

# Light:

## *A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOSE MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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

### A MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR.

The narrative which follows appeared first in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* of October 10th, 1863, and was republished in the *Spiritual Magazine* of November of the same year, where the name of the "Dr. —" was given as Dr. James G. Davey of Norwood's Lunatic Asylum, near Bristol. Through the courtesy of a correspondent we are now able to add Dr. Davey's corroboration of the affair, together with an account of the subsequent course of events.

The narrative was as follows :—

We have often read of trials having taken place at the instance of ghosts, and it is just possible that one may again occur owing to the alleged revelations of an invisible spirit. The following are the facts which we have heard ; we state them as we have had them from those who, we believe, had no wish to deceive, but we leave the reader to draw his own inference :—Dr. —\*, residing in the neighbourhood of Bristol, had a son educated in his own profession, who received a medical appointment abroad. A few months ago the son resolved to return to England, and sailed by a British vessel bound for the port of London, undertaking to give his services as medical man in return for his passage. When, however, the ship was on its way home, the young surgeon, after a short illness, died ; the captain of the vessel on reaching London communicated with Dr. —, and gave him an account of his son's death, handing him £22, which he said the latter had at the time of his demise ; he also gave Dr. — what he stated to be a copy of the ship's log, in which all the circumstances were regularly given. Dr. — was so pleased with the captain's conduct that he made him a present of a gold pencil-case as a proof of his gratitude for kindness to his son. A few months after this Dr. —, who, from being quite a sceptic in Spiritualism and spirit-rapping, is now a believer in both, was with his wife at a séance of Spiritualists in London, when a great agitation amongst the furniture of the room and other symptoms of spiritual disturbance were noticed, upon which the medium, who is a lady, stated that the apartment was full of spirits, and that the unseen visitors were evidently desirous of making a communication to some one of the company. The medium was then asked to request that the spirit or spirits would give some indication of the person present with whom they wished to communicate. Upon this, a large table, without any apparent agency, was violently moved from the other side of the room, falling on its top close to Dr. —. The spirit was then required, according to the usual fashion, to state who it was, when it rapped out the name of Dr. —'s deceased son, who had died at sea, and who, to the terror of all present, intimated that he had died from poison. Dr. —, wishing to ascertain whether he was or was not deceived, asked the spirit for some evidence of its identity, upon which the unseen visitor intimated the nature of the present which Dr. — had given to the captain, and which he believed could have been

known to no one present. Dr. — then asked if the poisoning was intentional, and the spirit rapped out that it might or might not have been ; a discrepancy, of course, noticed by more than one present. The spirit, however, proceeded to say that he had left £70 when he died, whereas Dr. — only got £22 ; other particulars were entered into, and altogether, Dr. — was so impressed with the revelations that he paid a visit to the wife of the captain of the vessel, who had remained in London, and from whom it was elicited that her husband had stated to her that he feared Dr. —'s son was poisoned, and that, instead of getting some peppermint with some castor-oil when he was ill, he got prussic acid. A copy of the log was obtained from the owners of the ship, and Dr. — found it differed most materially from that handed to him by the captain of the vessel. There were other mysterious circumstances connected with the affair, which we are not at liberty to state, but altogether such strange secrets transpired, and there was something so unsatisfactory about the narrative given by the captain, when it came to be scrutinised, that Dr. —, we hear, has been induced to consult a criminal lawyer with a view to ulterior proceedings.

We give the circumstances without expressing any opinion of our own. We may, however, add that Dr. —, who resides in the neighbourhood of Bristol, is a man of the highest professional and personal respectability.

Dr. Davey, on being written to in October, 1884, wrote as follows :—

4, Redland-road, Bristol.

October 31st, 1884.

DEAR SIR,—It was, I think, in 1863 that I had a son of mine die at sea from poison, when on his passage home from the West Coast of Africa. The matter was, as supposed, duly reported to me by the captain of the ship, but within the year it happened I got to know something of Spiritualism (so-called) and at a séance in London, I learned (from my deceased son) that the report of his death, as it reached me from the captain, was untrue, that in fact his death was due to the steward of the ship, who gave him a quantity of the essence of bitter almonds, in some castor-oil, instead of peppermint, for which he (my son) had asked. Of the money part of the question, I never knew anything, but among my son's effects there were simply a few coppers, though there were good and valid reasons to suppose that he had some £70 in his possession, when he died. "Spiritualism" is a great fact ; from 1863 to this time I have added much to my first knowledge of it, and since 1863 have had many interviews of a PERSONAL CHARACTER with my son.

The facts given by him in 1863 were all verified subsequently, to the evident sorrow and disgust of the captain, who, after a time, avoided me, and hurried himself to sea, lest, as I believe, he should be called to account for his false statements to the Secretary to the Board of Trade.—Faithfully yours,

J. G. DAVEY.

SLATE-WRITING MEDIUMSHIP.—Very many have been convinced of the truth of Spiritualism through the direct writing mediumship of E. C. Watkins. Like most mediums, he has not been financially compensated ; but we are glad to learn by a letter from him, that he has been able to acquire a little farm in Northern Michigan. In his letter he says : "My spirit-guides, desirous of developing independent slate-writing mediumship more extensively, wish me to inform private and undeveloped mediums that if they send to me a lock of hair, or an article of clothing, they will inform them if they can become independent slate-writers." We invite responses to Mr. Watkins, Sylvester, Mecosta County, Michigan. We want a thousand mediums where we have one. From all parts appeals come to us for mediums, through whom some phase of the phenomena can be witnessed and something be learned experimentally of Spiritualism.—*Spiritual Offering*.

\* Dr. J. G. Davey, Norwood's Lunatic Asylum, Bristol.

## THE HERMETIC SOCIETY.

At the ninth meeting of the present session of this Society, on the 24th June, Mr. C. C. Massey read a paper entitled, "Individuality," in which an analysis of so-called "self-consciousness" was attempted, with a view to show that a true separate individuality had not the guarantee of consciousness, the "Ego" being an idea or representation, determined in relation to certain modes of thinking, willing, and feeling. This representation, like every other imagination, was a mental or thought object. It was, however, the central object, about which all the states of consciousness were grouped by association, thus maintaining conscious identity throughout the changes of these states. "The ideal representation, Ego, being once gained by association with a definite consciousness, has become a real power of maintaining this particular content as the character and will of the individual. It, this idea, is the central point to which the habitual modes of consciousness are attached. This imaginary self is all that consciousness ever informs us of as to our individuality. If, for instance, I am insane or in a dream, and imagine myself to be a king, or a wolf, you would say that is an illusion superinduced upon my true personality. Nevertheless, for myself, for my own consciousness, that personality is wholly merged and immersed in the imagination, and apart from the latter is for me a mere blank abstraction, with as little meaning or content as is Being ('with a big B'), for some of our philosophers. If you restore me to sanity or waken me, I revive to the belief in another self, associated with another mode of consciousness." It was admitted that this was only an answer to the alleged testimony of consciousness to the individuality. Nor could the proof be found, as was sometimes supposed, in the mere unity of the consciousness, since this, the indispensable condition of all consciousness, contained no principle of differentiation, but merely necessitated a representation of the "subject," which representation, in regard to difference or limitation, was entirely determined by the particular states, or contents, of the consciousness.

The paper proceeded to describe the important change from primary to reflective consciousness which all feeling must undergo in order to be raised from the objective to the subjective rank, and thus to determine the abstract representation, Ego. This reflection was a recognition, a literal re-cognition of the feelings, a mental acknowledgment and appropriation of them, whereby they were raised from their original objectivity in consciousness as mere sensation, and were *thought* as subjective. "The sensation is taken up into the thought by an act of attention, as when one says 'I am cold,' and soon finds the sensation unbearable by reason of this acknowledgment of it." "Some explicit characterisation in the nature of thought is probably necessary to determine a sensation as pleasurable or painful. We may perhaps derive some consolation in regard to our sympathy with animal suffering from the consideration that unthinking beings do not make an afflicted Ego out of their sensations. That animals feel pain at all is perhaps due to an elementary power of thought appropriation. There is no such specific sensation as pain or pleasure; only sensations which are pleasurable or painful, those qualities being added by attribution with reference to a self; that is, they are *thought*."

The application was then made to the dominant psychical feelings which collectively determine the Ego, the result being that the secondary mode of consciousness, reflection or thought, could be detected in the very process of constructing that imaginary entity, the represented self of individuality.

It was then pointed out that metaphysical denial of a true diversity of selfs was quite consistent with recognition of the historical existence of them as organic subjects of evolution and re-incarnation. The self of consciousness might be a fiction, but it was a fiction determined by real states of consciousness; and these might have, and probably had, a very transcendental history. The resemblance of the alleged laws of Karmic re-incarnation to the reciprocal influences of heredity and environment was adverted to. The main thesis of the paper—that the individual Ego is a thought entity determined by reflective consciousness supervening upon the primary—was then applied in explanation of the Buddhist doctrine of destroying individuality by meditation. That was a great advance upon the old ascetic method, and even upon every religious principle which, while condemning the Ego, still recognises it as a *fact*, other, that is, than the creation of consciousness. A thoroughly consistent idealism cannot admit that; and it was the discovery of this idealism which separated the Buddha from his five

ascetic companions, and led to the great meditation beneath the Bodhi-tree—an incident which might also be significant of the very interior process of which it was ostensibly only an external history. Thought can only resolve what thought has created, and the method of Buddhism is psychologically scientific. The root of Egoism was to be extirpated; that root being "attachment" to objects—to objective life. "A perfect intellectual conviction that a thing desired is undesirable makes it difficult for the desire to attain the ideal stage of imagination—re-cognition—without which it is ineffective. No merely ethical principle is comparable for efficacy to this flat contradiction of the reason to the implicit proposition of the desire. For the desire has to gain a certain assent by the mind to the immediate desirability of its object, an assent which, being a mere taking up into the mind of the suggestion of the desire, is quite consistent with moral disapprobation. Accordingly the Buddhist meditations go all directly to the point. Egoity is the summing up of all desires in the will to live, to be an ideal self-positing centre of desires. If we can once for all see this Ego as a fictitious subject of imagination without perplexing ourselves with the further metaphysical question, *whose* imagination, our insight will be experimentally justified, for the hallucination will melt away before the steadfast gaze which it cannot bear. The secret lies in two sentences; the object, the feeling, has, as desire, become subjective: make it object again. As mere object it expires. This objectification of the fictitious "subject" is a casting of it out and off. But out and off *what*?" The answer to this question, which had pertinaciously met them at every turn of the argument, must ultimately be sought in the old Vedantin principle of the one "self within the self"—the same in all. The difficulty in the way here—so far as concerned Buddhism—arose from the disposition of some of our leading authorities on the subject to detach Buddhism from the earlier philosophy of the Upanishads. There was the less warrant for this seeing that one of the latest injunctions of the Buddha himself to his disciples, as reported in the "Book of the Great Decease," was that they should reject all future versions of his words which were not in accordance with the scriptures—the Vedas. Now they knew what generally was the conception to be found there. There was but one self, differentiating by successive and discrete acts of imagination, as in dream on our single plane of consciousness we often split ourselves up into diverse apparently distinct personalities. Thus to find "the self within the self" was to dispel the successive stages of Egoity and therewith the objective fiction. It was not annihilation, not loss of life, but an awakening to the fulness of all life, if only we excluded from the conception of life its active functions—a difficult condition truly. But short of this experience it was impossible to answer the question, What then is the subject to be delivered from the great "delusion of individuality"? "We are not, however, debarred from recognising an affirmative, as well as the negative side in the process itself of this deliverance. A pure subjectivity without content is unthinkable, and yet it is affirmed in the negation of every content which can constitute subjective character. Every negation of the Ego which becomes practical through being speculative is a declaration of *freedom*, and as such is the positing of an indeterminate self. That is just such a self as we are unable to think and to define; nevertheless in the act of positing, through negation of that which we can think and define, it becomes the greatest of realities. Nay, more, if all fictitious individuality is an ideal product (in the sense in which the ideal is *not* the real), the negation of this must be the recovery of a reality transcending thought. The refusal to define Nirvana or the positive substitute for individuality, is thus logically consistent with, and consequent on, the whole proposition of Buddhism, that the thought object has to do with impermanence and unreality."

The paper concluded: "To one who has entered into the spirit of Indian thought it is almost amusing to hear people oppose to its principle their profound sense and conviction of their own distinct personalities. For it is just in this very sense and conviction that personality consists; it is the self-consciousness. Deep, truly, is that dream, nor is its fabric baseless. But not to know that it is a dream is just that Avidya (Ignorance), from which there can be no awakening. But the dream has many stages, the Avidya many degrees. So let no one fear the loss of his individuality; for as long as he desires it, as long as he believes in it, he will not, for he *cannot* lose it. For it is that belief: it originates, and re-originates in that desire."

The above is an abstract of a considerably longer paper. In



the course of the discussion which ensued, it was objected (by the President) that the distinction between individuality and personality—the mere “mask” of the individual—had not been sufficiently kept in view; and (by Mr. Roden Noel) that the reader of the paper had not succeeded in showing how objective differences could ever be derived from an unity which did not subjectively contain them. To the first objection it was replied that in the view presented, the distinction could be only one of degree; the individuality, relatively to the personality, would be a deeper and more permanent Ego, but would still be resolvable into the higher unity of the only self. The answer to Mr. Noel was that it was the separate egoistic representation of differences which was said to be finally resolvable; the differences themselves might metaphysically or eternally pre-exist, and be manifested ultimately as functions in an universal organism—but the separate self-consciousness of a function would be disease. The self-consciousness of them all would be the single cerebral one.

Observations on the paper were made by Mr. Percy Wyndham, Mr. Maitland, and others, and the proceedings terminated at the usual hour.

### RECORDS OF PHENOMENA WANTED.

We shall be pleased to receive from our readers brief reports of phenomena subject to two conditions. (1) That a colourless statement of facts without comment is given; and (2) that communications are accompanied by the names and addresses of those concerned, not necessarily for publication, though we should naturally prefer to be at liberty to publish them. Amongst the phenomena referred to may be mentioned:—

Mesmerism.	Haunted Houses.
Trance.	Communion with the Departed.
Clairvoyance.	Materialised Spirit Forms.
Thought-reading.	The Spirit Rap.
Previsional and Coincidental	The Spirit Voice.
Dreams.	Spirit Writing.
Apparitions.	Automatic Writing.
The Human “Double.”	Movement of Material Objects
Presence at a Distance.	without Physical Contact.

Friends having had experience of any of these phenomena will be doing us a service if they will report them to us, giving—

- (1) The names and addresses of the persons concerned.
- (2) The circumstances under which the phenomena took place.
- (3) A brief account of the occurrence.

Letters should be addressed to the Editor of “LIGHT,” 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross.

PROGRESS is a law of nature. Man is but a part of a universal system of things. He cannot get out of nature, nor out of the tides of universal life which are ever flowing from the Infinite Fountain of Being. All things grow up towards the light—the beautiful flower turns its head following the course of the life-bestowing sun; the tree grows with its top toward the sky; human nature tends in the ultimate ever Divine-ward.—S. J. FINNEY.

**CURE BY SPIRIT POWER.**—Undert his heading the *Spiritual Offering* publishes the following, with its legal verification. “In the cause of truth and in gratitude to our kind benefactor, we solemnly state the following facts. Our boy, Pardner Gorman, had been suffering for three months with cerebro-spinal meningitis. He was attended by three good physicians, until they said nothing more could be done, and we daily expected he would be released by death. Business calling me to Potsdam, N.Y., my friend there, Stephen Grover, told me to go about my son to Dr. Loukes, for he had saved a boy suffering from the same disease. I went, and he would have visited him, but for the distance, twenty miles. Seeing my sadness, he said, ‘Let us see what can be done, come with me.’ He led me to two darkened rooms; told me to sit in one, while he shut himself into the other. In a short time he came to me, saying, ‘We have treated your son; he is better; he will get well.’ On returning home I found him sitting up in bed talking cheerily to his mother. He got better. When he was able to go out, he took a chill, through which he relapsed. I returned to Dr. Loukes, and he did as before. He is now well. No medicines were used. This is unexplainable by us as well as marvellous, only being equalled by Bible miracles of old.—Thomas Gorman. Witness, H. E. Irish.” “On this 1st day May, 1885, before me came Thomas Gorman known to me to be the individual who executed the above, and acknowledged that he executed the same.—L. Robinson, Notary Public, South Colton, N.Y.”

### CORRESPONDENCE.

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

#### Astrology.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—Even had I not to answer questions put expressly to me by your correspondent “Ebor,” I would be the first to thank him for his valuable suggestion with a view to the collection of data, and the comparison of experience, in astrology. I may mention that an astrological society, of which I was a member, was formed some years ago, but was not sufficiently known, and soon ceased to exist. What is most wanted now, I think, is for a few persons who are students of the subject, and familiar with its rules and methods, to agree upon some principle of investigation, and engage in the collection of sufficient data for each head of inquiry undertaken. There could then be a division of labour with the object of arriving at a valid induction, should the results justify that, or of showing how far the elements of a true “science” really exist. I have long pursued a method of my own, which I believe offers the only means of scientific verification; and I have lately obtained satisfactory affirmative results, but I am stopped for want of data, which are required in an abundance not obtainable by any single individual without much greater energy and steady persistence than I possess. And I must add that negative results, or the very small constant margin of affirmative ones in excess of the arithmetical probabilities, have rather discouraged me. Still the margins are usually there, as far as I have gone, but the labour is great, and co-operation much required.

As to the “directions” referred to by “Ebor,” I have studied, and believe in them—both the primary and the secondary—to some extent. But that any particular direction means a particular event, without regard to other very complex considerations in the horoscope, cannot be affirmed. The tendency, as fortunate or the reverse, is the most that can be predicted, except by a judgment of rare comprehension, acuteness, and experience. The rapt parallels are esteemed amongst the most powerful of the primary directions (the semi-arc method), and I believe I have found them to be so. But being formed upon the “angles” of the figure, they also require great exactitude in the time of birth, or the time of the event will be too divergent to enable us to prove the connection. And one weakness of the “science” is, that during the many centuries of its cultivation, eminent authorities have adopted different measures of time. That, however, was no doubt greatly due to the ambition to obtain a closer temporal coincidence between the direction and the event than the conditions admitted. As to the parallels named by “Ebor” signifying death, it is to be observed that astrologers do not predict death from any single direction, but require a “train” of evil directions, concurrent within two or three years. Certainly, I have known rapt parallels of one or other of the “infortunes” with the sun or moon fall within two or three months of the death, according to the usual measure of time adopted now—a year for a degree of arc. But I should not say the direction “caused” the death, or that the astrological connection was proved, without a more constant coincidence of the two things than can be truly alleged. I have always protested against the practice of writers on astrology giving a lot of affirmative cases without the least apparent perception of the elementary principle that selected instances prove nothing at all. If that were allowed it would be easy to demonstrate that thunder storms always happen on a Friday, or any other nonsense.

As to the secondary directions, I have also paid a good deal of attention to them, especially lately, and think them capable of verification. The school of astrology which may be described as the orthodox one, and which is at present represented by Mr. Alfred J. Pearce, the able author of the “Text Book of Astrology,” “Science and the Stars,” &c., considers them as operative only for a few weeks (as is probable), and by themselves of quite minor importance (which I doubt). On the other hand, “Raphael,” who can quote eminent old authority for his view, consults them exclusively, and by a method of his own, which is ingenious and plausible, but on which I am not much disposed to rely. I suspect that modes of divination by astrology, giving true results, may often be confounded with directions; and that may have also led to many of the Arabian subtleties, now usually discarded. On the other hand, I have

long been tending to the opinion that there is one and the same truth of nature underlying all the branches of astrology, including genethliacal and "horary" or divinatory. For instance, I do not think the "lordship" of the "houses" can have significance in horary astrology, yet none at all in horoscopolical.

Before concluding this rather discursive letter, I should like to notice one fact which tends to show that astrology is really a science of observation, and not merely of tradition. That is the specific influence ascribed to Uranus. This planet having only been discovered within a little over a hundred years, it is remarkable that all astrologers are now agreed that directions to him denote events of a sudden and unexpected (usually sinister) character—catastrophes in general. I have myself observed striking instances of this, and have considerable belief in it. It will be highly interesting and important to ascertain what experience reveals about the astrological influence of Neptune. We have had about forty years of possible observation, and should begin to know something about him. I have somewhere read that the discovery of a new planet coincides with an epochal development of a character correspondent to that of the planet. The revolutionary era would thus have been denoted by Uranus; and it has been suggested that Neptune is associated with a new ideal era.

C. C. M.

#### The Historic Jesus of Nazareth.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am grateful to Mr. Roden Noel for his testimony in favour of the doctrine of the "Personal Christ," in answer to the teaching of the leaders of the Hermetic Society, who would appear to desire to place themselves among "those false prophets who deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh."—1 John iv. 2.

That Agnostics, who deny the supernatural, should, because of the miraculous element in the history of Jesus, assert that the history is mythical, is easily understood; but that those should do so who believe in Modern Spiritualistic phenomena, in which may be found a replica of almost every miracle attributed to Jesus, is difficult to understand or to excuse.

That there may be a few discrepancies in the details of the Four Gospels may be admitted, although I assert that there is not one discrepancy of importance. But these few verbal discrepancies are to me a confirmation of the genuineness of the historic records: for had these been fabricated, the authors would have carefully compared the texts and rendered them exact in all details.

We all know how it has been "proved" that the first Napoleon never existed, because all his biographers not only differ in matters of detail but in essentials, one characterising him as an almost infallible demigod and another describing him as a vulgar charlatan, and yet I suppose there does not exist one living being who doubts that Napoleon was a real personage.

Again, take any event occurring in our day, and you will find all the morning papers which have not taken their narrative from the same reporter, vary not only in matters of detail, but often in essential matters, eliciting letters of protest from those concerned.

That the historic Jesus, as a bare fact, may have little influence on the souls of men, most thinking men will admit; and that the doctrine of the potentiality of the Christ in Man is the essence of Christian Theosophy, all Christian mystics will at once admit.

To deny, on the other hand, the historic Christ, is to assert that the Christ of God, the Divine Son or Word, has never fully possessed and transmuted any human being on this planet; and to assert, as the writer in to-day's "LIGHT" does, that successive re-incarnations are necessary to the regeneration as by water and the Spirit, is to assert that of which we have no scientific proof or historic confirmation in the history of the human race.

True, perhaps some men and women may, by self-biologising, believe that they remember their former incarnations, but there have existed since the days of Jesus about fifty thousand millions of human beings who never had any knowledge whatever of any such process.

Those who have passed into deep trance often say, "The reality and solidity of the spirit life infinitely transcends that of the flesh." And so it seems to me that Jesus the Christ was and is the most intense human personality, in all we know of the universe.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

#### "The Resurrection Body."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In a letter signed "Lily," which appears in "LIGHT" for June 6th, a very theatrical performance described in very theatrical language is attributed to Liebig on the authority of Dr. N. B. Wolfe. It is stated that Liebig having invited his faithful students to the "temple of science," there and then proceeded to "dissolve by chemicals" a human body, to reduce its one hundred and forty-five pounds of matter to an "impalpable elementary condition," and to scatter the same upon the "viewless air."

Now it is said that Liebig occasionally perpetrated and published "tall" scientific jokes, and I am inclined to think it possible that Dr. N. B. Wolfe has got hold of the wrong end of one of these. Of course, anyone who chooses to exercise the requisite care and patience can dissolve a human or any other organised body into its ultimate elements. Granted that the decomposition of the matter composing a human body was to be demonstrated, no chemist, and least of all Liebig, would have set about it in the manner described, or with the quantity of material mentioned. Neither would he, nor any other "earthly" operator, have been enabled to spread the whole of the elements of that body in the gaseous form upon the "viewless air," as some of them are not amenable to that process, either in their free state or in their various combinations; neither did he reduce anything to an impalpable condition, because gases are perfectly palpable forms of matter as it is known to us. We are told that "the process was slow." No doubt it was—very. Since "chemicals" (a magical word) were used to attain the desired result, a considerable time must have been required, and the "viewless air" must have been rendered vastly unpleasant for the noses and the lungs of the "intensely interested" spectators.

In bringing such knowledge as we possess of matter and its laws to bear upon the investigation of the difficult and intricate phenomena of Spiritualism, it should be remembered that success in this direction can only be attained by those who have special knowledge, and that nothing will be gained, and much may be lost, if those who are not thus qualified make the attempt.

—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

June 23rd, 1885.

A SPIRITUALIST AND A CHEMIST.

#### Liebig's Experiment.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reference to "A Spiritualist's" letter in your last issue, will you allow me to say that the result of my inquiries amongst men of practical science, is in exact opposition to "A Spiritualist," viz.: "that there is no doubt that Liebig's alleged successful experiment is a possible one," as I stated in general terms in my previous letter. Therefore as men of science, like doctors, disagree, we have only to wait for Dr. Wolfe's reference to that work of Liebig's from which he has taken the record of this experiment, and which having been related and published by him in such full detail, can hardly be the result of his own imagination.—I beg to remain, sir, faithfully yours,

June 27th.

"LILY."

#### THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XXXIV.

[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."]

The gathering of facts is the beginning of all true science and philosophy. The appeal to the readers of "LIGHT" must, therefore, bring good results. An American periodical with the title of *Facts* is doing this work of collecting and recording the phenomenal basis of Spiritual Philosophy. American secular newspapers of the first class freely, and even eagerly, publish well-authenticated accounts of spiritual manifestations. Here we must for the present rely chiefly upon our own journals.

\* \* \*

One curious "fact" respecting Spiritualism must not be lost sight of. It is that many of those who know are not very anxious that others should be in the same position. So far from wishing to gather and publish facts they are not only satisfied but a little tired of the phenomenal. "Why multiply facts? We have enough of them. Give us what they are meant to teach."



We must recognise also this mental condition. One fact may be as good as a thousand when we are sure of it.

\* \* \*

Only, there are many millions of people, scattered over the earth, to all of whom these facts are of interest. We do not know why they have come to us at this time—we do not know that they will be continued. Here they are—here and now; and they should be carefully observed, carefully recorded, widely published for the benefit of present and future generations. We are told that spirit manifestations will become more and more common and perfect, so that the great fact of immortality will be one of daily observation—known of all men. On the other hand, many look upon Spiritualism, as it now exists, as a passing phase of life, the records of which may be of infinite value to future generations.

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Consider how different it would be from what we call "Christendom" if the art of printing had existed twenty centuries ago, and newspapers had been published in Jerusalem. Consider how valuable our now recorded facts may be to those who live two thousand years hence. Only, the wonder will be that they were not printed in the *Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and all the daily, weekly, and monthly periodicals. And when our remote descendants read the testimony of scientists like Crookes, Wallace, or Zöllner, they will wonder why such facts were neglected by Darwin, Huxley, and Tyndall.

\* \* \*

Our duty to the present and all future generations is clear and imperative. It is to carefully observe, record, and publish the facts of the spirit manifestations of our time. So we pay our debt for whatever the past has given us. So we make up for past neglects. But we can never sufficiently regret that there were no daily and weekly newspapers printed in Egypt, in the days of Moses. What trouble it might have saved that good Bishop Colenso, who for the want of such testimony was banished to the Zulus! In the meantime we must comfort ourselves with Moses and the Prophets in a revised translation.

\* \* \*

I am obliged to the anonymous editor of *The Occult Magazine* for three numbers, 3 to 5, the previous ones being out of print—and therefore specially occult. It is a penny "monthly journal," published because "until the present time, advanced thinkers have had no European special organ for the elucidation of Mystical Philosophy; for the leading Spiritual papers are of necessity compelled to devote most of their space to matter pertaining to their own branch of Psychology."

\* \* \*

I don't quite see it. A Spiritualist paper deals with spirit in all its manifestations—only when a thing is manifest it ceases to be occult. The evident object of Spiritualism is to reveal what is ordinarily hidden. The mission of "LIGHT" is to remove darkness. When we throw light upon Occultism it ceases to be occult.

\* \* \*

And then, if "in Occultism the existence and immortality of man's spirit can be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid," what need can we have of phenomena, either of Occultism or Spiritualism? When a proposition is as clear as that two and two make four, or that the three angles of every triangle are equal to two right angles, where is the need of facts?

\* \* \*

The occult—"hidden, invisible, secret, unknown, undiscovered, undetected" (Webster)—we certainly have little occasion for; and when anything is brought (or sent) to "LIGHT" it ceases to be occult. The moment a spirit manifests by materialisation, or in any way, he ceases to be occult. The very object of spirit manifestation is to destroy Occultism. It is the hidden (occult) things of darkness (Occultism) that are being revealed by Spiritualism in fulfilment of prophecy.

\* \* \*

For all its occultness the *Occult Magazine* is quite worth reading. Some of its facts are very striking, and some are droll. I read, for example, that morning service at the Canterbury Cathedral sometimes begins with only the official staff, and ends with a congregation of two persons—while the salary of the non-resident Archbishop is £15,000 a-year—the services, including prayers against the Mahdi, being occult enough for anything. The Japanese fashion of writing prayers and praises on wheels, moved by wind or water, is more economical, and may be more effective.

\* \* \*

Here is another bit of pious Occultism—or thereabouts:

"A clergyman writes to the *Church Times* that he was the first to use incense in Protestant Episcopal worship, and promises to ring into Heaven any five virgins [wise or foolish?] who will give him the money to buy five chiming bells."

\* \* \*

Here also is a good account of a debate in a theological seminary. After four hours' controversy there was a tie on the question: "Suppose a prayer on a formal occasion is read from a printed slip, and a typographical error completely ruins the proper sense, will Providence receive the petition as read, or as originally written?" Talk about Occultism, after that!

\* \* \*

The *Occult Magazine*, which in spite of its occultness is still published, tells us that "the Adept's astral apparition, or double, is a fact, notwithstanding the pool-pools and sneers of the vain-glorious and conceited. Few, comparatively speaking, have the chance of seeing such a splendid sight, for the magnetic aura of humanity in general—with its steaming fumes of sensuality and spiritual atrophy—debars by magnetic repulsion the visible presence of the Master. Under very favourable conditions, however, they sometimes approach to individuals who are earnestly devoted to occult studies; but of course other living persons, apart from the Adepts, can project their double, so as to appear at a distance from their bodies. Peruse the works of Glanvil, Ennemoser, Crowe, Owen, Howitt, Des Mousseaux, &c., &c., and you will find many instances. At rare times the doubles talk, sometimes they wander whilst the subject's body is asleep, sometimes whilst awake, and very often the apparition is the forerunner of death."

\* \* \*

Several yards of the columns of the *Chicago Religio-Philosophical Journal* are occupied with a review by William Emmett Coleman, of the exposure of Madame Blavatsky and the miracles of Theosophism in the letters of Madame Coulomb. The letters said to have been written by Madame Blavatsky, on which are based the accusations of fraud and various duplicities, are denounced by her as forgeries. The strongest point in her favour, with those who have not the advantage of her personal acquaintance, appears to be the testimony of her distinguished coadjutor, Colonel Olcott, to whose character and mediumistic work, especially the exercise of the gift of healing, we have the highest testimony.

\* \* \*

There is no need of coming to hasty conclusions in these matters. In our criminal jurisprudence it is a maxim that every accused person is to be considered innocent until he is proven guilty—and even the verdicts of juries are sometimes wrong, and innocent persons are imprisoned or hanged. Perhaps the best we can do is to leave the wonderful Adepts of Thibet to the judgment of their peers, while we examine what is within our reach, the manifestations of spirit power in the presence of our own mediums on both sides of the Atlantic, with such testimony as we had last week from Mr. Meugens, of Calcutta, now making explorations in America. As a clear-headed man of business, he seems to us a thoroughly reliable witness.

\* \* \*

The spirit of Mr. Coleman's article can hardly be called judicial. He says: "By the testimony of the Theosophists themselves, Madame Blavatsky is a wholesale liar. How then does proving Coulomb a liar clear Blavatsky? It is not the Coulombs' unsupported statements that convict Blavatsky; it is the damning evidence of her own letters; and so far I have not seen a particle of substantial evidence that they are not genuine. I shall try and get the committee's report and see if anything is adduced worthy of being called evidence, indicative of the Madame's innocence. If she is innocent, certainly a woman of her intellectual shrewdness ought to be able to produce some evidence of that fact; and if aught of that nature is adduced I shall take pleasure, as an act of justice, in presenting it to the readers of the *Journal*. As it now stands, however, I am forced to believe the letters genuine and their authors guilty of systematic fraud."

MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND'S WORK IN ENGLAND.—The guides of Mrs. Richmond wish to announce that their medium will be at liberty to make engagements to speak in the provinces between July 12th and September 20th. The London series closes on 12th July, but will be resumed in September provided the committee receive sufficient support. Appointments: Halifax, August 23rd; Leeds, August 30th; other places in correspondence. Letters to be addressed to the care of Mrs. Strawbridge, 11, Blandford-square, N.W.

All Communications to be addressed to  
**THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"**  
 16, CRAVEN STREET,  
 CHARING CROSS, S.W.

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## Light :

SATURDAY, JULY 4TH, 1885.

### INFERENCE AND PERSONAL OBSERVATION.

Apparently impossible as are the phenomena of what is termed the materialisation of spirit-forms, and the production of independent writing in various languages within closed and fastened slates and books, to the uninitiated, they are, nevertheless, of almost daily occurrence; and recognising their genuineness as we do, we fail to see that they are a whit more marvellous and inexplicable than are the supposed facts, and inferences deduced from many of the facts, which occupy the attention of scientists.

Scientists, in view of well-observed cosmical phenomena, generally believe that the sun, earth, and all stars, planets, and nebulae, were, at some period in the immeasurable past, rotating masses of highly-heated gaseous matter; that by a process of cooling and consequent consolidation, those masses assumed a more or less solid spheroidal form; that after having rotated millions, or it may be billions of years, rings, and finally spheres were thrown off, which in their present stage of consolidation form suns, planets, and moons, such as probably belong to the millions of star systems now visible, or as yet invisible to man in the infinitude of space.

Scientists further believe that under certain physical combinations and conditions of matter, life was evolved, at first in a low and feeble form; that by development and evolution differentiation gradually increased, and that now all forms of animal and vegetable life on the surface of this and unnumbered millions of other worlds, are the offspring of primal protozoal organisms, which by a process at present inexplicable, made their appearance on every developed world, and that from what may be termed inanimate matter, there sprang simple organic vital forms, which, after passing through protozoa, coelenterata, articulates, mollusca, fish, amphibia, reptilia, bird, marsupial, and quadrupedal mammalia, at last culminated in the flower of organic creation, Man—man in a low, rude, savage and unintellectual state at first, but finally man who in the long process of the ages has culminated in the philosophers, poets and metaphysicians of the historical era.

All these opinions are inferences deduced from observations on solar and planetary motions, resting on Laplace's Nebular hypothesis; and from biological and paleontological researches based on the order of the introduction of vegetable and animal life, founded on the testimony of the rocks; and from the embryonic and other researches of biologists, in reference to the primal development of man and other animals. This is, however, little more than inference, as in no single instance in the records of the past, or in the experience of the present, has the evolutionary transition been observed. Slight modifications in form and colour have been observed, such as we see daily in the human

family; but any change such as the advance of a fish to an amphibian, an amphibian to a true reptile, a reptile to a bird, never!—although in paleontology, the apparently connecting links between fish and reptile, reptile and bird, are often disentombed. The real transition, however, has not yet been observed, and has not been historically recorded.

The doctrine of evolution, therefore, is a doctrine founded on inferences, based upon the relations of observed facts, extending through countless millenniums of time, and is never in a single instance the result of the observational experience of a single man.

Do we deny, then, inferences? Not by any means. We rather accept them as legitimate inductions from the consideration of ancient and modern facts.

Inferences from an extensive, and, as is freely acknowledged, a very incomplete body of facts, are justifiable, if the facts as far as they are known point in one direction. But inferences from observed and frequently repeated phenomena, that can at almost any time be reproduced, and may now be observed by any man of a judicial and critical mind, are far more valuable as a basis for theory than inferences from facts indiscriminately scattered over the face of the earth, which require the longest life and most devoted industry to examine a limited number of them. A scientific man is bound, therefore, to establish his theories on his own relatively limited observations, and on the testimonies of others whose powers of observation and truthfulness are only problematical.

If the scientific world can accept evolution as a theory to explain the life-history of the universe—a theory which contains many millions of more unbelievable marvels than the materialisation of visible human forms out of invisible matter, or the writing within closed slates or books, which may be observed by any rational man—why should the leaders of science not examine the alleged facts of Modern Spiritualism, and from observations rather than from mere prejudices and preconceptions deduce their inferences? If such a course were followed the result is not difficult to be foreseen by those who are familiar with the facts.

THE Earl of Dunraven, a Spiritualist of many years' standing, has been appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary for the Colonies in the new Ministry.

WE regret to learn that M. Tissot has been very ill since his return to Paris, but we are happy to announce his complete restoration to his usual health.

"A NEW BASIS OF BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY," by Mr. John S. Farmer, has been translated into, and will shortly be published in, the German language. The translator is Count Schonfeldt, a half-brother of the Prince Liechtenstein.

IT is no secret, we believe, that several members of the new Cabinet, in addition to others in the Government, are favourably disposed to Spiritualism. Surely it ought not to be a difficult matter, with so much influence, to get the obnoxious Witchcraft Act repealed.

A SPIRITUALIST and journalist of many years' standing, desires to engage in literary work of any kind. Manuscripts prepared for and put through the Press. Compilations, abstracts, and critiques supplied, &c. References to Rev. W. Stainton Moses, M.A. ("M.A. Oxon."), Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, of National Press Agency, and many others.—Address, A.B., care of the Editor of "LIGHT," 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, S.W.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—A general meeting of this Society will be held on Friday, July 10th, at the rooms of the Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, London, S.W. The chair will be taken at 8.30 p.m. The meeting, which will be partly of a conversational character, is open to members and associates, who are at liberty to invite friends. Members and associates will be admitted on writing their names at the door. Persons who do not belong to the Society will be admitted on the production of an invitation-card, duly filled in with one or more names, and signed by a member or associate. Edward T. Bennett, Secretary, 14, Dean's Yard, Westminster, S.W.



## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

On Thursday evening, June 26th, a *Conversazione* of the Alliance was held at the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall. There was a large and influential gathering of Spiritualists and friends to welcome the President, Mr. W. Stainton Moses, after his long and severe illness, and to listen to an address from Mr. Thomas Shorter entitled, "Modern Spiritualism: the Progressive Development of its Phenomena." Mr. Stainton Moses opened the meeting by the following address:—

## LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

My first duty, and a pleasant one it is, is to express my great thankfulness at being permitted once again to meet my friends here, and to thank them once more for all the kindness they have shown me. If I do not find myself—as alas! I do not—up to the old standard of work, I feel that I can rely on a kindly consideration which has never failed me, and I can honestly promise that no effort of mine that can fairly be made shall be lacking for the furtherance of the end that we all desire—the advancement of an intelligent appreciation of that complex and intricate subject that we call Spiritualism. It has not always been fortunate in its methods of presentation; there is room for improvement there. But it deals with matters that are in their essential nature of absorbing interest, and it touches all that is most momentous to man as an immortal being.

You will expect from me some account of what this Society is doing. We "have done what we could": and I have the highest authority for believing that that record is one to be commended. You are the arbiters; you entrust us with certain powers; we use them as far they will go, to the best of our ability, and at our wisest discretion. That is all that we can do; for, by solemn pledge given at our birth, we may not get into debt, nor do work that is ready to our hands when the material means are not forthcoming.

We have taken a home for ourselves at 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, a very central position, as likely, we think, to be useful to our members as any that we could hit upon. We have placed in a cosy and convenient room the library which, by the grace of the late Central Association of Spiritualists, is now at our disposal. It is at the full service of our members, and it is supplemented by a number of Spiritualist journals of this and other countries, which should be of interest, and which will keep us, at any rate, if we read them, from becoming insular and groovy, and will lead us to a breadth and generosity of interest in our fellows which is much to be desired.

To make this reading-room and library thoroughly useful, and to place its resources fully at the disposal of our members, we need an efficient secretary. We have no such officer; and we cannot at present afford one. It is for you to enable the Council to supply this grave defect, and so to place the resources of the Society unreservedly at the disposal of all our members throughout each day. This we cannot do with the funds which we at present administer. The value of the library and of the reading-room would be so much enhanced by the presence in the room of an intelligent person who could receive visitors, distribute books, and answer inquiries, that I can hardly imagine that the Society will not feel itself impelled to provide such a necessary functionary.

For the rest, the various spheres of usefulness that lie open before us are necessarily left to be tended by private effort, because we have not the means of attacking them. No one who has not been inside the movement—who has not received, as I have done, scores, hundreds, thousands of letters begging for guidance, help, enlightenment—can form any idea of the great craving that there is for spiritual food. The children crying for the bread of life! The cry is ever ringing in my ears! Men and brethren, my friends who have this great truth in your possession, how long is it to go up in vain? I do not for a moment lose sight of the efforts that are being made outside of our own borders to meet this growing want. I am thankful for all agencies for the dissemination of knowledge. But none the less I feel that all combined are miserably inadequate to do the pressing work that ought to be done. There should be no small jealousies in this matter. I, for one, am thankful for any help in doing what seems to me to be a plain duty, and I shall be proud to co-operate with any man who will lend a helpful hand in doing any part of the work that God, in granting us this blessed experience and knowledge, has laid upon every one of us. Stewards we are, one and all of us, entrusted with a

great truth; stewards for the mighty Master, labouring for the great account. There is no room for small jealousies in such a work. We shall meet our account the better in proportion as we discharge our plain responsibilities.

The presence of Mr. Shorter on the platform to-night accentuates what I am saying. We are a society of old Spiritualists, of persons who know what they believe, and who, in virtue of that belief, have plain duties to discharge. The name of Thomas Shorter carries me back to an age with which some of us here present are, perhaps, unfamiliar; to an age that is already historic. When he was working with the cautious care, the thoroughness, and the indefatigable industry which characterised him, he was associated with many great names. "There were giants on the earth in those days." I do not presume to present any historic record. This is not the time nor the place to appraise individual effort, where all laboured for a common cause. But some names rise at once to my lips. There was William Wilkinson, who did so much for the literature of the movement, and with whom Mr. Shorter was so closely associated in the conduct of the *Spiritual Magazine*. There were Mr. and Mrs. Newton Crosland, honoured members of our own Society. There was the venerated name of Mrs. Howitt Watts, now, to our enduring sorrow, removed from our midst, though, as I have good cause to know, not less active in promoting the work that she loved and adorned by her labours. There was her husband, Mr. Alaric Watts, with whom I am proud to stand here to-night. There was William Howitt, whose doughty deeds in defence of our faith are matter of common knowledge, and of universal acknowledgment. There was another of our members, General Drayson, whose scientific acquirements and unvarying readiness in defence of our faith did us, and still does us, such invaluable service. And, not to make the list unnecessarily long, there was Benjamin Coleman, whose shrewd common-sense and firm convictions enabled him to lay Spiritualists under a very deep debt of gratitude for many a battle worthily won. Nor must I omit a reference to two honoured names, long and worthily associated with Spiritualism—Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall. These and many more—for my list in no way pretends to exhaustiveness, nor have I time to enumerate all those honoured names whose praise is familiar in our mouths—these are some of the stars that illuminated the world in this now bygone age.

I have always felt that we are greatly indebted to these early pioneers. They accumulated rich stores of fact which they have handed on to us, a deposit which we hold in trust for the generation that shall in its turn succeed us. They have given to us a coherent system of philosophical exposition, which, if it does not explain all mysteries, does at any rate give a reasonable explanation of the origin, cause, and purpose of these manifestations of the power of spirits. The explanation of the Spiritualist—the Spiritualist hypothesis, we will call it, if you please—has, in my judgment, never been successfully impugned by any efforts of the many divergent schools of thought that have busied themselves with these problems. For myself—unless I must make two exceptions, which in very truth prove the rule, and which are in character and intention, quite exceptional—neither in my own now large experience, nor in what I know of that of other investigators, have I ever known a single case in which a spirit manifesting in any way whatever, at a circle, or to a medium, in public, or in private, ever claimed or pretended to be anything else but the spirit of a departed human being. I think I may have heard some claims to a particular name made by a spirit, which claims seemed to me hardly made out. I have even heard some that are preposterously absurd: Shaksperes desperately illiterate; Miltons both "mute and inglorious." But of the essentially human character of the manifesting intelligence I entertain no sort of doubt. They make good their claim, these manifesting spirits, to be of our brethren, sharers with us in the experiences of earth-life, moulded by its discipline, scarred by its sins and sorrows, constituted as they are by virtue of its myriad and manifold experiences. I am not sure that I can frame any adequate idea of what the deportment of an elemental spirit, or of a spirit which was in fact the astral soul of the medium, ought to be. Nor am I much concerned to speculate. When I find a spirit putting forward any such claim I will study its deportment with all due care. In the meantime, these beings, so far as I have made myself acquainted with them—and I have had many opportunities of so doing—are thoroughly and essentially human. They could not play the part they do if they were anything else. Their knowledge of us and of our humanity, their characteristic foibles, the information they give, the very

blunders that they make sufficiently demonstrate that they are of our stock, men and women with like passions to ourselves. This, I need hardly remind you, is a very strong point in our argument: and it has never, I repeat, been successfully combated since those early days of Spiritualism to which Mr. Shorter's presence carries us back.

This, then, is part of our inheritance from those early days—facts and their explanation. But this does not represent our total debt. These gentlemen whom I have named, and others who stood forth with them, have left to us a brilliant example of manly and simple courage, manifested at a time of no ordinary difficulty. At a time when it needed a brave man to avow a belief that might imperil his reputation, his prosperity, nay, his very sanity in the opinion of his fellows, these men stood forward as the champions of an unpopular cause, and the apostles of unwelcome truth. All honour to them for what they did. They made it possible for their successors to carry on the work which was bequeathed to them. And they have left to this Laodicean age—an age enervated by its prevailing faithlessness, by its corroding Materialism, and its halting, lame Agnosticism,—an example which it sorely needs. This is, unless I greatly mistake, an age across the face of which are written certain dominant notes or characteristics; an instability of purpose which paralyses heroic effort; a listless indifference which strikes at the root of sustained endeavour; and a calculating selfishness which leads a man to attach what in mercantile circles would be called a wholly fancy value to his own comfort and reputation for “safety.” We Spiritualists partake of the spirit of the age. We need stiffening; we want our purposes made more firm. And nothing will do for us what we want so completely as the cultivation of a spirit of simple and sincere self-sacrifice. We may learn somewhat of that lesson from the men of whom Mr. Shorter is to-night representative. I beg, with these introductory remarks, to call upon him to deliver his address.

Mr. SHORTER said:—

My acquaintance with Spiritualism dates from the time of its introduction into this country more than thirty years ago, and by my association with its literature during a large portion of the time, as well as by personal investigation, I have kept myself fairly conversant with its many phases up to the present time. I shall to-night speak wholly of those phenomena which are familiar to us and to which I can personally testify. My object in doing so will be, not to present a history, nor to exhibit the evidence for their occurrence, nor to give an exposition of the philosophy of the subject, but simply to show that these phenomena, in the order in which they have been presented, are not the result of accident; that they did not occur fortuitously; that they are not without a purpose or aim; but that there is a method in their development—a law of evolution to be observed in connection with them no less apparent than that seen in connection with other natural phenomena; in short, that their development has been orderly and progressive.

At the time of which I have spoken, when the subject was first introduced to my notice, Spiritualism was known amongst us only as spirit-rapping and table-moving. These terms were fairly descriptive of it as it was then known, and it is very significant that no adequate account of these phenomena has ever been given to the world. They were then, and still are—though a generation has elapsed—inexplicable to modern science. I need hardly remind you that according to the elements of acoustics sound can only be produced by the impact of one body on another. So long as a body produces no vibration there is no sound. In these rappings we have detonations varying in force and intensity from a faint tick to a blow like that produced with a sledge hammer, and yet of the two factors which science declares to be indispensable to the production of sound only one was present.

So with regard to table moving. It is asserted that no movement can take place except through some form of mechanical force. Yet here heavy bodies were moved without the application of any motor force. It is true that a very eminent professor endeavoured, as he thought, to deal a fatal blow at what began to be called “the new superstition,” by the invention of an ingenious instrument to show that such movements were produced by the unconscious muscular pressure of the sitters. That might apply in those cases where lateral pressure was exerted, but it could have no application in others where an upward movement was observed in opposition to a downward pressure, or where no contact took place. We were told that under these latter conditions the thing could not

possibly happen—that it was impossible according to all known laws of nature. The obvious rejoinder was that, spite of talk about known laws of nature, the phenomenon actually occurred, and it was only rendered more necessary to find a different solution.

Still it might fairly have been contended that if the phenomena were limited to sounds and movements—if there were no intelligence behind them—though they might present an interesting problem or furnish suggestions of a new force which science had not recognised, there would still be nothing in them to make it necessary to seek their explanation beyond the lines of physical causation. When, however, it was found that these phenomena showed obvious signs of intelligence; that they possessed a power of adaptation; that they varied in force at suggestion; that they could respond to questions and give answers; and that these sounds and movements were simply used as a new code of signals; that they could select and arrange letters of the alphabet so as to form words and sentences, and answers to questions relevant to the matter in hand—then it became evident that there was some other force at work than a blind unintelligent power. There were abundant evidences of an agency closely associated with intelligence, and as a stream cannot rise higher than its fountain, so it is evident that no intelligent phenomena can be the production of an unintelligent force; and when it was found that this intelligence uniformly, persistently, and everywhere, affirmed itself to be the agency of departed human beings, of those who had once lived on earth—and very generally the friends of those present—then the whole question at issue between Spiritualism and Sadduceism was raised. It became evident that if the phenomena went no further, here was the manifestation of a power—a new basis of belief, clear, palpable, and capable of verification—popular in its inception, appealing to the great body of men, and, therefore, deserving of the highest consideration.

It was soon manifest that if a new mode of intercourse with the spirit-world had been opened up, that if this intercourse were to be profitably extended, this method was ponderously difficult, and that some more easy mode of intercourse must be provided. The demand was promptly met. It was found that the hands of sensitive persons could be controlled to write automatically, at first with difficulty, but with increasing facility as they became more exercised in this direction. In this way not only answers to questions, but long messages and elaborate treatises, were communicated to the world.

Not only the human hand, but the whole organism, was subject to this control. Some were used for personation, representing by characteristic action, gesture, and deportment, the spirit who desired to be recognised by those present. More frequently still, the vocal organs only would be used, and in this way many messages of sympathy and affection were given to inquiring friends and relatives; and as this control became more perfect, public addresses were delivered, and in some instances poems were improvised on subjects suggested by the audience. To follow up this would lead me into digression, for the trunk line of manifestation here branches out into two directions, and with that which is purely psychical I have here no immediate concern. In these phenomena, as in nature, we have a dual and progressive development, as in the great kingdoms of nature, from the mineral to the vegetable, from the vegetable to the animal and human. And as within each kingdom there is a corresponding interior development from granite to diamond in the mineral kingdom, from moss and lichen to flower and tree in the vegetable kingdom, and in the animal kingdom from zoophyte to mammal, from lowest savage to the highest type of civilised man, so we find a corresponding dual development in the phenomena of which I am speaking. The phenomena grade from the spirit-rap to psychography, and from table movements to form manifestation, and we find in each a corresponding interior development. For instance, the movement of the table was simply the manifestation of the power of spirit to control physical substances. This by natural evolution involved the power of transporting material objects from place to place, and to increasing distances. It also involved the power of spirits to cause what is called matter to pass through matter, or solids through solids, as, for instance, the passage of flowers, fruits, shrubs, snow and ice, and even living organisms, into lighted and warm rooms of which the doors and windows were closed, and all ordinary means by which such things could be imported carefully guarded. So it was with other phenomena. In the case of the visible presentation of the materialised spirit we have first the spirit



hand; then after a time the hand and arm were exhibited. Then spirit faces began to be seen; these at first were vague and indefinite in outline; they gradually, however, became more distinct and individualised. The head and bust were then shown, and lastly the full form, frequently bearing the impress of some departed friend or relative. In all this you will perceive a progressive development. It has followed the natural order, from simple to complex—from lower to higher—from physical to psychical. In all these phenomena there has been a mutual corroboration and confirmation of the claims put forward of spiritual agency from the first—each confirming and supporting the other. Thus the original assertion that departed human spirits were concerned in their production was confirmed by psychography in characteristic handwriting, and appended autograph; in the clairvoyant perception of the spirit who claimed to be present; in the personation and dramatic representation; in the spirit photograph, and in the form manifestation, which exhibited clear characteristics of individual humanity.

It has been urged that these phenomena were low and unspiritual, and materialistic in their tendency and character. It may be that this is not altogether without foundation if we confine our attention to the purely physical side of the phenomena without regard to their spiritual significance. But it is deserving of note that contemporaneously with the manifestation of spirit power there have been other and larger movements which we are too apt to disregard. Contemporaneously with Modern Spiritualism, or slightly overlapping it, we find a remarkable series of illustrations of spiritual activity manifesting itself throughout the churches. Whilst the phenomena of Spiritualism are eminently adapted to meet a sceptical and agnostic age, satisfied with nothing short of sensuous demonstration of spiritual existence, yet there has always been, and probably always will continue to be, a large class of minds who in all things spiritual are conservative in their habits and associations, who cling to the faiths they have inherited and in which they have been trained, and to whom these phenomena would present no attraction; who would regard all manifestations from the spiritual world which did not come through traditional channels in methods according to prescription and precedent, as disorderly. If this order of minds were to be reached it would have to be through other means, formal, cold, and ceremonial, as the Churches had become; they required by any means to be aroused from that lethargy so fatal to the higher faculties of the soul. Thus the spirit world, in its universality and through its abundant resources, found the best methods of meeting this class of minds, and I should be presenting but a narrow and partial view of a great subject if I did not briefly glance at the manifestations which have taken place outside Spiritualism in order to meet the needs of the great body of people who could not be affected by such phenomena as we have been considering.

Take, for instance, the outpouring of spiritual gifts associated with the name of Edward Irving, the speaking with tongues, the discerning of spirits, and the gifts of healing. Simultaneously with this there was another movement very different in kind, affording in most respects a contrast, yet similar in its spiritual working. I refer to the strange revival of ancient Judaism on the Western Continent in the Church of the Latter Day Saints. With all its follies there was in it abundant evidence of an outpouring of spirit power.

I might also refer to the wave of religious revival which spread over this country a few years ago, and in connection with which occurrences took place strangely like the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism; and still more recently we have had what is known and what Spiritualists recognise as spiritual healing, called in the Bethshans the faith cure. Only within the last few weeks we have had a conference in London, attended by delegates from many countries on the Continent and from the United States of America, at which abundant testimony to remarkable cases effected by faith and prayer was given.

I refer to these examples in order to take a larger and more comprehensive view of the phenomena of Spiritualism by collating and comparing them with other phenomena which preceded and appeared contemporaneously, and to show that there is a parallel between the movement called Spiritualism and what is taking place in the Churches and in the world. It confutes that sophism to which David Hume gave currency, that the psychical phenomena of our time and the miracles of a former time are incredible because contrary to all human experience. They are certainly not contrary to all

human experience, for the spirit-world has never left itself without a witness. It has left its mark on all history and literature; it has sealed its impress on every age and nation. Throughout the world, wherever human hearts have beat, wherever men have hoped and suffered and experienced the loss of those who were dear to them, there has been the sense of a mystery which swathes us round—the consciousness of a spirit-world impinging on our own, and enveloping us in its atmosphere. We may be, some of us are, insensible to these higher harmonies from the invisible world; yet it is also true that there are here amongst us those of more ethereal mould less closely pent within the body's prison, who have made excursions from this into that realm which is to be their future home, who have had glimpses of the glories of that supernal world, who have heard faintly and afar off the echoes of that choir invisible in whose music is the gladness of the world; who have sought eagerly for some response to that cry which has welled from every human heart wherever lover and friend and child have one by one disappeared into the realms beyond; who have sighed in the agony of their heart's bereavement for

"The touch of a vanished hand

And the sound of a voice that is still,"

and who have listened not altogether in vain to the murmurs of that mighty ocean whose waves ever beat on the shores of our immortal life.

"And through their deep rolling,

Have heard their sweet calling

Of spirits that sing in a soft under tongue

The sense of the mystical march;

And have cried to them softly,

"Come nearer! come nearer;

And lift up the lap of this dark, and speak clearer,

And teach us the song which he sung."

Mr. W. Stainton Moses then said it was his duty and a great pleasure to move to Mr. Shorter a cordial vote of thanks for his most admirable address. He had found himself wondering, as he listened to the closely reasoned words of Mr. Shorter, how it was his voice was heard so seldom, and why, if they could not always have the privilege of listening to his voice, they might not be instructed by his large sagacity and experience, through the medium of the Spiritual Press. He wished Mr. Shorter might find it within his heart to let them hear of him more often in the future. He further wished to rectify an omission he had made in mentioning the early pioneers of the movement, although he did not pretend for a moment to mention them all. He had strangely omitted to mention the name of a lady who was a member of the Alliance and to whom all owed a very deep debt of gratitude. There was no book in the literature of the movement more able in its defence of Spiritualism than that which is entitled "From Matter to Spirit." And in mentioning Mrs. de Morgan he included her husband, Professor de Morgan, from whose pen came the preface to that volume; both stood in the most honoured places. He had also to announce that this meeting closed the present session, and an adjournment would take place to October, when he hoped they would be able to re-open these rooms. He trusted to be able to open the session himself by a paper. Until that time the Council hoped to meet their friends at the chambers in Craven-street.

Mr. Shorter, in replying to the vote of thanks, referred to a point which had escaped him when speaking—the remarkable parallel which existed between the visible presentation of the materialised spirit form and the spirit photograph. Everyone who had collected any number of these photographs would see that there was a very close correspondence between them and the phenomena of materialisation. There were in both the same vague and cloudy appearances preceding the presentation of a separate form—the same indistinctness at first in the mask-like faces presented in the earlier phases, the same luminous drapery—in fact, the same gradual development throughout.

The meeting then resolved itself into an informal gathering, separating at about 11 p.m.

The musical programme, arranged by the Misses Withall, was ably sustained by those ladies, assisted by Madame Amey, Miss Wade, Mr. Tietkens, and Mr. G. S. Darter. A grand piano was again kindly lent for the occasion by Messrs. John Brinsmead and Sons.

**HUMAN MAGNETISM.**—Signor Damiani communicates to the *Medium and Daybreak* the fact of a gentleman, by magnetic passes in a dark corner of a room, changing the yellow colour of a tulip to white. The flower was handed to him by the lady of the house, who said that it was the third time of the occurrence of such a phenomenon in her presence.

## A MATERIALISING MEDIUM OF THE OLDEN TIME.

By "M.A." (Oxon).

My attention has been drawn to an old book, published in 1807, and entitled, "The Eccentric Mirror: reflecting a faithful and interesting delineation of male and female characters ancient and modern, who have been particularly distinguished by extraordinary qualifications, talents, and propensities natural or acquired, comprising singular instances of longevity, conformation, bulk, stature, powers of mind and body, wonderful exploits, adventures, habits, propensities, enterprising pursuits, &c., &c., &c., with a faithful narration of every instance of singularity manifested in the lives and conduct of characters who have rendered themselves eminently conspicuous by their eccentricities: the whole exhibiting an interesting and wonderful display of human action in the grand theatre of the world. By G. H. Wilson." (London: Printed for James Cundee, Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row.)

It must be confessed that Mr. Wilson makes the most of his title-page. In his book he gives us the story of "Thomas Topham, the strong man," with a diverting picture showing the modern Hercules in the act of tying a poker round his neck: "The lady of the haystack," a half-witted girl who seems to have preferred a haystack to a house for her residence: a biography of Mr. William Evans, "a sort of epicure in wigs and walking-sticks": a notice, naturally, of Valentine Greatrakes and his wonderful cures: and finally an account of one Schröpfer. This individual seems to have started life as a waiter in a Leipzig coffee-house. He disappeared suddenly, and some years afterwards reappeared as the Baron Schröpfer, "to whom all nature, and even the world of spirits, were subject." "He showed people the spirits and shadows of their deceased acquaintances. . . . 'Come and see!' he cried to all who were inclined to doubt: they came, and actually saw shadows, and various terrible sights, which made the hair of timorous persons stand erect."

Schröpfer "performed his miracles at home, in private apartments prepared for the purpose." This is the sort of entertainment that was provided on one occasion. The observers "were all conducted into a large hall, hung with black cloth, the window-shutters of which were closed." Round the spectators Schröpfer drew a circle, out of which they were on no account to stir. "At the distance of a few paces a small altar was erected, on which the flame of burning spirits gave the only light that illumined the room." Schröpfer, with a drawn sword, which he flourished over his head, prostrated himself before the altar in an ecstasy of apparent prayer. "He was to call the shade of a well-known character lately deceased." He apostrophised the ghost: "Oh, thou departed spirit, who livest in an immaterial world, and invisible to the eye of mortals, hear the voice of the friends thou hast left behind, and who desire to see thee; leave for a short time thy new abode, and present thyself to their eyes." "Hereupon the spectators felt in every nerve a sensation similar to an electric shock; they heard a noise like the rolling of thunder, and saw above the altar a light vapour, which grew thicker by degrees, till it assumed the figure of a man. . . . The phantom hovered over the altar, and Schröpfer, pale as death, flourished the sword over his head. . . . The spectre at length disappeared, and Schröpfer was so exhausted that he lay extended on the floor." Why, if this were all a mere imposture (as the writer would seem to wish us to believe) Schröpfer should lie in this trance-like state we are not told. If what was seen was a shadowy materialisation, his exhaustion and entrancement would be natural.

Schröpfer at last got into debt, and resolved his difficul-

ties by suicide. Who he was—Jesuit agent as he was, of course, dubbed by some, or a man possessed of occult psychical powers—we are not able to determine from Mr. Wilson's narrative. To him he is just one in a gallery of curiosities, like the man with the poker, or the lady with her haystack. But there is that in the narrative which is so *vraisemblable* that I suspect the man of being a medium.

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND.—The address announced in our last issue was delivered on Sunday evening at the Kensington Town Hall. Impromptu answers were first given to a number of questions sent up to the chairman, and read out by him. The address was then given in a most able manner, and was listened to with great interest. In such condition, or nearly so, as we leave this world when death summons us, shall we enter spirit-life. We shall be little changed in our thoughts or aspirations. Still it will be a state of improvement. We shall be set free from many of the trammels of earthly life and circumstance, and shall be released from the influence of its passions. As various as are the conditions of those who enter spirit-life so will be the conditions found in spirit-life. In this life we are enshrouded in a physical body; in spirit-life we shall be surrounded by higher influences, guiding and watching over us, teaching us to rise and improve. Spiritualism is the *avant courier* of the new religion. The teachings of former religions have been scant as to immortality. Spiritualism demonstrates it specially. It is the alphabet of the new religion. It teaches us that we can communicate with those that have passed away. It teaches us that loving ones, though unseen, direct and guide us and seek to save us from despair when cast down. It affords new avenues of communication between this world and the life to come. Like as when it is intended to open up a new country and construct a railroad, there are first the pioneers and explorers, then the labourers to prepare the way along which the line is laid, and lastly the engine and the train when all is complete, so does Spiritualism prepare the way for the new religion. As in spirit life we are watched over by guardian angels, so again are angels instructed and counselled by archangels; and archangels again by still higher and greater intelligences. The subject chosen for the impromptu poem was "The Solar System." It was announced that the subject for next Sunday evening would be "Angels and Archangels: their Power over Man's Spiritual States and Destiny." The series will close on July 12th, to allow of a visit to the provinces, but they will be resumed on September 20th, if the committee receive sufficient support in aid of the funds from those interested in the movement. Anyone desirous of aiding the committee is desired to communicate with Mrs. Strawbridge, No. 11, Blandford-square, N.W.

CAMBERWELL AND PECKHAM ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM. (81, Wells-street, Camberwell, S.E.)—Miss Keeves has kindly consented to deliver an address on Sunday evening next at seven o'clock. Other mediums have promised to attend on future occasions, notice of which will be given in due course. The Thursday evening circle is now closed, and another circle for Tuesdays at eight o'clock is in course of formation. Friends wishing to join are requested to attend or communicate with the secretary.

DE QUINCEY'S LAST MOMENTS.—"He had been in a doze for some hours, and as it had been observed that in his waking hours since the beginning of his illness he had reverted much to the incidents of his childhood and talked especially of his father, regretting that he had known so little of him, so in this final doze his mind seemed to be wandering among the same old memories. 'My dear mother, then I was greatly mistaken,' he was heard to murmur, and his very last act was to throw up his arms and utter, as if with a cry of surprised recognition, 'Sister, sister, sister!' The vision seemed to be that of his sister Elizabeth, dead near Manchester, twenty years before, and now waiting for him on the banks of the river."—*From Life of De Quincey, by David Musson, p. 133, in Series of "English Men of Letters."*

CANINE INTELLIGENCE.—Captain P. M., of Paimpol, and Captain M., of Granville, were old friends; they met at port in Iceland; before parting to go on board their several vessels, the former gave to the latter a fine Newfoundland dog whom he had brought from France. Captain M. on coming into port at Granville, took on shore with him his Newfoundland dog, and soon lost sight of him. Captain P. M., four days later, entered his port of Paimpol, and as his boat approached the quay his Newfoundland swam out to meet him, to his infinite astonishment. Paimpol is more than thirty leagues from Granville, and to his master's knowledge, the dog had never been taken that road. This account, verified by M. Montsorel, is from the *Revue Scientifique*. Zoology abounds with marvels of this kind, but a greater marvel is that there are savants who deny *a priori* the existence of any analogous faculty in the human being, and who insist that he can perceive in no other way than by his senses in their ordinary state.—*Revue Spirite*.



## THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE,

CHAMBERS: 16, CRAVEN STREET, CHARING CROSS, S.W.

This Society of Spiritualists, founded for the purpose, primarily, of uniting those who share a common faith, and then of giving information respecting that faith to those who seek for it, has now occupied Chambers at the above address. There will be found an extensive Library of works especially attractive to Spiritualists; the various Journals of Spiritualism published in this and other countries; and opportunities of converse with friends like-minded. The Alliance holds periodical Soirées at the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, where papers on interesting phases of the subject are read, and discussion is invited.

Particulars as to Membership (minimum Annual Subscription, One Guinea) may be obtained from the Hon. Sec.,

MORELL THEOBALD, Esq.,

62, Granville Park, Blackheath, S.E.

The following list, which will be continued by the courtesy of the editor until complete, will show what an important library is now available for use by members of the London Spiritualist Alliance. It is the desire of the Council that the books should be used by Spiritualists, and should not merely be available for consultation in our Chambers. To this end they have made arrangements for their being removed, under certain restrictions, for home reading. The publication of a catalogue in "LIGHT" will place at the disposal of every member a list which will enable him to select at his leisure what he may wish to read. Rules and regulations will be at once drawn up, so that the Library may be available without unnecessary delay.

W. STANTON MOSES, M.A., President.

NO.	TITLE OF WORK.	AUTHOR.
1-2	Arcana Celestia. <i>Swedenborg.</i> (2 vols.) (Index to complete work.) Compiled for the Swedenborg Society ... ..	
3, 5-16	— (12 vols.)... ..	<i>Swedenborg</i>
4	— (another copy, Vol. I.)... ..	"
16, 17	Apocalypse Revealed, The (2 vols.)... ..	"
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(Treats of Spiritual Phenomena occurring in "heathen" lands.)		
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155	— (Vol. II.) ... ..	
(These volumes contain papers by the late Robert Dale Owen.)		
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26	Conjugal Love ... ..	<i>Swedenborg</i>
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(This magazine was ultimately merged in the <i>Medium and Daybreak</i> .)		
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521-540		
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575	Experiences in Spiritualism ... ..	<i>C. Berry</i>
577	Epic of the Starry Heavens ... ..	<i>T. L. Harris</i>

## WHAT CONJURERS SAY ABOUT PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

### Testimony of Robert Houdin.

The Marquis Endes de Mirville published during the lifetime of Houdin two letters from the latter, in his "Mémoire adressé à MM. les membres de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, sur un grand nombre de phénomènes merveilleux intéressant également la Religion, la Science, et les hommes du Monde," in which the conjurer confesses his inability to explain the phenomena he witnessed in the presence of Alexis, the clairvoyant. A circumstantial account is given of M. de Mirville's visit to Houdin for the purpose of engaging him in this investigation, of the latter's confidence in his own ability to detect the trick, and of what took place at the seance, 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.

"4th May, 1847.

ROBERT HOUDIN."

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

"I have, therefore, returned from this seance 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.,

"May 16th, 1847.

(Signed), ROBERT HOUDIN."

### 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 seance with a view of giving an unbiased 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 *mediumistic 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 obtinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. If (as I have every reason to hope) the psychical studies, to which I am applying myself at this time, succeed, I shall be able to establish clearly, and that by public demonstration, the immense line of demarcation which separates mediumistic phenomena from conjuring proper, and then equivocation will be no longer possible, and persons will have to yield to evidence, or deny through predetermination to deny.

"Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also the individuality of the spirit 'in spiritual manifestation.' I authorise you, dear sir, to insert this letter in your next number, if agreeable to you," &c., &c.

### Testimony of Samuel Bellachini.

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

"I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the *smallest degree* found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is *absolutely impossible*. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Bern; 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,

"Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI."

## 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 seances, 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 bitterspirit 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 a 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 seance.

The first indications of success usually are a cold breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitchings 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.