

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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ARE THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM IN HARMONY WITH SCIENCE?

BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, F.R.S.

(From the *Boston Sunday Herald*.)

"Life is the elaboration of soul through the varied transformations of matter."—*Spiritual Evolution*.

It is a common, but I believe a mistaken, notion, that the conclusions of science are antagonistic to the alleged phenomena of modern Spiritualism. The majority of our teachers and students of science are, no doubt, antagonistic, but their opinions and prejudices are not science. Every discoverer who has promulgated new and startling truths, even in the domain of physics, has been denounced or ignored by those who represented the science of the day, as witness the long line of great teachers from Galileo in the dark ages to Boucher de Perthes in our own times. But the opponents of Spiritualism have the additional advantage of being able to brand the new belief as a degrading superstition, and to accuse those who accept its facts and its teachings of being the victims of delusion or imposture—of being, in fact, either half-insane enthusiasts or credulous fools. Such denunciations, however, affect us little. The fact that Spiritualism has firmly established itself in our sceptical and materialistic age, that it has continuously grown and developed for nearly forty years, that by mere weight of evidence, and in spite of the most powerful prepossessions, it has compelled recognition by an ever increasing body of men in all classes of society, and has gained adherents in the highest ranks of science and philosophy, and, finally, that despite abuse and misrepresentation, the folly of enthusiasts and the knavery of impostors, it has rarely failed to convince those who have made a thorough and painstaking investigation, and has never lost a convert thus made—all this affords a conclusive answer to the objections so commonly urged against it. Let us, then, simply ignore the scorn and incredulity of those who really know nothing of the matter, and consider, briefly, what are the actual relations of science and Spiritualism, and to what extent the latter supplements and illumines the former.

Science may be defined as knowledge of the universe in which we live—full and systematised knowledge leading to the discovery of laws and the comprehension of causes. The true student of science neglects nothing and despises nothing that may widen and deepen his knowledge of nature, and if he is wise as well as learned he will hesitate

before he applies the term "impossible" to any facts which are widely believed and have been repeatedly observed by men as intelligent and honest as himself. Now, modern Spiritualism rests solely on the observation and comparison of facts in a domain of nature which has been hitherto little explored, and it is a contradiction in terms to say that such an investigation is opposed to science. Equally absurd is the allegation that some of the phenomena of Spiritualism "contradict the laws of nature," since there is no law of nature yet known to us but may be apparently contravened by the action of more recondite laws or forces. Spiritualists observe facts and record experiments, and then construct hypotheses which will best explain and co-ordinate the facts, and in so doing they are pursuing a truly scientific course. They have now collected an enormous body of observations tested and verified in every possible way, and they have determined many of the conditions necessary for the production of the phenomena. They have also arrived at certain general conclusions as to the causes of these phenomena, and they simply refuse to recognise the competence of those who have no acquaintance whatever with the facts to determine the value or correctness of those conclusions.

We who have satisfied ourselves of the reality of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism in all their wide-reaching extent and endless variety are enabled to look upon the records of the past with new interest and fuller appreciation. It is surely something to be relieved from the necessity of classing Socrates and St. Augustine, Luther and Swedenborg, as the credulous victims of delusion or imposture. The so-called miracles and supernatural events which pervade the sacred books and historical records of all nations find their place among natural phenomena and need no longer be laboriously explained away. The witchcraft mania of Europe and America affords the materials for an important study, since we are now able to detect the basis of fact on which it rested, and to separate from it the Satanic interpretation which invested it with horror and appeared to justify the cruel punishments by which it was attempted to be suppressed. Local folk-lore and superstitions acquire a living interest, since they are often based on phenomena which we can reproduce under proper conditions, and the same may be said of much of the sorcery and magic of the Middle Ages. In these and many other ways history and anthropology are illuminated by Spiritualism.

To the teacher of religion it is of vital importance, since it enables him to meet the sceptic on his own ground, to adduce facts and evidence for the faith that he professes, and to avoid that attitude of apology and doubt which renders him altogether helpless against the vigorous assaults of Agnosticism and materialistic science. Theology, when vivified and strengthened by Spiritualism, may regain some of the influence and power of its earlier years.

Science will equally benefit, since it will have opened to it a new domain of surpassing interest. Just as there is behind the visible world of nature an "unseen universe" of forces, the study of which continually opens up fresh worlds of knowledge often intimately connected with the true comprehension of the most familiar phenomena of nature, so the world of mind will be illuminated by the new facts and principles which the study of Spiritualism makes known to us. Modern science utterly fails to realise the

nature of mind or to account for its presence in the universe, except by the mere verbal and unthinkable dogma that it is "the product of organisation." Spiritualism, on the other hand, recognises in mind the cause of organisation, and, perhaps, even of matter itself, and it has added greatly to our knowledge of man's nature by demonstrating the existence of individual minds indistinguishable from those of human beings yet separate from any human body. It has made us acquainted with forms of matter of which materialistic science has no cognisance, and with an ethereal chemistry whose transformations are far more marvellous than any of those with which science deals. It thus gives us proof that there are possibilities of organised existence beyond those of the material world, and in doing so removes the greatest stumbling-block in the way of belief in a future state of existence—the possibility so often felt by the student of material science of separating the conscious mind from its partnership with the brain and nervous system.

On the spiritual theory man consists essentially of a spiritual nature and mind intimately associated with a spiritual body or soul, both of which are developed in and by means of a material organism. Thus the whole *raison d'être* of the material universe—with all its marvellous changes and adaptations, the infinite complexity of matter and of the ethereal forces which pervade and vivify it, the vast wealth of nature in the vegetable and animal kingdoms—is to serve the grand purpose of developing human spirits in human bodies.

This world-life not only lends itself to the production, by gradual evolution, of the physical body needed for the growth and nourishment of the human soul, but by its very imperfections tends to the continuous development of the higher spiritual nature of man. In a perfect and harmonious world perfect beings might possibly have been created but could hardly have been evolved, and it may well be that evolution is the great fundamental law of the universe of mind as well as of matter. The need for labour in order to live, the constant struggle against the forces of nature, the antagonism of the good and the bad, the oppression of the weak by the strong, the painstaking and devoted search required to wrest from nature her secret powers and hidden treasures—all directly assist in developing the varied powers of mind and body and the nobler impulses of our nature. Thus all the material imperfections of our globe, the wintry blasts and summer heats, the volcano, the whirlwind and the flood, the barren desert and the gloomy forest, have each served as stimuli to develop and strengthen man's intellectual nature; while the oppression and wrong, the ignorance and crime, the misery and pain, that always and everywhere pervade the world, have been the means of exercising and strengthening the higher sentiments of justice, mercy, charity, and love, which we all feel to be our best and noblest characteristics, and which it is hardly possible to conceive could have been developed by any other means.*

Such a view as this affords us perhaps the best attainable solution of the great world-old problem of the origin of evil; for if it is the very means of creating and developing the higher moral attributes of man, those attributes which alone render him fit for a permanent spiritual existence and for continuous progression, then the mere temporary sin and misery of the world must be held to be fully justified by the supreme nature and permanent character of what they lead to. From this point of view the vision of the poet becomes to us the best expression of the truth. We, too, believe that

"All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All Chance, Direction which thou canst not see;
All Discord, Harmony not understood;
All partial Evil universal Good."

Finally, these teachings of modern Spiritualism furnish

* This argument applies of course to other worlds and systems, all of which, on the spiritual hypothesis, either have been or will be the scenes of the development of human souls.

us with the much needed basis of a true ethical system. We learn by it that our earth-life is not only a preparation for a higher state of progressive spiritual existence, but that what we have usually considered as its very worst features, its all-pervading din and suffering, are in all probability the only means of developing in us those highest moral qualities summarised as "love" by St. Paul and "altruism" by our modern teachers, which all admit must be cultivated and extended to the utmost if we are really to make progress toward a higher social state. The modern philosophers can, however, give no sufficient reason why we should practise these virtues. If, as they teach us, not only our own lives end here, but the life of the whole human race is sure to end some day, it is difficult to see any adequate outcome of the painful self-sacrifice they inculcate, while there is certainly no motive adduced which will be sufficiently powerful to withdraw from selfish pleasures that numerous class which derives from them its chief enjoyment.* But when men are taught from childhood that the whole material universe exists for the very purpose of developing beings possessing these attributes, that evil and pain, sin and suffering, all tend to the same end, and that the characters developed here will make further progress towards a nobler and happier existence in the spiritual world, just in proportion as our higher moral feelings are cultivated here—and when all this can be taught, not as a set of dogmas to be blindly accepted on the authority of unknown ancient writers, but as being founded on direct knowledge of the spirit world, and the continued actual reception of teachings from it, then indeed we shall have in our midst "a power that makes for righteousness."

Thus, modern Spiritualism, though usually despised and rejected by the learned, is yet able to give valuable aid to science and to religion, to philosophy and to morals. Not only does it offer us a solid basis for a solution of some of the profoundest mysteries of our being, but it affords us a secure hope, founded not on reason and faith only, but on actual knowledge, that our conscious life does not perish with our physical body. To all who will earnestly inquire it gives:—

"The deep assurance that the wrongs of life
Will find their perfect guerdon! That the scheme
So broken here will elsewhere be fulfilled!
Hope not a dreamer's dream!
Love's long last yearnings satisfied, not still'd!"

MARY HOWITT'S "Reminiscences of my Life" will begin in *Good Words* for June, and be continued regularly in the same magazine.

VICTOR HUGO.—In "Spiritual Experiences," by R. Cooper, a book published many years ago, we find the following paragraph with reference to Victor Hugo: "While we were at the Salle l'Orient we were visited by Victor Hugo. Receiving an intimation of his coming, we reserved the place of honour for him, immediately in front of the cabinet. After witnessing both sances, he expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the genuineness of the manifestations, and said they far exceeded his expectations; in fact he could not have supposed such things to be possible. I believe I am right in saying that Victor Hugo was, at the time, a believer in spiritual phenomena."

M. D. writes: I am very sorry to see it announced that Mr. Eglinton declines to give sances for materialisation. It is true that psychography as displayed at his sances is a perfect proof of spirit power. Slate-writing, as given, for example, to Mr. Gladstone, is inestimable. I have writing on slates, cards, untinted note-paper, in hands perfectly known to me, done under absolute conditions, impossible to be explained on any theory but Spiritualism, which I hold to be of inestimable value; but how forego those materialisations which have brought the realities of the other life to the test of the three senses of sight, hearing, and touch? No! We needed materialisation. We needed, and millions still need, "to feel the touch of a vanished hand," and "to hear the voice that was stilled." Certainly I am very glad to get a written message from a departed friend in his, or her, own handwriting, but to see the beloved form—to hear the loving words—to grasp the very hand we held in life—surely no one would like to lose or miss such an experience?

EVIDENCE AND BELIEF.

As I understand Mr. Watson, he maintains that there can be no preconception or prejudice (pre-judgment), except as belief or unbelief, resulting from contact of the mind with evidence. In a sense that is true, because the evidence must be offered to the mind before there is any conscious attitude of the latter towards it. But did he never hear such expressions as: "I would not believe it if I saw it"; or, "I will not listen to evidence of such nonsense"? Or, to take a less extreme, but not really less significant, case, has he not himself told us that evidence of certain facts must for him be evidence of a particular sort, *i.e.*, personal experience? That is, not that Mr. Watson has examined the testimony of others, and found it insufficient on its merits as testimony, but that he attributes to the alleged facts an improbability the measure of which he assigns by demanding that it should be encountered by his own experience. "An improbable thing," he says, "means simply something that has not been proved or tested." Not been proved or tested by whom? By nobody at all, or only not by oneself? It is evidence that the facts in question have been proved and tested, which Mr. Watson will not credit. He has a right to call a thing improbable which is outside all human experience. But whether the thing is outside human experience is just the question, and upon this point it is surely not rational to refuse human testimony, however critically we may, and ought to, examine it.

The legitimate use of the word "improbable" I conceive to be to denote a presumption, arising from the absence of the degree of evidence which would suffice to establish a particular alleged case of an ordinary known fact of nature, that such evidence will never be forthcoming. A not inconsiderable proportion of admitted human experience is beyond the personal experience of most individuals. No one now, for instance, would call the fall of a meteoric stone improbable, though the phenomenon is rare, and comparatively few have witnessed it.

Mr. Watson, I observe, falls into the common fallacy of confounding what is not *conformable* to one's own experience with what is *contradictory* to it. "It is not impossible," he says, "but it is highly improbable, that a heavy body will remain in the air unsupported. Why? Because I have a belief, induced by a vast experience, that it does not, and cannot; and until I have other experiences as undeniable and irrefragable as the former, I *must* disbelieve any statements, however numerous, that such phenomena do occur." Mr. Watson has no such experience as he alleges, "that it does not, and cannot;" if he had, he would be utterly irrational in seeking for a contradictory personal experience. Only to remark, by the way, that he begs the question by the use of the word "unsupported," unless he knows all the forces in nature by which bodies can be supported in the air, his very offer and wish to personally investigate similar alleged phenomena prove that he does not really regard his experience as having the character he ascribes to it. And so far is it from being true that he "*must* disbelieve" the statements, that he very evidently *has not* "disbelieved" them, or he would not have thought them worth following up by investigation. He has simply not believed them—a very different thing from disbelief, if language is to be used as accurately "in exact reasoning" as Mr. Watson desires. He does not assent to these statements, and therefore does not positively believe them; but they have impressed him; his mind is not made up about them; his judgment is in suspense, asking for a particular sort of confirmation, and that is certainly not "disbelief."

Well, but, if that is so; if other than his own experience has impressed, and rightly impressed, his mind, conviction can be logically induced by raising the same sort of evidence—the testimony of others—to a higher power. All evidence is an appeal to experience, and I can tell Mr. Watson why

he has not absolutely "disbelieved" the witnesses to facts which are not in themselves conformable to his experience. It is that he has a certain positive experience of human veracity and human powers of observation. And he knows that the "cloud of witnesses" to these phenomena includes very many on whose truth and intelligence he would implicitly rely for any ordinary statement they might make. To suppose that when they make extraordinary statements their truth or their intelligence has failed, does violence to the principle of continuity in human character which is also guaranteed by experience. Now as this experience is positive, whereas what is opposed to it is mere *inexperience*, it is impossible that testimony of a certain quantity and quality, when fairly considered, should fail to impress the mind. I contend that the existing testimony in its entirety, if fairly considered, must not only impress, but convince the mind. But I also contend that testimony *cannot* be "fairly considered" by the majority of people in an age when it runs counter to dominant "preconceptions" of what is impossible or improbable in nature. Mr. Lecky, in his "History of Rationalism," has so ably illustrated this proposition that I need not dwell further on it, notwithstanding the logomachy in which Mr. Watson seeks to involve me. That "belief and unbelief are entirely outside our own volition" (so far as any conscious act of willing is meant), I quite agree; but Mr. Watson must surely see that this proposition is very distinct from another which he treats as correlative or equivalent, *viz.*, that they are both (belief and unbelief) "the product and the measure of the force of the evidence brought to bear." When Leverrier met the testimony for meteorites with the sententious remark: "There are no stones in the sky; none, consequently, can fall upon the earth," did his "mental factor" contribute nothing to the result—his unbelief, and was the latter "the product and the measure of the evidence brought to bear"? The mental factor is not mere understanding judging with reference to experience, but is deeply dyed with the hues of prevalent opinions, hues which it mistakes for its own natural colour. Mr. Watson may, perhaps, be one of those born sceptics of whom there have been representative in even the most credulous generations. But if not, it is no disparagement to his intelligence to say that, living 300 or 400 years ago, he would have been as apt to ascribe Maskelyne and Cooke's performances to magic as I suppose he is now to explain Eglinton's slate-writing by trickery. I can credit many men with exemption from conscious prejudice, but very few with a purely objective relation to nature. But if we must bring to our judgment of testimony presumptions or "probabilities," let it be a presumption which has positive experience for a foundation. Such a presumption is at hand. I venture to quote it from an essay appended to my translation of Zöllner. "If the widest and highest experience of mankind can afford us a canon of probability, it is this: that testimony, otherwise sufficient, to the exceptional, the abnormal, the strange, and the new, is probably true, and not probably false. Set side by side the cases in which newly observed facts of nature have been asserted, and have proved to be true, with the cases in which they have been well asserted, and yet disproved, or not proved, and who that is acquainted even superficially with the history of science and discovery would hesitate to say which list affords us the best foundation for an induction?" And perhaps I cannot conclude better than with the three propositions which follow what I have just quoted. (1) That testimony to the extraordinary is falsely opposed to experience. (2) That what it is opposed to is simply a negative induction from the absence of experience. (3) That a more general experience teaches us that such negative inductions cease to be probably true as soon as they are opposed to testimony of a character sufficient to establish any other fact."

C. C. M.

PHENOMENA OF MATERIALISATION.

"Facts" is the title of a monthly pamphlet, "devoted to statements of mental and spiritual phenomena," now published at the office of the *Banner of Light*.

In the number (the twelfth) for December last is reprinted, from "LIGHT" of October 11th, the narrative of remarkable materialisation séances with Mr. Eglinton, by Florence Marryat. It also records some experiences of the same character at séances held under strict test conditions, minutely described.

Mr. Brackett, of Boston, reports this, Mrs. Fay being the medium: "A spirit came out in lustrous white drapery. This form dematerialised when not more than three feet from me, and eight feet from the cabinet. Then a small spot of light appeared on the carpet, gradually enlarged, heightened, and finally developed into the tall angular form of 'Auntie,' one of the medium's controls. She addressed the circle, stating the reasons for her dictating the stringent conditions under which the medium sat; and then withdrew into the cabinet. Various materialised spirits then came out successively, and were recognised by different members of the circle. 'Bertha' appeared. She extended her arms and caused to appear between them, from one hand to the other, some fine lustrously white fabric, which she let all examine; this she gracefully arranged about her, and having walked to and fro, took it off, and dematerialised it before our eyes.

"At a subsequent séance with the same medium and under the same conditions, 'Bertha' materialised flowers; another, 'Emma,' came out clad in a satin-like fabric. Mr. Whitlock had permission to cut out a piece of it, and the gap so made was rapidly filled up. A male spirit, claiming to have been a German chemist, magnetised some water for a sick lady, one of the circle; while doing so his fingers emitted fine sparkles. On my complaining he magnetised some for me, and it relieved me. Mr. Whitlock recognised a fine robust materialised spirit as his father. Our old friend, Dr. Newton, was also recognised by all present who had known him in earth-life."

To Mr. Brackett's report, Mr. Whitlock, the editor, adds a confirmatory note, to the effect that the hole which he cut in the satin-like fabric became filled up with similar material before his eyes. He adds that the circle numbered forty. He attributes the results partly to the mental harmony which prevailed among so many.

Mr. Whitlock himself reports a séance with the Misses Berry, of Boston. At this, Mr. Henry Lacroix, not long returned from a visit to France, his native country, was present. Three female spirits came out of the cabinet and talked with him in French. In answer to questions he said that they were his daughters, that there were twelve. One of the spirits said in French, "Three of fifteen, papa." He said, "True, three are still in earth-life."

The next report is by Mr. Anderson, of Salt Lake City. This séance was held in Denver, Colorado, at which he, with his family and eight others, were present; the medium was Mrs. Miller. From a temporary cabinet formed by suspended blankets, fourteen spirits came out successively, of various ages and sizes. While one spirit was with the circle, another waited at a fold of the cabinet. In the course of the séance Mr. Anderson entered it, and while talking with a spirit visible before him, put his hand upon the medium in her chair. Some of the spirits called those whom they knew to approach them. "I conversed," says Mr. Anderson, "with several. One asked me to hold her hands; while holding them she sank slowly through the floor, her hands melting in my grasp as she disappeared. This experiment was repeated by my wife, and by others, at the spirits' own suggestion. My wife was admitted into the cabinet, and continued a conversation there with a

spirit, who told her that similar manifestations would before long be given in Salt Lake City.

"But," he continues, "a more remarkable manifestation was to come; a female spirit raised my little daughter in her arms and carried her about; then, still holding the child, she slowly sank, dematerialising, feet first, leaving the child where she disappeared, standing unharmed."

"The possibility," concludes Mr. Anderson, "of such manifestations implies favourable conditions, among which must be considered the perfect harmony of the circle. But I must not omit a noteworthy incident: A spirit-child came out of the cabinet and was recognised by ex-Judge Cassidy, of Denver, as his granddaughter. He spoke to her, but she said she wanted to talk to Gracie. The only one present answering to that name was my little daughter; they became at once familiar, and went together into the cabinet, prattling to one another just like two mortal little girls. Our Gracie returned to us, but the other remained in the cabinet, to vanish, with the rest of our strange visitors, into the air from which they seemed—to our mortal sight—all to have come!"

AN APPARITION CONNECTED WITH THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM, AS QUOTED BY MISS STRICKLAND.

Meagre as the following record is, from its connection with the great victory of Blenheim, and the interest which naturally attaches to the freethinking Sophia, Electress of Hanover, mother of George I., in whose letter to her friend Leibnitz, the great German *savant*, it occurs, it may prove of interest to the readers of "LIGHT," and perhaps incite to further research among those fortunate enough to have access to the valuable record quoted by Miss Strickland in her "Lives of the Queens of Scotland and English Princesses," Vol. VIII, pages 390, 391, from which I copy the account (or rather allusion) verbatim.

"All Europe now rang with the fame of the Marlborough victories; the war through the year 1704 had become gigantic. Brunswick troops had partaken in the great victory of Blenheim, which occurred in the succeeding year, where Sophia's third son, Duke Max, commanded the Emperor's left wing.

"Of course, the victorious Marlborough and his captains were received as welcome guests at her Court. But before their arrival she thus wrote to her confident Leibnitz: 'I know not if the Landrost Busch has confided to Luxbourg the revelation he had from his son who was killed there; he appeared to him and prayed him not to be afflicted at his death, because he was very happy.' I find this very extraordinary, to have known of the battle so positively. The Elector says, above all, 'What judgment will M. Leibnitz pass on this subject?'"

After quoting the above letter, Miss Strickland continues:—"A very curious question it is as propounded by the philosophic Electress to her high priest in those matters. The three persons concerned in the discussion of the above ghost story—the Electress Sophia, her son George I., and the German Newton Leibnitz—had each their different opinions. The Elector (George I.) believed implicitly in ghosts, vampires, and all the *diabletic* to which his countrymen seriously incline. He suffered superstitious notions to guide him in his course of conduct, and, if we may believe his contemporaries, lost his life through the sudden shock of a summons to the tribunal of God, sent by his injured wife from her deathbed. He did not receive it till six months afterwards, travelling to Osnaburg. He was in good health, but being suddenly shocked by reading it he never spoke after. The letter was in his carriage when he was taken out dead.

"Sophia, it may be seen, although she mentions the apparition of the young Blenheim soldier in the briefest words, is startled fairly out of her infidelity. 'For Busch,' she says, 'knew the death of his son so positively,' her meaning being before any intelligence of this world could have brought it."

In another note Miss Strickland adds:—"George II. fancied he had seen vampires, and has left a judicial account of these supernaturals. The trial, happening when he was at Trieste, is quoted by Lord Byron, on whom it made a strong impression."

ELIZA BOUCHER.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XXIX.

[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."]

What has been said in these pages of the value of the testimony to the facts of Spiritualism, given by Mr. Barkas, of Newcastle, is not a bit overdrawn. I have seen him in his house, with his scientific work in astronomy and geology around him—a solid, useful man, full of common-sense and pure logic. Mr. Cowan, his townsman, a man of great vigour and influence, quite knew what he was about when he left the House of Commons to take the chair at Mr. Barkas's lecture, some time ago, in London.

"A good name is," in many cases, "a tower of strength." Let me make a suggestion. Let us get the matter of one of the standing pages of "LIGHT"—the testimonies to the reality of spiritual manifestation—neatly printed as a tract and widely circulated among the still ignorant, and perhaps therefore intolerant, friends of Spiritualists.

Mr. E. A. Bracket, in a recent number of the *Banner of Light*, describes a materialising séance, in which, while standing near to, and talking with the medium, he saw, shook hands, and conversed with several of his perfectly recognised friends in the spirit world. He says: "As I gazed with delight upon this sudden and unexpected manifestation, bathed in a mellow light which made all the surroundings perfectly visible, I could not help feeling a regret that my psychical friends had shut themselves out from such evidence, by presenting arrangements to which no intelligent control would submit. Here, under strictly test-conditions, which precluded any possible doubt, was crowded into a small space just the information which I am sure that some of them are honestly endeavouring to obtain." Well, the next thing to personal observation of such transcendent facts is a good account of them by reliable, entirely credible, witnesses. Not to believe any senses but our own is to ignore nearly the whole of science. To reject good testimony is the end of a great part of knowledge. We transfer property, and imprison, and even hang, our fellow men upon testimony. Is it not strange, then, that the evidence for Spiritualism, often far stronger than that upon which we deliberately strangle a fellow creature and give another inhabitant to the world of spirits, is rejected?

And Spiritualism raises anew the question whether we have any right to shoot our rubbish by gallows or gunpowder into that other world. Considering that forty millions of souls manage to leave their earthly bodies every year, the few thousands of soldiers shot or murderers hanged can make but little difference.

But the fact, at last demonstrated, that the human spirit survives its body, and the probability that millions of worlds have been inhabited for millions of years by beings whose souls survive their bodies, so that infinite space may have an all but infinite number of spirits—"must give us pause." The mind expands with what it feeds upon, and necessarily bursts all the bonds by which it has been confined.

The material universe, of which we get slight glimpses in the starry heavens, orders itself by the two forces of attraction and repulsion. It is reasonable to presume some analogy in the forces which govern the spiritual universe. What "outlook" we may have must come from our explorations. All our analogies must be drawn from our facts—and they who ignore or deny the facts can have no insight and no outlook.

I read in the *Christian World*, "Mr. Maskelyne says, dark séances are wicked, and that fathers and husbands have complained to him of the insults put upon their wives and daughters during the hour of darkness; and that the Spiritualists trade and fatten on this use of the dark séance."

Of course, all the fathers and husbands of Spiritualist women rush off to complain to Mr. Maskelyne, who for years has packed as many men and women as he could get into the

Egyptian Hall and then turned off the lights and given his dark séances, at which people behave with the most exemplary propriety, and of which wives and daughters never complain. And what of the magic lanterns, dissolving views, in all the lecture halls of London and the provinces? Really, the *Christian World* is not consistent!

The *Newcastle Chronicle*, Mr. Cowan's paper, gives a good account of some physical manifestations. The writer says: "We all placed the tips of our fingers only on the table. One of the sitters asked that the table should be lifted, if the spirit-friends could do so. After being rapidly rocked to and fro a few times it gradually rose some three feet from the floor, and lowered. Next the 'control' was desired to lift it again higher, and this was done, the table rising so high that we had to stand up in order to reach it. And being elevated about six feet, it was put gently down again, but not in the exact spot where it had stood before. A request being made that it should be put in its proper place, this was at once done."

I hear that Mr. W. Eglinton has received a most flattering and advantageous offer to visit Australia, and that it is within the region of possibility that he may leave our shores for the Antipodes in the autumn. Many attempts have been made at various times to induce him to pay the Australian Colonies a visit, but his engagements have always prevented his doing so. Much as his departure from our shores would be, as I consider, an irreparable loss to the cause of Spiritualism in this country, no doubt a more useful work is to be done in the Colonies in breaking new ground.

Mr. Eglinton is truly a missionary. After having been in almost every country in Europe, he is now going to put a girdle round the world, and so complete his experience; but not in time, I fear, to include it in "Twixt Two Worlds," which, I am glad to hear, is now about to appear.

During Mr. Eglinton's recent visit to the Continent he met, amongst others, the eminent French Society artist, M. Tissot, whose attention was first attracted to Spiritualism through reading Florence Marryat's account of a materialisation published some months since in the columns of this journal. M. Tissot seized the opportunity of Mr. Eglinton's tour abroad to commence a practical investigation of the subject, and so interested did he become in what occurred that he has recently paid a visit to London for the express purpose of continuing his inquiry. After a searching investigation he has expressed himself as thoroughly convinced of the reality of spiritual phenomena. His experience both in psychography and materialisation, especially the latter, was certainly most marvellous, one form which appeared having been indubitably recognised by him as that of a deceased friend.

Après of materialisation, a sensation is likely to be caused in society and the artistic world by the next picture from M. Tissot's pencil. I am violating no confidence by stating that I have seen a sketch which M. Tissot intends to issue as a mezzotint. The subject is a materialisation as seen and drawn by the artist on the spot, and it needs no assertion of mine to show that a picture like this from the hand of a master is likely to prove one of the pictures of the year.

A CONTRAST: HOW THE TRUTH IS ADVANCING.—In an article on apparitions in the "National Encyclopedia," published from fifteen to twenty years since, occurs the following passage: "We cannot dismiss the subject of apparitions without observing that the manner in which these phantoms have vanished before the light of knowledge affords a striking illustration of the blessings which descend even to the lowest of the people from the diffusion of the sound principles of philosophy." An article on the same subject by "A.Z." in the last edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" says: "Apparitions in the ordinary acceptance of the word can scarcely be better defined than in the words used by Defoe: 'They are the invisible inhabitants of the unknown world, affecting human shapes, or any shapes, and showing themselves visibly to us.'" "We shall probably," adds the writer on his own account, "arrive at the conclusion that there is in this subject either some substratum of unexplained facts, or that the human imagination is subject to laws which have not been sufficiently investigated."

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Light :

SATURDAY, MAY 30TH, 1885.

INQUIRERS AND INQUIRIES.

By "M.A. (Oxon.)"

No. II.

In a previous paper on this subject I had given some reasons for my belief that the undoubted difficulties of some inquirers were inevitable and to be expected. For we are making an excursion into an unknown country, and it is not reasonable to ask us too minutely as to its internal economy, or even as to its geography and topography. Some of us on first landing did impulsively give some information derived from some people that we chanced to meet; but we are now, perhaps (the wisest of us), sorry that we spoke unadvisedly. We *know* some things; we *deduce* from them other things as probable; we generalise and surmise more; but we have no map of the country, and are in no wise ashamed to confess that our knowledge is extremely limited.

Moreover, the avenues of knowledge are so various that only very few of us can estimate the value of the information that comes through each. It is one of the most remarkable facts about a remarkable age that the attempt on the part of the world of spirit to get into relations with and influence our world should be so widespread. It is not by any means confined to that particular spiritual outbreak with which I am concerned. Since it broke out in America less than forty years ago, we have had definite attempts on the part of spirit to correlate itself with us, such as that which found a mouthpiece in Thomas Lake Harris; or that which is associated for all time on the Continent of Europe with the name of Allan Kardec. We have had in the United States of America more than I can remember or name. We have had Eastern philosophy adapted to Western thought by what claims to be occult agency, drawing its information from a high spiritual source; and, not to particularise too minutely, we have lately had a spiritual revelation, not without its own truth and beauty, from the slopes of Mount Carmel, even as we have had (what has at any rate acted as flint to our steel in eliciting a spark of thought) a very different one from the slopes of the Himalayas.

All more or less stuff? Quite so: or, as I prefer to put it, all embodiments of partial truth: no monopoly of perfection in any of them: no approach even to more than a mere adumbration of truth such as the several minds who received the several revelations were able to bear. We all have our little mug, and we can't do more than fill it. We do not all go to the same streamlet, but all the streamlets trickle down to us from the great Fount, losing something by the way, acquiring some contamination, but con-

veniently adapted by locality to various needs. It must be so. If you, my good friend, had been born on the banks of the Ganges, locality would have influenced the unconscious choice of the spiritual streamlet at which your soul first slaked its thirst (if it had any); as it is, you were born on the banks of the Thames, and things are different.

This has been so in all ages. The avenues of spiritual enlightenment are various, and are adapted to very various needs. This is so now, and has been so always. And observe that it has not been from a common centre that all these various local centres of activity have been thrown off. We can tell nothing (for we have not the materials for judgment) about what took place when that great spiritual wave passed over us which left us the holy influence of the Christ, the most pure as it has been the most beneficent that the world has ever seen. But we can watch the present outpouring of the Spirit, and we can see that it is not a mundane development from a central spot on our earth. It is not in one place but in many, scattered sporadically over the face of the world; not to one type of mind or to one sphere of thought that Spirit has manifested itself; but to all who have ears to hear and the power to assimilate the message. It was said in the old days—if I may reverently apply what is a truth for all time, of no local or special application—"The wind bloweth where it listeth... so is every one that is born of the Spirit." We can give no reason for these sudden outbursts of Spirit power in special places; we cannot tell why one is taken and intronitted into the inner mysteries of the kingdom of Spirit (which in a very real sense may be, and often is, a Kingdom of Heaven), while another strives in vain to get evidence which would, if he got it, be no proof to him, and which he has not imagination enough to grasp (for spiritual things are spiritually discerned), except that the origin of all is not with us, not governed by our wishes, or moulded to our ideas of fitness.

We only know that it is so; and so long as it is we shall not be able to answer questions and objections which would be suitable if concerned with exact science, but which are not in place when we are but on the threshold of spiritual mysteries. Rather than vex ourselves with these too curious questionings let us think what has already been done for us in the leavening of religious thought, in the buttressing of a yielding faith, in the demonstration of intelligence apart from a human brain, in the establishment of a sure and certain hope that because life and activity are possible for some of the disembodied members of our race, and that demonstrably, they are possible also for us.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—Will you permit me a little space in your paper to say to the members of this Alliance that the Council feel it desirable to make some arrangement by which our members may be enabled to communicate with one another and with the members of the Council personally.

They propose that some of the Council shall attend at 16, Craven-street, every Tuesday evening during the month of June, from six to eight o'clock; and they will be pleased if members will take that opportunity to visit them informally for any purpose that they may desire. This will be an experiment which they trust will lead to more active work.

Yours obediently,

MORELL THERBOLD,

16, Craven-street, Charing Cross,
May 26th, 1885.

Hon. Sec.

MR. G. S. DARTER, an old Spiritualist, of Cape Town, South Africa, is now in London, and intends to make a tour on the Continent soon after the approaching marriage of his daughter. He would be glad if any one will inform him of the address of Mr. J. H. Herbst. Mr. Darter reports the cause to be in a flourishing condition in South Africa.

Transitions.

VICTOR HUGO.

A man of massive genius has been removed from the world, and we are the poorer for the loss of Victor Hugo. It is not always possible to admire his many poses, nor to follow with approval all his erratic utterances. He was a man of contradictions; a fierce hater, tumultuous in his denunciations; a lover of children, and a sympathising friend to the poor and needy. He has desired that his body may be laid to rest in the republican simplicity that his soul loved, and that no formal utterances of prayer or panegyric may break the solemn silence of the tomb. It has been the fashion, from some passages in his writings, and from some impetuous utterances of his during his life, to regard Victor Hugo as an Atheist. This feeling will gather force from his last wish respecting his funeral. Yet it was not true of him that he denied the existence of a God; on the contrary, he died affirming that belief. Nor did he make light of that true and pure religion which alone could touch his simplicity and sincerity of nature. He only desired to avoid a histrionic display, and perhaps to mark his dissent from an elaborate system of dogmatic theology to which he was unable to assent. His views nowhere find a clearer expression than in the following words which closed his oration over the grave of Madame Paul Meurice some years ago:—

"From her heights of serenity in the unknown world, she will see around her these hearts of ours which are still full of her, these friends who respect and glorify her, this good husband who mourns her. The memory of her, at once sad and charming, will never be effaced. It will illumine the twilight in which we live. May the eternal spirit receive into its high domain that immortal spirit of hers! Life is the problem; death, the solution. I repeat it, and it is this with which I desire to end my adieu; the tomb is neither dark nor void; no, it is a great light, and may he who now speaks to you be enabled to turn to that light! For the man who exists no longer, as it were, here below, for the man whose only ambition is contained in death, it is reserved to see in the depth of infinity, in the sublime and dazzling brightness of the grave, the fixed star of God."

However strong may have been the objection felt by M. Hugo to dogmatic theology, he has struck in those burning words the key-note of true religious faith and aspiration, and must be claimed, by virtue of them, as a good Spiritualist.

"M. A. (Oxon)."

LISETTE MAKDOUGALL GREGORY.

It is with extreme regret that we have to record the passing away of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, at her residence, 21, Green-street, W., on Sunday last. She died a sudden and painless death from breaking a blood vessel. She had been ill, but was, apparently, as nearly recovered as a lady of her advanced age could expect. She would have been eighty next August. There are few Spiritualists who do not owe Mrs. Gregory a debt of gratitude for the facilities for the investigation of Spiritualism which she unwearingly, from the early days of the movement, placed at the disposal of her friends and acquaintances. The news of her transition comes too late to enable us to deal exhaustively with her work for Spiritualism. The subjoined extract from the preface to the second edition of "Animal Magnetism," written in 1877, gives a few particulars, and pending the publication next week of a more extended memoir, we can only say that in her departure from the physical plane, Spiritualism, Spiritualists, and mediums especially, have lost a devoted friend and helper. The funeral takes place at Brompton on Friday next.

Mrs. Gregory's maiden name was Lisette Scott; she was daughter of John Scott the Younger, of Gala, who was the son of Sir George Makdougall and Ann Makdougall, daughter and heiress of the ancient family of Makerstoun, established in Roxburghshire since A.D. 1100.

Mrs. Makdougall Gregory was as deeply interested in psychological science as her partner; indeed, it is well known that up to the present time she continues to work arduously in London, doing all she can to disseminate a knowledge of this interesting science. Professor and Mrs. Gregory were both well acquainted with Harriet Martineau, who wished Professor Gregory to write her biography, and offered to send all the documents and letters necessary for the purpose. He was unable, in the midst of other arduous duties, to undertake the additional responsible work. Professor Gregory's works on chemistry, especially the organic branch of that subject, are even now valuable text books to the student, although it is a science in which such rapid advances are made from day to day.

MRS. LOFTUS-OTWAY.

We regret to announce the passing away of Mrs. Georgina Frances Otway, on Tuesday, the 19th inst. The deceased lady had been a Spiritualist for many years past, and always helped any scheme likely to promote the interest of Spiritualism, but of late she took no active part in the movement, probably owing to the death of her son, Captain Cecil Otway, which took place last autumn, and from which she never recovered. Mrs. Otway was the sole heiress of General Sir Loftus William Otway, and married in 1837, Captain Marjoribanks Hughes, who assumed the surname of Otway in lieu of his patronymic, and who survives her. She leaves three sons and two daughters, and will be mourned by a large circle of acquaintances, no less for her endearing qualities than for her kindness and consideration to the poor, to whom she was at all times a generous donor. The belief she held so strongly is now exchanged for knowledge.

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."

MADAME HORETSKY.—MSS. to hand. Will appear next week.

G. D. H.—Letters received, but surely you are not aware that your last three letters have come to us unstamped, causing us to pay double postage. We would have written you privately, but do not know your address.

T. C. CAUDLE asks for a brief definition of the nature and efficacy of prayer as believed in by modern Spiritualists. By prayer a magnetic rapport is established between him who prays and ministering spirits, bringing to the former a rich spiritual blessing. "The very cry of the burdened soul is in itself an unknown relief. The spirit is lightened though the prayer is not granted in the terms of the petition. By the rapport thus established guardian angels are able to pour into the sorrow-laden soul the value of sympathy. From them comes that peace which at such times steals over the soul and assures it of a sympathising and consoling God. The prayer does its work by drawing down an angel friend." But the answer to prayer is subject to law; therefore, prayer for rain or for its cessation is obviously inconsistent. For further teaching read Crowell's "Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism," also "Spirit Teachings," by "M.A. (Oxon.)."

WANTED a copy of Justinus Kerner's "Seeress of Prevorst" in the original German. State price to Editor of "LIGHT."

FROM inquiries which are repeatedly made, it does not appear to be generally known that Mr. W. Eglinton has returned from the Continent, and may now be seen or addressed at 6, Nottingham-place, W. Several investigators who have had sances with him recently testify to the remarkable nature of his powers. There are few who visit him who do not receive complete satisfactory evidence of the genuineness of psychography.

ENVY is fixed only on merit, and, like a sore eye, is offended with everything that is bright.

POETRY, like truth, is a common flower. God has sown it over the earth like the daisies, sprinkled with tears, or glowing in the sun; even as He places the crocus and the March frosts together, and beautifully mingles life and death.

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

BY J. G. KEULEMANS.

(Continued from page 246.)

PLATE IV.—BUST OF JOHN KING.

A curious feature connected with materialisations (and I believe also with transformations) generally, but in "John King's" apparitions especially, is the perceptible variation in height and size of the form. The same peculiarity is noticeable in the busts. The total height of "John's" form nearly always exceeds that of the medium. I have found, by actual measurement that, at times, there was a difference of as many as six or seven inches. Like most other "spirit forms" which vary in size, the type is unchanged, and as far as the face is concerned, it may be either small or large, pale or robust; but the portrait is ever that of the familiar "John King." Yet, the expression of his eyes is subjected to slight variations according to circumstances, the most important of which being the medium's condition of health. The length and thickness of the beard also frequently show a marked divergency from the usual type. But what seems most perplexing is, that in cases when the "form manifestation" is an undoubted transfiguration of the medium's person, the individual type of "John" is preserved in all its details. His powerful voice is invariably the same whenever heard. It may be heard in spots where the solid form could not possibly locate itself, as, for instance, against the ceiling, underneath the table, over the floor behind the piano (other voices are sometimes heard inside this instrument, or inside the chimney, &c.). I have personally convinced myself—often by direct experiment—that "John's" voice travels all over the room whilst the medium is seated at the table, hands being joined all round.

I must here observe that on such occasions, when the medium has been removed (*i.e.*, by spirits through levitation) into another room, I do not consider any "form" to be a true materialisation unless other direct and unimpeachable evidence establishes such a fact; that, therefore, all the more remarkable cases and phenomena I have quoted were presented with the medium amongst us, both his hands being held by responsible and reliable inquirers. Phenomena witnessed under conditions which might be looked upon as unsatisfactory, manifestations only partly observed, or of a doubtful nature, or such as could, by confederacy, be easily imitated, I do not intend to describe. But, at the same time, I am constrained to confess that many of these spiritual "miracles" at first evoked grave suspicions in my mind, but which now, after repeated observations, I consider to be plain and incontestable realities, of which every patient investigator may convince himself.

I will now refer to some phenomena witnessed when the medium had been removed in a manner as before stated, and which I cannot but consider as affording the most satisfactory evidence of their genuineness. I confine my remarks to certain feats performed by "John King." One evening, "John" informed the circle that it would be better for the medium to be seated in the corner of the room; the latter, having just recovered from a short trance, was advised by his instructor to arrange himself comfortably and obtain a light. I, thereupon, and without a moment's delay, struck a match, when, to our astonishment, we found all the "spirits" gone; and there must have been several, considering the different voices that were, two seconds previous, heard all over the room. The

medium had now taken a seat, as advised by "John," the match by this time having burnt out. Suddenly a spirit-light appeared from the new corner, and "John" stood before us carrying the large disc-shaped light before his face. As he approached me I noticed his nude arms, and by the reflection of this light on the wall was enabled to observe the complete outline of a male form, only thinly covered by drapery, the time occupied by the "spirit" in materialising being no more than ten seconds. I merely quote this as one instance out of very many to point to the impossibility of the medium performing a spirit apparition, because he was dressed in his usual costume, and ten seconds later, the spirit appeared showing a nude form through the thin material covering it. I do not think it possible for any person dressed in the usual attire, to divest himself of all his garments, re-dress in spirit costume, procure an artificially compounded light, and all this in ten seconds of time. With clothing constructed for the purpose, like the Protean costumes worn by the clown, or on the stage, such a feat could be performed even more rapidly, but the ordinary costume, like that habitually worn by the medium, would be a very serious encumbrance. Still, I merely quote the occurrence and the circumstances under which it took place for what it may be worth, giving it only as my personal opinion that it has all the appearance of a genuine spirit-manifestation. Nor would the suggestion of a confederate hidden in the back parlour account for much, because similar instantaneous apparitions have been witnessed by competent observers at seances held with Husk, in private circles. I will now give a list of the peculiar traits of both "John King" and his medium. The spirit, when materialised or when appearing in the transformed medium's body, presents the following characteristics: Height, about six feet; hands, large, broad and fleshy; head, of average size; nose, slightly curved, but the bridge perfectly symmetrical; mouth, small; teeth, small; eyes, small and decidedly normal, as far as the power of sight is concerned; cheeks, rather full; skin, pale and smooth; eyebrows, nearly straight and well divided; black beard and moustache. The medium's height appears to vary, at least to have undergone a slight reduction during the manifestations. I find that after a séance, probably on account of some loss of vitality necessary to produce the various phenomena, his body has shrunk about two inches. If I am not mistaken, the reduction of the stature of the human frame consequent upon bodily fatigue, long-continued walking, &c., is a well-known fact. Anyhow, the medium is, as a rule, shorter in stature than the manifesting "spirit" of "John King" (and decidedly shorter than another of his familiar "spirits" materialising more or less regularly, whose height at times exceeds eight feet). Husk's hands are broad, but bony, and the skin is coarse and shrivelled, resembling those of a very aged person. The head is under average size, nose curved, but irregular at the bridge, there being a slight unevenness or twist towards the left side. His mouth is larger than "John King's," and the teeth are bigger. The eyes of the medium, in consequence of an unfortunate affliction, are almost devoid of expression—in fact, I need not repeat what every investigator personally acquainted with Husk already knows, namely, that he is nearly blind. The cheek bones are high but the cheeks lean, the flesh of normal colour and the skin rather rough, eyebrows curved and nearly touching; no beard.

(To be continued.)

AUSTRALIA.—The Victorian Association of Spiritualists at Melbourne celebrated the thirty-seventh anniversary of the advent of modern Spiritualism. The proceedings were held in one of the largest halls in the city: they included literary, musical, and choregraphic assemblies. There was on view a large collection of direct spirit-writings, drawings and pencillings, writings through automatic mediums, spirit photographs, and paraffin moulds.—*Le Messenger*.

* A few sets of these chromo drawings still remain, and may be obtained of 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.

PSYCHOMETRY.

By T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.

I have just received a pleasant letter from one of the most eminent of American Spiritualists, Dr. J. R. Buchanan, author of works on medicine, education, and Spiritualism, with allied phenomena. Not long ago Dr. Buchanan had the good fortune to marry a highly gifted lady well known as a psychometric. The learned Doctor writes: "I gave your name to Mrs. Buchanan at our dinner just now for an offhand psychometric description, which she gave in these words: 'An able writer, sound and logical, *impressional, living*. He could write sensibly on various themes—not a man of fancies, but sound. He is not in this country—far away. His views are similar to yours. He would read your books with interest and approve them. His writings would be on his profession, and the condition of the world and promotion of health and education.' ('What is his age?') 'Very nearly as old as you. He has good health unimpaired, and, with his good care, should live long. His ideas are all reformatory, and he has a following. Those who know him like him.' ('What family?') 'He has no wife—he is a widower.'"

Now how did Mrs. Buchanan, who certainly never saw, and probably never heard of me, get all that information? Brain reading? Not her husband's, for Dr. Buchanan never saw me and probably knows very little about me. He adds: "You will have a good record to remember in the upper world, where we shall meet before many years. I am hurrying to get out 'Psychometry,' then I have to prepare a mind volume, also 'Electro-therapeutics' and 'Anthropology.' If I could live to 120 years I might achieve my plans, but I can only do an unfinished work."

I had, many years ago, another remarkable experience of the psychometric faculty. A friend of mine sealed up a business letter from me in a blank envelope, and handed it to a lady who had never seen, and probably never heard of me—a sister of the late William Denton, who died while exploring New Guinea. She held the packet in her hands, then against her forehead, and gave him as good a description of me as if she had known me most intimately for twenty years, extending to particulars of my physical condition known only to myself, when the letter was written.

How did she get this knowledge, some 200 miles away? Not from my friend who gave her the letter, for he had no such knowledge to give. Well, perhaps this is not Spiritualism; but such facts surely illustrate spiritual powers and possibilities. I know a lady who used to get the matter of a letter, and sometimes an image of the writer, if a stranger, so that she recognised him when she saw him, before she opened the envelope.

THE HERMETIC SOCIETY.

A paper on the present revival of Mysticism was read by Mr. Edward Maitland before this Society on the 20th inst.

This revival, he said, is at once the most remarkable and most important of all the notes of our era, both for its power to interpret the past and to influence the future. Mysticism is the science and philosophy of Spirit, and refers to processes and conditions occurring within the soul. It thus denotes transcendental metaphysics. Occultism, on the contrary, denotes transcendental physics, and refers to a sphere exterior to the soul, that, namely, in which the soul is. The one is concerned with *spirit*, the other with *spirits*. Mysticism is the product of the spiritual consciousness, which is the consciousness of the inmost and highest region in man; and the faculty by which this region is cognised is the intuition, or centripetal mode of the mind, whereby man obtains access to the knowledge which, in the long ages of its past, the soul has gathered by experience concerning God and the Universe. As the world had lost its spiritual consciousness, and denied the soul and the intuition, the revival of Mysticism implies a twofold recovery—of faculty and of knowledge.

All sacred scriptures and true religions have been products of the spiritual consciousness. Wherefore the revival of Mysticism means the interpretation of these by their proper authors—the mystics. And as their significance is entirely spiritual—religion being addressed to the soul—it means also the transference of this from the physical to the spiritual plane. The world's spiritual history is marked by a series of corresponding revivals, alike in the East and the West. In the East they are called *Avatars*, in the West, Messianic advents and illuminations. In

both worlds the series consists of ten such events, each of them making a cycle, or day, in man's spiritual creation, of which the duration is about 600 years, the great cycle which is made up of these representing the entire evolution of the spiritual consciousness of the races concerned. The earlier steps of this great ladder are traceable in Biblical and other prehistoric myths and legends. The latter are recorded in history. Throughout them all runs one definite purpose—the recognition by, and establishment in, the world of a system of thought which at once explains the nature of existence; and provides for the conduct of it a rule by the observance of which man may turn his own existence to the utmost possible account in the long run by making of himself the best that he has in him to be.

Such a system it is which has found expression in all true Bibles and religions, and of which the great religious systems of East and West have been the vehicles. Known in the West as the Hermetic Gnosis, it was originally the product of Divine revelation, and is always discerned afresh whenever men recover in sufficient degree the faculty by which it was originally received—the intuition, the possession of which makes the mystic. Mystically regarded, the Bible represents the fall of man as consisting in the obscuration of the spiritual consciousness through the soul's descent into matter, or fall beneath the power of the bodily consciousness. Such is the primary meaning of the allegory of the creation, the soul being symbolised as a woman, and in this stage called Eve, and the bodily consciousness as a man, and called Adam. In its secondary and historical sense, this allegory may be taken as denoting the first formulation of the Hermetic Gnosis and institution of that Church of Christ which consists of those—and those only—who possess the spiritual consciousness. Both this, and each of the events described under the histories of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Ezra, and Christ, are readily interpretable as implying progressive restorations of this consciousness, or "revivals of Mysticism." "Christ" would thus represent the "Seventh from Adam" of these cycles; but a "Second Coming" was necessary for the full comprehension of the Christ-idea by the world. The eighth cycle, A.D. 700 to 1,300, saw the permeation of Christendom by the doctrine, at once Hermetic and Christian, formulated under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, and the acceptance by both the Eastern and Western Churches of the mystical presentation of Christianity.

The ninth cycle—A.D. 1,300 to the present time—witnessed another great advance in the same direction in the rise of the "Scholastic Philosophy,"—a movement largely contributed to by the Arabian school of Mysticism, which under the Mohammedan régime had meanwhile attained a notable development—the Hermetic doctrine of Dionysius receiving everywhere the fullest recognition as constituting the esoteric truth, not only of Christianity, but of religion itself. The illumination of this cycle—which was at the time regarded as a Messianic advent, and like the present one had been predicted as such—was followed, like all the rest, by an obscuration, or "fall," of the spiritual consciousness, through the usual cause—the materialistic and idolatrous tendencies of the priesthood. And it is the restoration from this fall that is immediately represented by the present revival of Mysticism.

The significant characteristics of these events—the true character and mutual relation of which, if not the very existence of the series constituted by them, are now being indicated for the first time—are (1) the recovery or promulgation of a doctrine either secret, forgotten, or lost. (2) The identity in all cases of this doctrine. (3) Its Hermetic character. (4) The regular periodicity of its recurrence; and (5) the identity of the method of its recovery, as related of all those who have been instrumental in it, whether in the past or the present—namely, by means of intuitional perception and recollection.

Conspicuous among the numerous tokens of the influence now once more operative in the world to the same end, are that remarkable and otherwise inexplicable phenomenon, modern Spiritualism, which, however, belongs to Occultism rather than to Mysticism; and the action taken by the present Pope in regard to Catholic education. For in restoring, as he has done, the teaching of Aquinas to be henceforth the basis of ecclesiastical education, he is ministering directly—whether consciously or not—to the establishment of the mystical and Hermetic system of interpretation; as distinguished from the historical and sacerdotal, and therein to that which it is the chief aim of this Society to promote—namely, the final establishment of religion upon its proper "Rock," the Understanding.

The paper concluded by a summary of the doctrines of the Religion of the Future as thus foreshadowed, and was followed by the usual conversational discussion.

* For a fuller account of this method of interpretation see "The Perfect Way" and "How the World came to an End in 1881."

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

MRS. RICHMOND'S INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSES.—Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond delivered her second discourse of the present season, the subject being "The Soul of Man, and its Immortal Destiny," at the Town Hall, Kensington, on Sunday evening last, to an appreciative audience. Many who arrived late were not able to obtain admission, the hall being full. It was stated that there could be no higher theme for human contemplation, no thought so absorbing and all engrossing to the mind of man, as the contemplation of immortality. This inquiry has interested men in all ages, and its very existence is an evidence of the reality of immortality. Materialists say that even matter is eternal. How much more, then, should it be said that that which comprehends and analyses matter is eternal? The expression of the soul may change, but change is not death; change is life, and the changing forms of being expressed by nature illustrate that life is eternal. The seed was something before it became a seed; the blossom is not all that there is of being in its own existence. It proceeds from the bud, goes on to fruition, again to be carried forward to manifold expressions of life. The very laws of physical phenomena point to immortality, to a living intelligence controlling them, to a something more than a mere combination of atoms. God builds the outward structure of the material universe, and the soul, though finite in its capacity but endowed with the attributes of Deity, builds the outward structure of the body for its habitation, its experience, and its expressions. The soul wears the semblance of the Divine, and introduces into human existence the elements of love, faith, hope, and prophecy. The soul, manifesting itself as eternal in its power and possession, is only here transiently, occupying for a time this tenement of clay, using perfectly or imperfectly the physical organism, to the end that each individual consciousness may become aware of its immortal nature even while on earth. After the discourse, an impromptu poem was given on "The Death of General Gordon," being the subject chosen by the audience. It was announced that the discourse on Sunday evening next, the 31st inst., would be on "The Soul, Spirit, and Mind of Man: their Nature and Destiny."

WALWORTH ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 43, MANOR-PLACE, WALWORTH-ROAD.—Mr. Robson being unwell, and not able to attend, Mr. James Veitch took his place, and delivered a lecture on "Ancient and Modern Spiritualism," on Sunday evening last. Spiritualism, *i.e.*, the knowledge of, in contradistinction to the belief in, immortality, he contended, existed amongst the various nations of the ancient world. Grecian history, as testified by Herodotus, was full of interventions on the part of disembodied beings. The Delphic oracles, the daemon or spirit guide of Socrates, could be explained on no other ground. Numerous instances were given from the history of other nations to show its connection with modern Spiritualism. On Sunday next Mr. James Veitch will speak on "Faith Healing."

GLASGOW.—Spiritualists' Hall, 2, Carlton-place, Sunday, 17th May.—On this occasion the instructors of Mrs. Wallis discoursed on "The Mission and Teachings of Jesus," to an attentive and appreciative audience.—On Sunday, 24th inst., the instructors of Mr. E. W. Wallis replied to a printed sermon by the Rev. Dr. De Witt Talmage on the question: "Is there a Hell?" The subject attracted a crowd of strangers, and the hall was well filled. The guides were very vigorous, and successful in handling the subject.—On Tuesday, 26th inst., at eight o'clock, a meeting was held under the auspices of the "Fraternal Discussion Union," a recently instituted adjunct to the Society, when a paper was read by Mr. Munro bearing on the favourite dictum of optimism, "Whatever is, is right." A keen but friendly discussion followed.—On Sunday, 31st inst., it is intended to have a Floral Service at the hall in commemoration of the passing into spirit life of one of the Society's members, Mr. Urquhart. This event happened some ten days ago, suddenly; and much sympathy is naturally felt, not only for the departed, but for those whom he has left behind. The members have been appealed to in support of this project, which, if carried out in the way suggested, is calculated to effect a good impression of the views of Spiritualists concerning death and the life hereafter. It is expected the guides of both Mr. and Mrs. Wallis will take part in the proceedings. Next week's notes will report the service when it shall have transpired. The subject of discourse for the occasion will be: "Social States in Spirit Life," by Mr. Wallis's guides.—St. MUNGO.

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 sances, 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 sance.

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 Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Fricse, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

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

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; 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.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—"Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent."

PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—"I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me."

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.—"I have for many years known that these phenomena are real, as distinguished from impostures; and it is not of yesterday that I concluded they were calculated to explain much that has been doubtful in the past; and, when fully accepted, revolutionise the whole frame of human opinion on many important matters."—*Extract from a Letter to A. Russel Wallace.*

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—"Far from abating my confidence in the inferences respecting the agencies of the spirits of deceased mortals, in the manifestations of which I have given an account in my work, I have, within the last nine months" (this was written in 1858), "had more striking evidences of that agency than those given in the work in question."

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—"I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. In short, the testimony has been so abundant and contemporaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up."—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

PROFESSOR GREGORY, F.R.S.E.—"The essential question is this: What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? Although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel on some others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. . . . I believe that if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to I should be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging of the truth of the spiritual theory."

LORD BROUGHAM.—"There is but one question I would ask the author, Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest

faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism."—*Preface by Lord Brougham to "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE report: "1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person. 3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications."

PROFESSOR BARRETT, F.R.S.E.—"I know and rejoice in the blessing Spiritualism has been to my own faith, and to that of several dear friends of mine. Moreover, I cordially recognise the fact that in bereavement and deep distress numbers have been cheered and consoled by the hope that Spiritualism has set before them. . . . So far from Materialism being true, I do not believe a single person has ever yet lived on this earth who has truly and heartily desired to know if an intelligent and personal existence be possible without our present bodily organism, and has steadily set himself to solve this supreme question with all the help he can gain from every source.—I say, I do not believe any such earnest seeker after truth has ever failed to obtain a clear and definite answer in the affirmative."

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—"I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated 'magnetic,' 'somnambule,' 'mediumic,' and others not yet explained by science to be 'impossible,' is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to."

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—"Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possibility of trickery and self-deception. . . . He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: "Other and numerous phenomena have occurred, proving the existence (a) of forces unknown to science; (b) the power of instantly reading my thoughts; (c) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. . . . That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late now to deny their existence."

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, F.R.S.—"My position, therefore, is that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are proved, quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences, and it is not denial or quibbling that can disprove any of them, but only fresh facts and accurate deductions from those facts. When the opponents of Spiritualism can give a record of their researches approaching in duration and completeness to those of its advocates; and when they can discover and show in detail, either how the phenomena are produced or how the many sane and able men here referred to have been deluded into a coincident belief that they have witnessed them; and when they can prove the correctness of their theory by producing a like belief in a body of equally sane and able unbelievers—then, and not till then, will it be necessary for Spiritualists to produce fresh confirmation of facts which are, and always have been, sufficiently real and indisputable to satisfy any honest and persevering inquirer."—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.*

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—"The writer" (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) "can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of (so-called) Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as, for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of any legerdmain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience, of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a mere narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil."—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—"No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, Homœopathy, and Mesmerism) deserve to be observed, recorded, and arranged; and whether we call by the name of mesmerism, or by any other name, the science which proposes to do this, is a mere question of nomenclature. Among those who profess this science there may be careless observers, prejudiced recorders, and rash systematisers; their errors and defects may impede the progress of knowledge, but they will not stop it. And we have no doubt that, before the end of this century, the wonders which perplex almost equally those who accept and those who reject modern mesmerism will be distributed into defined classes, and found subject to ascertained laws—in other words, will become the subjects of a science. These views will prepare us for the following statement, made in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1864, p. 336: "We have only to add, as a further tribute to the attainments and honours of Mr. Senior, that he was by long inquiry and experience a firm believer in spiritual power and manifestations. Mr. Home was his frequent guest, and Mr. Senior made no secret of his belief among his friends. He it was who recommended the publication of Mr. Home's recent work by Messrs. Longmans, and he authorised the publication, under initials, of one of the striking incidents there given, which happened to a near and dear member of his family."

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, a 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 authorize 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."