

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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

SPIRITUALISM, SPIRITUALISTS, AND THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

BY JOHN S. FARMER.

The following letter addressed to me by a prominent working member of the Society for Psychical Research, and my reply, speak sufficiently for themselves to need no further introduction :—*

DEAR MR. FARMER,—I learn from Mr. — this evening that, from some remarks of mine which have been reported to you, you have inferred that I intended to impute possible dishonesty to you in the matter of the W— séance. Pray let me assure you that no remarks of mine were intended to bear such a construction. I have no ground for supposing you to be less honest in this investigation than I am conscious of being myself, and I have never said a word that was intended to throw a doubt upon your *bona fides*. I am sorry that there should have been any misunderstanding.

I did, however, express my regret that you had been present at the W— séance, and had held an important position at the séance—next to the medium, that is; and I think it likely that my remarks on the point were misinterpreted. I said that to the outside public the fact of your presence in an important position in the circle would certainly lessen the evidential value of any phenomena obtained, and for this reason. Outsiders think, as you doubtless know better than I do, that a believer in Spiritualistic phenomena is probably either an accomplice in fraud or an easy dupe—in either event, a bad witness. Under whichever category outsiders might place you, your presence at the séance would certainly be regarded as a weak point in the evidence, and would probably render an account of the séance of little value for evidential purposes. To put it syllogistically, a sceptic would reason in this way :—

From the testimony which Mr. F. has already given, it is evident that, if he is honest and a trustworthy witness, some of the phenomena called Spiritualistic are true.

Now—according to the testimony of universal experience—none of the phenomena called Spiritualistic are true.

Therefore Mr. F. is either dishonest or incompetent.

I hope this explanation will satisfy you that I cast no slur upon your character in regretting, as I did regret, your presence at the séance in question.

DEAR MR. —, —As your letter of the 28th ult. refers to questions of general interest now exercising the minds of many Spiritualists, and as it also touches indirectly on the whole attitude of the Society for Psychical Research to-

wards Spiritualism, I will reply through the columns of "LIGHT." I am further induced to do this in the hope that frank speaking, and fuller explanations, may, in some measure, remove the unpleasant impressions now entertained by many Spiritualists, both inside and outside this Society, as to its attitude and capacity.

It will suffice for me to deal with your letter mainly on general lines. The W— séance is only one incident, and I do not take the arguments to apply to myself personally; they are, I conceive, used in a general sense and apply to Spiritualists at large, and their capacities for, and methods of investigation. Allow me, without in any way anticipating the report of the W— Committee (which, however, I now publicly challenge them to publish with full names and particulars), to briefly relate the salient points of the séances in question.

The Haunted House Committee of the Society for Psychical Research received, from apparently trustworthy and independent witnesses, a record of hauntings in a cottage some distance from London. There appeared to be a good *prima facie* case for inquiry, whereupon certain members of the Society for Psychical Research formed themselves into a committee of investigation, and arranged to spend from Saturday to Monday at the place. For some reason or other it was suggested by them that probably better results would be obtained if they were able to secure the services of a medium. They were successful in so arranging, and they also courteously asked me to accompany them as a guest, the reason stated being my "long experience in regard to Spiritualistic phenomena." Of the eight men forming the party, six were members or associates of the Society for Psychical Research; the other two—the medium and myself—were not connected with that Society, and were, moreover, well-known and long-avowed Spiritualists. The results exceeded all expectation: the phenomena occurring were rough and violent,—maliciously so to my mind. On each occasion, mainly for reasons obvious to experienced investigators, I occupied a seat next to the medium, two other individual members of the party also alternately filling the corresponding position. The séances were held in total darkness. This was much against my will and advice. At each séance I protested strongly against this condition, the medium naturally expressing no opinion. Hands were held all round, and at the close of each séance each member of the circle testified that the chain had been unbroken as far as he was individually concerned. The phenomena were of such a nature that, accepting these statements, and in view of a thorough search of the house previously, they must have been due to some agency outside the eight persons visibly present.

This is, I think you will admit, a correct though bald account of the circumstances of the case. Now what are your points? You "regret my presence at the séance," and that I "held an important position—next to the medium, that is." Surely your first point is a matter which concerns the members of the Society for Psychical Research, who originated the circle, more than it concerns me. If they wilfully introduced elements, knowing that such introductions would, in their minds, vitiate results, they were deplorably lacking in common sense. I, however, do not believe a single member present at the séance in question adopts the attitude so foolishly and rashly taken by those

* It is only fair to state that the writer did not, in the first place, intend this letter for publication. I therefore treat it as a private communication by excluding the signature and other marks of identity. I am sure that every opportunity will be afforded for replying under the same or other conditions.—J.S.F.

who were absent. I am, however, open to correction in this. With regard to my sitting next the medium it is true I did so. Why, however, should I be singled out for objection? You admit there are no grounds for supposing me to be less honest in this investigation than you are conscious of being yourself. Yet you not only say nothing calling in question the *bona fides* of the other two men who also occupied at times a similar position, but actually specially mention me. Is it because I am a Spiritualist and they are not so avowed? There really seems only this inference that can be drawn, more especially in view of the whole tenor of your letter.

If we deal according to the rules laid down by you with regard to alleged "suspicious elements" in the conditions, as narrated, it seems to me I have grave cause for logically doubting the *bona fides* of all the circle except the medium, inasmuch as the experiment was, as a matter of fact, held in total darkness in spite of my protests.

This brings me to the general attitude of yourself and several prominent members of the Society for Psychical Research, but I wish it to be distinctly understood that nothing I may say is in the least degree meant to be personal. You speak of "the outside public," putting them in the place of critics. In the first instance, I deny the competency of "the outside public" to occupy such a position, and I shall be surprised if you maintain the claim. A chemist might just as well expect a man ignorant of the rudiments of chemistry to understand fractional analysis. Douglas Jerrold once said, "Public opinion is only the average stupidity of mankind." He was not far wrong. Only those who are competent—*i.e.*, those who have proved themselves lovers of, and seekers for truth, who have had the requisite experience, and have exercised common sense in dealing with this experience—are capable of passing judgment, or giving a verdict. Whose view shall we then accept, taking these qualifications as our basis?—"the outside public," or the men of experience, whose verdict, by-the-by, as to the genuineness of these facts after due inquiry, has been and is unanimous?

It seems to me, therefore, that you and the leaders of the Society for Psychical Research generally put yourselves in a false position when you attach so much importance to what an incompetent tribunal will say and think. Does not history give the lie to the utility of such fear for one's skin? Do you really imagine that such a course will recommend itself with respect even to that outside public, which you are so anxious to consider and convert—a world which, though slow to receive and apply any new truth, is remarkably keen, clear-sighted, and appreciative when it is a question of straightforward out-spokenness? The fact of Spiritualists standing firm and immovable in defence of what they know to be a truth, through nearly forty years of ridicule, abuse, and persecution, is bearing fruit at last. Would that the labours of those who have borne the burden and heat of the day—men who have alone rendered possible a society like the Society for Psychical Research—were duly acknowledged by those who should be amongst the first to appreciate the results at which they have arrived.

Instead of this their work is largely discounted and passed by, or surely the attempts to prejudice the subject by the many disparaging allusions to Spiritualism and Spiritualists, and the capacity of the latter, together with the soundness of the methods they adopted, which crop up so frequently in the literature of the Society, could never have found currency. Spiritualists as a class are not thin-skinned, their past experience having rendered them proof against much that would otherwise burn and rankle, but these allusions have, I fear, wrought little service to the Society for Psychical Research, and that in the face of a loyal desire to acknowledge and recognise at its full value

the work done and results obtained by the Society in one branch of occult research.

For myself, and I think I also express the views of a large number of Spiritualists, I believe our "cue" is to trouble but little about "the outside public." They are not as yet even ready to accept evidence, much less to judge righteous judgment.

Do you, however, class yourself among "the outside public"? I hope not, as thereby you would be doing yourself an injustice. Nevertheless, the position you take up for the supposititious "outside public," although thinly veiled, is, I take it, meant to represent your own attitude. If I am right I do not wonder at your finding yourself with a barren experience. There is yet the very first lesson in spiritual science to be learnt.

Your syllogistical application of the sceptic's position contains a gross fallacy. It is *not* the case that "according to universal experience none of the phenomena called Spiritual are true," and your deduction therefore falls to the ground. As a matter of fact the universality of testimony is rather on the other side. If you will point out a nation or an age in which phenomena, similar in kind, if not in degree, to those called Spiritual have not been alleged to occur, I will at once abandon my position. In the meantime I aver that there is a weight of testimony in favour of Spiritual phenomena such as few of even the so-called exact sciences can produce. It is true that there has been "money," in many of the latter and that, therefore, the facts have been more exhaustively studied and applied to the needs and conditions of life than has Spiritual science. That, however, is a reproach which will doubtless mend itself in time. As a matter of fact, many things in scientific research are contrary to the "universal" experience, so-called, of "the outside public," and, moreover, are not supported by collateral evidence occurring all over the civilised globe—do you therefore reject them?

It is with extreme regret that I have to confess—and my opportunities for judging are by no means few—that the feeling amongst Spiritualists at large is that, in spite of the fair promise under which the Society started, there is little now to be expected of them as far as Spiritualism is concerned; that the whole attitude to and treatment of the subject is hardly calculated to inspire confidence. The claims of Spiritualists and Spiritualism are systematically ignored; the genesis of the Society has been misrepresented in the *Proceedings*, and to crown all a member of the Society for Psychical Research, reputed to be antagonistic to the Spiritual theory, and who it is doubtful has had the requisite experience for such a task, has accepted an invitation from the editor of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" to write an article on Spiritualism for that work, instead of standing aside in favour of those who at least have the requisite knowledge and experience. Verily the outlook is not reassuring. Mr. Myers, in the last *Proceedings*, complains that an appeal for evidence relating to Spiritual phenomena produced little reply. I regret the fact, but I am hardly surprised. If those who have channels of investigation which they could throw open to the members of the Society for Psychical Research are informed that because their experience has led them to certain conclusions their presence at any séance would be "regretted," and would "probably render an account of the séance of little value for evidential purposes" to those who confessedly lack experience in such matters—if they know this, it is scarcely surprising that such an appeal should be made in vain. Is nothing to be counted in regard to honesty of purpose and sacrifice for truth?

Complaints are made that evidence is scarce, that there is a dearth of witnesses. My answer is, first publish boldly

and without comment what is already collected; adopt the same course with Spiritual phenomena of any kind that you have with "Phantasms of the Living," and I make bold to say that you will require to double the size of both your magazines. In the case in point, you have considered testimony which is certainly not even of yesterday, or all first-hand. If "LIGHT" of the past two years alone is ransacked, a wealth of evidence will be found, which, if duly weighed and considered, will, I venture to say, shatter the extraordinary amplification of Dr. Carpenter's "unconscious cerebration" theory, now put forward by the Society for Psychical Research in explanation of some of the phenomena. It is all the more strange that this evidence should be neglected in face of the fact that a fair proportion of vice-presidents, members of Council, and members or associates of the Society for Psychical Research are among the witnesses referred to. Dearth of evidence indeed! Nor is this all. It is, I believe, true that certain prominent members of the working section of the Society for Psychical Research possess records of séances kept during many years. If these exist, why are they not dealt with? Surely they are of undoubted value. The only conclusion is that if evidence is wanted there is plenty to hand.

I am afraid you will regard my letter as a grumble all round. At any rate, it is better for any society to know what is being said of it. At present it occupies a position somewhat analogous to that of a clergyman who year in and year out lays down the law without fear of opposition or criticism. The bulk of the debateable questions connected with these topics appear in the *Journal*—published "for private circulation only." It is true permission is given to quote if applied for, but in any case the restriction tends to cramp free inquiry and discussion, both of which are doubly invaluable when dealing with abstruse subjects of inquiry like Spiritualism and kindred subjects.

For the rest, I hope and believe a basis of agreement and work will be found possible between Spiritualists and the Society for Psychical Research. The former, I will answer for it, will readily respond to any disposition on the part of the latter to treat the subject of Spiritualism with that calmness and justice which is due to it. We have both a common interest in attaining such a position.—Yours truly,

JOHN S. FARMER.

A LAD in the State Institution for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind, at Romney, Hampshire County, Vir., born with cataract in each eye, has gone under operations resulting in his acquiring sight. For fifteen years he had depended upon his other senses for his impressions of the outer world. His acquisition of the new sense was at first useless to him. Objects which had been familiar to him he did not recognise until he touched them. His eyes were like an infant's, gazing at things with a vague, wondering expression. Thus will it be, we imagine, with those who in this life are blind to spiritual things, when they have laid off their garment of earthly material.—*The Golden Gate*.

REV. P. S. HANSON recently delivered a lecture in Chicago on "Fools." He discoursed of "Fools old, young, big, and little; of religious fools and irreligious; drunken fools and sober fools"; and lastly of "Spiritualist fools." Upon the last point he said: "No spirits ever returned to the earth after their eyes had fallen upon the glories of Heaven. Spiritualism is all wicked bosh, and I warn Christians to flee from it as from a lie of the devil." We wonder if Rev. P. S. Hanson believes the story of the return of Moses and Elias on a certain occasion? Is it not possible that he omitted, in his discourse, the enumeration of still another class of fools?—*The Golden Gate*.

WHAT has been meant by the tradition of Christ's resurrection was essentially the belief that He had reappeared from the spirit world to certain disciples. The stories that have been handed down concerning those manifestations have heretofore simply perplexed good people, who have ventured to reason upon the matter, by their apparent contradiction to all they had known of the limitations of bodily existence. And now behold these same phenomena are before our eyes as natural forms of action of rare organisations, even in the flesh. Regarding the phenomena of Spiritualism, therefore, simply as strange manifestations of man's nature upon earth, they clear the air for us to see the possibility of what Paul called a spiritual body. Physical science does not even seriously challenge our faith in immortality. It is clearing the ground for a new, natural, and rational faith in immortality.—Rev. J. NEWTON.

REVIEWS.

MANUAL OF PSYCHOMETRY: The Dawn of a New Civilisation. By Joseph Rodes Buchanan, M.D. Published by the author. Price 8s. 6d. English Agency, The Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C.

Psychometry (from *psyche*, the soul; and *metron*, a measure) or the power of measuring by the soul, owes its discovery to Professor Buchanan, who, in the winter of 1842-43, observed certain facts which led him to the conclusion that mind and character could be measured; the history of the hidden past revealed; and the interior nature and history of persons and things present or absent, living or dead, truly and critically estimated. By personal investigation and instruction, and also by means of lectures on the subject he gradually extended a knowledge of its principles, and, by degrees, a mass of facts was collected which seemed to allow of no questioning of the general truth of these startling claims. For upwards of forty years Dr. Buchanan has continued his researches, and has now given to the world in this large volume the results of his labour. There is much in Dr. Buchanan's work of interest and, what is far more important, of extreme value to the Spiritualist. Without desiring in any way to underrate the value of the excellent results attained by investigators in the past—their works speak, indeed!—it yet seems to us that we Spiritualists of to-day are too little careful of the heritage we have had handed down to us; and that we are somewhat in the position of the servant who, in the ancient fable, had received a talent which he forthwith hid from sight and rendered useless either to himself or his fellow men. We want above all else careful and original research in regard to the latent powers of spirit, embodied or disembodied; for that we must learn to depend upon ourselves and not on others. In this light, therefore, we regard Dr. Buchanan's *Manual* as extremely opportune and useful.

Psychometry deals with the latent normal powers of the embodied spirit. It is curious to note in this respect the correlation between the trio, Psychometry, Mesmerism, and Mediumship. They may be thus tabulated:—

Psychometry: dealing with the normal powers of embodied spirit.

Mesmerism: dealing with the abnormal powers of embodied spirit.

Mediumship: dealing with the powers of disembodied spirit.

Each of these three branches of occult science overlaps and merges into the other, and it is difficult to say where one ends and the other begins. One thing, however, seems clear, viz., that we here possibly catch a glimpse of an orderly arrangement and graduation of phenomena which have in some respects seemed without sequence, and beyond any but a general classification. Not less important are the indications we also get as to a more rational method of dealing with those who are honestly and truly seeking practical knowledge concerning the nature and capacity of spirit. We have long felt, by reason of the experience gained while conducting this journal, that some well-conceived system of study, capable of being placed before those who thus seek, was urgently required. Broadly it appears to us that the course should be as here indicated; the details of the instruction we leave for abler organisers to arrange or suggest. Surely, however, the first step for an inquirer is to recognise and study the capacities and powers of the embodied spirit in its normal state—to begin at the lowest rung of the ladder instead of half way up, or near the top, as when Spiritualism is studied without a previous knowledge of either psychometry or mesmerism. In such a case half the difficulties which beset the inquirer would not exist at all, and the many other advantages of such a course of study are sufficiently obvious to need little particularisation.

Those who take a similar view cannot do better than peruse and study Dr. Buchanan's "Manual of Psychometry"—indeed we will go farther and say that even advanced Spiritualists who have no acquaintance with this subject have missed a very important and indispensable branch of spiritual knowledge.

Dr. Buchanan's discovery was made in this wise. Having for many years made a special study of the nervous system of man, he was informed by Bishop Polk, of the American Episcopal Church, that his sensibility was so acute that if he should, by accident, touch a piece of brass, even in the night, when he could not see what he touched, he immediately felt the influence through his system, and could recognise the offensive metallic taste. The discovery of such sensibility in one so vigorous both in mind and body as

was Bishop Polk led Dr. Buchanan to suppose that it might be found in others. In this he was justified by observation. It soon appeared that the power was quite common; that there were many who could determine by touching a piece of metal or by holding it in their hands, what the metal was—as they recognised a peculiar influence proceeding from it which in a few moments gave them a distinct taste in the mouth. This power was not confined in its operation to metallic substances. We continue in Dr. Buchanan's own words:—

"Every substance possessing a decided taste appeared to be capable of transmitting its influence into the system, and of being recognised by its taste. Sugar, salt, pepper, acids, and other substances of a decided taste, made so distinct an impression that each could be recognised and named by many of those upon whom the experiment was performed. It did not appear that the sense of taste was translated to the fingers, or changed any of its known laws, but it did appear that contact of the sapid substance with the papillæ of the tongue was by no means necessary. The peculiar influence of the substance touched or held in the hand by sensitive persons appeared to affect the hand locally, and thence to be transmitted gradually along the arm, recognised by some peculiar sensation as it passed, and producing no other effects until it reached the chest or the head. In the head it produced its impression upon the brain and nerves, and, if possessed of sapid qualities, was recognised by their characteristic impression upon the tongue and fauces. The sweetness of sugar, the pungency of pepper, and all the peculiarities of other tastes were recognised, as if the same substances, instead of being held in the hands, had been gradually, in small quantities, introduced into the mouth. (It is perhaps necessary for me to state that these experiments were entirely independent of any mesmeric process, and consisted simply of what I have stated. The public mind has been so accustomed to the processes of mesmeric operators, that unless a special disclaimer is made, it may be supposed that such experiments were made upon mesmeric or somnambulant patients, prepared by a magnetising process.) The number of individuals who could exercise the acute sensibility and taste which I have described appeared to be variable in different localities, being greater in warm climates than in cold. In some places one-fourth, or even one-half, of the whole population appeared to be capable of displaying this new power of the nervous system. In other places not more than one in ten or fifteen could display it distinctly. Mental cultivation and refinement, acute sensibility, delicacy of constitution, a nervo-sanguineous temperament, and a general predominance of the moral and intellectual organs, constituted the most favourable conditions for its exercise."

In a class of 130 students experiments were made in this direction with medicines of various kinds, the trial being conducted in such a way that any play of the imagination could be at once detected, and in some instances the medicine was unknown to all present until the close of the experiment. Forty-three members of the class, or about one-third, were successful in these results.

The conclusion arrived at through these and other experiments was that the nervous system is capable of being affected by a subtle influence emanating from all objects, and it was soon verified by experience that those who possessed this sensibility were distinctly affected by contact with living beings, and were able to correctly appreciate the influence proceeding from them, even without actual contact. The next steps are thus described:—

"It seemed probable that if the psychological influence of the brain could be transmitted through a suitable conducting medium, it might also be imparted to objects in proximity to it, and retained by them, so as to be subsequently recognised by one of impressible constitution. Without relating the experiments which established this proposition, I would proceed at once to the most wonderful experiment of all. To proceed with my narrative: It was in the latter part of '42 that I made the experiment which I would narrate now—not merely to appeal to the reader's faith, but to give him an example for his own experimental inquiries. I had clearly ascertained in a young gentleman* with whom I had made many experiments the existence of extraordinary acuteness of sensibility. In a moment's contact with the head of any individual he would discover his entire character by the sympathetic impression. Reasoning, which I need not now repeat, had convinced me that he possessed the power of recognising a mental influence in any autograph that he might touch. I was sitting with my young friend in an apartment in Astor House, when I resolved to test his powers. I proceeded to my trunk, and took four letters written by individuals of strongly marked and peculiar characters. I placed them successively in his hands, and requested him to watch the mental impressions to which they gave

rise in his mind, and report his conceptions of the characters of the writers. He did so, and his descriptions surpassed my anticipations. He entered into the spirit of each character as familiarly as if he had been in contact with the individual, and described not only his intellect and his principles of action, but even his personal appearance and physical constitution. He knew not of whom he was speaking—he did not even know what letters I had placed in his hands—yet I can say, without exaggeration, that his description would not have been more correct if he had described the individuals from familiar personal knowledge."

It is foreign to our present purpose to deal further with the practice and application of psychometry, of which Dr. Buchanan gives many examples. It would be impossible within these limits to do anything like justice to the importance of the subject. Sufficient, however, has been said to indicate the scope and practical aim of the book. We also purpose publishing at an early date a few practical articles on the subject.

FIVE YEARS OF THEOSOPHY: Mystical, Philosophical, Theosophical, Historical, and Scientific Essays selected from "The Theosophist." London: Reeves and Turner, 7s. 6d. May be obtained by post from the Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, London, W.C.

As implied by its title this book consists of reprinted articles selected from the *Theosophist*. They embrace a wide field of study; how far they are of value we are not at present in a position to say. Though these special articles are not, we understand, put forward as authoritative, yet we cannot but remember the attitude adopted by prominent members of the Theosophical Society, in the controversy arising out of circumstances to which we need not now more particularly allude.

The protest of Spiritualists in connection with this controversy with Theosophy was not directed against any new light which it could possibly throw upon a perplexing subject, but rather against the arrogant "Thus saith the Lord" method of its presentation; against the insufficient evidence upon which Spiritualists were expected to swallow the alleged facts of Theosophy; and more especially against the wilful and systematic misrepresentation of Spiritualism indulged in by prominent Theosophists. They habitually, and we confess, it appears to us wilfully, attributed to the Spiritualism of to-day the characteristics of twenty years since, whereas vast strides had been made since then. As a matter of fact, Theosophy at its inception, and at the time of which we speak, calmly and coolly passed off as its own exclusive teaching much that was due to the labour and research of Spiritualists, and it had not even the grace to acknowledge the source of its inspiration. And as regard the methods and "facts" of Theosophy has not the logic of events proved the value of the general conclusions arrived at by Spiritualists?

We feel we are only re-echoing the views of the majority of Spiritualists in this country when we welcome criticism on all sides. Feeling that the more we learn of Spiritualism the less we really know, we are ready to be taught by any man having knowledge and ability. We feel that, standing midway between the Theosophical Society, as now constituted, on the one hand, and the Society for Psychical Research on the other, we may learn much from both. All we ask is that there may be no misunderstanding of the position we hold, or of the methods we adopt. Let it not be forgotten that while insisting upon the spiritual theory as a legitimate outcome of facts, we do not presume to deny the action of spirit other than that of the mighty dead; that we recognise that man is a spirit here and now, and as such has latent spiritual qualities; that beyond the order of embodied and disembodied spirit there may be a vast realm filled with the unembodied orders of spiritual being: this, we conceive, is the present position of most Spiritualists.

It is with regret that we notice the same dogmatic and unreasonable estimate of Spiritualism perpetuated in the volume before us. We had hoped that it would have been otherwise. For the rest we may say that those who care for speculation devoid of an apparent sound foundation on facts, will find in "Five Years of Theosophy" a volume to their tastes.

THE JOURNAL OF SCIENCE (1s. 6d. monthly, 18s. per annum).

All Spiritualists should read this magazine. It is one of the very few which deals fairly and honourably with Spiritualism. Hardly a month passes but that it contains articles or notes relating to the subjects with which we are specially concerned. In last week's "LIGHT" we gave *in extenso* an article taken from this magazine which could not fail to commend itself to our readers,

* Chas. Inman.

and this by no means exhausted the extracts we felt tempted to make. Editorially, the subject is treated on its merits. For example, in the August number occurs this passage in a review of Laing's "Modern Science and Modern Thought," a book the object of which, in its own words, is "to give a clear and concise view of the principal results of modern science and of the revolution which they have effected in modern thought." The author deals incidentally with Spiritualism, and his estimate of it "as another widespread modern delusion," the *Journal of Science* regards as "scarcely in harmony with the facts of the case." We now quote the *Journal* :—

"He [Mr. Laing] writes: 'In vain medium after medium is detected, and the machinery by which ghosts are manufactured exposed in police-courts; in vain the manifestations of the so-called spirits are repeated by professional conjurers like Maskelyne and Cooke, who disclaim any assistance from the unseen world.' Now, here is precisely the difficulty. Maskelyne and Cooke have never, as far as we are aware, succeeded in producing under fair test conditions even the simpler forms of 'psychography.' They have never—though the attention of one of them was especially called to the case—fixed on the wrist of a man an iron ring, like that of Mr. Husk, too narrow to be passed over the hand. The author's remarks on dreams, somnambulism, and mesmerism, however, are worth attention."

In the same number appeared the first portion of the article we reprinted last week. Curiously enough it was followed by one entitled "Ignoramus et Ignorabimus," intended, we should think, as a kind of apology for the pronounced views expressed in "The Relations between Spiritualism and Science." Here are some of the most pertinent paragraphs :—

"We see that, if any of our present senses were wanting, entire categories of phenomena would escape us, and that entire branches of science as we have them could never have arisen.

"Such being manifestly the case, is it not justifiable to assume that, had we more senses, more gateways of knowledge, we should become cognisant of classes of phenomena which have now for us no existence, and that new unimagined sciences would be developed? A little reflection will convince most of us that the additional knowledge thus gained would in many cases inevitably modify our present views."

"Unless we are prepared to deny the possible existence of such senses, we must admit that our present insight into nature is most fragmentary. We are like men gazing upon a nocturnal landscape upon which fall five narrow beams of light from the windows of a castle, leaving broad regions between them unilluminated. What these dark spaces may contain it is impossible for them to say; but they will be presumptuous in the extreme if they venture to assert that they have a complete view of the entire region, that they see all which does exist, and that whatever they fail to see is 'impossible.' Yet this is exactly the position which men of great reputation have not unfrequently taken. Hence true men of science, fully alive to the responsibilities of their position, are now very reluctant to pronounce on 'impossibilities.'"

"These considerations show us how very imperfect and fragmentary is the primary material upon which science has to work. Entire categories of phenomena escape us. What would be the position of our hookworms if, in the ancient treatises in which they delight, letters, words, sentences, and chapters, in great numbers, were here and there missing? What if they were not aware of the very existence of such gaps and deficiencies, but believed that they had before them the complete text, and proceeded to expound it accordingly? Misinterpretation, surely, of the wildest character would result. Yet the position of us interpreters of nature is but too closely analogous. With our few—and, as we have just called to mind, imperfect—senses, much fails to reach our understanding. Much? Possibly in some directions the most important part. Surely, therefore, we should take good heed not to talk of impossibilities. Remembering that we see only in part, we should not be hasty in rejecting any new light which is offered for our acceptance."

The drift of this is obvious, and we hail with joy the undogmatic attitude here adopted. A fair field and no favour is all that Spiritualists ask; here we shall probably get it.

FAITH-HEALING.—A new sect has arisen in England, claiming to heal by the exercise of faith—by auto-magnetisation. It is severely censured by journals of the pietist school, in the name of what they regard as the true Christian faith. "LIGHT" calls the attention of these latter to the correlation between such facts as those reported of the faith-healers and those recorded of Jesus Christ, and of many prophets and saints. But partisan spirit blinds men to not perceiving that they furnish arms against themselves.—*Le Spiritisme*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

The Electric Girl.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It appears from a letter from one of your correspondents some weeks back, and an answer to "J. C. D." in your current issue, that the "Electric Girl," or "Goddess Electra," is affording some mystification; and, "as it is not yet quite clear whether the phenomenon is genuine, or the result of mechanical contrivance," perhaps you will kindly allow me to offer your correspondents the assurance that it is the result of a very simple contrivance which anyone can effectively employ. As I should be most unwilling to injure the exhibitor of this, whose only means of living it may be, I cannot make public the explanation, but will most willingly do so by private communication to any of your correspondents who would not prefer to cherish the illusion.—And remain, sir, yours very truly,

149, Cheapside, London, E.C.

C. T.

September 12th, 1885.

AN appreciative "local sketch," entitled "With the Spiritualists," appears in a recent issue of the *Coventry Herald*.

A LIVELY discussion on Spiritualism has been in progress in the *South Australian Times*, published at Adelaide. As an instance of the interest excited, it may be mentioned that special supplements of correspondence have been issued.

DRAWING MEDIUMSHIP.—D. L. Shaw, of Chicopee, Mass., writes: "I am an investigator. A dear daughter, eighteen years old, departed this life nine months ago. She had learned to paint flowers, &c. She seems to have returned to her mother, who is now executing some fine drawings. They come through her hand when she takes a pencil in hand and holds it on drawing paper laid on the table. My wife was never a Spiritualist. She also has communications by writing: some very beautiful."—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

ANOTHER SLATE WRITING MEDIUM.—Dr. H. R. Rogers has recently come to New York from Philadelphia, and is giving sittings. The writer of this had one a few days ago, and received a message covering the whole surface of a slate, under the following conditions: Two slates cleaned by himself and fastened by a rubber band, with a small piece of pencil between them, were held by himself upon the top of his head, the medium standing at his side with his hands upon the surface of the upper slate. The sound of writing was heard within the slates for about three minutes; then three light taps. The sitter then removed the band, and found the written communication spoken of.—*H. K. in the "Spiritual Offering."*

DIRECT SPIRIT PAINTING.—Mrs. Dias Debar is a medium through whom direct paintings come. She hands to one of the circle a small, plain square of cardboard, and, after he has marked it, tells him to hold it on the top of his head in such a way that the edge of the card may rest on it with the marked face of the card forward. The medium does not touch it from the moment of putting it plain into his hands. At the end of perhaps a minute, after a few squirms, holding the hands of one or more of the circle, the medium says, "Look now," and there on the unmarked side of the card is a fresh little painting which would take an artist hours to execute. This manifestation reminds me of séances I had years ago in company with Epes Sargent, when coloured crayon drawings were produced in a somewhat similar way. We did not think the drawings were done by any kind of mechanical operation, but psychical, as I do the present paintings. We may know hereafter more about such things than we do at present.—*The "Spiritual Offering's" Boston Correspondent*.

A HAUNTED CAR.—Two tram-cars run on Chestnut and Walnut-streets after midnight. The driver of one, Bill, an old and trustworthy one, says that some nights ago his car was boarded by a man resembling closely one whom he knew as a constant passenger, and who died five years ago. On his approaching the man he nodded and smiled just as he used to do, and then faded away. He told another passenger what he had seen. This passenger, making the journey a few nights after, saw, with Bill, the same object. He says: "Being kept in town very late, I had to ride home in Bill's car. As it ascended the bridge hill, Bill called my attention to someone standing on the platform of the car. He was of ordinary appearance, with a full blonde beard. Bill went up to him, and as he did so I saw the man smile and nod as to an old acquaintance, and then melted away. As the car descended the hill, Bill and I saw the same man seated in the corner of the car. Bill approached him, and the seat was empty! 'That man,' said Bill, 'rode in the car for years. We were always friends. I always used him right, and I can't understand why he should have it in for me.'"—*Philadelphia Press*.

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

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Light :

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1885.

MATTER AND FORCE.

Monists and Dualists are now in deadly conflict, the former affirming that all the phenomena in the universe consist of various aspects and attributes of matter and force, and the latter that behind nature there is "an infinite power that makes for righteousness."

The Monists are to a man against Spiritualism in any form, even in the form of a future existence for mankind, and specially in the form of a supreme, infinite, and absolutely independent Ruler of the physical universe, and its innumerable and infinitely varied inhabitants.

In the opinion of Monists, who for the most part are speculative physical scientists, there is no God, and no necessity for one; no spiritual man, and no future state of conscious existence for man in any form.

The Dualists, on the other hand, and specially those who have adopted what are termed modern spiritual theories, recognise a Supreme Ruler to whom all nature is subservient, and they further recognise the existence of innumerable commonwealths of spiritual beings, who have been born upon, and passed their preliminary stages on the myriad worlds of this infinite Cosmos.

Monists accept the theory that matter and force have all the powers and potencies with which we are familiar, and, besides that all the powers and potencies of the universe, of the overwhelming majority of which, the wisest men on earth know absolutely nothing.

Monists further affirm that matter is infinite, eternal, and indestructible, that it always has been and always will be; that its quantity will never vary an atom in weight or physical potency, although they can scarcely affirm that it will not vary in intellectual potency, and what may be termed its vital power has vastly increased since the earth was a molten mass, although Monists may assert, that the force which was exhibited in heat in the molten earth, is only now being exhibited in another aspect as vital and intellectual force, and that all vitality and all mentality are merely peculiar chemical or other physical actions. To believe this, they must believe that all vital action and mental manifestation lay potentially in the earth's primordial fire-mists, and further, that it must have been there eternally.

Dualists or Spiritualists, on the other hand, as a body, refrain from the expression of opinions as to the eternity and essential potencies of matter, and recognise the existence of a Supreme Spiritual Power, and spiritual intelligences, who do not come within the range of those conditions to which all matter appears to be subject.

Monists believe in a material universe, and that only. Dualists defend the theory of a dual universe, the two parts

of which are intimately related to each other, but the laws governing one, although related to, are not analogous to those governing the other.

From the times of Lucretius, Lucippus, Democritus, Epicurus, Anaxagoras, Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Descartes, Leibnitz, Newton, Holbach, Diderot, and more modern writers and thinkers, the contest between Monists and Dualists has proceeded, and now proceeds with increasing vigour, since both sides admit that motion is a property of matter, and that not only is every huge sphere in the universe in complex motion, but that every atom and molecule in existence is in a condition of ceaseless activity, and that a motionless atom is an impossibility.

Rest, says Meyer, does not exist. "It is an exquisite dream, a phantom of hope which the world knows not, which is without an instance in Nature. Nature itself knows no death, but only change; no destruction, but only the passing over into other forms of motion; it is an eternally raging, whirling sea of motion and of change."

Modern Spiritual phenomena have not reached us a day too soon. The intellectual world is drifting into a cheerless and pessimistic Monism, which allows us life without a sentient future, a high intellectual and moral Now, to end in blank negation. The theologians of the world are powerless to meet the needs of the profoundest theorists. The analogies of nature itself are far from clear, and the despised phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, which science at present taboos as unworthy of examination, are breaking, and will continue to break, the links that are fast binding the learned world in what appear to be adamant chains of materialistic falsities.

MRS. CORNER, the medium, is now on her way to St. Petersburg in her husband's ship.

MR. J. G. MEUGENS has returned to this country after a successful trip to the United States.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—If any readers of "LIGHT" know of any Sunday services for Spiritualists in this neighbourhood will they kindly send particulars to our office?

MRS. M. S. Williams, the American medium, accompanied by Mrs. Anderson, left London on Thursday last for the United States. The reception accorded her on the 7th inst. was well attended.

We regret to learn that Miss Kate Cook, so favourably known to many of our readers as a remarkable physical medium, has been seriously ill, but we are happy to announce her complete recovery.

A MAGNETIC HEALER.—D. M. Bowman, of Cleveland, Ohio, commercial traveller, has discovered that he has the gift of healing. Some residents of this city have experienced remarkable results of it. He has never made a charge for exercising it: he has simply used it as an investigator.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THOUGHT-READING.—*Apropos* of this the *Boston Transcript*, gives the following as from Goethe:—"One soul may have an influence upon another, merely from its silent presence; of this I could relate many instances. It has often happened to me that when I have been walking with a friend, and have had a lively image in my mind of something, he has begun to speak of that very thing. I have also known a man who, without saying a word, could silence a party engaged in cheerful conversation, merely by the power of his mind; nay, he could introduce a tone which would make every one uncomfortable. We all have something of an electric and magnetic force within us."

THE guides of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond announce her return to America the last week in October. The meetings in Kensington on Sunday evenings will be the last public meetings in London for the present. A series of *private* meetings will be held (time and place to be stated to individuals) every Thursday evening during Mrs. Richmond's stay in London, for inner teachings. Those desiring to attend will please send their names (for acceptance by the guides), care of Mrs. Strawbridge. A limited number only can attend. Mrs. Richmond will also answer a few calls to speak in suburban towns, on week-day evenings, but they must be accessible and within easy reach by rail.

SPIRITISM.

BY EDUARD VON HARTMANN.

(Continued from p. 443.)

III.

THE IDEALITY OF THE MANIFESTATIONS (*Der Vorstellungsinhalt der Kundgebungen*).

Having in the previous section discussed the phenomena, which more or less serve as the expression of an ideal content, or under favourable circumstances are applicable to the communication of it, we have now to examine the ideal content itself, which is communicated to us in these unusual ways. Already in dealing with the involuntary movements of speaking, writing, &c., we saw that the guiding intelligence is to be sought in the somnambulant consciousness of the medium; but as the handwriting remains the same, whether the pencil is guided by involuntary muscular movements of the hand itself, or by the mediumistic nerve force through a system of dynamical push and pull lines, so the content of the writing remains in both cases the same. We have, therefore, no reason whatever to doubt that the same parts of the brain which give the innervation-impulse for the radiation and distribution of the nerve force, as for the involuntary muscular movements, serve also for the support of the somnambulant consciousness.

The ideality of the manifestations of a "speaking-medium" coincides with the temporary ideality of his somnambulant consciousness; for a speaking medium is only an auto-somnambulant with the peculiarity of spontaneously imparting his occasional ideas connectedly. The ideality of a writing-medium is, however, not essentially different from that of a speaking-medium, and that of the former is independent of the mode of writing, whether by rapping out the alphabet, or by pointing out letters, or by involuntary handwriting, or by writing at a distance. Whether the medium speaks with changed voice, writes with changed handwriting, or speaks or writes in the character of a named or unnamed third person, makes no difference in this conception; for we know that in the somnambulant consciousness a conversion of the *Ego* into another person is a phenomenon of quite common occurrence.

Since the medium is either without waking consciousness, or if in masked somnambulism his persisting waking consciousness has ordinarily no knowledge of what passes in the somnambulant consciousness, the medium also must be unaware that it is himself—his somnambulant consciousness—who has in himself, and ejects from himself, this ideal content, i.e., he writes in his waking capacity unconsciously. The experimental proof that this writing is only relatively unconscious, but for the masked somnambulant consciousness is conscious, may, however, be afforded by the medium placing himself in open somnambulism, and then remembering the former unconscious writing and giving an account of it by word of mouth. This happened with Slade, for example, according to Zöllner's report, in respect of a writing at a distance effected in a closed slate the previous day, which had not yet been opened, so that none of the party knew the contents.*

The writing or other mechanical means can give information of everything comprehended in the medium's somnambulant consciousness, but of nothing which this does not fathom. The ideality of the manifestations is just so instructed or ignorant, cultured or uncultured, serious or sportive, thoughtful or foolish, witty or dull, intellectual or silly, as is the content of the medium's somnambulant consciousness. There is no longer much dispute about that; but there are still individuals who are unable to keep distinguished the somnambulant and waking contents of the medium's consciousness, and refer the deviations of the former from the latter to a source apart from the entire

person of the medium. It is thus really the ignorance or insufficient knowledge of somnambulism which causes Spiritists to misapprehend the obvious exclusive origin of the communications.

The masked somnambulant consciousness compasses the simultaneously existing waking consciousness, without being itself compassed by the latter, as the waking consciousness of the past is fathomed by the consciousness of open somnambulism, but not the converse. In other words: the conduction of ideas and wishes from the parts of the brain supporting the waking consciousness into those supporting the somnambulant consciousness is easy, but the reverse is difficult. Therefore it is, that the somnambulant consciousness writes words and sentences, answers questions, and takes account of wishes, dictated and proposed by the waking consciousness, either before the commencement of the masked somnambulism or during its continuance. On the other hand, however, the somnambulant consciousness is also able to answer such questions and to heed such wishes as have become known to it (e.g., by thought-reading), though not to the waking consciousness.

The content of the somnambulant consciousness is distinguished from that of waking consciousness partly by its form, partly by its derivation. The form is generally more perceptual (*anschaulichen*) of greater sensuous palpability, inclines to symbolising and personifications, but is thus easily confused, obscure, and enigmatical in comparison with the abstract reflections of waking consciousness. The derivation is partly the simultaneous waking consciousness, partly the hyperæsthetic memory of the parts of the brain supporting somnambulism, partly direct Thought-transference,* and finally, in part, true clairvoyance. Whoever rightly knows the range of these different sources will scarcely be tempted to look beyond them for explanation of the ideal content of the mediumistic manifestations. But unfortunately the facts of the hyperæsthesia of memory, transference of conscious and unconscious impressions, and clairvoyance are, to the great majority of Spiritists, as unknown as to their opponents. So far, however, as they are known, they are deliberately thrust aside and underestimated, because they threaten destruction to the wishes of the heart.

Hyperæsthetic memory of the somnambulant consciousness yields often the most astonishing material, the derivation of which seems wholly inexplicable, because the simultaneous waking consciousness of the medium has not only no memory of this material, but often fallaciously believes itself able to conclude from accessory circumstances that such impressions could never have been experienced by it. As the somnambulant speaking is able to repeat the sound of words or sentences in foreign, not understood, languages, which have been heard long ago without attention, so can the somnambulant writing repeat the written or printed characters of words and sentences in languages not understood, which have been once regardlessly seen, or even spell such out from unintelligent memory of word-sounds in languages not quite unknown. If, besides, in such proceeding the symbolising and personifying tendency of the somnambulant consciousness induces it to put these communications in the mouth of an absent person, its dramatic metamorphosing talent must at the same time, succeed in dressing out the communication with all sorts of small external traits appropriate to the person represented. In this way communications can be brought about, which in form and content appear to belong as little as possible to the waking consciousness of

* *Vorstellungstransferung* I translate "Thought-transference," because that term is already familiar to the English reader, who is in no danger of here restricting "thought" to intellectual process, or a purely abstract content. "*Vorstellung*" is sometimes rendered "idea" (as by Messrs. Haldane and Kemp in the title of (and throughout) Schopenhauer's work); "idea" having, then, the extended significance which Berkeley gave to it. In its most general sense, "*Vorstellung*" is perhaps most properly translated "representation," as always by Mr. Meiklejohn in his translations of Kant's "*Critique of Pure Reason*." Dr. Hutcheson Stirling, in his "*Secret of Hegel*," remarks on the frequent difficulty of finding a good English equivalent.—T.

* "*Transcendental Physics*," c. 10.

the medium, and as much as possible to the presupposed author of the dictation. Anyone not familiar with the peculiarities of the somnambulant consciousness will in such case almost unavoidably fall into the delusion that the communications are under the spiritual influence of the absent or deceased person who is indicated in them as their author.*

Thought-transference yields results which, for those who are unacquainted with this class of facts, are still more surprising than the effects of hyperæsthesia of memory.† We are here putting quite aside interpretation by attitude, gesture, involuntary muscular movements, &c., although even this interpretation may be involuntary, instinctive, of reflex manifestation (*reflektorisch zur Kundgebung gelangende*), and from the latter afterwards first recognised by the waking consciousness. We restrict ourselves rather to the cases in which such sort of mediation is undoubtedly excluded by the experimental arrangements. We have, then, to distinguish (1) willed perception with willed implantation; (2) willed perception without will in the other to implant; (3) not willed perception with will to implant; (4) not willed perception without will in the other to implant. The will to implant on the side of the person transmitting,‡ and the will to apprehend on that of the recipient, are powerful furtherances to thought-transference; and, indeed, the will to implant seems to have an incomparably greater power of realisation than the will to perceive: a power so great, that with persons in sympathetic *rapport* through love, friendship, or magnetic relations, it overcomes all earthly distance. The will to perception of others' thoughts can also act favourably, but not in the same degree as the will to implant, because perception by the waking consciousness is generally impossible, and the somnambulant consciousness is not immediately subject to the conscious will; more operative than the latter is the ardent desire of the heart, the inward and urgent longing, because it imparts itself to and intensifies the somnambulant will.

The will to implant operates likewise, at least in proximity, only through an excitation of the somnambulant parts of the brain; but this active, and in few seconds concentrated, excitation is more easily directed, than is the passive to perception, since to a brief percipient excitation there may be no corresponding energetic thought whatever in the other. The will to implant may also be an unconscious one, seated in the somnambulant layers of the brain, in so far as the urgent heart-longing produces the wish to be perceptible to a beloved person; so sleepers may have this unconscious will and transmit their dream-images to a distant person awake or likewise dreaming. With extinction of the motive feelings (home-sickness, longing of love), usually disappears also the unconscious will to thought implantation. All reports of voluntary implantation of intuitive representations in a distant person point to this, that the success of such experiments depends as much on the ability of the willer to place himself transitorily in open or masked somnambulism, as on the sensitivity of the recipient and the strength of the sympathetic *rapport* between the two. The result seems easier, when the recipient is in a dreaming or half-awake condition, in one, that is, in which the waking consciousness is more or less suppressed.

Success seems most sure when two persons agree upon a definite minute in which to direct their thoughts upon each other, both placing themselves in open or masked somnambulism, the stronger willing of the two undertaking the active, the more sensitive the passive part. If two

persons have first practised this distant intercourse, the connection between them is to be re-established at any time by the will of one being directed on the other, exciting in the latter at first an indefinite feeling, or appearance of a distant light, or some other indication serving as a signal, and occasioning him to place himself in somnambulism for the perception of definite communications (*Vorstellungen*). In this way the initiates of higher degrees in the secret brotherhoods of Tibet have acquired the power of conversing with one another at a distance without telegraph wires, and similar attempts have often succeeded in Europe.* They are most hopeful between magnetiser and somnambule, if the magnetiser is able to put himself into open or masked somnambulism.

Persons between whom there is no sympathetic *rapport* will have no prospect of success in thought-transference at great distances; in this case the transference, if it is to succeed at all, must be facilitated by spatial proximity or material connection. The nearer the two are to each other in the same room, the better success is there, while in the transference over extended tracts the degree of remoteness does not signify. The presence of other persons is disturbing, because then the cross-influence of all their thoughts trouble and confuse the particular thought to be perceived; and it is especially necessary that spectators should stand considerably away from the transferor. Also confronting with eyes bound seems better for success than when one stands behind the other. If several agree to think the same thought, the transference is facilitated, as the number is greater, evidently by a multiplication or exaltation of the influence similar to that attained when the will to implant and the intensity of the thought are strengthened in a single individual.

Contact, as by application of forehead to forehead, laying the hand on the forehead, crown, or back of the head, or clasping hands, facilitates greatly; but as here the influence of unconscious understanding of involuntary muscular movements comes already into play, results thus obtained no longer prove immediate thought-transference. It is better to form a chain of hands between the two persons, yet then the intermediates introduce disturbance, positive results being only still obtained when the recipient is somnambulant, and in magnetic relation to the transferor, but in no *rapport* with the intervening persons. (*Ps. St. IV.*, 298.) I cannot understand why inorganic conductors of different substances (metal wires, damp cords, &c.) have not yet been used in these experiments, as every communication by involuntary muscular movements is securely avoided by such interposition. Between magnetiser and somnambule no contact or conduction is required to transfer the sense impressions and thoughts of the former to the latter. (*Ps. St. III.*, 529-531.) Also light seems to have a disturbing influence in these experiments, which may bear out the corresponding assertion of mediums; moreover all fatigue is to be carefully avoided, and series of from 30 to 100 experiments in immediate succession, such as Richet's, are a mistake.†

As regards the nature of the representations, the most easily transferable appear to be feelings, dispositions, and distinct sensations of the lower sense organs. Transference of musical impressions and their combinations seems not yet to have been tried, although the telephone, as an aid to sensible presentation, would facilitate such experiments; the diviner must, of course, be musical enough to designate or imitate the tune heard. The transference of visual representations is easier as the representation approximates by hallucinatory distinctness and vivacity to perception;

* Of this nature, for example, seem to me mainly Aksakow's "Philological Problems mediunistically propounded." (*Ps. St. X.*, 547; *XI.* 1, 49, et seq.)

† Compare the opportune survey of this subject by Du Prel: "Das Gedankenlesen" ("Thought-reading"), Breslau: Schottländer. 1885. Especially pp. 11-13, 16-18, 28-30.

‡ The "agent" in the convenient terminology of Messrs. Gurney and Myers in the publications of the Society for Psychical Research. This term (and the correlative "percipient") not being restricted to the case of voluntary processes, might be used here throughout, could I venture to take such a liberty with the text.—TR.

* Cf. *Ps. St.*, VII., 481-488; VI., 294-301, 344-352; Du Prel's "Thought-reading," p. 24-26.

† *Revue Philosophique* for December, 1884. The English reader will also find an account of these experiments in the number for December, 1884, of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* (Trübner, Ludgate-hill, E.C.). The important original experiments of this Society, recorded in various numbers of its *Proceedings* during the past three years, should be referred to in connection with this subject.—TR.]

perhaps the facilitation of transference at a distance when the transferor is in a somnambule state has for its sole reason the fact that only in this state are hallucinatory distinctness and vivacity possible. The transference of whatever is not sensible perception or its lively reproduction will be much more difficult, but still in that case easiest when it is clothed with the perceptive form of inwardly spoken and heard words.

All transferences at a distance are hallucinatory sight-pictures, usually of the figure itself of the person who would be manifest to beloved ones at a distance. I know no case in which words put in the mouth of such a figure by the phantasy of the recipient have been verified by the transferor. All manifestations at a distance are completed by mimical movements of the implanted hallucinations, or by symbolical additions to them, but abstract thoughts are never transferred at such a distance.

In immediate proximity, under favourable conditions, not only words, sentences and numbers, but also abstract thoughts, and even thoughts not clothed in words, are transferable. Somnambules accomplish with tolerable certainty the thought-commands of the magnetiser (*Ps. St. VI. 103-106*), especially if used to this sort of transference; they can repeat, by writing and verbally, words and sentences in languages which they do not understand, which the magnetiser or another placed in *rappor*t with him, dictates for transference, and even understand the sense of them, so far as the transferor understands and conceives while speaking the words aloud or inwardly. The proof is in the fact that somnambules answer intelligently, in languages with which they are familiar, questions put in languages of which they are ignorant, but the answer fails as soon as the question is put in a language which the questioner himself does not understand.* Here it is clear that a thought is transferred which is intelligible by itself, apart from the words, unintelligible to the somnambule, to which it is attached; this is the most spiritualised case of thought-transference conceivable.

When there is neither the conscious nor unconscious will to transfer a mental representation, but there is on the other side the conscious or unconscious will to perceive, then the usually too-widely employed term "thought-reading" is strictly applicable; in which is included "character-reading." A somnambule who is placed in *rappor*t with a person previously quite unknown to him, either by direct contact, or by the mediation of the magnetiser, or by contact with an object containing the personal aura of the individual in question, receives a certain collective impression of the latter, a compound of impressions sympathetic and anti-pathetic. If now the somnambule's will is directed to the interpretation, dissection, and restoration of this impression, there will emerge, according to the sensitivity, and faculty of conveying its impressions in words, a more or less incomplete, indefinite, and inexact, yet not wholly unlike picture of the personality, its character, its immediate feelings and dispositions, and under circumstances even its immediate thought. Thought-reading can finally be an involuntary reception of impressions, if the sensitivity of the somnambule is highly exalted, and the other conditions are favourable.

The percipient of the transferred representations is always the somnambule consciousness, never immediately the waking consciousness. If the somnambule consciousness is alone present and commands the machinery of speech, it is not difficult to establish by interrogation the fact that thought-transference has taken place. It is otherwise if the percipient's somnambule consciousness is masked by the waking consciousness, and the latter has sole rule over the organs of speech and the voluntary muscles. In such cases it cannot be said whether behind the waking consciousness there is a somnambule consciousness or not, and

whether, if there is, it perceives another's thoughts or not. Only when the division between somnambule and waking consciousness is not complete, but a faint shimmer of the somnambule consciousness gleams unnoticed into the waking consciousness, imparting a weak colouring to the contents of the latter: only then is it possible to infer mediately, from the waking consciousness, that a thought-transference has taken place in the somnambule consciousness.

The waking consciousness of a normal person must thus be consulted as to the representations in the other person's mind, and if in a long series of experiments its testimony is better than was to be expected from the calculation of probabilities, the overplus is to be set to the credit of the thought-reading somnambule consciousness which even in the normal person lies concealed. These experiments are instituted by Richet,* and in the guessing of colours of playing cards have yielded about ten per cent. better results than the probability, experimental results when the cards were drawn without being looked at agreeing with the latter. Had results when the brain was tired not been taken into account, the percentage in favour of an influence upon the waking by the somnambule consciousness would have been considerably larger. It is most desirable that the experiments should be repeated with avoidance of all fatigue and with greater exclusion of light, new experiments being added by introducing a conductor between the two bodies, gradually increasing the number of transferors, and varying the distance between them and the diviner.

With sensitives to experiment upon, there is a very different prospect of results. Whereas in normal persons the somnambule consciousness not only remains below the threshold, but also has small noticeable influence on the content of the waking consciousness, with sensitives this influence is remarkably apparent, and can be considerably exalted by avoidance of every disturbing and distracting external impression on the waking consciousness, and by attention being concentrated on stimulations transmitted from the somnambule sphere. Barrett's experiments on healthy but sensitive children show that the successful cases of transference of perceptive thoughts (*e.g.*, objects to be fetched) from a person thinking them to the sensitive may exceed the probable figure by more than 100 per cent., and that in the transference by several persons fixing on the same thought the chances of success may rise almost to certainty, so that the sensitive already guessed while outside the room the thought of the sitters within.†

Still more favourable are the conditions, if the difficulties of transition of the thought from the somnambule into the waking consciousness are avoided, *i.e.*, if the experimental conditions are so arranged that the persisting waking consciousness knows nothing at all of the guessing and announcing. This is possible, if the reflex-prohibitions of the parts of the brain supporting the waking consciousness are so far debilitated as to admit the despatch of involuntary innervation impulses by the parts of the brain supporting the somnambule consciousness. This happens in the state of masked somnambulism when the somnambule consciousness, veiled by the waking consciousness, announces its contents either by involuntary muscular movements,‡ or by mediumistic nerve force. Already the divining rod is even for apparently normal and insensitive persons an excellent aid for revealing the thoughts of others by involuntary designation, so far as these thoughts are fixed on an object in the room, and yields successful results

* "La Suggestion Mentale et le Calcul des Probabilités," *Revue Philosophique*, 1884, No. 12, pp. 608-674. 1885, No. 1, pp. 115-118.

† Barrett, Professor of Physics at the Royal College of Science, Ireland. "On Thought-Reading." *Ps. St.* [The English reader will find Professor Barrett's contributions to the subject in the first vol. of the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.*—T.R.]

‡ "We have in our collection," says Mr. Edmund Gurney, "several cases where a mental question, on the part of some one present, has been answered in writing, either with a *planchette* or a simple pencil, without any consciousness of either the question or the answer on the part of the person whose hand was automatically acting." *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. December, 1884.—T.R.]

* Du Prel; "Das Gedankenlesen," (Thought-Reading), pp. 19-22.

exceeding the probable figure about two to three-fold. (*Revue Phil.*, 1884. No. 12, p. 639, *et seq.*)*

Yet more surprising are the results if recourse be had to the table, for rapping, or to the psychograph, requiring, it is true, longer practice than the divining rod. Involuntary writing with the hand leaves too much room for interchange with voluntary writing and for the suspicion of intentional deception, for it to be suitable for demonstrative experiments; but in the writing at a distance of mediums, excluding the change into voluntary writing, there is the purest possible experimental material, which then, as indubitable expression of the masked somnambulant consciousness, affords also, in fact, the most astonishing proofs of thought-reading. If, for instance, questions are written in a closeable slate, on the second inner side of which the medium then writes at a distance the answers (*Ps. St. IV.* 388; *XI.* 497),† no explanation more readily suggests itself than that the somnambulant consciousness of the medium perceives the question from the thought of the person writing it down, and thereupon imparts the answer.

Thought-reading is yet more involved and removed from detection, in that not only thoughts of the waking consciousness, but even those of the masked somnambulant consciousness of the persons present, can make entry into the somnambulant consciousness of the medium. This could only be completely proved by experimenting with two mediums, one to guess the answers which the other had made to questions without previous knowledge by the waking consciousness. But it can also be inferred with approximate certainty from the fact that somnambules frequently give information concerning the past of the questioner, contradicting the present recollections of his waking consciousness, that the statement is nevertheless persisted in, and that either his memory, sharpened by more circumstantial additions, at once recognises his own error, or being subsequently accidentally led into the right track confirms the somnambule's assertion.‡ Such cases are usually treated as clairvoyance, but it seems more probable that there is a masked somnambulant memory in the questioner, which, excited by the question, by means of its hyperæsthesia realises truer recollections than the duller memory of waking consciousness. Further, someone present, whose interest is excited in a particular direction, may have in his masked somnambulant consciousness recollections of formerly heard or seen sentences in foreign languages; these impressions may, by the medium, be divined by thought-reading and be involuntarily written (or rapped out), without the waking consciousness of the other recognising the result thus presented to him as his own recollections.§

As these instances are not numerous, and as on the other hand there are a not inconsiderable percentage of persons, in whom the masked somnambulant consciousness lying below the threshold has a certain vivacity, nothing is opposed to the presumption that the phenomenon in question only occurs in somnambules in connection with such persons having masked somnambulant consciousness.

Given the case of the somnambulant and waking consciousnesses of the questioner presenting their respective impressions of different characters to the somnambule, according to the foregoing it is not surprising that the more hallucinatory impression of the somnambulant consciousness is easier perceived than the more abstract thoughts of the waking consciousness, so that under these suppositions the phenomenon also is explained without clairvoyance.

Slade, for example, saw the figures which were on the three coins contained in the plastered-up boxes, and Zöllner

finds in that an instance of true clairvoyance, because he had put the coins in the boxes a long time previously, and no longer exactly remembered of what description they were.* Just in this case it seems to me doubtless, though subsequent confirmation by correction of Zöllner's memory is wanting, that there was here no clairvoyance, but thought-reading of somnambulant impressions. For that Zöllner was a masked somnambule, who, without knowing it, co-operated with Slade, is highly probable from the whole character of the phenomena manifested in those sittings, and just as probable is it that Zöllner, in putting up the coins, had accurately observed them. These two suppositions suffice, however, for the data, first, that Zöllner's somnambulant memory had taken in the numbers of the coins, and secondly, that with the tension of mental occupation with the object, the hyperæsthetic somnambulant memory realised these numbers, while the memory of the waking consciousness endeavoured in vain to recall even the descriptions of the coins. Under such circumstances, Slade's somnambulant consciousness could perceive the numbers by thought-transference, and all that is striking in the case is that this perception was so lively as to pass as visionary sight into the waking consciousness and into expression there; unless the opinion is preferred, that at that moment Slade's waking consciousness had sunk below the threshold, and the somnambulant had possessed itself of the organs of speech. Slade being also a speaking medium, there is nothing to prevent the adoption of the latter view.

A medium has always a lively interest in divining the open or masked thoughts of those present; for it is his interest to elude astonishing manifestations, and nothing can be more astonishing for "sound common-sense" ("*gesunden Menschen verstand*") than exhibitions of a knowledge which the persons present believe to be confined exclusively to themselves, or which is even withdrawn from their own waking consciousness. The will to perceive must therefore be supposed continually present in the medium. But if the others, on their side likewise, have a lively interest in the occurrence of striking phenomena, that must develop in them the will to support the medium according to their own powers, and to lighten his difficulties. And then the unconscious will is excited to thought-transference. Moreover in circles the hands are in contact, so that all conditions are as favourable as possible for thought-transference. And when the other person is a masked somnambule like Zöllner, it is scarcely still surprising that results at such sittings should exceed the average.

For experiments in intentional thought-transference, there can be no subjects better adapted than mediums with the faculty of writing at a distance, only there must be an end to misusing the medium's nerve force by the childish game of oracular questioning, and systematic experimentation must take its place. These trials must at first relate to impressions of single senses, and gradually rise to more abstract representations; the distance of the transferor from the medium must also be gradually increased, and the percentage of successes as depending on distance be ascertained. For the effects at greater (mile-wide) distances, a second medium must be introduced, and the influence of distance, if any, and of what kind, must be determined. Hitherto spiritistic sittings afford no material for thought-transference at great distance, the medium having always been the only active party, instead of being reduced, as in such experiments is necessary, to a passive relation to another medium at a distant place.

(To be continued.)

* [M. Richet himself, as diviner, thus obtained 6 successes in 13 trials, the probability being 1 in 6. *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, December, 1884. P. 245. —TR.]

† [An experiment which is said to have repeatedly succeeded also with the medium Eginton. —TR.]

‡ Du Prel's "Thought-reading," pp. 22, 23.

§ Cf. Aksakow's already cited "Philological Problems mediumistically propounded."

* ["Transcendental Physics," c. IX. Zöllner's statement is as follows:—

As mentioned above, I had already, in December, 1877 " (the séance was on the 5th May, 1878), "fastened up these boxes, and as I had observed neither the value of the enclosed coins nor their dates, I could afterwards only ascertain by the noise from shaking the boxes, that enclosed in the circular one was a large German coin (a thaler or a five-mark piece), in the rectangular one two smaller pieces; whether these were pennies, groschen, or five-groschen pieces, I had, after the lapse of half-a-year, at the time of Slade's last stay in Leipzig, entirely forgotten." Page 155 (English translation). —TR.]

SOME ODD "FADS" AND FANCIES ; THEIR
RATIONALE AND EXPLANATION.

By S. EADON, M.D.

VI.

Whence comes this unseen, supernatural power? Can it be aught else than a disembodied spirit, of a high order, working upon and influencing the spirit and physical organisation of man, whilst yet in an embodied form, producing effects which human beings not so impressed from spirit-life are unable to produce? Genius is but another name for spirit-aid from a higher life. Poets in all ages, and men "of high-born genius" in every department of science and of literature have ever felt these inspirational influences from another life, and never forgot to invoke their aid in any "adventurous flight," as, when Milton says:—

"And chiefly thou, O spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me; for thou knowest
. What in me is dark
Illumine."

Again, he says, that his "Heroic Song" was due to

"My celestial patroness, who deigns
Her mighty visitation, unimplored,
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires,
Easy, my unpremeditated verse."

Who aided the soul of Shakespeare to roam at will through boundless and untrodden paths of thought, and to write, as no man ever did before, or, perhaps, ever will again? Who? but, as Coleridge says:—

"Contemplant spirits! Ye that hover over
With untired gaze the immeasurable fount
Ebullient with creative Deity!
And ye of plastic power that interfused
Both through the grossest and material mass
In organising surge."

Who inspired the spirit of Newton, from the mere incident of the fall of an apple, to open up the mechanism of the heavens, and demonstrate laws which govern stellar systems, invisible save by telescopic and Nebulæ vision? Who? but some mightier Newton from spirit life? As it ever has been, so it will ever be, as man becomes fitter for higher kinds of knowledge; disembodied spirits will select embodied forms of analogous order, as mediums, whereby to open up higher forms of thought, and point out the means whereby discoveries may be made pregnant with social and national advancement, and which will tend to raise, in due time, the whole family of man to higher kinds of civilisation not yet dreamed of. The spirit world is about us; and

"Millions of spiritual beings walk the air
Both when we wake and when we sleep."

And the great want of the age is a universal kind of mediumship whereby disembodied spirits can hold high intercourse with spirits

"Whilst yet in their muddy vesture of decay."

The signs of this interchange are at hand; and soon will be manifest, that the unseen and the seen are, in reality, but

"One realm,
One continent of easy thoroughfare."

And the earth, in these fast-coming times, will

"Be but the shadow of heaven, and Kings therein,
Each to other like, more than thought."

Great changes yet await the earth and its inhabitants. A genius is, in reality, a medium between the invisible and the visible, making known a higher form of thought, a now and a then,

"Down the corridors of time,
For man's advancement."

The time will come when millions of men will be thus endowed, and knowledge, of a kind unknown at present, will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. In those days, mankind—having cast aside the creeds, the forms,

the devices, and the uncertain theologies of men—will, with one accord, and with singleness of heart and purity of purpose, worship the Great and Supreme Intelligence beneath the starry dome of millions of suns and systems, mingling their songs with the music of the spheres, in one grand harmonious chorus—

"For ever singing, as they shine,
'The hand that makes us is Divine.'"

A German mineralogist, by means of the divining rod, discovered many very valuable mines, thus proving its use in a practical and commercial sense. Nor has it been without advantage in furthering the ends of justice. A man and his wife, for the sake of their money, had been murdered in a cellar. A man named Jacques Aymar, a wealthy peasant, and a sensitive, was taken to this spot. Guided by the rod, he followed the track of the murderers into hotels; told the glasses from which they had drunk; tracked them by land and over rivers; recognised the beds upon which they had slept, the very pots they had touched, till he was conducted, by this hazel fork, to the gates of a prison, where he felt sure one or more of the wretches would be found. Four male prisoners were placed before him, when the rod turned violently towards a man with a hump-back, who had been admitted, only half-an-hour before, for some petty larceny. The peasant said the man with the hump was one of the assassins. The fellow at first denied it, but at length confessed; and he corroborated, in every particular, the truth of the track taken by the sensitive over forty-five French leagues. This case is remarkable, and is well authenticated. From these examples, it is highly probable when veins of metal break, and geologists and mineralogists are at a loss to point out the corresponding seam, if a sensitive were called in, he might be able to indicate where the broken vein begins. In these cases, sensitives, cataleptics, lunatics of a certain order, and somnambulists may, some time, be quite in request for commercial purposes; and instead of being a burden, might really prove benefactors to their several localities, doing, in fact, what science had failed to accomplish. The discovery of OD, seems quite adequate to explain the phenomena of which the hazel-fork is the outward symbol. It is something more than a mere sort of hocus-pocus, or legerdemain, to satisfy the vulgar mind, which is never contented unless a veritable something impinges upon the senses, and seems adequate, in their eyes, to account for the effects observed. The opinion of Dr. Herbert Mayo, Tardy de Montravail, Ritter, Thouvenel and others, is "that there is strong evidence to show that, in competent and honest hands, the divining rod really does what is pretended of it"; i.e., in the hands of sensitives whose Odic force seems naturally to have some kind of occult relationship with lodes of metals, seams of coal, and the flowing of subterraneous water.

(To be continued.)

A MATERIALISATION SEANCE with the medium Mott, Kansas City, is reported by T. J. Haughey, in the *Spiritual Offering*. After detailing the constitution of the circle, &c., he relates the appearance at the window of the cabinet of General Bledsoe, and the particulars of the conversation between the General and himself; then of his old well-recognised captain in the War of Secession; then of his mother, in her well-remembered head covering. He concludes: "Each of the eight sitters got some revelation that seemed to be good to them. The recognised father and brother of one lady were seen by us all. She was very agitated. Her father bade her be brave, and said if she could conquer her nervousness, he would be able to appear in full form outside the cabinet. We each paid a dollar and a-half. We parted with Mr. and Mrs. Mott, feeling thankful that nature is so kind to give to every soul a conscious immortality, and that she has not arbitrarily arranged an eternal separation. I inwardly bless human nature, and take courage to prosecute my earthly journey. I must express regret that all have not an opportunity to visit this medium and witness for themselves this divine phenomenon."

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 following, referring to another séance, occurs:—

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

"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 unbiassed opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional prestidigitator, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid.

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

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

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

"In respect to the above manifestations, I can only say that I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed anyone who described such manifestations under similar circumstances. I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand."

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

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

The Testimony of Professor Jacobs.

Professor Jacobs, writing to the editor of *Licht, mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—

"Spite of the assertions, more or less trustworthy, of the French and English journalists, and spite of the foolish jealousies of ignorant conjurers, I feel it my duty to show up the bad faith of one party and the chicanery of the other. All that has been said or done adverse to these American mediums is absolutely untrustworthy. If we would rightly judge of a thing we must understand it, and neither the journalists nor the conjurers possessed the most elementary knowledge of the science that governs these phenomena. As a prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect.

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

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

Testimony of Samuel Bellachini.

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

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

"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.