

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOATH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

No. 239.—VOL. V.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1885.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

CORRESPONDENCE.*

The Historic Jesus.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Though sympathising with your desire to close the discussion on this subject, I must nevertheless ask to be allowed to make a brief reply to some of the statements contained in this week's "LIGHT."

To take first the letter of Dr. Wyld. The epithets to which he objects applied not to himself, but to his style and argument. If flat contradiction in a matter such as that under treatment is not "discourteous," then, and then only, was I not justified in using the term. I believe, however, that I was justified in using it. Thus much as to the style.

With regard to the argument—to which I applied the other terms complained of—if to use an argument to another which does not satisfy oneself—as, for instance, Dr. Wyld's argument from majorities, which he certainly does not regard as sound in regard to things spiritual—is not to be "flippant, superficial, and insincere," then, and then only, was I wrong in using those terms. As it is, I hold that I am justified by the facts of the case. Dr. Wyld replied to me by an argument which, he well knows, has no weight with himself.

Dr. Wyld's veneration for the "beloved disciple" cannot exceed mine. But the question between us is, not what that disciple wrote, but what was his meaning. Dr. Wyld in his present letter simply reiterates the expression before employed in order to stigmatise us as "false prophets," without taking the smallest notice of my suggested explanation of the meaning of the phrase "Come in the flesh"—thereby aggravating his original fault. We maintain no less strenuously than Dr. Wyld himself that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh," and by that coming inaugurated the Christian dispensation. But we differ from Dr. Wyld as to the *modus* of the coming, and believe that our view is the true one, and that which the "beloved disciple" himself intended.

Dr. Wyld's persistent substitution of the word "mythical" for "mystical"—which I used—is, I hope, due to accident rather than design, for the perversion involves a serious misrepresentation. It is, however, clear from his remarks on the Miraculous Conception that his own view of what is implied in that event is neither mythical nor mystical, but materialistic; and that as, for him, "Christ Jesus" denotes, not Man regenerate and purely spiritual, but a physical and historical personality; so "Virgin Mary" denotes, not the human soul become pure and fit to be the "mother" of such "Man regenerate," but a physical and historical personality. But perhaps Dr. Wyld is of those for whom Adam and Eve and the serpent are "historical" personages. If so, it is no wonder that he falls foul of us who hold that the Bible teaches by means of parables which, referring to things spiritual and in perpetual course of enactment, are not "historical," but true for all time. It is precisely the insistence on the materialistic, because historical, view that has wrought havoc with Christianity and even with religion itself.

I cannot but regard Dr. Wyld's allusion to what he considers the exposure of "Koot Hoomi" as unfortunate for his case. If only by showing how easily a fictitious personage may come to be accepted as a real one, the history in question is suggestive in a direction the very opposite to that which Dr. Wyld would approve. Concerning the case itself I pronounce no opinion. But concerning the spirit in which Dr. Wyld has dealt with it I have a decided opinion, and find it not difficult to believe that had he lived—as perhaps he did—some eighteen centuries ago, the "pretensions" of a certain other personage, also intimately associated with "a tree," would have found in him an equally scornful repudiation.

If I have indeed "somewhat overstepped bounds" in alluding

* We have inserted as many letters on the subject of "The Historic Jesus" as we could find space for. The correspondence must now, in accordance with our intimation, cease.

to Dr. Wyld's admissions in past years, I am sorry for it. But I alluded only to what he has said repeatedly and before others, and was in no sense private, but has since been borne out by his own published letters. If Dr. Wyld can say the same of the remarkable utterance he ascribes to me, I shall be content to incur the reproach due. This, however, I know that he cannot do; for, whatever may have been the remarks on which he bases his statement, they were certainly not as he represents them; first, because, however high I may believe to be the authority for the doctrine of re-births, it is contrary to my practice to rest any doctrine on authority, and still less to advance pretentious personal claims; and next, because the expression, "forsaken of the Gods," would imply my belief in a previous enjoyment by him of Divine communion; and happy as I should be to credit Dr. Wyld with so high a privilege, he has yet to furnish the grounds which would justify me in doing so. But it may be after all that the solution of our difference here is to be found in the proverbial difficulty which persons of Dr. Wyld's nationality are said to have in apprehending a joke.

I do not care to contemplate a harsher explanation of Dr. Wyld's mistake in this matter, but am content to ascribe it to some defect either of apprehension or of recollection, and would therefore remind him that, however positive he may feel about his accuracy, all that he can possibly be sure of is his own belief as to what passed on the occasion or occasions to which he refers.

One word of thanks to Madame de Steiger for her excellent letter. She is indeed right, it seems to me, in her reprobation of those who, in their determination to have their human God, have caused Christianity to be discredited, and seriously endangered the whole fabric of religion.

It is impossible for me to deal here otherwise than very cursorily with Miss Campbell's elaborate disquisition. I will therefore content myself with indicating a few of its salient points, as a means to a judgment of the whole.

1. Miss Campbell has sadly mistaken both the scope and spirit of my remarks. For those who, being sincere in their beliefs, defend them by sincere arguments, and even if mistaken have taken pains to learn, I have nothing but respect, no matter what their beliefs are, and to such as these my strictures bore no reference. It was to a particular line of argument, employed by a particular person, that I applied the terms she resents, and her application of them to the whole body of those who share the same views is at once unjust and unjustifiable.

2. So far from my interpretation of Mark iii. being "astounding," it is the obvious and only one possible. The word, v. 21, translated "friends," means undoubtedly, says the learned Dean Alford in his scholarly work on the Greek Testament, "relations," "for the sense is resumed, v. 31, by the word, *οὗ*,"—therefore. Moreover, his note is headed "Charges against Jesus of madness by His relations;" and the text expressly specifies His mother as one of those concerned.

3. After saying she "has never read the works of scholars either on one side or the other," but will "simply let the Gospels speak for themselves," Miss Campbell proceeds to set forth, not at all what the Gospels say,—namely, that Mary, as cousin to Elizabeth, who was of the house of Aaron, must have belonged to the tribe of Levi, and was not therefore of the house of David,—but what "Roman Catholics are taught in their earliest lessons" by their priests, and is rested by them, not on the Gospels, but on a tradition in apparent discordance with the Gospels!

Does not my fair, and doubtless amiable, though somewhat impetuous, opponent see that even if her letter does not call for the particular epithets by which I characterised that of Dr. Wyld, there are yet others which might be used, of a scarcely less favourable nature? The most fervent faith and zeal cannot afford to dispense with accuracy of statement and logical coherence. She seems to regard her acknowledged want

of study, which means want of knowledge, as a positive qualification for the task of defending her religious convictions. But how if such rule were applied to the discussion of other subjects as, for instance, chemistry or astronomy? Would she not consider as guilty of something not very unlike "presumption" the novice who, "having never read the works of scholars on one side or the other," should undertake to contradict off-hand those who had devoted years to earnest investigation?

If, as I suspect, Miss Campbell thinks the presumption is ours, for declining to accept the sacerdotal presentation of these matters, I would refer her again to her Bible, where, as she will find, it is always the priests who, alike in Old Testament and New, incur the Divine reprobation for precisely the degradation of doctrine from which we are endeavouring to rescue Christianity. If she can shew that the *prophets* are against us we shall indeed be answered. But we know and respect the Bible far too well to take our interpretation of things spiritual from any body of priests. Does she suppose that the sacerdotal character has changed since the days of Caiaphas?

Miss Campbell's closing remark that "it is quite open to doubt the mystic sense of the Gospel," shows that she has yet much to learn of her own religion before she is qualified to take part in this controversy. If the Jesus of the Gospels was indeed an historical character, then must His mother have been one likewise. Is it, then, such a character that the Church contemplates when, in its offices of the B. V. M., it puts into her mouth the words—"I dwell in the highest: and my throne is on the pillar of the clouds. I made an unfailing light to arise in heaven: And, as a mist, I overspread the whole earth"? Or when it says of her—"The Lord Himself created her in the Holy Ghost: and poured her out among all His works"? And declares, further, that "the Virgin Mary was taken up to the Heavenly chamber, where the King of Kings sits on His starry throne?" To us who accept her as a symbol of the soul, universal or individual, and at once Divine and human, these utterances are intelligible and true. But they represent the mystic sense of the Gospel, and therefore, for your correspondent, though a Catholic, are "quite open to doubt," and the only sense that is imperative is that which, by applying them to an historical personality, makes them something worse than nonsense.

In reference to the "correspondent" whom you answer at such length, I would add to your answer these two remarks:—(1) That a careful examination of the subject would show him that so far from "attacking Christianity" we are doing the one thing that can rescue and save Christianity—namely, restoring to it its spiritual sense. And (2) that the course he proposes to you in the conduct of your paper would be not only "idiotic," but unjust and illogical. "LIGHT" is described on its title-page as a "Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research." So that in demanding—as I understand—that it should deal exclusively with things spiritualistic, he demands that it should omit the whole of the subjects it professes to treat saving only a particular department of one of them—Spiritualism being defined as a department of Occultism. It is only recently that you deprecated the establishment of a rival magazine, on the ground that "LIGHT" suffices to meet existing requirements. I feel tolerably confident that were you to do as your correspondent suggests, and exclude the classes of subjects to which he objects, it would very speedily be found that another paper of the kind would really be indispensable.—Yours, &c.,

EDWARD MAITLAND.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been much interested in the correspondence recently carried on in your columns entitled, "The Historic Jesus." I have no desire to traverse the whole subject, but should like to point out to C. C. Campbell and others that it is evident that neither Matthew nor Luke accepted the doctrine of the Miraculous Conception, or they would, in giving us their genealogies, have given that of Mary; this they have not done. They were both very careful to prove that Jesus came from the loins of David, and from the seed of Abraham, so they traced him in unbroken line, apparently, which went to establish two claims made by the followers of Jesus, viz., the identity of Jesus with the promised Messiah, and the fulfilment of prophecy in respect of his descent. But immediately the doctrine of the Miraculous Conception is introduced, these genealogies become meaningless; they prove nothing, and point to nothing, and being contradictory are terribly in the way; their authors sought to show the

lineal descent of Jesus from Abraham and David, and in making the attempt have failed. This is the logical position of those who accept the doctrine of the Miraculous Conception, which seriously conflicts with another and even more cardinal doctrine of Christianity, viz., that of the Inspiration of the New Testament.

I will not seek further to trespass on your valuable space, or I would give your correspondent some references respecting the lineage of Mary.—I am, sir, yours truly,
Winchester, July 26th, 1885.

GEO. BARTER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It seems to me that if the Hermetic Society is to be taken at its word, according to its exponents (for they will not allow us to call them "leaders"), all should hasten to join that ecstatic community, and become mystics like themselves, for we are told by one lady, "There are no re-births any more for the soul that has found Christ Jesus," while, probably with the same dip of ink (we need not say "breath," as that might get us into a new difficulty), that lady tells us, "Jesus Christ comes in the flesh when He is incarnate in man, and this is the way He comes to all mystics."

Another lady of the same enthusiastic band expresses herself as "thankful to feel that, after all, their wings are safe." While a gentleman of the same happy family delivered himself thus to Dr. Wyld: "The views I hold come from the highest Divine fountain of all truth, and if you do not accept them you must be a man forsaken of the Gods." How glad some would be to believe this, if men, or even ladies, were to be always thoroughly confided in! That gentleman may believe this himself, but where are his proofs? As things are, what evidence have we that his is not a new groundless assumption?

"There is no salvation out of the Church of Rome" we have been told these many years, but I, for one, do not believe it, though it is grounded by a far greater weight of testimony from great and good men than this new version of Hermetic teaching.

Some, too, have whispered, "New presbyter is old priest writ large," and the opinion of the Calvinist has been expounded thus: "Many are called but few chosen; I am among that happy lot." But here are the Hermetic exponents assuring us that the blessings of salvation come to all mystics. On this point they are quite equal to the Salvation Army. What an enlargement of the old lines! What a delightfully broad interpretation! Who would not be a mystic if he could be so conscientiously! If he could abandon facts and take up with myths, which, indeed, he must do if he would be one of these new enthusiasts. For a prominent mystic exponent, who demurs to the term "leader," tells us: "No man can know any fact"; "Man is incompetent to know facts." How is this, Mr. Editor? In the very next number of your valuable journal you head an article thus, "Facts are Chieftains that winna ding." And thus it is, these new mystics utterly ignore, and would knock away, the whole fabric on which Modern Spiritualism hangs, which is founded on facts. And yet, when it suits their purpose, these Hermetic exponents stick to facts like other people. Is it, then, a fact that Mr. Maitland's views come from the highest Divine fountain? If he denies facts, like his president, he stultifies himself by such an observation, and surely can find no fault with those who believe in Spiritualistic facts being in accord with such stultification.

WM. R. TOMLINSON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In the article quoted by you from your contemporary, the *Chicago Religio*, the great truth of Spiritualism is said to be "the certain and indissoluble connection of character here with destiny hereafter." This, it is claimed, Spiritualism has evidenced in the reiterations of spirits who communicate to us from the other world. Howsoever much the manifesting intelligences differ upon other points they are agreed here, "that character is the only basis of the awards of the life to come, the only parent of destiny." This is an important "fact," the value of which cannot be over-estimated. Admitting the truth of the statement I feel inclined to ask why all this war of words and bitterness of feeling in respect to the ideal or real (historic) Jesus? The Man or mystical "Christ"? Whether real or mystical, historical or symbolical, in any case, the characteristics set forth are identical, viz., the necessity that each one of us should live pure lives, animated by pure and unselfish purposes, and practically emulate the Exemplar by "going about doing good," in the sweet, gentle, earnest, and true love for our ignorant and suffering kind, forgetful of self in the love and sympathy we bear to others.

Are we doing this? Are we building such characters by the devoted efforts we make to practically embody this law of love in our daily lives and zealously aim to achieve the ideal in our own experience?

When I know that I must work out my own salvation, learn patience, endurance, and gain strength through effort and enterprise for the good of my fellows, what matters it to me, whether one or other, the symbolic or historic, view of Jesus be correct? I can neither prove nor disprove, but, one way or the other, this I know, I must live my own life, be myself, be held accountable for the motive and "deeds done in the body," go to "my own place," not for what I have believed, or doubted, respecting Jesus, but for the seed sown, the influences exerted by me, the example I have set to my fellows.

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

Have we as Spiritualists, I ask in all solemn seriousness, and conscious that the answer my own conscience gives is not altogether satisfactory, realised to the full the significance of the demand Spiritualism makes upon us to do practical work for human progress by individual sacrifice of self and united effort? Have we not been trying to get more and more light, looking to our own needs, like the horse leech demanding more and more, without giving in return unstintingly to others around us? Have we preached these glad tidings, gone forth into all the world to tell them to every creature, regardless of discomfort and opposition? St. Paul was a fanatic, perhaps, but he was in earnest, and meant what he said; his philosophy did not cool his ardour for human salvation, he felt he must pluck men "as brands from the burning." "Now was the time," but he went to work at it so successfully that, although persecuted to the death, he made a mark which will live as long as Duty is recognised by man.

Have we wiped the tears from the mourner's eye? Have we fed the hungry, clothed the naked, healed the sick, sympathised with the suffering, warned the wayward, helped the weary, and comforted the heavy laden?

"The people die for lack of knowledge." We Spiritualists say we have the knowledge which will and must save, save from ignorance, fear, intemperance, selfishness, and wrong-doing. Why then are we spending our strength and cudgelling our brains, fighting with each other about symbols, interpretations, occult mysticisms, and poring over the wisdom of the ancients, which when interpreted means no more than is found in the spirit of the age, viz., that man is a spiritual being, a moral and responsible agent, that virtue, goodness, and obedience to the promptings of benevolence (self-sacrifice), and a life of purity, justice, and righteousness, bring with them the inevitable reward of growth in spirit, goodness, and power, peace and sweetness? The "blessedness" which is higher than happiness (gratification) comes alone to those who have overcome selfishness, and, in love, lived for others. Exactly so the contrary of these bring consequences of pain and deprivation. The only passport into the higher spheres is that of a rounded character, built up by daily endeavours to know and do the right, to be good and do good, and leave the world sweeter for our having grown and blossomed in it.

How can we practically realise this? Surely not by secluding ourselves from the world, not by talking a language of esoteric jugglery with symbolic expressions that none but Adepts can understand, which serve to obscure and not reveal the truth.

Let us have plain terms for plain facts. Let us overcome indifference by earnestness, hypocrisy by honesty, and faithlessness by fanaticism if need be. Character, not creed; deeds, not words. Empty boasters are we unless we can apply our Spiritualism with its mighty revelations of immortality and destiny to the daily life of humanity. Abstract philosophical disquisitions will not educate the children of the age, will not feed their minds with practical truth, moral culture, or warn them of dangers and vices that beset their paths. Let us not clutch at the shadow of wisdom and lose the substance of truth and duty. Wisdom is justified of her children when they prove themselves hers by wise employment of knowledge, in treading the path of duty, right, and love.

The spirits, with trumpet tongues, tell us over and over again—go to work—sow the seeds—spread the truth—let the light shine—life is for use, not for self, but for humanity and the truth. Learn it, love it, live it!!!

For myself, as I go through life I see so much of fear, fraud, and folly, so much of ignorance and wrong, that I feel amazed

that people can spend their time bothering over what somebody, who lived (or did not live), somewhere or some time, meant by a phrase, a symbol, or an allegory he is said to have uttered, as though their very existence and the happiness here and hereafter of mankind depended upon getting at the bottom of the mystery, while starvation, disease, degradation, and death abound everywhere around them. Possibly when discovered the teacher meant no more, the truth behind the symbol was none other than the command, "Help, comfort, and bless your fellows, do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."

Is there not need for "physical salvation" for the suffering, dejected, and degraded men and women, and depraved children around us, deprived because of the vice in which they were begotten? Should not this work be made better, brighter, and happier by right-doing and lovingkindness?

Cannot Spiritualism supply a moral force which shall lift humanity upon a higher, holier, and more harmonious plane of thought and life? Is there no practical way in which the golden rule of Spiritualism—"character here the parent of destiny hereafter"—can be applied to the building of a nobler character for ourselves, by self-knowledge, self-culture, and self-conquest, first, that we may become teachers by example and influence as well as by precept from Press and platform? These are questions of vital import for us to consider. We may sneer at the zeal of the Salvation Army, but it is doubtful to my mind whether it is not doing a more practical work for human advancement here, and consequently for a more blessed hereafter, than our "dry-as-dust" intellectual and theologic Spiritualism. The "head" without the heart is dead, has neither warmth, love, nor soul. We must put the "hearts" of love and sympathy into our Spiritualism, and "go out into the highways and byeways and compel them to come in," if we would be alive and indeed even profit by the story of a Jesus, whether real or ideal.—Yours sincerely,

E. W. WALLIS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In Mr. Maitland's letter which appears in "LIGHT," No. 237, there is much that calls for reply, but without going into the whole question I should like to ask him where he discovered that the Evangelists disagree as to the day of the Crucifixion. I find on referring to the Greek Testament that each of the four Evangelists states that Christ was crucified on the day of preparation, namely, the day immediately preceding the great Passover Sabbath. Again, I should like him to show how the visit of the Magi contradicts the presentation in the Temple. St. Matthew neither states where nor when the Magi visited the young Child. He does say, however, that they came to Jerusalem, and stated that they had seen His star in the East, the same star which may have guided them to Nazareth, though the priests had directed them to Bethlehem. They came from the East, and though the place is not named, it may be readily supposed that they did not arrive in Jerusalem till some months after having seen the star. This is further to be supposed from the slaughter by Herod of children of two years old after having carefully inquired as to the time when the star had appeared. There is nothing in this account which in any way contradicts the account given in Luke's Gospel. Neither is there any statement in any of the Gospels which can be taken to mean that the parents of Jesus went up to Jerusalem every year from the time of His birth to His twelfth year. Like the Jews generally, they were in the habit of doing so, and this is what the passage means. Again, Mr. Maitland, when noting the genealogy of Jesus, seems to have forgotten, if he knew, that Mary was of the House of David and a near relative of Joseph. St. Luke in his Gospel does not assert that the Ascension occurred on the day of the Resurrection, and indeed his statements would show that it could not, for it was late in the evening when the Lord revealed Himself to the two disciples by the breaking of bread at Emmaus some sixty stadia from Jerusalem. The journey back must have occupied some hours, and while they were telling the Apostles of what they had seen He again appeared to them all. Luke then goes on to give some account of His instructions to them, and then, in a subsequent paragraph he gives a brief account of the Ascension without saying when it occurred. There is no account that the mother of Jesus tried to dissuade Him from doing His Father's business.

If Mr. Maitland have no better arguments against the history contained in the New Testament than he has brought forward in his letter, he had better confine himself to the speculative philosophy of the question which, consisting as it

does of reasonings on possibilities, cannot be confuted, for it is not susceptible of argument.

I should like to add that I most thoroughly endorse the last sentence of Dr. Wyld's letter in No. 238 of "LIGHT." While I freely admit the possibility of spiritual development by the aid, as I believe is often the case, of other spirits, and the working of what may be termed miracles by such aid, I am certain that such development and such powers are extremely limited, and cannot be satisfying. The only true and satisfying teaching is that of the Spirit of God in accordance with the testimony of the Anointed Saviour, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

—I am, yours very sincerely,

Kennington,

H. T. HUMPHREYS.

July 25th, 1885.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I trust you will allow me a few lines in order to place this question in a light in which it has not hitherto been regarded by any of your correspondents, and which, I fancy, neither Mr. Maitland nor Mrs. Anna Kingsford will find it easy to answer.

It consists of that which is considered good reasoning in geometry, a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Let us suppose that there was no historic Jesus, in other words that the Jesus of the Four Gospels was not a real but a fictitious character, a creature of pure imagination, and therefore that the Gospels were pure fictions—romances in fact.

What results from this view? Nothing less than this, that these novels or romances have not only delighted the imagination or improved the morals, but that they have changed in the most definite manner the whole current of the world's history. Only just consider what a vast external and historical effect Christianity has had upon the world! To begin with the Apostles and martyrs of the first three centuries. They passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, were thrown to the wild beasts, or were consumed by fire or the sword, because they committed the blunder of mistaking mere romances for narratives of real events. Paganism expired in the Roman Empire from the same cause. The life of Jesus was deemed historical.

This same blunder created a vast literature—Greek, Roman, and modern—a literature of enormous dimensions, and still continuous, all of which was founded on the same error.

This error, moreover, created all the cathedrals, churches, monasteries, hospitals, schools, universities, colleges, libraries, &c., which fill Europe, America, and much of Asia. All those vast externalities owe their origin to the implicit belief in the reality of the Jesus of the Four Gospels. It is attested by all the records of these foundations, and by the lives and professions and customs of their ministers, scholars, or inmates.

The historic Jesus has been the animating principle of the grandest pictures in the world, and of its grandest music.

Moreover, this belief has revolutionised the morals of society, greatly influenced its law, and even changed the tenure of property.

This belief has given rise to wars, persecutions, and has occupied the thoughts, affected the feelings, changed the interests, and aroused the liveliest hopes and fears of all the generations since in the most enlightened parts of the world.

The whole of these mighty consequences have arisen from mistaking a romance for a history!

I humbly submit that this is, if anything ever was, a *reductio ad absurdum*.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I go so entirely with Mrs. Kingsford and Mr. Maitland in their insistence on the symbolical nature of sacred Scripture, and, at the same time, by the idiosyncrasy of my persuasion, am enabled to subscribe to the concluding paragraph of Dr. Wyld's letter in "LIGHT," of the 14th, with regard to the "intense human personality" of the Lord Jesus Christ, that I am induced to refer such genuine inquirers as are seeking towards a reconciliation of these views, to the writings of the early schoolmen, who were philosophers as well as theologians, Theosophists, and saints; who, having recapitulated the whole of religious doctrine experientially within their own lives, were able to appreciate the superlative and saving nature of that catholic advent of the Son of Man which was manifest to them within the veil—not a Christ, but the Christ, and only Son of God, universal as the creeds symbolically rehearse.

July 26th, 1885.

NORMON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As Dr. Wyld, Mrs. Kingsford, and Mr. Maitland have been good enough to allude in your columns to my own personal belief about Christ, will you allow me to say a word more on the subject? Though in general agreement with the teaching of the two latter, which seems to me, on the whole, of high value, I am in profound disagreement with them, as Dr. Wyld rightly states, on the question of the historic Christ, though I can hardly think the pages of "LIGHT" a fitting place for a long discussion on the evidences of Christianity. To enter into the historical details touched upon by Mr. Maitland would take up too much time and space. Still, his averment of the unhistoric character of the Gospel narrative is so vehement and positive that a word seems called for in reply. For my part, I entirely agree with Dr. Wyld that the discrepancies do not affect the substantial veracity of the history in any important particular. To me, on the contrary, they are proof that it is not a concocted forgery. Discrepancies quite as serious are to be found in the narrative of events of which no one seriously doubts the historic veracity. The French and the English give, and have always given, different versions of the Battle of Waterloo, and yet the history of Europe since that event can hardly be accounted for if the battle never took place. Nor to my mind can the modern history of the world, or of the Christian Church, be accounted for without the assumption that the New Testament biography of Jesus is in all essential particulars correct. The discrepancies alleged, moreover, are often the result of mere misunderstanding, as the Rev. G. Allen showed in the conversation that took place after the reading of my paper at the meeting of the Hermetic Society concerning what Jesus is stated in Matthew and Mark to have told His disciples about meeting them in Galilee after His resurrection.

One of the difficulties triumphantly vaunted by sceptics was that Cyrenius (or Quirinus), according to Josephus, was not Governor of Syria till eight years after the birth of our Lord, though Luke states the contrary. But it has now been established by Zumpt, of Berlin, that he was twice Governor, and the first time from B.C. 4 to B.C. 1. I myself was witness of a battle in the Lebanon between mountain tribes, of which I gave a perfectly honest account; and a friend of mine, present at the same battle, gave a different version with equal honesty. *Argal*, that battle never took place! Nay, but had we been concocting a story there would have been no discrepancy.

Not the most sceptical of critics now disputes the genuineness of four epistles of St. Paul. Now these must have been written, at the latest, 28 years after the crucifixion of Jesus. And from the allusions in them to most of the important events recorded in the Gospels as to notorious and generally-received facts, we may conclude that these narratives are fairly accurate in their relations. Moreover, it is evident from these epistles that very much the same doctrinal beliefs concerning Christ obtained among His disciples at that early time as have obtained among them since. Yet surely had these narratives been spiritual parables, or myths only, they could hardly have got themselves generally received as sober fact within so short a time after the alleged events, while a multitude of contemporaries were still living to correct the mistake. And the difficulty that these wonderful spiritual parables—which have so imposed on mankind, and changed the course of history—must have been invented for the most part by more or less illiterate Galileans, Mr. Maitland meets by ascribing them rather to learned Alexandrian Jews. But how reconcile this view with the admitted authenticity of some of St. Paul's Epistles? We know from Pliny, Tacitus, and other heathen writers, that about A.D. 60 Jesus Christ was already adored and revered by His followers as Divine.

Then the Epistle of Clement of Rome, the companion of Paul, found written on the Alexandrian MSS. of the New Testament, presented by the Byzantine patriarch to Charles I., and now, I believe, admitted by all scholars to be genuine, testifies that the same alleged facts as we have related in the Gospels were believed in that early period of the Church's history—a like testimony being borne by the Epistle of Polycarp, the personal friend of St. John, and that of Irenæus, the friend of Polycarp; while to me it certainly appears that the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is as clearly taught by the Synoptic Gospels as by that of John, though not so much insisted on, and philosophically expounded.

Why did not Celsus, the great heathen opponent of Christianity, who wrote early in the second century, deny the

authenticity of the Gospel narrative, if it was open to him so to do? whereas he cites nearly all the facts related in our four Gospels about Jesus and a great number of His sayings, as authentic, urging that these facts and words are derived from memoirs written by the disciples of Jesus. Why did not the Gnostic Marcion, or St. Valentinus, born about the end of the first century, while St. John was still alive, dispute their authenticity? But in Justin Martyr again, who was born in the year that John died, we have all the same facts (miraculous and others) cited, and the same doctrine concerning Christ deduced from them. He says, moreover, that these facts are derived from the memoirs called Gospels, written by the Apostles, and their companions. He informs us also that these Gospels had been read systematically in the churches from the beginning. Indeed, there is no trace anywhere of any question at all being raised concerning the authenticity of our New Testament narratives in the earliest ages of the Church—nay, concerning the authenticity of those twenty books called Homologoumena, which constitute what is termed the First Canon. Irenæus says he had known Polycarp, who was familiar with many persons who “had seen the Lord,” and heard the venerable man repeat “all they had told him about His miracles and doctrine.” Indeed, “the testimony to our Canon,” as Michaelis observes, “is infinitely superior to anything that ancient literature could present to us in favour even of the most abundantly-attested books.” A long superintendence of the churches they founded by the Apostles themselves—the jealous care with which the sacred books were preserved, special guardians and readers of them being appointed—seems alone sufficient to account for the unanimity of the agreement concerning them, attested by Celsus, Justin, and other writers of the early part of the second century, as existing in all Christian communities scattered throughout the world.

And to my mind the history of the rise and progress of the Christian Church proves and involves the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in all essential particulars such as we have them recorded, even as the recent history of Europe proves the actual occurrence of the French Revolution. For I suppose Mrs Kingsford can hardly be serious when she assures us that virtually there is no such thing as history! And yet there are grave divergencies in the accounts that have come down to us of the Great Revolution. But do apparent differences in the reports about the day on which Jesus was crucified throw serious doubt upon the fact itself? Surely not. Clarendon relates that the Marquis of Argyll, in Charles II.'s reign, was condemned to be hanged, and actually hanged the same day. But Burnet states that he was condemned to be beheaded on Saturday, and executed on Monday. Shall we therefore conclude that he was not executed at all? The Embassy of the Jews to Claudian is placed by two contemporary historians, Philo, and Josephus, at a different time of the year—did it, therefore, not take place at all?

With respect, to my argument from the moral influence of a living example being superior to that of a merely conceived ideal, either Mr. Maitland has misapprehended me, or I have failed to understand his answer. He says that for a sculptor to realise an ideal of beauty in a statue it is not necessary for him to have a perfect model of beauty before him. Now, first, I think that statement open to question. It is plausibly contended that if a sculptor seeks various features of beauty in different models, he runs the risk of putting together an incongruous whole. At any rate, he will certainly seek for a model as perfectly beautiful in every respect as he can find. And among the Greeks I do not doubt that many individuals, beautiful in almost every respect, were to be found. His æsthetic sense, his genius for beauty should also go far to help him in creation.

But Mr. Maitland is certainly wrong when he says that for this new revelation of beauty there was no need of “more beauty than usual in the world”; that uncommon beauty very surely existed. I think, moreover, that the genius for moral beauty, in proportion as it deals with a higher type of excellence, is also a much rarer type of genius. And here it is assumed that there were many such engaged in the imagination of Jesus Christ. Remember it is not a popular ideal of goodness; rather one utterly opposed to the expectation, and aspiration of those who at that time were looking for a Messiah. It is, moreover, not the ideal of the Alexandrian Philo (see “Philochristus”), nor precisely that of the Stoics, Epicureans, or Essenes. I believe that had the mythopoeists put together the character of

Christ from diverse models of excellence, there could never have resulted the living congruous Individuality, which has for so long influenced and, in part at least, transformed society.

But who, then, are these imaginative artists, far greater, because more spiritual than Shakespeare, whose names have been so long and unaccountably withheld from all knowledge? But this touches the possibility of conceiving, and creating in imagination the character of Jesus. It does not in the least touch my argument from the superior transforming, and stimulating force of a concrete living example over that of an ideal merely conceived in the mind. It is surely unquestionable that a noble example—be it Gordon, or the Curé D'Ars, or humbler people than they (say an Alice Ayres, or a Grace Darling)—fires men to emulation, and strengthens them for virtue far more than discourses, however eloquent, and more than mere solitary aspirations. But it is not equally obvious that the contemplation of physical beauty has a tendency to produce physical beauty in ourselves. Yet that should be so, to warrant Mr. Maitland's negative argument from analogy. If a fairly realised moral ideal gives great encouragement to those who are striving after perfection, a supremely realised ideal gives yet more. The ideal having already passed from the region of vague aspiration and imagination to that of actuality and life, we feel that this may happen again, whereas such a possibility is still problematic if it has not done so.

What Mrs. Kingsford, however, so beautifully says of the Eucharistic and universal value of the saints' merit, and of their present quickening influence over men, in virtue of their own attainment, is in exact agreement with what I urged in my own paper concerning Jesus. Prayer, therefore, may be made to saints, but more especially to the Lord. I only claim Him as the Head and Leader and Representative of the race—as the God-Man—because He, more fully than any other, so clearly known to us through history, has atoned His human with that Divine consciousness, which is the true and eternal individuality of all.

I do not think we Christians are idolatrous, as is alleged. It is not idolatry to adore the adorable. For God the Father is hidden until manifested in the Son. And while I am not blind to the Divine Word, as spoken in nature, and the rich fulness of all humanity—nay, while admitting that the revelation in Jesus needs to be supplemented by these—yet I do feel that Nature, with her tyrant law of survival, is obscure, and that ordinary men and women are often darkness visible. But in the wise, supremely-loving, just, and self-sacrificing member of our race, in proportion as virtue belongs to him or her, is God most fully revealed, light being radiated from the humblest loving and righteous human heart upon the profoundest mysteries and darkest places of “all this unintelligible world.”

Madame de Steiger says that history cannot be true because it appeals to the senses. But this objection applies equally to all science. History and science alike appeal through sense to very much higher faculties, without which they cannot be understood. If you believe in evolution, how disbelieve history? History reveals the action and reaction of individuals on one another, and personality is the goal of evolution. Though the elements of free-will, and testimony add some uncertainty to the study, yet, for all that, “the proper study of mankind is man.” Eternal principles reveal themselves behind the apparent caprice of persons; and it is attempting to jump off our own shadow to fancy that principles may manifest themselves otherwise than to the calm and piercing vision that looks through the ever shifting phantasmagoria of sense to those eternal verities of which these are “broken lights.” We learn more upon the *terra firma* of experience than combining in *vacuo* upon the chimeræ of metaphysic. That method has been tried in past ages with little promise of success. Whereas some seem to fancy that eternal truth is independent of, and apart from, all that appears in time, eternal truth is, indeed, but the perfect intuition of the very same things, which we behold imperfectly under our own native condition of time.

Can anyone deny the law of heredity or that of cause and effect? Yet its influence for good or evil is only through biography, or history. Events in time affect us, because we are in time. And they incur a grave responsibility who seek to deprive our poor work of its chief Consoler.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

RODEN NOEL.

MR. T. P. BARKAS is now staying at the Hydropathic Establishment, Peebles. He will be there until the 10th August. It is expected that he will in the interval visit our Glasgow friends for a lecture with “heckeling.”

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Light :

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1st, 1885.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XXXVIII.

[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."]

Monsignor Capel, of all priests and prelates, has been lecturing on Spiritualism, and, of all places in the world, at Salt Lake City. He attacked it on two grounds—as being opposed to Catholic doctrine, and as having a bad physical influence.

He took it for granted that his audience were Christian. If they had been Agnostics he would have taken other grounds. Every Christian believes in direct communications from God. Every man, woman, and child possesses such communication by conscience—a universal communication which tells us what is right and what is wrong, and the half-civilised African possesses it as well as the cultured gentleman of Europe.

Besides this, the Church was constituted to reveal the will of God to man. It teaches that there are personal angels and devils. When a man died, if he had lived a good life, he was immediately taken into the presence and friendship of God. If he had committed sins, he would atone for them in purgatory; but if he died in blasphemy, woe unto him. There was no salvation beyond the grave for such. Of course there was no room for Spiritualism in such a system.

Monsignor Capel said he had been clever enough to unmask two mediums. In one case a sound of thunder ceased when the feet of the medium were placed on a cushion; in another, when a slate-writing medium went to Paris the spirits could not write French.

This is too silly, even for Monsignor Capel. Every Spiritualist knows that with Eglinton or Slade messages are written in Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian. Mr. Gladstone wrote questions on a locked slate in four languages unknown to the medium, and, while the slate was locked, he got answers to each question in the language in which it was written.

Monsignor Capel, however, had the grace to acknowledge that there are manifestations not easy to explain. But then he said: "Many of the laws of nature were yet imperfectly understood; mesmerism, so-called magnetism, mind-reading, and other seemingly supernatural phenomena belong to the science of biology, and would yet be explained by the laws of science. What would have been thought three hundred years ago of a man who should have declared the possibilities of the telegraph and telephone? He would have been called a madman. Scientists and medical men were watching and investigating biology closely, and the explanation would come."

"But, supposing that all that is claimed for Spiritualism is true," said this remarkable Monsignor, "what good is it? What

happiness is there in the knowledge of a few raps, a little slate-writing, and an intimation that 'so-and-so is happy in the spirit land?' It wrecked the physical organisation. He could almost tell a Spiritualist from his knowledge of physiognomy. By the wandering eye, the gloomy disposition, &c., he could point them out. He had good authority for stating that the end of many Spiritualists was in the lunatic asylum."

This is very bad, or would be if it were not false and silly. Religious mania is common enough. A belief in the orthodox hell and the doctrines of Calvin has sent many to lunatic asylums. The effect of Spiritualism is quite the reverse.

Finally, Monsignor Capel said that Spiritualism was not only dangerous, but wicked. He declared that "belief in divination is blasphemy, and he cautioned his hearers against indulging in it. It was as if a man should ask to patent a small tub to cross the Atlantic when there are already magnificent ocean steamers which make the voyage in safety. Spiritualism attempted to dethrone God; the laws with regard to communication with the invisible were fixed, and it is blasphemy for any 'ism to pry further into the secrets of the Almighty. Spiritualism has had its existence since the Witch of Endor called up the spirit of Samuel, and evidently the witch made a much better job of it than do the mediums now-a-days."

A clever man, this Monsignor, but it might be better even for ever so clever a man to take the trouble to know what he is talking about, or to stick to what cannot be known, and therefore cannot be contradicted—theology, for example. The idea of going to Salt Lake City to give such a lecture! Well! the opponents of Spiritualism now learn that the first condition of giving a good lecture on any subject is to know something about it.

Reading this probably imperfect report of Monsignor Capel's lecture, copied in the London Catholic organ, the *Universe*, I cannot but wonder how this man ever became Monsignor; and I do not wonder that he was silenced in England, and obliged to find some other field for his labours. The lecture is false—but it is worse than that. It is unprincipled.

For example—can any Spiritualist believe in the *bona fides* of a man who could preface what I have quoted above with this declaration?—"He would give many Spiritualists the credit of being honest, but the dross in the crucible was large and heavy. It was also true that many bright and intelligent minds had belief in it. He would not speak from prejudice, but from an impartial investigation of many years. Curiosity was a good thing in itself, but he deprecated it in a matter of religion; he had investigated it from a scientific standpoint."

The declaration of the late Cromwell Varley, a thoroughly scientific man, and a model investigator, was that no man of science ever investigated Spiritualism without being convinced of its reality—that is, without becoming a Spiritualist—which is true even of those who began with the intention of exposing what they supposed to be a delusion.

Monsignor Capel is no more shallow than are most of the religious opponents of Spiritualism. We can understand its being denounced as fraud and imposture by those who have not examined it. The world is full of men who judge without examination; but to denounce a thing as fraud, and condemn it at the same time as diabolical is supremely silly. The best thing is to know what is; and a man who stands on a platform, or gets into a pulpit, should take some pains to know what he is talking about.

Our Calcutta friend, Mr. J. G. Meugens, now happily revelling in the American Spiritualist camp-meetings, has written a close column in the *Banner of Light*, headed—"How I became a Spiritualist." It was a simple, sensible method, open to every intelligent person. He read the published works of scientific investigators like Crookes, Zöllner, and Wallace. On a visit to England he made personal investigations, and then invited Mr. Eglinton, the medium, to Calcutta. Few men have done more for Spiritualism than Mr. Meugens.

It seems pretty clear that the Seybert Commission of the University of Pennsylvania is making a mess of its investigations of Spiritualism. Mr. Henry Seybert left by will sixty thousand dollars (£12,000) for the investigation of Spiritualism. It is a well-known condition of the higher class of manifestations that there shall be at least fair play—not belief, but something like

passivity. One strong will may prevent all manifestation. It is said that the amount of wilful opposition in the commission is very trying to the mediums, and mars, if it does not entirely prevent, the action of the spirits. If it were a question of chemistry, mental opposition would not matter—but then it would not exist. An investigator of Spiritualism should be as accurate, but also as unprejudiced, as a chemist or physiologist.

For example, when some of the members of the commission were present two slates were bought joined with hinges and fastened together with a screw, with a bit of pencil between them. In a few minutes the pencil was found on the upper slate and a sentence written inside. At a séance which another member attended they sat two hours without a scratch. The moment they were gone it was written on the slate—"We could not overcome the influences." It is easier to pass solid through solid, than to get through a mental prejudice.

An American newspaper, the *Saratoga Eagle*, announces the accession of Rev. John P. Newman—the former pastor of General Grant, and one of the greatest pulpit orators in the Methodist church—to the ranks of Spiritualism. The conversion is not a sudden one, however, as Dr. Newman has been for years an intelligent investigator into the phenomena and a student of the philosophy of Modern Spiritualism, and it is said that his wife is not only a strong believer but is herself a medium. Dr. Newman is a regular Saratoga summer guest, and a great favourite there, and he will, without doubt, be warmly welcomed before the Saratoga Society of Spiritualists.

A very few clergymen in England have investigated Spiritualism, and most of these have visited mediums by night, and spoken only to intimate friends of their observations. Mr. Haweis, Mr. Page Hopps, and a few others have had courage to give their testimony to the truth. Many more have quietly profited by it. It is a nice question—that of our duty to tell the truth. It depends upon the good it may do, or the harm of withholding it. That knowledge which we value ourselves we naturally wish to give to all around us.

The late George Dawson, a Radical lecturer, who in the last years of his life became a settled preacher in Birmingham, is said to be the spirit control of Mrs. Groom, who lately spoke at the Cavendish Rooms. His most intimate friends in Birmingham are satisfied of his identity, and some of the matter given here was certainly worthy and characteristic. He said:—"I offer you no creed but one: Be a believer in God, His angels, and the spirit-world, ever working out the highest dictates of Divine wisdom . . . With all my earthly knowledge, I found myself just like a babe on the shores of spiritual existence, waiting, still waiting, to see the realisation of my hopes. I have found my wife, I have found my child. This is indeed Heaven. . . Before I passed out of the body I was a minister of the Church of the Saviour, Birmingham. I was branded, when first I went to Birmingham, for being too free in religious speech, and for not teaching their canonical creeds. And now that I have passed to the Better Land, I thank God that my people, as they pass out of the body, join my Church in the Heavenly Spheres." We are apt to expect too much of our spirit friends. There is progress, step by step—not sudden transformations. There, as here, we live and learn—but with Eternity before us we have no need to hurry.

ERRATUM.—In the article on Statuovism, "LIGHT," July 25th, p. 351, for *Fahnessock* in title, read *Fahnestock*, and in second column, eighth line from bottom, for *visibility* read *risibility*. Also in Visions by "Lily":—Vision II., last line of second column, for *Whose Spiritual power* read *Whose power Spiritual*; Vision III., last stanza of third column, first line, for *a strange thing read a strange sight*; Vision IV., third stanza, first line, for *appear'd* read *appear*; and in "Lily's" letter on "The Resurrection Body," for *allowable real* read *allowably real*.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.—In consequence of the extreme pressure on our space caused by the correspondence on "The Historic Jesus," we have been obliged to hold over several articles of more general interest. Next week, however, our columns will be clear, and we hope to give some of the outstanding communications. Amongst these we may mention "The Unconscious Secondary Self," a criticism of the methods and theories of the Society for Psychical Research, by Henry Kiddle; "Statuovism," No. II., by W. M. Fahnestock, M.D., &c., &c. We have also much pleasure in informing our readers that we have in view a series of articles on Mesmerism, Psychometry, Palmistry, Statuovism, and other phases of Occult Research. These papers will treat each of these subjects in a practical and experimental manner, giving plain instructions to investigators.

REVIEW.

"SYMPNEUMATA."

(FROM ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW.)*

I propose to offer some impressions of "Sympneumata" differing widely from that conveyed by the long and powerfully written review which appeared in successive numbers of "LIGHT" some months ago. To follow *seriatim* the charges preferred against the book by the reviewer would be foreign to my purpose, which is not directly controversial. But in defining what I believe to be essential in the conceptions presented to us reference will of course be made to objections which will appear as misapprehensions if the view I oppose to them is correct. One of them, however, meets us on the threshold, and is so obstructive to any clear conception of psychical evolution that we must endeavour to come to an understanding with it at once.

It is remarkable that two books of nearly contemporary publication—Du Prel's "Philosophie der Mystik," and "Sympneumata"—contain an almost identical protest against the fallacy of transferring to nature the dualism which in thought abstracts force from matter, or spirit from body. Materialism, as the German author shows, is chiefly due to a confusion of the super-sensible with the supernatural; that is, to an inability to see that nature is not limited to our existing sensibility, but will become progressively more sensible with the evolution of organic conditions more susceptible to its impact. The Spiritualist, on the other hand, it is said, makes the same mistake, but believing more in the force or spirit side of the dualistic conception, hypostasises spirit as a mode of existence independent of organic conditions of consciousness. Now it is evident that all sensibility, whether it be that of an external sense for an external object, or of an internal sense for an intelligent or even Divine influence—spiritual intuition—implies a receptivity and reaction; that is to say, a mode of existence which must be conceived both objectively as sensible, and subjectively as sensitive. As Du Prel has pointed out, it is only the psychophysical "threshold" of sensibility which prevents any influence—such as "thought-transference"—from passing into sensible apprehension. And so our own thoughts, in the degree that they were forcible and distinct, would be phenomenally perceptible by another "spirit" which should objectively apprehend them. And, indeed, if all correspondence from a higher plane to a lower, or from the relatively subjective to the objective, are just such representations, then is our whole "material" Nature nothing else (as Hinton taught).

It is common now to hear the phrase "refined materialism," applied by way of reproach to every attempt to make the conditions of a higher existence scientifically conceivable. There is, indeed, one way of doing this which must always evoke a philosophical protest. That is when "matter" is accepted as an absolute entity or substance antecedent to consciousness, and is merely attenuated for the support of a consciousness which somehow, and for that sole reason, is supposed to be more spiritual. The dualism in our conception is not resolved by adopting one side of it, the other side immediately breaking out in the antithesis which marks the earlier stages of idealism. Both these views, however, are at least professedly monistic; whereas, to speak with your reviewer of the spiritual as "the real antithesis of the material" is to concede an independent existence to matter, maintaining the dualism which will always justify the presence of a materialistic no less than of a spiritualistic school of thought. The aim of philosophy is surely not to show where matter ends and spirit begins as independent phases of existence, but to carry our conception to a deeper level at which the apparent difference is suppressed. Such a solution will not divide the universe into material and spiritual substances, the former on the lower planes of life, the latter on the higher, but will exhibit this dualism as one of aspects merely, re-appearing as such on every plane of individuality. For any mode of existence which can be brought within positive experience—however subjective and therefore "spiritual" it now relatively is or seems—must then take on the objective aspect, which will be found continuous with the same aspect in the lower, or earlier objectified, modes. If existences, as for instance the other modes of consciousness which we call other individuals, are externally perceptible at all in the "spiritual"

* See Review of this book in "LIGHT," April 11th, 18th, and 25th of the present year. May be obtained of the Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, S.W. Price 10s. 6d.

world, that must be, as here, through an objective aspect, that is, phenomenally. And that which for external observation will be an appearance, a body, will for the subject be its organism, its means of expression and operation. But with increased power and intensity of the conscious life its expression or phenomenon must correspond by mobility, flexibility, and adaptability to the inner impulse; in a word, by "fluidity." Our bodies here are more solid, not because they are more "material," but because they express a lethargic consciousness, an undeveloped life, and a defective will. The force, which objectively expressed is mobility, or that condition of matter in which it readily yields to, and represents the force by, form, is still comparatively latent.

When, therefore, the reviewer censures "Sympneumata" for ascribing "spiritual impurity to solid matters on the ground of its physical density, and spiritual purity to tenuous matter on the ground of its physical rarity," he overlooks the initial thesis of the book, that "matter" is to be identified with "the whole universal medium for the transmission of force" (p. 11), a definition which, while preserving the continuity of nature throughout all the planes of manifestation, deprives matter of any distinctive character of its own, or apart from the quality of the force which it expresses and transmits. If the book lays stress, as no doubt it does, on the material aspect, that is because this aspect, as a constant phenomenon, is the object of scientific apprehension. The organism is just the *mode* of receptivity to, and reaction upon, impressions whether from without or from within; in other words it is the particular differentiation of consciousness. Absolutely or metaphysically conceived, it is neither material nor immaterial substance, but assumes one or other aspect as it is regarded from the objective or from the subjective point of view. That is merely to say again, that the dualism of force and matter, or spirit and body, belongs, not to the truth of things, but to our conception of them. It is therefore not materialism to recognise in every mode and degree of sensibility an organic condition, and to speak of that condition in terms appropriate to the objective aspect of it—as subtle or fluid materiality—if only that side of the dualistic fallacy is avoided which *derives* force from its medium, or spirit from its vehicle.

The purpose of "Sympneumata" being to expound the phenomenon of a new sensibility, and at the same time to vindicate for this sensibility a spirituality which should not imply a false antithesis, it was necessary at the outset of the work to reassert the monistic conception of force and matter, mind and body, without which no theory of evolution is at all intelligible. The following passage will have especial interest for those who are opposing scientific prejudice against the recognition of psychical phenomena:—

"It is in this that the misfortune lies, for the minds of the more rationalistic quality, of the great untruth that matter and force are separable. If the scientific man could once realise that in dealing with the moral forces which ultimate themselves dynamically in the actions of men, he was not transgressing the limits of legitimate scientific investigation, and that such investigation could be pursued upon a basis in the strictest sense material, the great barrier would be removed which has heretofore closed the most important of all branches of scientific study, and he would perceive in the experiments which have been made in the science of molecular physics, whereby smaller molecules have been revealed by the use of modern appliances than could previously have been apprehended, evidences that material atoms may continue to elude observation to an indefinite degree, and that the focus of the human eye is not to be relied upon as furnishing a limit beyond which, he may dare to say, no form or matter exists. However, as has been said, his dislike to the pursuit of further investigation into the more hidden secrets of nature, has been due quite as much, if not more, to the assumption of those people who claim an acquaintance with experiences which transcend nature,—which are, they say, supernatural, immaterial, or purely spiritual,—as to any positive disinclination on his part to see no further than the microscope can reveal, or to have no sense of what he cannot touch and weigh." The dualism in question "has not merely had the effect of driving scientific men into a narrow groove of so-called positive investigation, but it has exercised a most pernicious influence upon the opposite class of minds, whom it has confined to the no less narrow groove of spiritual dogmatism, thus separating the students of external nature, and of internal truth, into two violent antagonistic categories. And it will now probably prove to be

more repellant to the class which has dealt exclusively with what it has termed the spiritual side of man, to acknowledge the all pervading presence throughout it of matter, than for the scientific class to acknowledge the existence of the moral element in every manifestation of force."

Poor Spiritualists! Only the other day there was Mr. Roden Noel chiding them for their too great readiness to adopt a materialistic conception of spirit as a subtler material form or body; and eminent Rationalists have repeatedly denounced phenomenal Spiritualism for a similar degradation of "spiritual" ideas, applying to it such phrases as "a peculiarly gross form of materialism," and so on. But the above apology for scientific men at their expense may well try their patience more than these aspersions. As if it were *their* business, rather than that of the scientific people who profess "exact" conceptions of nature, to discover the fallacy of the time-honoured dualism in those conceptions, and as if *they* are responsible for the grossness of the scientific mind, recognising no phenomena of force which cannot be associated with the matter of the senses!

But with this passing protest against a singularly misapplied censure, the substantial truth and importance of the passages quoted may be admitted. That the false separation of force and matter, spirit and body, in nature is responsible for the division, hitherto irreconcilable, of human thought into materialistic and spiritualistic schools, is a proposition which only requires adequate statement to induce assent. And its clear recognition almost entirely removes objection to terminology which would otherwise be appropriate to a one-sided point of view.

There are in "Sympneumata" three distinctive principles which may be considered, first separately, and then in their combination. One is, that sense-consciousness in organic evolution may be raised to a moral quality, taking the place now occupied in most of us by the ideal or metaphysical consciousness, all moral evolution in the race or the individual testifying to a corresponding biological process which is consummated with the establishment of a new organic basis of the moral life. Henceforward the subject of this completed process—at any stage, that is, of its completion—is not under a "law" of a higher or ideal consciousness, imposing a painful and doubtful struggle with the lower sensational and selfish instincts, but that consciousness has ousted the lower from its sensational vantage ground, and now itself rests on this as the spontaneous nature and delight of life.

Now when the reviewer tells us that "the 'new creature' of mystical science is not a fluidic but a spiritual being, and represents the 'great work' of the Hermetists, the redemption of spirit from matter altogether, whether solid or fluidic, and not the reconstitution of the individual of any particular kind of matter," it is very evident that he there conceives matter as determining consciousness, and not as determined by consciousness. Now that is certainly true of all organic conditions of consciousness, which, as such, mediate the will force, thus belonging to the definition already referred to of "matter." But he forgets, it seems to me, that there are or may be many regenerations or "redemptions"; that the Divine power, which on any organic basis is consciousness, passes downwards, or from within, from one such basis or stage to another, modifying, and at length transmuting the lower one to the next higher. And thus it is,* that whereas consciousness on any organic basis is determined thereby, it, that condition of "matter," is at the same time resolvable, and thus redeterminable, by another force-matter combination, which on the higher stage is again consciousness. If we resolutely and consistently refuse to recognise matter as anything else than the objective aspect of a certain relatively stable condition of consciousness—which stability is expressed by the term organic—we see that the "matter" from which we would be "redeemed" is that fixity of consciousness at any given stage which is then the *nature* of the individual. If, as the reviewer says, the "great work" is "the redemption of spirit from matter altogether," that is an utter passing out of manifestation, Nirvana, the only condition in which the term "supernatural" has more than a relative sense. That, no doubt, is the undefined ideal of Buddhism, undefined for the very reason that it is a supernatural condition in the absolute sense, the conceptions of reason being always scientific and concerned with nature, whether in its subjective

* I wish here, once for all, to apologise for any apparent dogmatism of language. So far as any conception becomes clear to us, it resembles a perception of truth, and we almost unavoidably use expressions appropriate to that intuition.

or objective aspect. The evolution of the soul belongs to the natural series, and to oppose a supernatural ideal to any account of that evolution is clearly irrelevant, however right it may be philosophically, to point to a consummation which signifies no more than that the natural process is completed. But the great teachers of old usually meant by "matter" the lower quality of sensation corresponding to the grosser organism expressive of the lower life. The pure soul had still its "vehicle," its *soma angoides*: Neo-Platonic speculation distinguishing between bodies terrestrial and ethereal, and assigning the more tenuous bodies to the purer souls.

To understand the first of the three leading ideas in "Sympleumata" on which we are now engaged, it must be remembered that all moral and spiritual emotion is therein conceived as the sensation of a higher organic degree, inchoate for our lower degree, but tending to become the ultimate basis of the whole conscious life. Not till we have examined the second idea, which tells us what this new life of the individual, to be thus ultimated, really is, can we see that the moral quality of the sensation is completely guaranteed. But this we can see at once: that sensation, and the organic "matter" which both mediates it and is its objective aspect, are correlates than which no two sides more inseparable can be imagined. Now, if further we recognise in the growth of the moral consciousness a sensational element, the intensity of which is the measure of that consciousness, we must admit that a new moral nature will be a sensational basis and impulse of the will, making moral action instructive, certain, and delightful, instead of difficult, precarious, and painful. The distinctive external aspect of this organic nature, as fluidic rather than solid, is the material expression of the expansive or spiritual quality, which has now prevailed over the contractive quality represented by the solid form. The reviewer is known to be an eminent student of mystical—which are really philosophical*—conceptions, and this correspondence is certainly not strange to him.

Our consciousness is sensational, emotional, and ideal. The middle term partakes of the first and third; like physical sensation, it is feeling, and it is associated with ideas. The power of ideas over us is measurable by the degree in which they can produce certain mental affections, determining the direction of our intellectual and practical energies. Now as the emotion is a spontaneous reaction upon the idea, it testifies to a certain organic basis existing in the individual as special character and tendency. The idea to which one consciousness leaps upwards in emotional response impresses another's consciousness not at all, or rather it wants that fulness of intellectual apprehension in which assent by the will is involved. The function of will in intellectual processes is insufficiently recognised in psychology, though it has often been insisted upon by a profound religious discernment, and is at the foundation of the mystery of "faith," so little comprehended by the merely rationalistic understanding. It is an affinity with the idea, implying that the order of consciousness to which the idea belongs has become organically seated in the psychical constitution. The idealist will certainly be repelled by the prominence conceded to "sensation" in "Sympleumata," unless this indissoluble association of the ideal with the emotional consciousness is understood. There is no greater fallacy than that we cannot will what to believe, since in truth we believe nothing which we do not will.† But this "will" is not conscious volition; it is pre-disposition. As such it is a mode of sensibility, an intuitive faculty, as truly a sense for truth as seeing is a sense for its objects.‡

Now it is with the evolution of this faculty, in substitution of the present physical basis of consciousness as the "ultimate" of man, that "Sympleumata" is concerned. Never mind, for the moment whether the book has rightly defined what will come forth in this consciousness; we have first to see that it has rightly described the basis of the new consciousness as sensational. For this, the "alluring tones and lavish promises of sensational compensations," the "ascription of physical attributes to spiritual principles," is one of a long list of charges against it, for which the closest examination I have been able to give the text discovers no real, and sometimes not even an apparent warrant.§

* "For many, as they say in the mysteries, are the thyraus-bearers, but few are the mystics," meaning, as I interpret the words, the true philosophers."—*Phædo. Jowett's Translation.*

† "The will," says Swedenborg, "leads the understanding, and causes it to act in unity with itself; and the love which is of the will calls that wisdom in the understanding which agrees with itself."—*Divine Love and Wisdom*, S. 245.

‡ "The thought is nothing but internal sight."—Swedenborg, *Op. cit.*, S. 404.

§ The last specified, for instance, "the insidious intimation of man's exemption from any call for self-sacrifice," p. 59, is referred to. Unless this is a misprint, or a wrong reference, there is here a charge not even remotely relevant to the particular matter adduced in justification of it.

The superiority which we justly ascribe to intellect over sense belongs not to the faculty but to its objects. On the contrary, all direct and immediate perception is in its own nature a superior mode of knowledge to that which we now represent ideally. And perfect intellection would be that in which the moments of the process were suppressed, the result being intuitively present. This is just what happens in developed sense perception, in which all psychologists, whether they belong to the Association school or are followers of Kant, recognise either mental processes or mental laws. It may even be questioned whether there are really two generically distinct faculties of knowledge or apprehension. Thought, not being yet perfectly organised in us for the possession of objects other than those of our sense, repeats the moments of its process laboriously, and therefore consciously. In sense the object is gained with apparent immediacy, the moments being indiscernable by reason of organic facility. We have no criterion of reality except immediate apprehension. The disparagement of sense may therefore have no other justification than that we have as yet only developed a sense for inferior objects. And if this is true of sense-perception it must likewise be true of the emotional element of sense, sensation. "Lavish promises of sensational compensation" would thus be the promise of organic spontaneity for the highest emotions of the soul. The question whether this is so in "Sympleumata," introduces us to the second of the ideas which I have distinguished for convenience of examination. That will exhibit the evolution of human solidarity in the individual consciousness, parallel to its social manifestations. The third idea, which essentially characterises the book, combines the conception of the organic basis of the new life with that of its humanitarian and non-egoistic quality, in the announcement that this development of consciousness is a further ultimatum of the Divine love and sex principle, derived from God to man, and thus only can be realised and expressed.

C. C. M.

(To be continued.)

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

CROYDON.—Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond delivered an inspirational address in the Public Hall, Croydon, on the 21st inst. Considering that only about three days' notice could be given to the public, the attendance was very good, there being about 150 persons present. We believe that this is by far the most aggressive move Spiritualism has hitherto made at Croydon, and its success will be a great encouragement to further efforts in the same direction. The subject of the address was "Spiritualism as a Portion of Daily Life," and it was treated in a most practical, vigorous, and dignified manner. The calm and graceful bearing of Mrs. Richmond at once disarmed all unfriendly feeling, and enlisted the sympathy of the audience, who listened with the greatest attention. An interval at the commencement was devoted to answering questions; and the manner in which some most difficult questions were grappled with seemed to strike the uninitiated with wonder. But wonder rose to astonishment when, upon the audience choosing a subject, an impromptu poem of much merit and beauty was immediately delivered upon it. A great impression was undoubtedly made, and many expressed themselves as highly gratified. It was felt that "sweetness and light" of so much attractiveness could come from no uncanny source; and that no reason nor motive could be assigned why power and culture of such unmistakable elevation should stoop to senseless simulations, and assume utterly unprofitable and useless disguises. The feeling, therefore, was widely spread that, after all, "there may be something in this Spiritualism," and many have expressed the desire to see more of it. Mr. J. H. Mitchiner, F.R.A.S., presided, to whose wise and energetic care in the arrangements a share of the success is due. Great interest has been excited in the subject. It is contemplated repeating the experiment when Mrs. Richmond returns in the autumn.—*Communicated.*

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- H. A. KERSEY.—Next week. Our columns are too crowded to permit its insertion now.
- A. J. C.—We have forwarded your communication to Mr. Maitland as you requested.
- S. E. GAY.—Letter to hand. Shall be glad to help the friend you name, and have written him to that effect. Will also attend to the other matter in due course.
- C. J. A.—We were glad to hear from you. You must, however, kindly excuse a personal reply, though we should much like to write you occasionally.
- REV. J. D. HULL.—Your letter and papers came duly to hand. We used one last week. Could you not occasionally send us an article on the same or similar lines? We should welcome you as a regular contributor.
- E. H.—Why do you hide your attack on the "Dr." behind a *nom-de-plume*? We never notice anonymous communications, and we moreover think you can do many better things than talk scandal. If you have a complaint go and have it out with the person concerned, but not like a coward, stab him behind his back.

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.

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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.

(Continued from p. 348.)

NO.	TITLE OF WORK.	AUTHOR.
283—287	Soul of Things, The, or Psychometric Researches and Discoveries (3 vols.) (Duplicate copies of Vols. I. and III. ...)	William and Elizabeth Denton
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TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHAT CONJURERS SAY ABOUT PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

Testimony of Robert Houdin.

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

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

4th May, 1847.

ROBERT HOUDIN."

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

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

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 séance 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 medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect.

"Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. If (as I have every reason to hope) the psychical studies, to which I am applying myself at this time, succeed, I shall be able to establish clearly, and that by public demonstration, the immense line of demarcation which separates mediumistic phenomena from conjuring proper, and then equivocation will be no longer possible, and persons will have to yield to evidence, or deny through predetermination to deny.

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

Testimony of Samuel Bellachini.

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

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

"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 séances, and what to expect.

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

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

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

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such 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 séance.

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.