced that no human hands had produced what I saw, felt, and heard, and that there was some hitherto unknown force present.

Being then in London, with Spiritualist friends around me, plenty of time at my disposal, an insatiable desire to learn more of, and an intense longing to be able to believe in, the unspeakable blessing of intercourse with dear ones beyond the veil, I yet went from medium to medium, from circle to circle, for nearly three years without advancing a single step!

Wherever I heard of good séances to which money would admit me I went, only to find each and all utterly unsatisfactory. Were they for physical manifestations, there were no precautions taken against fraud. Did they sit for psychical phenomena with clairvoyants, there was a vagueness and indefiniteness about all statements and descriptions, a glad seizing of trifling coincidences, a delighted enlarging on any small prophecy that had been fulfilled, a triumphant holding up of one true thing to the oblivion of a dozen that were false, that finally so wearied me I gave up all such researches, and endeavoured to obtain an *entrée* to some private circle where a higher class of mind in the sitters would promise better things, and the suspicion of money interests be eliminated. I heard of many such circles. To one the conditions of admission were strict, but I would gladly have accepted them had I not been told I should probably have to wait months until a vacancy occurred. As to the others, they were formed by advanced Spiritualists for their own satisfaction. The admission of a stranger would, I was informed, retard and perhaps prevent the development of the desired phenomena, and I could neither wish nor expect any one to make such a sacrifice of their time and patience for my sake.

I therefore resolved to try and develop mediumship in myself, and appealed to a lady of whom I had heard much as a medium of the highest class, and possessing the power of developing mediumistic gifts in others. From her I received much sympathy and great encouragement. She told me of most blessed and wondrous "revelations" and "manifestations" occurring to others, which might and probably would also occur to me; I therefore put myself unreservedly under her guidance and remained so for months. Now, that this lady was one of the most single-minded of women, that she believed, with an intensity of conviction nothing could shake, in her own wonderful gifts, and the importance of all manifestations and revelations given through her, as coming from the highest sources—I am fully persuaded, but I neither perceived in myself the faintest sign of any abnormal power (though she continually pointed out to me *what she called* evidence of such), nor did I receive from her one iota of anything that could be reasonably called evidence of the continued existence of those passed from among us. In fact, the interference of any outside power appeared to me to be, in her case, *not proven*. And now I come to that part of my experience which I think may be useful to Mr. Watson. Unable to obtain what I desired from or through any medium, I set to work without one. A relative of my own and two intimate friends, all interested in the investigation, sat with me at a small round table once a week on the same day, and at nearly the same hour, for the greater part of one winter. For a time we got nothing but "tilts," in which I placed little faith, feeling sure they can be produced by unconscious movements when several pairs of hands are engaged. But through these despised "tilts" came slowly conviction, first, of some intelligence possibly within ourselves, but of the action of which we were unconscious; secondly, of some intelligence wholly outside ourselves, which foretold trivial, but unexpected events, gave what we thought wrong answers to questions, but afterwards found were right; told us circumstances of which we could have had no previous knowledge, and often in which we had no interest, but which, on taking the trouble to investigate, we found were correct, &c., &c.

Moreover, the "tilts" were as various in kind as the personalities supposed to be in converse with us, and singularly suggestive of the characteristics of the person they claimed to represent—a quick decided movement for the one, a slow methodical movement for another, an impatient and irregular tilting for a third, and so on. Lastly came the final triumph of our patience—raps! soft, weak, small sounds, but clear, distinct, and unmistakable. Through them we held a conversation with the intelligences; I received an incomprehensible message from a dead man I did not know to a sister of his, of whom I had never heard, and it having been delivered through a mutual friend, was found to be a most natural and apposite message under their circumstances. Stranger still, my friends sitting one day without me were informed of the death by an accident of an acquaintance of mine, whose name was quite unknown to them. So it was that I began to make some progress in the

study of Spiritualism, and if Mr. Watson has time and patience enough to give this method a fair trial, he can convince himself in like manner.—I am, sir, yours obediently,
M. E.

Mr. Eglinton and Materialisation Séances.

We have been requested to publish the following correspondence :—

DEAR MR. EGLINTON,—

Will it be convenient for you to give a séance for materialisation, one evening between Friday next and Wednesday week? A friend of mine, Dr. M., from the Cape of Good Hope, is anxious to see some spirit manifestations before he leaves London, which he intends doing on Wednesday, and I would like very much if you could give him the opportunity. I shall try and get one or two others to join us, my daughter and myself would also be present, and Mr. Younger has kindly consented to attend, and take charge of the circle. Others who may be present, know scarcely anything of the subject, and are sceptical, but I do not think their presence would hinder the manifestations, as they are earnest in wishing to know the truth.

I can make no arrangement, however, till I hear from you, whether you can give the sitting. Hoping to hear from you soon, with kindest regards,—I remain yours very sincerely,

99, Ledbury-road, Baywater.

ANNE DARLING.

April 20th, 1885.

DEAR MRS. DARLING,—

I regret that I cannot accede to your request to give you the desired séance for materialisation. Lest I should be misunderstood, I will state my reason for this refusal. I hold that a medium is placed in a very responsible position, and that he has a right to satisfy, as far as he possibly can, those who come to him. Now, my experience, which is a varied one, leads me to the conclusion that no sceptic, however well-intentioned or honest, can be convinced by the conditions prevailing at a materialisation séance, and the result is further scepticism on his part, and condemnation of the medium. It is different when there is a harmonious circle of Spiritualists, who are advanced enough to witness such phenomena, and with whom I shall always be delighted to sit; but a neophyte must be prepared by other methods. If your friend cares to come to a slate-writing séance I shall be happy to arrange an hour on Monday or Tuesday, otherwise I must decline to sit for the reasons stated above, and which must commend themselves to you as to all thinking Spiritualists.

Believe me, yours sincerely,

6, Nottingham-place, W.

W. EGLINTON.

April 23rd, 1885.

DEAR MR. EGLINTON,—

Although I feel sorry for my friend's sake, I quite approve of your decision. It is quite right that outsiders should be made to understand that they cannot get admission to the "sacred mysteries" without due preparation on their own part, and that they cannot have manifestations at their beck and call.

I had my doubts about the prudence of your sitting for sceptics, but thought I would ask you, and now that I know your opinion, I shall in future be better able to advise others who wish to see these wonders. Too often these séances are made too common, and mere shows for the amusement of people who cannot appreciate or understand the sacredness of spirit communion.—Yours sincerely,

99, Ledbury-road.

ANNE DARLING.

April 24th, 1885.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—Rev. Dr. J. P. Newman says: "After medical men had failed with me, my wife took a lock of my hair to a lady in New York, said to be endowed with clairvoyance, for which she received no payment. This lady, my wife told me, held the hair in her hand, went into an apparent sleep, and presently murmured, "Gall stones; he must take sweet oil and seidlitz powders." Persuaded by my wife, I swallowed a quantity of sweet oil and took seidlitz powders with the effect of passing twenty-eight gall stones. This cause of my troubles had never been diagnosed by any of my doctors. I was soon well, and am now a hearty man. When the lady who brought me this good service died, objection was raised by some clergymen to performing the rites of burial over her body. I gladly accepted the duty, and over her coffin I publicly acknowledged my debt to her. No man can explain such a mysterious mental power; but that this woman had been given some force not possessed by most mortals I do not doubt."—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THE NATURAL AND THE SPIRITUAL BODIES.

(From the *Spiritual Offering*.)

The editor of the *Spiritual Offering* (Ottamwa, Iowa) of March 21st., calling the attention of a correspondent belonging to one of the churches, to the words of St. Paul, "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body," reminds him that the text says that there *is*, not *will be*, a spiritual body; that numerous facts are on record demonstrative of the existence of the spiritual body; that such records have increased in later times, and are now of frequent occurrence. Such facts, he points out, demonstrate that the spiritual body may leave its material body without complete severance of the "silver cord," and return to it for a time, longer or shorter. He quotes instances, most recently reported.

From the *Des Moines Register* he takes this :—Mrs. Fossett, of Portland, Me., died on March 10th, after a very short illness, and her body was laid out. Late the same evening a dear friend came to take a farewell look at her. Sitting by her side, weeping and gazing at her face, she said, "Ah! where are you now?" Mrs. Fossett moved, turned a little on her side, and finally sat up! Her friend called in the family to hear her relate that it seemed to her that she had been in Heaven, feeling a happiness beyond expression; that she had met her mother and other departed friends. The voice here became faint, and, sinking back, she died, to return no more.

This from the *Banner of Light* :—On Monday, February 16th, John Wisholm, a Swede by birth, of Centre Township, Penn., was taken suddenly ill and apparently died. His family were overwhelmed with grief; his son threw himself upon him, embraced him, and implored him to speak, not to leave them without one word! Presently the father's eyes opened, his lips moved, and he said: "Oh, why call me back?" They administered restoratives, and when able he narrated what he had experienced. He said that after a first sinking sensation he saw what was occurring in the room, but could not speak; then all became dark, and he seemed to float between two forms invisible to him; then it grew lighter and lighter, until he saw two beautiful bright beings on either side of him, heard sweet music, and felt at peace. From this he was aroused by his son's voice, which seemed to draw him back through the darkness again and into his painful body. He lay in a weak state for two days and then finally left this world.

Lastly, this from the *Auburn Gazette* :—Thirty-four years ago, John Hurelle, a youth of sixteen, in Auburn, was pronounced by doctors to be dead, and every preparation was made for the funeral. On the morning of the day of burial, his mother, thinking she saw signs of life, had him removed from the coffin into bed. As this was being done he faintly said, "Let me ——" and then stopped. He lay unconscious, his mother giving him liquid food from time to time, for eight months. Consciousness then returned, the first word he uttered being, "be," and then stopped, thus completing the sentence he began eight months before. This man is now fifty years of age. He is a shoemaker, working in Reilly and McGarr's shoe stores in Auburn. The coffin, of thirty-four years ago, is still kept by his brother. Questioned as to any experience he had during that eight months, he says that he seemed to be floating around; when he thought of a place he was immediately there. He saw his coffin, his mother, and his friends, but he could neither hear nor speak to them. He saw many deceased friends. Everything was bright and pleasant while he was out of his body, but the coming into it again was terrible.

The editor of the *Spiritual Offering* tells his correspondent that he thinks such facts are now more frequently recorded because men are giving more heed than ever before to the relation between the spiritual and the material, and because the nearness of the spirit-world is more generally recognised than heretofore.

All Communications to be addressed to
THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"
4, AVE MARIA LANE,
LONDON, E.C.

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Subscriptions for 1885 are now due. Subscribers will oblige by forwarding these at once to "The Manager of 'LIGHT,'" 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C. Post Office Orders may be made payable to Henry Barnes. All Editorial Correspondence to be addressed to "The Editor."

Light :

SATURDAY, MAY 2ND, 1885.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XXV.

[We shall esteem it a favour on the part of our readers if they will forward us, for use in this column, any allusions to Spiritualism and Psychical Research they may come across in the course of their reading. We see a great many of these ourselves, but it is obvious that there must be many references to the subject which do not meet our eyes.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

I do not see that advertising an exposé of Spiritualism by the American method of interviewing amounts to much. Mr. Maskelyne talks of exposing Mr. Slade in Bow-street. What he really did was to swear that the table used was a trick table, which was false, as any one may see who chooses to examine it. As for the writing, neither Mr. Maskelyne nor any one else has ever told us how it is done.

Again, if Maskelyne can explain or reproduce the manifestations, why has he never claimed the large rewards offered by the late Mr. Fowler, of Liverpool, by Signor Damiani, and by Mr. S. O. Hall? Not one challenge offered by Spiritualists has ever been accepted; not one reward has ever been claimed. So long as this is the case, what confidence can be placed in the mere advertising brags of newspaper interviewers?

No Spiritualist, who has been a careful investigator, can be troubled for a moment by such assertions. Every such investigator has seen scores, perhaps hundreds, of manifestations, which no conjurer could imitate. When Mr. Maskelyne will sit down with me at a table, let me clean two slates and place a bit of pencil between them, and then place his two hands with mine upon the slates until we hear the sound of writing, and I find the whole inside of one of them covered with a letter to me, in the handwriting of one I knew intimately in this life, signed with the name proper to such handwriting, and stating facts utterly unknown to Mr. Maskelyne, then, in such a case, he might be worth interviewing—though, as a matter of business, it would be only in the strictest confidence that he would tell how it was done.

Of course it is a folly to fancy that a professional conjurer knows more about the matter than any man of common-sense. But when we have the careful, continued, scientific investigations of two adepts in physical science like Crookes and Zollner and a dozen more, what do we want of a Maskelyne?

I agree with some of the critics of the Psychical Society. It seems to me that their method has been wrong. I think they should have begun by investigating, and confirming or exposing,

the best known phenomena of Spiritualism. Thought-reading, apparitions, haunted houses, &c., might have followed. Of course it is a matter of taste or judgment—but I would have begun the investigation with rappings, the moving of objects, psychography, and so on, up to materialisation—examining and fighting each fact, and mercilessly exposing every fraud or falsehood. That, it seems to me, was what we wanted of such a society.

After all, the great obstacles to the reception of new facts and new ideas are mental inertia, habit, prejudice, and the utter want, in nine persons in ten, of a philosophic spirit. People have "made up" what they call their minds. Having accepted some theory of life and faith, they resolutely bar out all facts that threaten it. Dreading light, they draw down the blinds and close the shutters.

Next to a favourable presentation of the phenomena in literature, and perhaps better in some ways for exciting curiosity and provoking discussion, is such an attack upon Spiritualism as that made last year by Robert Buchanan in his novel, "The New Abelard." Of course, Mr. Buchanan burlesques it stupidly. But attending a séance, or even reading a fair account of one, might have been a disadvantage. When a man sets himself to abuse a creed, or a philosophy, or a system based on facts, the less he knows about either, the finer his scope for vituperation and misrepresentation.

But even the wildest misrepresentation or the most virulent and baseless abuse may have a good effect upon fair-minded, open-minded inquirers after truth. Such men say: "Why is this doctrine everywhere spoken against? How is it that intelligent and even profoundly scientific men believe in what is denounced as an idiotic imposture?" And the first impulse of every just man who hears any cause abused is to ascertain whether the abuse is well founded.

So far as I can judge from the reports in spiritualist journals in America, Europe, and the Colonies, the "Cause" of Spiritualism is very rapidly advancing, by which I mean that its facts are becoming more widely known. Facts hardly constitute a cause or a creed. Spiritualism is really a science to be investigated or studied, like astronomy or geology. It is not a faith, it is not a hope. Certainty supersedes both. We know there is a world of spirits. We know that the friends who have left us as to the earthly life, still live, still are able to talk with us and assure us of their loving care. We are as sure of this as we are of our own existence, and our "Cause" is simply and only the benevolent wish to bring this knowledge to all "whom it may concern."

I freely admit that religious people of several denominations may have more urgent motives for missionary efforts. It is natural that men who believe that tracts or preaching may save human souls from an eternal fiery hell, should put spare shillings and even pounds into the contribution box. Of course a man who believes that the destiny of every human soul has been foreordained from all eternity has no such motive. Why should a man try to save a soul predestined by its Maker to eternal perdition? Or why spend money or effort for those predestinated to eternal felicity?

A Spiritualist has, however, abundant motives to spread the knowledge of the truth. It is a cheerful science and helpful to humanity in many ways. It removes the terror of annihilation, and makes many welcome the change of death. The certainty of immortality gives new motives to purity and justice, kindness and benevolence. Can there be a grander stimulus to the attainment of all wisdom and virtue than to know ourselves immortal? Can all the sciences of the universe compare with this one science of THE LIFE TO COME?

Mrs. General Booth, of the sensational Salvation Army, has been preaching at the Town Hall, Kensington. She was announced in the *War Cry*, and on large ruddy posters, borne by sandwich men. Of course the large beautiful New Town Hall, opposite the High-street Station, was crowded, and the shilling for reserved seats and the collection paid expenses. A good general keeps a sharp outlook on his military chest and commissariat.

I doubt, however, whether Mrs. General Booth can draw as large a crowd as Major Pierson, who has been the medium of miracles of healing in the Potteries and later at Sheffield—where, we are told in many newspapers, the blind were restored to sight, the deaf heard, and lepers, if any came, with faith enough, were cleansed. It is clear enough that there has been much excitement—but the reporters are not quite agreed as to the miracles of healing. And if the “mesmeric” power of a dozen fervent Salvationists were anywhere gathered, ordered, and directed by a “healing medium” there is no doubt that miracles would be produced. The cures wrought in Australia some time ago by a Spiritualist were very remarkable. We had some instances in England, through Dr. Newton. There seems to be no doubt that in the fervour and concentration of united prayer at the Bethshans of Islington and Liverpool, many have been cured.

It has long been suspected by many, and known to some that successful revivalists were men and women who, perhaps unconsciously, exercised a strong mesmeric power—that converts are as really “psychologised” as the mesmerised performers of Madame Card. Of late this fact is being freely discussed in the American newspapers, and “revivalism” and its machinery and *modus operandi* are likely, like Spiritualism, to be submitted to scientific investigation.

For example, the Chicago *Herald* has an article on the mesmeric power of a Mrs. Woodworth—a transatlantic Mrs. General Booth, who is “conducting the great revival at Hartford City, Indiana.” “Her subjects,” it is said, “are not always paralysed at sight, but frequently go away and find themselves prostrated afterward. The wickedest man in the town entered the meeting the other night for the purpose of breaking it up. As he strode up the aisle cursing in a loud voice, the revivalist fixed her eyes on him, and he lost the power of speech for the rest of the evening. One young woman went to an evening service and returned home in a normal condition. The next morning she was found sitting up in bed, cold and stiff, with wide staring eyes and speechless. It took three hours of hard work to bring her out of her trance.”

That is pretty fair, but the case of Miss Viola Mc Dermot is even more interesting. She goes off into trances every time she attends the revival, and in spirit visits the eternal world. “I know as well as anybody,” she says, “when the trances are coming. My hands get cold and I can feel my arms stiffening. My eyes get hard and the inside of the church-room gets smaller. The darkness begins at the outer edges of the room and comes toward me from all sides. Finally the sight is gone and I am in two worlds. I can hear everything that is said here, and there I can see the great white throne.” There are many other people in that vicinity similarly affected.

Everyone who has read Professor Gregory's work on Mesmerism, or paid any reasonable attention to psychological phenomena can see how perfectly analogous are the operations of Moody and Sankey, the Salvation Army, the Bethshans, and the rude, but effectively pious, mesmerism of our missions and revivals, to the curious and amusing exhibitions of Madame Card and the so-called Electro-Biologists—with this difference—Madame Card selects her subjects, and at the end of her experiments, takes off the spell, and leaves them as sane as usual. The revivalists let the spell remain to wear off gradually. Sometimes it lasts a long time—perhaps a lifetime.

“KARMA,” a novel, by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, author of “The Occult World” and “Esoteric Buddhism,” has just been published. We understand the story is concerned with incidents of an “occult” character.

Mrs. RICHMOND.—It has been arranged, we are informed, that Mrs. Richmond will resume the series of discourses given by her last year in Kensington Town Hall (opposite Metropolitan and District Station, High-street) on Sunday evenings, the 17th, 24th, 31st May, and the 7th, 14th June, at seven p.m.

We understand that Mr. Hargrave Jennings, author of “The Rosicrucians,” “One of the Thirty,” “Live Lights and Dead Lights,” and other works, has made application for entry to Llanthony Monastery, where he proposes to end his days in solitude, and live according to the rule of St. Benedict. He will be received with due ceremony after Father Ignatius' London mission.

“THERE ARE MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH, HORATIO, THAN ARE DREAMT OF IN YOUR PHILOSOPHY.”

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CONVERSAZIONE OF THE SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, HELD APRIL 24TH, 1885, IN THE BANQUETING HALL OF ST. JAMES'S HALL, REGENT-STREET, LONDON,

BY T. P. BARKAS, F.G.S.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

By the kind invitation of your Executive, I appear before you as a provincial stranger for the purpose of occupying forty-five minutes of your time, with a view to placing before you, in the concise possible manner, some of my psychological experiences, which come strictly under the classification of facts that are more strange than “are dreamt of” in the philosophy of the majority of mankind.

The phenomena of Modern Spiritualism cover a very large field, extending from table-tipping to the complete materialisation of entire human forms, and from the most childish and commonplace twaddle to the most profound scientific and philosophical disquisitions.

The interpretations of those phenomena widely differ, extending from alleged trick, on the one hand, to the direct and conscious agency of intelligent beings who have passed from this life to another sphere of existence on the other.

The holders of the trick theory are those who for the most part have not fully investigated the phenomena, and who are abnormally prejudiced against the reception of new occult facts; the advocates of *ab-extrâ* spirit agency theory being those who have devoted much time and care to the critical examination of the phenomena.

As a stranger among you, I may state, prior to quoting facts which appear clearly to prove independent spirit agency, that I have carefully investigated these phenomena for upwards of thirty years, that I am not conscious of being in the least degree mediumistic, and that I have examined the manifestations as a cool and unimpulsive outside observer, being quite indifferent as to the conclusions arrived at, so long as those conclusions commended themselves to me as genuine.

I propose this evening to place on one side all merely physical phenomena, the genuineness of which I have ascertained, and to explain some of the more striking psychological facts that have come under my observation.

I may state *en passant* that the facts which took place at some of the sésances to which I am about to refer have been published in consecutive order in the pages of “LIGHT,” a valuable journal issued weekly at a very moderate price.

The records of the first and second sésances refer to music and acoustics, the third sésance to the conditions of the future life, and the fourth and fifth sésances embrace replies to hypercritical questions on abstruse musical laws. These questions and answers published in “LIGHT” probably have been, or, at least, may be, read by all who are present. I shall not, therefore, quote them at length, but after describing the mode in which the sésances were conducted, and the answers obtained, I shall give several typical questions and answers from the records of the subsequent sésances attended by the same lady medium.

The medium was twenty-six years of age. She attended as a child a Wesleyan day-school; her tuition was much interfered with by ill-health; she had a few months' instruction when she was about fifteen years of age. She was the wife of an outdoor foreman over riverside labourers, with the weekly wage of an ordinary workman. She and her husband lived in a small three-roomed house, and she did all the cooking, cleaning, and work of the house herself. She had no taste for scientific studies; never attended a scientific lecture, nor read a scientific book, and was never known to converse on scientific subjects. Her reading consisted, for the most part, of novels, travels, and tales; and her education was, in a word, of a very ordinary kind. Her manners were quiet and refined for her station, and her general conversational power tolerably good, although she spoke little.

Her knowledge of science was, so far as I could ascertain, absolutely blank. She did not receive any remuneration for her mediumistic services, but gave them quite gratuitously, and the only expense incurred was in the preparation of the MS. books, in which the questions and answers were written; these I purchased and now keep.

She was, during the sésances, not in a trance, or mesmeric sleep, but was, to all appearance, in her normal condition, and

took part in the general conversation as did any one at the table.

The only abnormal sensation she had was that of her hand being invisibly directed, and she had not any consciousness of what was being written. When I read the answers audibly she did not understand the meanings of many of the words, nor did she, or the great majority of those present, understand the drift and meaning of many of the replies.

The arrangements for the séances were of the most simple kind. The number present at each séance varied from six to ten persons. We sat round a plain deal table, the top of which was about four feet by two feet. MS. books and pencils were placed on the table. I generally sat next to the medium and wrote the questions in the MS. books as they were being asked, and turned the book to the medium, who instantly wrote the replies to the questions. As each answer was written I read it aloud, so that all present saw and heard the questions and answers written and read. The hand of the medium unquestionably replied to each question asked, and the problem for solution is, did the medium of her own knowledge write the replies, or, as was persistently alleged, was her hand controlled and guided by some invisible intelligence, or intelligences, who possessed the scientific knowledge that was communicated. The theory of thought-reading is ruled out of court by the fact that the answers to the questions were in many, probably the majority of cases, beyond the knowledge of all those present.

To arrive at satisfactory conclusions in an occult and unique case of this kind, all care should be exercised. It may be affirmed that the medium and I conspired to deceive the other sitters.

My reply to that is, that such a theory is at least morally improbable; second, that several of the questions were unknown to myself, and were asked by others present, so that if the theory of deception is to be introduced they also must have been confederates. I think, therefore, we may conclude that the confederacy theory is untenable, and we are thrown back upon the skill of the medium or on the theory that her hand was controlled by invisible intelligences.

As no woman in England, nor man either, could answer the questions so well under similar conditions, it seems to be not merely improbable, but impossible that she replied to them from her own stores of knowledge, and we are therefore driven to the conclusion that invisible beings through her hand wrote the replies. If any persons anywhere doubt the accuracy of these statements, I shall be glad to test them with the unpublished questions.

I propose now to give typical questions from the séances with the answers received. They cover a very large field of inquiry, embracing music, acoustics, musical instruments, the conditions of the future life, musical composers and their works, heat, light, optics, biology, botany, anatomy, physiology, the brain, the eye, the ear, the circulation of the blood, the nervous system, chemistry, metaphysics, electricity, magnetism, history, clairvoyance, mesmerism, and other subjects.

It is professed that the replies were written by, or at the dictation of, a departed German student, an American student and Federal soldier, a Spanish child, a German lady, an English physician, a doctor of the Alexandrian School, an English gentleman, and others. The writing and composition varied according to the idiosyncrasies of the various writers. I quote verbatim from the questions and replies, and select typical answers from various departments of inquiry.

[Mr. Barkas then proceeded to give selections from the questions and answers somewhat resembling those which have already appeared in "LIGHT" from February 21st to April 25th. The subjects to which the questions referred comprised Light, Heat, Electricity, Magnetism, Galvanism, Pneumatics, Acoustics, Physiology, Anatomy. At other séances the subjects lengthily discussed were the distribution and functions of the Encephalic Nerves, Electricity, Mediumship, Circulation of the Blood, Man spiritually, Automata, Functions of the Brain, Heat, Natural Philosophy of the Ancients, ditto of the Middle Ages, John Harrison's Criticism of Humnour Stafford's Essay on Heat, Vegetable Life, Philosophy of Consciousness, the Modus Operandi of Spiritual Phenomena, Conditions of the Future Life, Metaphysics, Atoms, Ozone, and a long and philosophical essay on Chemistry, concluded the series of thirty-eight séances with this medium.]

I have now endeavoured to place before you some of the more salient features of this investigation.

You will agree with me that a large and somewhat abstruse field was covered, and that the majority of the replies could not be given by any woman of ordinary education. There are some replies that might have been given by any one of average intelligence, but, on the other hand, there are many that could not normally have been given except by some one who had had the advantage of a severe scientific training, and the area of inquiry is so extensive that it is very probable the whole of the questions could not have been answered so well under similar conditions by any living man or woman.

You will have observed that I have not given the name of any one who attended the séances; that is not because I do not possess them, for they are recorded in full in the original MS. records of the séances. The prejudices, however, against following investigations of this kind are so great, that I prefer bearing the entire responsibility myself, rather than drag the names of quiet, retiring persons into the public arena.

If, however, any accredited society, say the Royal Society or the Society for Psychical Research, please to appoint a committee for investigation, I shall be glad to give them the names and addresses of all who were present at the séances, and afford them every facility for the fullest and most searching inquiry. The only exception is the name of the professor of music, whose name I would not give without his direct consent.

Permit me to say briefly, in conclusion, that I fail to see that any explanation of these phenomena will cover the entire ground, other than that which is claimed by the alleged producers of them, viz., that the replies were given by persons in the spiritual world, who had for the most part acquired the scientific knowledge displayed in the replies during their residence on earth. That position, I believe, is the only one logically defensible.

ALLAN KARDEC'S ANNIVERSARY.—Many Spiritists met March 29th, convened by the Society founded by him, at the tomb of Allan Kardec, bringing flowers, crowns, &c. Communications were read from all countries, and orations were delivered. They are reported in full in the *Revue Spirite*. A separate celebration was organised by the Union Spirite for the 31st, reported in *Le Spiritisme*, and was attended by about 300 members of the thirty societies forming the Union. At this, communications from the provinces were read, and orations were delivered by well-known disciples. Whatever difference, unknown to us, there may be between the Société and the Union, it did not appear on this occasion: all were evidently of one mind in paying the highest respect to the memory of Allan Kardec, and in evincing zeal in the cause with which his name is identified.

THE "GHOSTS" of the past were regarded as emerging in some miraculous way from some awful realm; but the apparitions manifesting themselves in the present day are recognised as coming, in accordance with law, from the contiguous spiritual realm. Spiritualism has banished ghosts, hobgoblins, &c., and has introduced us to the presence of people from the other world, who appear as natural and pleasant to us as we in this world do to each other. The investigations of Spiritualism bring within the range of their studies mesmerism, magnetic healing, clairvoyance, mind-reading, &c., and in their studies they are often undeniably aided by the intelligence of spirits—the people from the other world. Certain sectarists go on charging us with diabolism, and certain scientists with dabbling in a survival of old superstitions. We repudiate both charges, as coming from the platforms of bigotry and ignorance. We hold, on the contrary, that Spiritualism in its higher aspects marks clearly the line between miraculous superstition and the study of natural psychical phenomena and their laws.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THE EDITOR OF *Facts* quotes from *Spirit Voices* the report of a séance at Boston, Mrs. Bliss, the medium, at which were invited Spiritualists only. Many materialised spirits were recognised. The most striking manifestations were by 1. Blueflower, a bright talkative young spirit; 2. Lucille Weston, dressed in splendid white, who sang exquisitely; 3. Captain Hedges, tall and handsome, in uniform; 4. A German Doctor, short, slender, energetic, with head high and broad, long beard and whiskers; 5. Harry Montague, a late dramatic artist; 6. Ada Isaacs Menken; 7. The beautiful Helen Western with her little daughter; 8. Billy, a witty young spirit, of great strength; 9. Mrs. McCarty, a simple quaint old lady; 10. The wife of Mr. Smith, the organ manufacturer, who was called to her at the cabinet, and who walked with her arm-in-arm before the circle; and 11. Sister Josephine, who sang "Ave Maria" with exquisite taste and feeling. The editor of *Facts* says that he has attended many of Mrs. Bliss's séances, has met with some of the spirits here named, and has listened with delight to their singing.

PHENOMENA CALLED "SPIRITUAL" ILLUSTRATED BY CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHY.* VIII.

By J. G. KEULEMANS.

(Continued from page 200.)

We have still to weigh the somewhat vague assertions intended to reconcile the apparent incompleteness of evidence, in such cases where the medium has been discovered appalled in the "flowing garments." It is stated that the invisible spirit first produces the drapery, then dresses the medium, and, this finished, takes possession, of or animates, his body. Some prefer the theory that the medium does the work under control and automatically. If we accept either view, the suspicious-looking incident of mediums being discovered in the act of arraying themselves is explained, for it would seem that in such cases the real actor is the spirit, which, on account of its ethereal nature, is invisible, and causes the blame to fall upon the medium. However, this generally admitted explanation of the somewhat awkward position in which mediums have at times been found, requires for its acceptance more substantial evidence than has as yet been forthcoming. As it stands at present it seems a mere prolegomena intended to exonerate the impostor, and it fails to enlighten the inquirer why the drapery is arranged over the medium's usual attire; for this would imply that the spirit acting as "costumier" is either unable to judge of the awful incongruity of the circumstance, or, premeditatedly conceals it, which, in the latter case, would be equivalent to fraud. Nor can the subterfuge of "evil influences," causing the medium to masquerade before the circle, be expected to find many adherents amongst Spiritualists, since this would simply be a confession of invoking and conniving at intrigues, not on the part of the medium himself, but on that of corrupted denizens from the outer world. It may be perfectly true that but too often low or undeveloped spirits influence the medium; but when they play tricks, cheat, and, out of desire to commit mischief, actually bring discredit upon an otherwise estimable cause, it will be simply doing an act of justice to both medium and investigator to abolish the conditions under which ill-natured spirits can manifest at all. If transformations should take place whilst the medium is visible, or in the circle, hands being joined, they must be welcome, and their value may be judged and appreciated. Unfortunately, under test conditions, they either never occur or have been entirely overlooked. As to such cases of supposed or professed transformations where no perceptible alteration in the medium's features is discoverable, and where the latter appears in "spirit"-costume, there is no alternative but to pronounce it a fraud perpetrated by either the would-be medium or, what is more likely, the "spirit" present. In all cases of transformation, the real value of this kind of phenomena can only be established by experiment and by rigidly excluding the cabinet and all other arrangements which would make deception possible. However, although it is not my wish to hint at discrepancies, I consider it the duty of every Spiritualist to record the results derived from his personal investigations, no matter whether these are in harmony, or in direct contradiction, with previously-accepted doctrines. The "facts" themselves remain, and may serve as material for others to deal with. What is still to be settled is, how far all the "facts" are spiritual.

Now in the case of "spirit"-drapery we are undoubtedly dealing with a real spiritual fact, for its gradual formation and its sudden disappearance can be witnessed. Although it must be earthly in its origin, it is nevertheless liable to changes and modifications which no earthly being could possibly effect; hence it must in some respects possess a characteristic which is neither strictly earthly nor strictly spiritual. The fact that by the superior power of "spirits" it can be made to assume different degrees of solidity would

suffice to indicate the strange peculiarity of its substance, because the same spirits could not cause a similar change in ordinary drapery, viz., such of which they do not possess the spiritual counterpart. There are, besides, some features connected with this substance which are so mysterious as to baffle all attempts at further research. For instance, it has been observed that a female spirit appeared in a duplication of the male psychic's wearing apparel, the latter differing only by its more subtle texture. Colonel Olcott mentions a case where the medium wore a black merino dress, and a hole cut from the "spirit's" drapery made a corresponding deficiency in the dress of the former. I have witnessed cases which induce me to believe that the medium's double can be projected and solidified, and that a similar occurrence presented itself in Colonel Olcott's case. But of this later on. Another strange fact may be observed in such cases when a form is seen to dematerialise. It might be supposed that whereas it has been seen to appear by accretion or agglomeration, it would have to disappear by a conversion of the process, i.e., by gradual attenuation. So it does, in cases where its perfect solidity has not been established, and it is not unlikely that in the majority of cases, when the manifestations occur in total darkness, the perfectly solid vanishes also gradually. Yet in those cases where the form dematerialises in full view, the drapery, instead of losing in substantiality, diminishes in quantity. It does not accumulate in a heap, or fall in pleats, but appears to sink away together with the form. I have noticed this, perhaps, as many as fifty times and within two feet distance from my eyes.

(To be continued.)

MR. GOWLAND, THE "EXPOSER," AT BARROW-IN-FURNESS.

On Thursday evening week Mr. T. W. Gowland, of Ulverston, gave his now pretty generally ridiculed exposition of slate-writing in the Temperance Hall, Barrow-in-Furness. The members of the Barrow Spiritualists' Association mustered in force, and Mr. Speed, of the *Ulverston Mirror*, Mr. T. S. Sykes, clerk to the Ulverston Board of Guardians, and Mr. James Hamer, manager for the principal mining company in Furness, were also present. The bills described the affair as "Common Sense v. Spiritualism. Eglinton and Slade Exposed," and also invited discussion, but Mr. Gowland, knowing that a vigorous opposition was intended, used every stratagem to prevent there being a chance of reply. He made his appearance about half-an-hour late, although he had been in the town more than an hour before the time for commencing, and then endeavoured to spin out his proceedings so that his opponents, who had to return home by a train leaving at ten o'clock, would not have time to speak. But this attempt was frustrated by their determined efforts, and they then proceeded to show in the most conclusive manner that Mr. Gowland's séance was a mere farcical representation of those held by Mr. Eglinton. Mr. Gowland, in replying, challenged Mr. Eglinton to come back to the district and reproduce his manifestations in his (Mr. Gowland's) presence. Mr. Hamer thereupon, amidst loud applause, challenged Mr. Gowland to produce a single manifestation of Mr. Eglinton's under the same conditions, offering to stake £5 on the result. We may mention that the chairman, Mr. T. Wood, a prominent Secularist, expressed his belief in the existence of certain occult, though not spiritual, forces, not yet cognised by science, and cited, in proof of this assertion, his public experience with Mr. Alexander Scott, the thought-reader, who had informed him the number of a bank note enclosed in a sealed envelope, though the number was known to none but himself (Mr. Wood). The chairman also admitted that Spiritualism was growing. What the opinion was of Mr. Gowland's "exposure" may be estimated from the following quotation from the report in the *Barrow News*: "One gentleman said they had certainly seen an exposure, not of Mr. Eglinton's performance, but of Mr. Gowland's ignorance, a sentiment which the audience, from their loud plaudits, evidently concurred with." This appeared, notwithstanding a visit made by Mr. Gowland to the office of this paper the day after his performance, with a view to obtain a more favourable report than he apprehended would be given. He boasts that the reporter having written the sentence, "Several gentlemen gave conclusive evidence in favour of Mr. Eglinton's slate-writing," he (Mr. Gowland) induced the editor to strike out the word "conclusive." We might mention that Mr. Gowland's method of slate-writing, simple and anything but clever though it is, is not even his own idea, but that of a Mr. Haines, a gentleman of some standing in Ulverston, who imparted it to him.

"LIGHT" WANTED.—To complete our binding files we require a few copies of No. 217 (February 28th, 1885). We shall be obliged to any of our readers having copies of this issue to spare if they will forward them to us.

* A few sets of these chromo drawings still remain, and may be obtained of the Manager of the Psychological Press, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C., price 2s. 6d. the set, packed on roller for safe transmission by parcel post.—SEE ADVT.

INTELLIGENCE.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—Notwithstanding the fact that the conversazione of the Alliance and a meeting of the S.P.R. had been fixed for the same evening, there was no appreciable falling off in the attendance at the former on Friday, April 24th, when a large audience assembled in St. James's Hall, to hear Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., of Newcastle-on-Tyne. A report of his address will be found in another page, and when he finished speaking the somewhat lively questioning to which he was subjected, showed how keen was the interest taken in his statements. We hope to see Mr. Barkas amongst us again very shortly.

THE HERMETIC SOCIETY held its annual meeting on the 27th inst., on which occasion a paper by the president, Dr. Anna Kingsford, was read and discussed. The Society will hold weekly meetings throughout the ensuing session, at the rooms of the Royal Asiatic Society, 22, Albemarle-street, W. Papers have been promised by Major Arthur Lillie, the Hon. Roden Noel, Mr. C. C. Massey, Mr. Edward Maitland, and others. The Society will gladly issue invitations to visitors on application to Mr. Edward Maitland, Oxford and Cambridge Club, Pall Mall, S.W., who will furnish inquirers with particulars as to dates of meeting, and subjects of papers, and terms of Fellowship.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—A general meeting of the Society for Psychical Research was held on the evening of the 24th, at the Rooms of the Society for British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, and was attended by over 300 members and friends. Professor Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., the president of the Society, occupied the chair. In his opening remarks he briefly sketched the rise and progress of the Society. He mentioned the main features of the work in which it had been engaged, and spoke of the amount of evidence placed before its own members, a large portion of which had been published in the Proceedings. He paid a high tribute to the value of the services which the late president, Professor Sidgwick, had rendered to the Society, in a variety of ways. Mrs. Sidgwick read the concluding portion of her paper "On the Evidence, collected by the Society, for Phantasms of the Dead." It is intended to include the paper in full in the forthcoming Part of the Proceedings. At its conclusion, discussion was invited, in which Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Mr. Bidder, Q.C., the president, and others took part. Owing to the lateness of the hour, it was agreed to defer the second paper by Messrs. E. Gurney and F. W. H. Myers, on "Some Higher Aspects of Mesmerism," to the next meeting.

WALWORTH ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS (Lamb's School-room, 43, Manor-place, Walworth).—On Sunday evening last Mr. Robson, of Peckham, was present, and his instructors delivered through him an address on "Life in the Summer Land." The address was one of great importance, illustrating as it did the condition and development of a spirit in the higher spheres of existence. After the address a number of questions were asked, to which answers of a conclusive character were given. Mr. Butcher, also of Peckham, was present, and, at the wish of the controls of Mr. Robson, spoke in his normal condition for a few minutes. Mr. Robson once more went under spirit control, and concluded the meeting by giving a short impromptu poem on "Mediumship."—On Sunday next Mr. A. Savage will be the speaker, and we hope all who have not heard him will come and listen to him.—*Cor.*

GLASGOW.—On Sunday, April 26th, the guides of Mr. E. W. Wallis spoke at both forenoon and evening meetings. At the close of the usual address in the forenoon the control changed, and "Lighthouse," after delivering an impromptu rhyme strung upon words promiscuously suggested by the audience, gave a psychometric delineation of an elderly gentleman, a stranger, which turned out to be very true and successful. Besides the salient characteristics of this person being described to the satisfaction of a friend (Dr. Mack) who accompanied him, "Lighthouse" was able to "sense" his condition so as to indicate the influence upon the gentleman's past life of certain occurrences at, or about, certain times, to his satisfaction. It was admitted that such experiences had been undergone and that such had been their effect upon his life. The clairvoyant description of a spirit friend followed, which was also satisfactory to the same person.—The evening's discourse was on "Sacred Scriptures: Their Nature and Use." Its deliverance was marked by exceptional vigour, and the treatment of the subject was full and complete.—On Monday evening, May 4th, at eight o'clock, a meeting will be held in the Hall to make arrangements for the conduct of a mutual improvement branch of the Society, and if possible to arrange a syllabus of subjects for discussion. The usual Tuesday evening séance will not be interfered with.—*ST. MUNGO.*

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

S. P. ATKINSON.—Proof shall be sent to you.

COLONEL BUNDY.—Cuttings received. Thanks.

R. KLENCK.—P.O.O. received and dealt with as desired.

OSWALD MURRAY.—We are pleased to make the announcement you wish.

R. D.—Your notice came too late. Will you send us copies of any reports, or have one made for next week's "LIGHT"?

A. H. SYKES.—Too late for this issue. Your communication shall have attention in due course.

J. VEITCH.—"Psychic Facts" will partly supply what you want. It is supplied by the Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C. We note that you safely received the parcel of "LIGHT" for free distribution.

G. F. PARSONS.—The reason you did not receive the plates is that you did not conform to the terms of the thrice repeated announcement. They can only be obtained now on payment. See advt.

E. ADAMS.—We had seen Mr. Maskelyne's article. Thanks, however, for the paper. We had hoped from his letter, which recently appeared in these columns, that he had become a little less biased, but these slanders prove we were mistaken. Even had we time to write to your local papers as you suggest, we fear there would be little chance of the letter being inserted. The posters would do good, no doubt, and would be effective. Apply acent these to the secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C.

F. J. THEOBALD.—Your letter has been forwarded. Subjects such as that dealt with in "Sympneumata" may not suit all readers of "LIGHT," but you must remember that we have to cater, more or less, for students of every phase of psychological research. Bearing this in mind, we do not think you will find undue prominence given to any particular line of thought; and while we are Spiritualists, and write primarily for such, yet, as we cannot claim the possession of absolute truth, we are pleased to afford a channel for the views of those who differ from ourselves. The comparative study of occult phenomena is much needed, and our correspondent may, we think, learn something from the Society for Psychical Research on the one hand, from the Theosophical Society on the other, or even from Laurence Oliphant's new Syrian "revelation."

A. L.—Probably personal feeling is at the bottom of the matter. With the exception of one book, no work published by the Psychological Press has or could, under the circumstances, have produced a balance on the profit side. Even in the case of the book which forms the exception to the rule the author has given far more away than he has received. Why trouble, however? It is impossible to please everybody, and although such misrepresentations, especially when wilful, may mislead some who do not give thought to the matter, yet the best plan is to leave them severely alone. Please do not write again on this matter. If pursued, it is apt to get personal, and from the first we have steadily refused to allow personalities to creep into "LIGHT." All we do is regulated by public necessity and expediency, and without reference to our private likes and dislikes, of which, being human, we are, unfortunately, not altogether free.

J. J. ROGERS.—With reference to the paragraph about Spiritualism and the Royal Family, and the alleged contradiction by the private secretary of the Queen, the following cutting from the *Pall Mall Gazette* will, we think, throw a little light on the matter:—

"Mr. J. S. Farmer, the editor of 'LIGHT,' sends us the following communication:—In your issue of Wednesday, the 25th inst., you copied from the *Adelaide Evening Journal* a letter, purporting to have been written by Sir Henry Ponsonby, her Majesty's private secretary, asserting that 'it is not true that the members of the Royal Family are believers in Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism;' and also a letter from the Hon. Alexander Yorke, who was equerry to the late Duke of Albany, stating that the notorious Braham-lock double slate used by Mr. Eglinton was not given to him by his Royal Highness. As to both these letters, knowing what I do, I can only describe them as exceedingly diplomatic. Will Sir Henry Ponsonby, leaving out the qualification of 'Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism;' whatever that may be—plainly assert that none of the members of the Royal Family have ever attended spiritualistic séances, or that they have not arrived at a belief in the possibility of communication with the unseen world? And will the Hon. Alexander Yorke kindly inform your readers who it really was who presented the Braham-lock slate to Mr. Eglinton? I happen to be aware that he (Mr. Yorke) knows, and it would be interesting if he would be ingenuous enough to state the fact. He could do so without any breach of confidence."

These questions have never been answered, although care was taken to send copies of the paper to those concerned. Further, we learn from the last *Harbinger of Light*, that the original statement which drew forth Sir Henry Ponsonby's statement, says nothing about Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism, in fact does not mention his name, so that the denial, if genuine, looks very like an evasion of the question. Our readers must draw their own conclusions.

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 some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

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

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

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

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

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

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butlerof, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mape, 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 Guldenstübke, &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 medianistic 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; Butlerof, 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.

WHAT CONJURERS SAY ABOUT PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

Mediums, who are the instruments of an external agency, have, more than once, been confronted with conjurers who deceive by sleight of hand; and in the same manner that no man of science who has thoroughly and fairly investigated the phenomena has failed to become convinced of their reality, so no conjurer who has been confronted with the same facts has been able to explain their occurrence by prestidigitation. Houdin, Jacobs, Bellachini, Hermann, Kellar, and others have already confessed their powerlessness to produce under the same conditions what occurs without human intervention in the presence of a medium.

Testimony of Robert Houdin.

The Marquis Endes de Mirville published during the lifetime of Houdin two letters from the latter, in his "Mémoire adressé à MM. les membres de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, sur un grand nombre de phénomènes merveilleux intéressant également la Religion, la Science, et les hommes du Monde," in which the conjurer confesses his inability to explain the phenomena he witnessed in the presence of Alexis, the clairvoyant. A circumstantial account is given of M. de Mirville's visit to Houdin for the purpose of engaging him in this investigation, of the latter's confidence in his own ability to detect the trick, and of what took place at the séance, the conditions of which were entirely under Houdin's control. This account extends over twelve pages, and its accuracy is confirmed by Houdin in the first of the documents now translated:—

"Although very far from accepting the eulogies which M. — is good enough to bestow upon me, and especially insisting that I am not at all committed to opinions, either in favour of magnetism or against it, I can, nevertheless, not refrain from declaring that the facts above reported are entirely correct (*sont de la plus complète exactitude*), and that, the more I reflect upon them, the more impossible I find it to rank them among those which belong to my art and profession.

"ROBERT HOUDIN.

"4th May, 1847."

A fortnight later, M. de Mirville received another letter, in which the following, referring to another séance, occurs:—

"I have, therefore, returned from this séance as astonished as it is possible to be, and persuaded that it is utterly impossible that chance or skill could ever produce effects so wonderful! (*tout à fait impossible que le hasard ou l'adresse puisse jamais produire des effets aussi merveilleux*).—I am, Monsieur, &c.,

"(Signed), ROBERT HOUDIN.

"May 16th, 1847."

Testimony of Harry Kellar.

Harry Kellar, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, investigated the slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, at Calcutta, in January, 1882, and on the 25th of that month he addressed a letter to the editor of the *Indian Daily News*, in which he said:—

"In your issue of the 13th January I stated that I should be glad of an opportunity of participating in a séance with a view of giving an unbiassed opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional prestidigitator, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid.

"I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Eglinton, the spiritualistic medium now in Calcutta, and of his host, Mr. J. Meugens, for affording me the opportunity I craved.

"It is needless to say I went as a sceptic, but I must own that I have come away utterly unable to explain, by any natural means, the phenomena that I witnessed on Tuesday evening. I will give a brief description of what took place."

After describing several successful experiments, Mr. Kellar proceeds:—

"In respect to the above manifestations, I can only say that I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed anyone who described such manifestations under similar circumstances. I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but

I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand."

On the 30th of the same month Mr. Kellar addressed another letter to the *Indian Daily News*, reporting some experiences of another kind with Mr. Eglinton, and regarding which he said:—

"In conclusion, let me state that after a most stringent trial and strict scrutiny of these wonderful experiences I can arrive at no other conclusion than that there was no trace of trickery in any form, nor was there in the room any mechanism or machinery by which could be produced the phenomena which had taken place. The ordinary mode by which Maskelyne and other conjurers imitate levitation or the floating test could not possibly be done in the room in which we were assembled."

The Testimony of Professor Jacobs.

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:—

"Spite of the assertions, more or less trustworthy, of the French and English journalists, and spite of the foolish jealousies of ignorant conjurers, I feel it my duty to show up the bad faith of one party and the chicanery of the other. All that has been said or done adverse to these American mediums is absolutely untrustworthy. If we would rightly judge of a thing we must understand it, and neither the journalists nor the conjurers possessed the most elementary knowledge of the science that governs these phenomena. 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. If (as I have every reason to hope) the psychical studies, to which I am applying myself at this time, succeed, I shall be able to establish clearly, and that by public demonstration, the immense line of demarcation which separates mediumistic phenomena from conjuring proper, and then equivocation will be no longer possible, and persons will have to yield to evidence, or deny through predetermination to deny

"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.' I authorise you, dear sir, to insert this letter in your next number, if agreeable to you," &c., &c.

Testimony of Samuel Bellachini.

Samuel Bellachini, Court Conjurer at Berlin, made the following declaration in December, 1877:—

"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; Butlerof, 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."