

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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### A PROBLEM FOR CONJURERS.

BY CARL DU PREL. (Munich.)

(Translated by V.)

"Quam multa fieri non posse, priusquam facta sint, judicantur."

#### I.—THE FACTS.

It is well-known that public opinion in Germany is opposed to recognising the phenomena of Spiritualism as genuine, but no one can deny the fact of the rapid spread of belief in Spiritualism, even in Germany. On both accounts a scientific inquiry into the so-called Spiritualistic phenomena is highly necessary, in order—if it be all humbug—that a stop should be put to a morbid epidemic; or if it be true, for the sake of truth itself. Such an inquiry seems the more necessary since Spiritualism is greatly on the increase, not only as regards the large number of its adherents, but also as to the weight of the evidence for it—the latter, indeed, in a two-fold manner. I shall scarcely meet with contradiction when I say that the question whether Spiritualistic phenomena are the result of trickery is one scientists and philosophers are scarcely the proper persons to decide; but, in the first place, conjurers themselves. Now, the most skilful conjurers, such as Bosco, Houdin, Bellachini, Hamilton, &c., have pronounced the mediums with whom they have been brought in contact free from suspicion of imposture. On the other side, however, the question as to the reality of the phenomena is quite suited to scientific men, since these latter have proved themselves both cautious and skilful in experiments in scientific departments. Only to mention a few well-known names, such as Crookes, Wallace, and Zöllner, this cannot be denied, and these professors have declared their belief in the genuineness of the phenomena.

Now, since it is quite justifiable to challenge or invite conjurers to perform the phenomena themselves, and *under the same conditions*, and, since their judgment would be of great value, I bring before their notice, in the following pages, a problem for them to solve.

During my last visit to Vienna, in consequence of a kind invitation, I had the opportunity of being present at a series of séances given at four different houses, and in the following pages I shall recount the results of these séances, in which the experiments in slate-writing made by Professor Zöllner with the American medium, Slade, as described by him in his "Transcendental Physics," were repeated. I select these among the many séances I have been present at, to describe, because the first took place in full daylight; the second by the light of six large lamps, distributed about the table and the room; the third by that of three gas burners over the table; and only the fourth in darkness. The medium in the three first instances was Mr. Eglinton, from London, in the last a private gentleman of high education, a member of the Academy, whose name I am not authorised to mention, and to whom I was introduced by a professor of Vienna.

It is well-known that Spiritualistic phenomena usually demand a darkened room; sometimes they are produced in semi-darkness, and only where the mediumistic power is very strong can they take place in full light.\* Respecting slate-writing, there is this favourable circumstance—that the room may be as light as can be wished, since the necessary condition of darkness can be secured, independently of the lightness of the room. For instance, a common slate may be laid upon the table, in which situation the under side of it is in darkness; or it may be held under the flap of the table, when the top side will be in darkness; or a double-folding slate may be used, bound together like a book, in which case (when closed) both the surfaces of the slate will be in the dark, and it can be held at pleasure either above or under the table, or suspended in the air. It is only, therefore, a question, in the case of the darkened slate, which it is out of the medium's power to write upon, of receiving written answers to questions put at the moment, and for which purpose a morsel of slate pencil is previously placed upon or under it. It is clear that under such circumstances, deception is simply impossible, if the person experimenting has a sound eye. I possess two of them, and remarkably good ones. Be it said, by-the-way, that the hypothesis of prepared slates is simply too ludicrous, as the following experiments will show:—

It is the easier to determine that the writing is really direct, and not obtained indirectly through the medium, because—

Firstly, the medium's power of action is restrained, his hands being on or holding the slate;

Secondly, in some cases, even this is superfluous, the mere presence of the medium being sufficient;

Thirdly, the medium has no knowledge of the questions, which may be written at a distance from him either on a common slate or on a double one.

Under such conditions even a blind person could not be deceived.

It is very easy, too, to ascertain whether the writing has been done with the bit of pencil placed on or under the slate, by previously marking it and noticing whether, especially in the case of a lengthy communication, it is worn down. And, lastly, the sound of the writing is to be distinctly heard, and the vibration felt by the hand laid upon it. The fact, however, that the medium knows nothing whatever of the question, and, indeed, does not want to know it, is a complete proof that the answer is written *after* the question is asked, verbally or in writing. As a circumstance, which perhaps may not always be the rule, occurred to me on several occasions, I just add that the writing does not appear directed towards the medium, but towards the inquirer, when the latter is sitting opposite the medium.

As in every operation in the world, so in the case of slate-writing, some force must be at the bottom of it. Therefore the question must be asked from what source is the mechanical power necessary to produce these writings drawn? In the first place, this source is the medium; the slight convulsions to which he is subject—though this is not the case with every medium—prove that power is being taken from him. But power is likewise evidently drawn from the circle of experimenters, whose hands,

\* This only refers to certain of the phenomena.—ED.

laid upon the table, form a chain. At one of the séances at which I was present, when I removed the outside finger of my right hand and afterwards of my left from that of my neighbour's on either side, the writing immediately ceased, and recommenced directly I replaced my fingers, and thus completed the chain. The same phenomenon is narrated by Zöllner in his "Transcendental Physics."

This power being given for the mechanical process of writing, another force, however, is required for the production of intelligent communications—that of intelligence. That such is present is proved by the sensible and suitable answers given to the questions asked. According to my experience, it is simply untrue that, as some persons assert, the answers are generally silly and trifling; one of these says "they belong to the department of higher or lower imbecility, especially to the latter—that is, have no meaning whatever."

Now, what is the active intelligence employed? It cannot be that of the medium, since he is unacquainted with the question put; besides which the answers are frequently written in languages unknown to him. At one of the séances at which, besides myself and the medium, a lady and gentleman were present, Mr. Eglinton's knowledge of German being scarcely worth mentioning, three-fourths of a slate were covered rapidly and audibly with German writing, the rest containing a special message to the lady. The writing in German, which was not in answer to a question, was as follows: "This is the real truth, which is here manifested; the facts speak for themselves. Is it not the duty of everyone, with any pretension to intelligence, to search out the hidden secrets of nature and of human life? To come to you in this wise must comfort aching hearts, and lead you to the knowledge of the future life." When I asked the person chosen to write a short question on some ordinary subject on the slate, he took it into a corner of the room, and when he had done so and brought it back to the table, we laid our hands upon it, when immediately the sound of writing was heard, and when the slate was uncovered we read the question and the answer to it, which was quite correct: "What time is it?" "Twelve minutes after three o'clock."

It is not surprising that the answers should generally be short, as much more power must be required than is needed for ordinary writing and speaking, and the frequently insufficient power of the medium and circle is sparsely supplied to the acting intelligence. This brevity, however, as long as it does not interfere with the sense, can only be considered in favour of the intelligence. For instance, when I put the question as to what I should say to Eglinton's "exposers" (*Eutlarvern*) in Munich, the answer, given in English, was as short as it was to the point. It was, "If anyone considers this brevity a cause for suspicion, I can easily give him a longer reply."

One morning, when I was in company with Eglinton and Baron Hellenbach, it was proposed, by slate-writing, that we three should hold a séance without any other persons being present. This took place the same evening, and Baron Hellenbach and I came to the conclusion that we should obtain the best results if we allowed things to take their own course, instead of, as is usual when sceptics are present, imposing any conditions or tests. This condition was fully justified by the result, and the proofs of the phenomena could not have been greater. Eglinton himself declared afterwards that it was the best sitting he had ever had. Our slates lay upon a table illuminated by three gas-burners; Eglinton, whom we left completely to himself, soon became evidently in a state of semi-consciousness, acting instinctively and without conscious will. At first he sat at the table, but soon stood up and began to walk up and down, speaking in an altered voice. He next asked Baron Hellenbach for a blank sheet of paper, and when a packet was handed to him, taken out of a writing-case, of rather stiff note-paper, about the size of a post-card, he took a sheet, laid it upon the table, and then went to a book-

case, took out a book at hazard, which proved to be Zöllner's "Transcendental Physics," which he likewise laid upon the table. He then tore off a corner of the sheet of note-paper, which he put in my hand, after which he placed the blank sheet in the book, placing likewise a morsel of lead pencil in it, and then closed it. We then united our six hands together above the book, Eglinton kneeling between us on the floor, and Baron Hellenbach put a question on a matter connected with his private affairs and studies, which demanded a long answer. In a very few seconds I thought I felt the vibration of the writing in one of my hands; and when I put my ear down to the book, I distinctly heard the muffled sound that rapid writing, under such circumstances, would produce. Three quick raps, coming in the same muffled manner from the book, informed us (as usual) that we should open it, and on doing so we found, between pages 386 and 387, the lately blank sheet of note-paper covered with thirty closely-written lines. The corner of the paper which was torn off, with its edges sharp and jagged, on account of the thickness of the paper, fitted exactly; while a later examination showed a slight impression of this on the top page of the book, though not the slightest mark of the pencil. The message was written in the English language, but was not finished, and only partly answered the question which had been put.

Encouraged by this result, we allowed the medium to follow his impulses, which still continued to have the character of being involuntary. He now pushed the slates lying upon the table nearer to us, and placed a blank sheet of paper in one of them, which was a double-folding slate, and another similar sheet between two ordinary slates, laid one atop of the other, providing each with a point of lead pencil, and, with obvious effort, made several magnetic passes above the folding slate, probably because the wooden frame in which it was bound rendered the experiment more difficult. We then spread our hands on both slates, and Baron Hellenbach declared, after a few seconds, that he could feel the writing going on inside the slates on which his hands alone were resting. I laid my head down to the other, and distinctly heard the writing going on within them. I do not venture to assert that writing was positively going on in both at the same time, but I think it quite possible; the more so as Zöllner, in describing an experiment, narrates that, with two bits of slate pencil placed on one slate, writing was found done at the same time from right to left, and from left to right. In the case of the present experiment, the simultaneousness of the writing on both sheets of paper could not be decided, because we had no way of testing that writing was going on on both at the same moment; but the rapidity with which the answer was given seems even the more wonderful if the writing were done first on one sheet and then on the other. Now, again, the raps were heard; we opened the slates, and found on one sheet twenty-eight, and on the other twenty-four closely-written lines, completing the answer already begun on the first sheet, which had been placed inside the book, and written in well-chosen language, and very intelligently. The writing was quite unlike that of Eglinton himself, with which I afterwards compared it. On the other hand, it exactly resembled not only the signature of Ernest, but the handwriting on another slate, which had been given when I was not present, in the English, German, and Greek languages.

I repeat that, by the light of three gas-burners, we were able to watch Eglinton's every movement closely, and that no kind of suspicious circumstance of any sort was to be observed. If the sceptic, however, will deny us the capacity of sight, and assert that Eglinton was able to write quickly, and, in some way or other, insert the sheets of paper, even in this case it could only be the under side which was written on, because the top side we distinctly saw to be blank; but when we ourselves opened the slates, the top side was written upon; therefore Eglinton must not only have been clever enough to write with rapidity eighty-two lines unseen by us, by the light of three gas-burners, in answer to a question which had not yet been put on the sheets of paper which had been handed to him, but he must have been able to turn the sheets upside down when they were in a shut-up book and a locked slate, upon which our hands were resting. It here really seems as though scepticism, carried to an undue point, strongly resembles idiocy.

(To be continued.)



## PHASES OF MATERIALIZATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH  
IN THE  
OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M. A. (Oxon)."

(Continued from page 485.)

## II.—Cases of Materialization where the Medium is Secluded from Observation.

## 4.—PRESENTED UNDER SOME SPECIAL TEST.

The group of cases which I now approach is distinguished by the presentation of the form under some special condition of test. For example, we have cases in which the form is manifestly not the body of the medium, because both are visible at the same time; or because of the great variety of forms of both sexes and many ages which are seen in the course of a single séance; or because, again, the process of building up the figure has been watched by the observers, being effected in their very midst; or, lastly, because of some specially applied tests which make it impossible that the medium should be personating the form.

In dealing with these pieces of evidence, which will complete the body of testimony that I offer in cases of form-manifestation in presence of a secluded medium, I will first deal with special tests in the

## (1) PRESENTATION OF MEDIUM AND FORM TO VIEW AT THE SAME TIME.

I select cases which are no better in themselves than many others, but which are sufficiently illustrative for my purpose \*

And first, I quote an account† of a private séance held at the house of Mrs. FitzGerald, at which some well-known Spiritualists were present. After a narration of familiar phenomena the materialization of John King is thus described:—

"The back drawing-room doing duty for a cabinet, we invited the medium to make himself comfortable upon a couch close by the curtain separating the two rooms. . . . A bright light was seen in the back room, and John King's face and form were seen through the partly-opened curtains. Suddenly the latter were drawn right back at one extremity of the circle, and the sitters at that extremity saw standing over the couch and illuminating from head to foot with his spirit-lamp the unconscious medium reclining on it, the finely draped and majestic figure of 'John King.' He closed the curtain at one semi-circle, and drew back that at the other end that all of us might distinctly see . . . the spirit and the medium both present at the same time. This test was repeated several times." [1873.]

Again, Mr. Webster Glynes describes‡ a private séance held under carefully guarded conditions, at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on December 16th, 1873, by Prince Emile de Sayn Wittgenstein, in which, in the rooms occupied by the Prince, the medium was seen by both Mr. Glynes and himself, with John King bending over him and holding his lamp so as to throw its light upon the entranced medium. Both observers testify to the completely satisfactory nature of what they saw. [1874.]

The next account§ is one of a test séance, held at Mr. Martheze's, Mr. Williams the medium, at Brighton. Mr. Martheze, an old and experienced Spiritualist, states:—

"John King came out with his lamp; he came over the table to us, and floated up to the ceiling. He placed the light in each of our hands. He requested me to walk into the back room to see Mr. Williams in his chair. I did so, and John King moved his light over Williams's form and face, so that I saw his features clearly. Mr. Heaton saw his features too." In a note the Editor says: "Mr. Heaton informs us that he saw the

whole form of John King standing outside the curtains and holding them back to allow the spectators to look into the cabinet, where, by the light of the lamp, he saw Mr. Williams reclining on the chair." [1875.]

Another case where the view of medium and psychic form seems to have been very distinct is recorded by Mr. G. H. Potts.\* He was invited by John King to enter the cabinet for the purpose of seeing him and his medium together. He states that he stood by the side of John King, "his form and features distinctly visible by the light of the lamp that he held," and that he also saw clearly the recumbent figure of Williams in a corner of the cabinet. [1877.]

Respecting another medium, Mr. Eglinton, Captain James gives† a piece of testimony which is good in itself, though it has in recent days been transcended by more remarkable manifestations equally well attested. I do not attempt to give any idea of the wealth of evidence that is now public property respecting Mr. Eglinton's remarkable power as a psychic, because a connected narrative of his life as a medium is now being prepared, and will be in the hands of the public before the present records can be complete. I may, however, remind my readers that many attested records are to be found in the columns of "LIGHT," and refer them for more elaborate details to the volume which, as I write, is announced as in preparation.‡

Captain James's narrative, a typical one amongst many, relates to a séance held at Mrs. Woodforde's, on January 27th, 1876.

"The cabinet was a recess with a curtain suspended in front. The light was good. An old man appeared with furrowed face and white beard and hair, and clad in white drapery. . . . This figure, 'White Warrior,' who formerly came with Bastian, frequently appeared at the same time with the medium in full light. There could be no possible mistake about this, for we repeatedly saw the two figures side by side." During a portion of this duplicate manifestation Mr. Eglinton was quite conscious.

(To be continued.)

THE *Revue Spirite* translates in its September number the judicial investigation in the Court of Criminal Correction at St. Louis, as published in the *Daily Globe Democrat*, of Mr. and Mrs. Miller, mediums, on the charge of "taking from Johnson and Madden one dollar and a-half from each, to witness an exhibition of pretended materialised spirits." The court was crowded with sympathetic friends, who gave the fullest testimony in favour of the defendants' true mediumship. The charge was dismissed. The *Revue* calls especial attention to some portions of the evidence, of which the most striking was transferred to our own columns.

SCPTICISM.—Speaking of the negating effect of positive sceptical minds on spiritual manifestations, I may say that I have known many in whose atmosphere manifestations have been very indifferent or impossible. I used to sit with a medium, some years ago, whose séances were held in a room adjoining a bath-house which was frequented by one of his occasional visitors. In this gentleman's presence not a line could be obtained. Once I had been receiving communications freely, when the pencil which the medium was putting between two slates, suddenly flew from his fingers, and presently this sceptical gentleman walked in. His approach had been perceived by the medium's spirit-guides, while he was many rods from the house, and all manipulation of the pencil was arrested.—THOMAS R. HAZARD.

THE WESTERN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—We have received a copy of the report of the First General Meeting of this Society, held at Chicago, June 30th. In its list of members we find the names of physicians (the President himself being President of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Chicago), lawyers, scientists, clergymen, literary men, journalists, among whom is the editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. In the course of an excellent opening address the President said that a society also founded on the lines of the London Society for Psychical Research, had been a year in existence at Boston, of which many men eminent in the different professions are members. The Western Society has appointed working Committees on (1) Hypnotism, Clairvoyance, and Somnambulism; (2) Apparitions and Haunted Houses; (3) Physical Phenomena; and (4) Psychopathy, including Mind-Cure, Faith-Cure, Metaphysical-Cure, and Magnetic Healing.

\* Since this was written the wealth of evidence on this, as on kindred subjects, has very largely increased. I have not, however, thought it well to enlarge my area of evidence by quoting cases similar in kind to those already adduced.

† *Medium*, May 30th, 1873, p. 241. ‡ *Spiritualist*, January 2nd, 1874, p. 7.  
§ *Spiritualist*, January 15th, 1875, p. 30.

\* *Spiritualist*, November 2nd, 1877.

† *Medium*, February 11th, 1876.

‡ "Twixt Two Worlds."

## 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 Society for Psychical Research and Madame Blavatsky.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Several months have elapsed since the Society for Psychical Research held a meeting at which Mr. Hodgson, anticipating the publication of a report then promised on the results of his visit to the headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Madras, made certain statements. He declared that, in his opinion, Madame Blavatsky had been guilty of perpetrating various frauds on the credulity of Theosophists and others in India, had actually written the letters imputed to her by the *Christian College Magazine*, had employed the so-called shrine as a conjurer's box, and had been the actual writer—assisted by confederates—of the letters I have received for several years, believing them to come from a Mahatma.

At the time, it appeared to me that the evidence Mr. Hodgson had collected in India, as far as this was foreshadowed in his speech, was worthless; his method of inquiry seemed to have been ill-judged, his unfamiliarity with India and Indian ways to have led him into many serious mistakes, his conclusions concerning the phenomena at Adyar to be incompatible with facts within my own knowledge, and his theory concerning the letters I had received,—very few of which, compared to the whole number, have ever been published or seen by Mr. Hodgson,—to be grotesquely untenable. I felt that an answer to a great deal that might be brought forward could be evolved from his own materials, and before this I should have endeavoured to prepare such an answer but that it seemed desirable to wait for Mr. Hodgson's report, so that the whole case might be dealt with once for all. Indeed, I understood that some private representations made to Mr. Hodgson by Theosophists since the meetings of June have been met by reference to the forthcoming report, as containing matter which would justify conclusions that might not have been adequately accounted for by the explanations put forward at the meeting.

But three months and a-half have elapsed since the meeting and that report has not yet appeared. It seems to me that the course which the authorities of the Society for Psychical Research have thus pursued is open to grave objection. A series of charges imputing misconduct of the blackest dye to Madame Blavatsky have been made public on the assumption that they would ultimately be supported by testimony. If this testimony was not ready for immediate production the announcement of Mr. Hodgson's conclusions ought equally to have been delayed. By the arrangement adopted Madame Blavatsky's reputation is deeply impugned, and her friends are paralysed in regard to the measures they would desire to take for her defence. For these measures can only have to do with an appeal to the reason of persons interested in the controversy of which she is the centre. However cruel, hasty, and unfounded are the attacks made upon her, a defence which involves the recognition of psychic phenomena can never be urged with success in courts of justice,—tribunals which are not yet sufficiently familiar with the occult side of Nature to entertain the possibility of occurrences transcending the experience of daily life. But to deal at length with Mr. Hodgson's forecast of his conclusions before having his report available for analysis would be to court the objection that we are criticising an investigation with the results of which we are unacquainted. To remain silent, on the other hand, is to encourage the profoundly erroneous belief that we, who by reason of our interest in Theosophy scrutinise the facts concerning Madame Blavatsky with attention, are overwhelmed by a conviction of her guilt.

For the moment, therefore, I can only turn to "LIGHT" as the principal organ of psychic discussion in this country, and ask you to make public my protest against the course that has been pursued by the Society for Psychical Research, and to allow me,—while postponing a fuller criticism of Mr. Hodgson's conclusions till the much-talked-of report is issued,—to make a few preliminary observations.

To begin with, it ought to be generally understood that never to this day has Madame Blavatsky been allowed to see the original letters alleged to be hers, so as to offer her own suggestions as to the manner in which they may have been produced, and yet Mr. Hodgson seems to have had these letters in his

possession while still at Madras and in frequent intercourse with all persons at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society. I am unable to reconcile this incomprehensible neglect of what would seem to have been the first step he ought to have taken towards getting at the truth about the letters, with his assurance that he conducted his inquiry with an open mind. More than this, it appears to me that until the letters are shown to Madame Blavatsky, and until her comments on them, whatever these may be, are fairly taken into account and sifted, Mr. Hodgson is not entitled even to a hearing in regard to the inferences he may draw from the result of inquiries concerning the letters carried on behind Madame Blavatsky's back.

Anxious myself to sift the matter to the bottom I applied to the Society for Psychical Research about two months ago, for permission to take such of the letters as have been brought to this country to Madame Blavatsky myself, with the view of getting her explanations about them. But my request was refused on the ground that the present custodians of the letters were bound to return them to the *Christian College Magazine*.

Secondly, having during the past few weeks spent considerable time with Madame Blavatsky, and having minutely discussed with her all the circumstances of darkest suspicion concerning her, I have returned from these interviews entirely assured in my own mind of her innocence of the offences imputed to her by Mr. Hodgson. But pending the unfairly delayed publication of the promised report, it would be premature for me to go into details as to the grounds on which I regard the outrageous attack that has been made upon her as the result of blundering all long the line.

A. P. SINNETT.

## "Facts and Theories."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The position assumed by "C.C.M." in last week's "LIGHT" cannot be left unchallenged by those who think that the demand for "facts first and theories afterwards" is something more than "plausible," and is necessary and characteristic in "this inductive age;" yet for many reasons I would rather find myself in agreement with "C.C.M.," as would also, I believe, most of the readers of "LIGHT." His wide experience and his erudition give to anything that he writes an authority to which few can pretend, and he is at all times a formidable opponent. But the position which he takes is a dangerous one. It is very metaphysical, and metaphysicians wield a dangerous weapon—a two-edged sword.

I grant the difficulty of getting facts accepted—and properly interpreted—by the untrained, without giving them theories to swallow them with; the difference between a scientific and an unscientific man here is precisely that the former is able to admit a fact or series of facts without the accompaniment of a set of more or less flimsy hypotheses. The "outside public"—for which Psychical Researchers have suddenly developed so great a respect—can be made to accept "tentative and provisional" hypotheses of the most *outré* kind, provided they are only put forward sufficiently ponderously by those who happen for the time to hold the public ear. To "give them a theory they can understand" on the plea that they will then "soon find the evidence to be satisfactory," seems to me to be doing permanent evil that temporary good may come. I venture to characterise such a process as unscientific. What happens when the bubble bursts? This must be its fate, and the theory-holder will either stick to his exploded theory or will get into a state of mental chaos and demoralisation at seeing it blown away with but little more trouble sometimes than was taken to put it together. We do not want people who will accept evidence on such immoral terms—we ought not to care about those who are incapable of grasping facts without such treatment as the foregoing. I should be glad, indeed, to find, with "C.C.M.," that people would not accept evidence to facts which are to them utterly unintelligible unless it be "personal and palpable" evidence. I am pleased—by the way—to see that "C.C.M." falls back upon "*plain experience*" to prove this point, a proceeding hardly in accordance with the rule of "theories first, facts afterwards"; and that further on he endeavours to support the latter proposition by saying that it is based on "*common experience*." The truly scientific man asks for scientific evidence, which consists firstly in the observation and the co-ordination of facts—of plain and common experiences—without reference to theories; he requires very different evidence to that which would satisfy "any court of justice in the world"—for courts of justice are easily satisfied, and he has no "antecedent presumption against the facts." It cannot be



assumed that the nature and degree of the evidence usual in a court of justice are the best possible, and are to be taken as standards, any more than it can be assumed that the ordinary jurymen, by the mere fact of his function, is at all capable of "estimating human testimony at its ordinary value."

I cannot admit that because the conditions of a phenomenon are not known, or are known but imperfectly, and because we may not have the power to reproduce and exhibit it at will, the evidence of the occurrence of such a phenomenon is not scientific evidence. Surely there are enough and to spare of phenomena with the conditions of which we are unacquainted and of which we cannot command the reproduction. Is the observation, collection, and tabulation of these not to be considered as scientific work and as furnishing scientific evidence?

I fail altogether to see that "C.C.M.'s" proposition, "the form of intelligence is prior to its content," is at all equivalent to "theories first, facts afterwards," or to "facts follow thought." I take the first to mean that the form of intelligence common to humanity is capable only of the reception of certain impressions which it regards as facts, but which may have a totally different effect upon intelligences differently constituted. The way in which a fact will impress me, then, depends upon the form of my intelligence, but this peculiarity of appreciation is surely not the same thing as the making of a theory to account for the fact. If I see the sun rise, and have never seen it before, my mind registers the fact—I have no theory to account for the process beforehand. My mind takes the fact in a certain way, and the theory which I afterwards adopt may be due to the way in which the fact has impressed me, but the subsequent theory is no more identical with the peculiarity of appreciation than an effect is identical with its cause. Therefore, as it seems to me, facts do not follow thought, but thought follows facts. On the other hand, if "C.C.M." is going to adopt the position that everything is subjective, I have nothing to say. Then facts cease to exist, there is nothing but thought, and we may spend our time in the "bowers of boundless bliss" in speculating as to the reality of our own existence.

Spiritualists have certainly not all accepted their theory as a ready-made one inherited from the world's old tradition,—although the existence and persistence of that theory through all time as the only one capable of covering the facts observed, is a strong support to it. Many, I believe most, of those who may be regarded as the best of Spiritualists, have gained their conviction, in spite of themselves, in spite of the bias produced by education, surroundings, and inheritance, by the steady incidence of undeniable facts. The rule of "theories first, facts afterwards" has not been followed by these men any more than it has been followed by the few truly scientific men who have appeared in the world, and to whose work and methods we owe our present position. When men spent their time in theorising about what ought to be, instead of observing what *was*, stagnation and darkness were the results, but the new era came with men who, like Darwin, spent years in patiently collecting facts before venturing on theories—proceeding from the simple to the complex, a method which might be recommended with advantage to the Society for Psychical Research.

There are several other points in "C.C.M.'s" letter with which I should like to deal, and upon which I should be grateful for further explanation and development from him. I would merely remark, *en passant*, as regards Von Hartmann, that some of the writers in "LIGHT" will no doubt be able to give a good account of him and his "Scientific and Philosophical Categories," which it appears are not founded on any personal experimental knowledge; and finally to "C.C.M.'s" last sentence, regarding the intrinsic merits of the Psychical Society's theories, I would report that those who are responsible for them are evidently as yet unable to grasp the extraordinary contradictions and assumptions to which they have committed themselves, and which have led others as well as myself to "slight their importance" at the risk of being informed that we have made no effort to rise to that intellectual level which has produced "Telepathy" and "Unconscious Cerebration."

THYMOL.

**"The General Credibility of Spiritualists as Witnesses."**  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The members of the W— circle are to be sincerely congratulated on their direct, manly, and straightforward letter. Spiritualists will await from such candid and impartial observers a report of their investigations with more than ordinary confidence.

The question of "the general credibility of Spiritualists as witnesses," which they shy at, is one which would deserve no second thought, were it not that its introduction into this discussion in any way whatever was singularly out of taste. Spiritualists as a body know more about the phenomena under notice than any other body of men. Their individual competence as witnesses depends on personal characteristics with which their critics are wholly unacquainted. Certainly, "nothing but the most general conclusions could be arrived at as to the moral and mental characteristics of so many persons." But why introduce this body of persons into the argument at all? Shall we, for instance, discuss the moral competency of men over 6ft. high to observe accurately what they see from that elevation? Or, shall we try to arrive at some conclusion as to the effects of obesity in persons over 14st. in weight on their capacity for observation?

If it was intended to imply that all Spiritualists are not competent observers, the insult may be allowed to pass amid laughter. If it was desired to convey the impression that the testimony of an avowed Spiritualist would invalidate evidence in the eyes of certain "outsiders," we may laugh at the candour and impartiality of the "outsider." But in any case the discussion is to be deprecated. "Outsiders" have no monopoly of candour and intelligence.

October 10th, 1885.

A SPIRITUALIST.

**The Society for Psychical Research.**

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I beg to offer a few remarks on the letters of your correspondent "W. P.," in your issue of October 10th.

The spirit of factious egotism which imbues Spiritualists, in the opinion of your correspondent, has not been noticed by me up to the present time. I should have supposed it to be more rife among those who, by their neglect of opportunities the most favourable for investigating "so-called Spiritualistic phenomena," imply that the phenomena and the evidence of those who have investigated, are equally unworthy of attention.

Far be it from me to underrate the value of the Society for Psychical Research; but I beg to say that an investigation of phenomena occurring in the presence of such a medium as Mr. Eglinton would be worth more in every way than a record of an apparition or a prescient dream recorded twenty years after the occurrence.

Your correspondent states that we owe it to the Society that "we are no longer discussing phenomena, but the causes of those phenomena—their existence is admitted, their meaning alone is in dispute."

I have yet to learn that the phenomena known as "slate-writing," and "materialisation," both occurring to a remarkable degree in Mr. Eglinton's presence, have been discussed; at any rate no attempt at explanation has reached me. "Telepathy, undoubtedly, does not cover all the ground" is the remark of your correspondent, and in this I cordially agree with him.—Yours truly,

October 10th, 1885.

A MEMBER OF THE S.P.R.

**The W— Seances, &c.**

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Permit me to thank the members of this circle for their frank and manly letter with reference to Mr. Eglinton and myself. It was only as a foil to the insult offered to Spiritualists on the part of one who was absent on the occasion in question, that I felt it my duty to ask for such a statement from those who were present. I can now rest assured that the promised report will be speedily forthcoming.

As regards the communication upon which I commented in my "Open Letter," is judgment to go by default? This I cannot allow without an effort to remove the difficulty which I am informed my correspondent experiences in replying. I accept all responsibility for my action in that matter; I also maintain that I was perfectly justified, *under the circumstances*, in departing from a strictly purist view of what is or what is not a private communication, or how far publicity was given by its insertion in "LIGHT," and I shall be quite content to stand by a letter in which I explained my reasons for so acting. That letter I am quite willing he should publish, and in that case I fail to see any difficulty in the way of his meeting the case against him. I should be extremely sorry to believe he will thus tacitly admit the justice of my remarks.—Yours truly,

16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C.

JOHN S. FARMER.

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

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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.]*

## Light :

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17TH, 1885.

### RECORDS OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

(Continued from page 489.)

[In this column will be given from time to time such accounts of psychical phenomena as seem to be worthy of permanent record. Beyond the general classification indicated, no attempt at tabulation will at present be made; that work will follow in due course. In furtherance of this object we shall be pleased to receive from our readers brief reports of phenomena subject to two conditions. (1) That a colourless statement of facts without comment is given; and (2) that communications are accompanied by the names and addresses of those concerned, not necessarily for publication, though we should naturally prefer to be at liberty to publish them. Amongst the phenomena referred to may be mentioned:—

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A.—Mesmerism.                                       | L.—Materialised Spirit Forms.                             |
| B.—Trance.  | M.—Rappings, Knockings, and Stone Throwings.              |
| C.—Clairvoyance.                                    | N.—The Spirit Voice.                                      |
| D.—Thought-reading.                                 | O.—Psychography.  |
| E.—Prescience, Previsional and Coincidental Dreams. | P.—Automatic Writing.                                     |
| F.—Apparitions.                                     | Q.—Movement of Material Objects without Physical Contact. |
| G.—The Human "Double."                              | R.—Speaking and Writing in Tongues.                       |
| H.—Presence at a Distance.                          | S.—Miscellaneous Phenomena.                               |
| I.—Haunted Houses.                                  |   |
| K.—Spirit Identity.                                 |   |

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

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

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

#### CLASS O.—PSYCHOGRAPHY.

On Tuesday, September 29th, 1885, at 12 a.m., I, in company with Mr. J. G. Keulemans, attended at 6, Nottingham-place, for the purpose of conducting experiments in psychography with Mr. W. Eglinton. The séance commenced at 12.15 a.m., and terminated at 12.55 a.m.

In reference to an inquiry, Mr. Eglinton cordially agreed that, as far as he was concerned, we should conduct our experiments in our own manner. I had not previously mentioned my proposed course of action to any one.

It was to obtain psychography in four different colours in a rotation unknown to the medium, the particular words to be chosen at random from a book unknown to all present.

The number of a page in the book from which I wished certain words in a given line to be transcribed on the slate by psychography I chose in the following manner. I took a piece of money at random from my pocket out of fourteen coins then in my possession. The last two figures of the date I wrote down on a slate, secretly to Mr. Eglinton and Mr. Keule-

mans. A similar result, i.e., the last figure of the date on another coin, written down secretly as before on my slate, was to indicate the number of the line. Four words in the line having to be transcribed, I also wrote down secretly their numbers, placing the slate, on which I had written, face downwards on the table.

I then asked Mr. Keulemans to select a book haphazard from a bookcase in the room, containing upwards of 150 volumes. I requested him not to look at the title or in any way to seek to discover its contents, or to so place it, when selected, as to reveal its nature either to Mr. Eglinton or myself. My instructions were faithfully followed, and not until the end of the experiment did either of those visibly present know what the book was. To make assurance doubly sure Mr. Keulemans chose a volume without any title lettered on its back.

As I desired to obtain four lines of psychography in as many different colours I then requested Mr. Keulemans to decide this point and to write down secretly on a slate the names of the four colours chosen in the order in which he wished them used. This was done, and the slate upon which he had written these details placed face downwards on the table. Neither Mr. Eglinton nor myself touched this slate until the end of the séance.

My next proceeding was to request Mr. Keulemans to decide whether the words I had chosen should be counted forwards or backwards, i.e., from the beginning of the line or from the end. This he did, electing that they should be counted from the commencement. It should be noted:—

- (1) That the title or character of the book chosen at random was unknown to all the persons visibly present.
- (2) Mr. Keulemans selected the four colours from a number lying on the table.
- (3) The order in which these were to be used was known only to Mr. Keulemans.
- (4) The numbers of the page and line chosen by chance from which I desired four particular words transcribed, and the numbers of the particular words, were known only to myself.
- (5) Mr. Eglinton knew nothing (a) of the title or character of the book; (b) of the order of the colours; (c) of the number of page; (d) of the number of the line, and (e) of the numbers of the particular words in that line.
- (6) Not any of these details were decided upon until immediately preceding the experiment.

These preliminaries completed, Mr. Eglinton took another slate, which was cleaned and examined by Mr. Keulemans and myself. It was destitute of writing or marks on either side. Upon the upper face of this slate were placed the four crayons. Upon these, and completely covering them from view, was put the book. So arranged, the slate was then held by Mr. Eglinton's right hand just under the edge of the table, his left hand being all the time firmly grasped in my left, and both Mr. Keulemans' hands being placed in my right hand. I closely scrutinised what took place. At no time was the slate resting on Mr. Eglinton's knees, nor was there any support for a slate on the under surface of the table.

I then inquired of Mr. Eglinton's invisible co-workers, presumed present, whether the experiment was satisfactory to themselves; also whether we were likely to be successful. Mr. Keulemans desired aloud that the reply should be written in white, that being one of the four colours then on the slate. We shortly heard the sound of writing, the completion of the message being indicated by the customary three raps with the pencil on the slate.

On examination we found the book and the four crayons as we had placed them, but on the slate under the book, written with the white crayon that had been placed on the slate, were the words, "We will try."

Another slate, with the book and crayons similarly arranged, was returned and held in the position previously stated. After the lapse of some minutes writing was again heard, ultimately followed by three taps.

On examination we found written on the top surface of the slate (and of course under the book) the words:—

- |     |            |    |        |
|-----|------------|----|--------|
| (1) | "Enforced" | in | White. |
| (2) | "This"     | in | Blue.  |
| (3) | "Here"     | in | Red.   |
| (4) | "Must"     | in | Grey.  |

The crayons in each case rested at the end of the word written in the respective colours.

The slates upon which Mr. Keulemans and myself had written the directions were now, for the first time, turned up. The



order of the colours chosen and written down by Mr. Keulemans was found to be—1st, white; 2nd, blue; 3rd, red; and 4th, grey. The number of the page written down by myself was the sixty-first, and the particular words chosen for transcription from the fourth line were the sixth, the fifth, the first and the third word respectively.

On turning to the fourth line of the sixty-first page of the book—which turned out to be Crookes' "Researches"—it ran as follows:—

"Here I must bring this enforced vindication to a close." The sixth, the fifth, the first, and the third words of which are as written on the slate. The experiment had been perfectly successful.

Another experiment was then tried. Mr. Keulemans took another slate, and drew upon it a parallelogram. This he divided into two equal squares. In one he drew an owl's head, and requested that the sketch should be copied in the blank square. A piece of grey crayon was put on the slate, which was held under the table in the usual way, and in a few seconds, on being withdrawn, this had been accomplished, with the addition of the words "I am not an artist, as you see. Good-bye; God bless you." The séance then terminated.

16, Craven-street, Strand.

JOHN S. FARMER.

The above account of this most successful séance is perfectly correct.

34, Matilda-street, Barnsbury.

J. G. KEULEMANS.

P.S.—Although I had requested to have the colours used in a certain rotation, I had, at the moment Mr. Eglinton held the slates, quite forgotten how they were to follow, except that white was to come first.—J. G. K.

[Apropos of this truly remarkable séance it may be interesting and instructive to our readers if they will compare the various theories which may be broached to explain it and its congeners:—

1. A disembodied spirit was able to perceive, either in the minds or clairvoyantly upon the slates of the experimenters, the complex method by which the particular words were to be selected. It was able to perceive clairvoyantly the words themselves. And it was able to use a force, derived from the medium, whereby to write the words.

2. The complex method aforesaid was conveyed *in toto* to the unconscious mind of the medium by thought-transference. The unconscious mind of the medium, either from the stores of latent memory or by clairvoyance, was able to perceive the particular words required, and it was able by using the force of the medium to write the words.

The difference between these two theories is so little as far as our argument is concerned, that if one be true the other may also be true.

3. The complex method was conveyed by thought-transference to the conscious mind of the medium. He then with a sort of "divine dexterity" managed to overcome all obstacles, and to write himself the words required.

In this case, however, the direct statements of Mr. Farmer as to the way in which the slate with the book and pencils on it was held beneath the table, puts altogether out of court any theory of fraud on the part of the medium.

4. There was no thought-transference and no psychography. Mr. Farmer and Mr. Keulemans, both well-known to our readers as men whose only crime is that they are Spiritualists, have deliberately concocted this account after, perhaps, going through the mockery of an experiment.

Either 1 and 2, that is, psychography, must be true; or 4 must be true; and the writers of this account must be charged with fraud. We cannot permit the sceptic to go halting off with lame excuses to seek a *via media* in (3).

Let us narrow the issue, turn the tables, and bring the investigators to book.]

#### CLASS M.—KNOCKINGS AND RAPPINGS.

Allow me to contribute the following short account of a séance held on Sunday evening, September 20th, as an addition, under heading "M.," to your "Records of Psychical Phenomena."

The manifestations which occurred were not startling in character, but are, I think, worthy of notice for their distinctness and simplicity. We were sitting round the table, in a room on the ground floor, below which no apartments exist. We kept a candle burning the whole time, and everyone's hands rested on the table, separate at first, but subsequently joined to

those of their neighbours. After a few minutes, faint knocks were heard on the table; these soon became stronger, and succeeded, with some difficulty in spelling out a short message by means of the alphabet in the usual way. I say "with some difficulty" because after every two or three letters were indicated a pause occurred as if the power to produce knocks was for the time expended. The knocks were produced on the table, on the floor in various parts of the room, and once on the top of the piano, which was immediately behind my chair, and quite out of reach of anyone; they were of varying emphasis, and always occurred in answer to questions asked in a low tone of voice.

After the message was completed, a pause, longer than usual, occurred, during which the person through whose mediumship the manifestations were taking place said he felt that "the influence" had changed. This was confirmed, on the question being asked, by very loud raps on the floor. The power being now seemingly stronger, we got a piece of string, and passed it through a sheet of note-paper near the edge; the string was held "taut" by two persons at opposite sides of the table, and the suspended paper was placed midway between them. In this position, in answer to a request that such should be, taps were made on the paper and heard by me; the taps were of such a nature that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, they could not have been caused by any ordinary movement of the paper or string. The number of taps on the paper corresponded in every case with the number asked for, thus indicating, in this instance also, the intelligence of the operator. I was not myself able to count the number of taps each time, but the three people nearest the paper agreed that they always thus corresponded. After this all indications of occult power ceased.

G. S. LE M. TAYLOR (Major).

[We think it well to publish this case as it stands; though we hope to obtain more evidence ourselves. Some of our readers may now be able to assist us. It is just one of those cases which make us regret the non-existence of some practical investigating society of Spiritualists, with resources which might be applied to inquiries on the spot. We give first an account, strongly tinged as it is with the sceptical bias, from the *Somerset County Herald* of May 2nd, 1885.]

REMARKABLE SPIRITUALISTIC DEMONSTRATIONS. — During the past few days considerable excitement has been caused among the inhabitants of King-street and the neighbourhood, by what has been termed "a visit from an evil spirit," with which a family residing in that street allege they have been favoured. They stated on Saturday last that they heard some unaccountable noises proceeding from one of the bedrooms of their residence, which they believed betokened the approach of the "evil one," and they were not slow to communicate their fears to their neighbours, and as the rumour obtained currency, a considerable number of persons hastened to the scene of the mysterious occurrence. They were invited by the victims, who consisted of a man, woman and a girl, to enter the house and witness the manifestations for themselves. Many persons availed themselves of this invitation, and the Spiritualistic mania gradually taking possession of them, they freely confessed to hearing peculiar noises, as though articles of furniture were being knocked by a stick. The affair continued to cause an amount of animation in the neighbourhood, and during Sunday several hundred persons visited King-street, while Acting-Sergeant Brown and Police-constables Richardson and Bartram also proceeded to the scene of the "spirit's" demonstrations. The "spirit" evidently did not appreciate the interference of the protectors of the peace, for although the manifestations were in full swing when they entered the house, on Sergeant Brown's requesting the girl who occupied the chair to which the "spirit" was confining its attention to vacate it and remove her boots, the noise suddenly ceased. Doubtless had the worthy sergeant and his colleagues remained in the house, very little more would have been heard of the Spiritualistic manifestations, but as they quitted it the tapping was resumed. Several of the more credulous of the neighbours seemed to have entertained the opinion that the appearance of the "evil one" had been evoked by some wicked act on the part of the girl who resided in the house, and they urged her to confess her guilt in order that the wrath of the spirit might be assuaged. This, however, the girl, perhaps wisely, refrained from doing, as by so doing the whole proceedings might have come to an end. Subsequently, it was thought that religious intervention might prove of some avail in solving the mystery, and consequently two "happy" members of the local "mission" appeared on the scene, and they consented to pray for the removal of the supposed evil one from the unhappy girl. Their attempted exorcism, however, proved of no avail, for on Monday the girl alleged that

she was unable to remain seated in a chair, being violently thrown about by invisible agencies. The woman was also said to be affected by the evil one, but the man has as yet escaped its machinations. On Monday morning the girl fastened a prayer-book around her neck, and this for a time she stated prevented the spirit tormenting her. The affair continues to create considerable excitement, a large crowd having assembled in the neighbourhood on Monday evening, and did not disperse for a considerable time. Various and amusing are the reasons assigned for the manifestations, and it is indeed surprising that in this "enlightened nineteenth century" there should be found people credulous enough to entertain such absurd fancies, which are sure to turn out a silly hoax.

[We learnt that the mission referred to was the Taunton Gospel Mission, and we obtained the name and address of one of the members mentioned as having been present at the knockings, which we retain private, but who is known as "Happy Albert." We have received from him the following interesting letter, which throws quite a different complexion on the affair.]

October 5th, 1885.

In reference to the King-street affair of May last, I will give you as true an account as I can, as I found it myself. The little mission-room I have laboured in for over two years is about two minutes' walk from King-street. It was Sunday evening, between eight and nine o'clock, when I was called out of the meeting and asked to go and see a young woman who could not find peace indoors or out. I at once left the meeting in my colleague's hands and went. Arriving at King-street, to my surprise, I found about 300 people assembled. I was pointed out the young woman surrounded by about six men trying to hold her. She seemed to me like one mad, in a most pitiful condition. I at once helped her indoors. It was distressing to see her. The knockings continued all the time I was present. I was always most sceptical about these things before. But I must confess I really believe an evil spirit or something I could not see harassed the girl. If she sat on a chair the knocking could be heard under it. I asked her to let me sit in her chair and she sit in my place. She did so. The knocking went to her chair. If she stood by the table, it was just the same. Or, standing away from anything, it would then catch hold of her. There were also about twelve more present besides myself who were very much alarmed. I held a service with them, singing. Prayer was offered by myself and Mr. Peart. We spoke to those present about their souls' eternal welfare. Strong men wept like children. But as soon as the service was ended the knocking continued. I left there about 10.30. The next day the young woman was taken to her parents' home, about two miles from Taunton. I have heard since that she is quite herself again.—I remain, yours truly, in God's work,

#### CLASS E.—PREVISION.

In the summer of 1873, I resided at London, Ontario, Canada, my house being on the Hamilton-road, near Adelaide-street, about ten minutes' walk from my work. I was a carpenter in an iron foundry. I went to bed at nine o'clock. Just before dark I was suddenly aroused from a half-sleeping condition by the whisper of "Fire, fire, fire." I called to my wife to go into the garden, and looked all round for fire, but she could discover nothing.

Next morning when I arrived at the workshop, I found to my surprise a hole burnt through the roof just over where my tool-chest stood. And on inquiries I found that while running the blast furnace just after 9 p.m., the night before, sparks from the "cupile" had set fire to the roof, being the exact time that I had been disturbed by the whisper of "fire" in my ears.

(Signed) GEO. PEDDLE.

West End-road, High Wycombe, Bucks. JEMIMA PEDDLE.

#### TRANSITION.

CORNER.—On the 2nd inst., at Llanhenock, Monmouthshire, Gladys Emma, youngest daughter of Edward and Florence Elgie Corner, aged ten months and one week.

DR. SLADE has recovered from his recent illness, and is now busily engaged in Boston giving séances.

MR. GERALD MANSEY is now on his way to England, after a most successful lecturing tour in Australia.

THE first anniversary service to commemorate the opening of Cavendish Rooms for Sunday lectures, took place on Sunday last at that hall, when over 200 persons were present. Mr. Burns, Mr. A. Duguid and others were the speakers.

#### REVIEW.

##### THE MOTHER: THE WOMAN CLOTHED WITH THE SUN.\*

This volume, which may be chosen as a well-marked specimen of its class, exceeds in its pretensions all that have hitherto appeared—and those are not few—in the same line. Such histories of mediumship are likely to mislead those who take them literally, and as they are so taken by many readers they are worth examination, always supposing them to be written in good faith. As this book shows many of the features of a true development of mediumship, we must suppose it genuine, although doubts may arise as to whether the source of the inspiration is a good one; for the aspiring lady who calls herself "The Mother" claims to be not only, like St. Catherine of Sienna, or her humbler rival Joanna Southcott, the Spouse of Christ, but a superhuman being, the Divine Mother, the feminine half of the bi-une God. The author's name is not given, but the book is written by a gentleman who calls himself "The Recorder," and who tells how, in the year 1877, a lady, accompanied by two younger ones, came to his house. As he had been reduced in circumstances and let apartments, we may suppose the three were lodgers. He had been in the habit of attending séances, but the spiritual gifts made known through this lady were so far in advance of anything which had yet come to his knowledge that he at once accepted them as being of a different kind and far higher character. It is likely that this writer may not have had any other opportunity of watching the development of a mediumship from its commencement, but readers who have seen this will perceive that the case is not an uncommon one, except inasmuch as the teaching has been misapprehended. The automatic writing and drawing, and the sort of symbol used to illustrate the messages are just like what most old Spiritualists will recognise as among their earliest and simplest experiences. They are for the most part inferior to the work of some of our most enlightened, but least assuming mediums. But for both drawing and writing we are referred to the Bible for confirmation of what is well-known, that both were forms in which revelations from the higher world were formerly made.

After these manifestations had gone on for some time under "The Recorder's" notice, "The Mother's" true nature and history were disclosed. She was born on the 25th December, in a wayside inn at the foot of St. Michael's Mount. Her mother was travelling, and the infant, unprovided for and unwelcome, "was laid aside in a basket of straw." The mother afterwards, on her death-bed, solemnly declared that the child had no human father. But "she grew up surrounded by luxury, and in the midst of the highest society," &c., until having passed through many troubles, of which one was an unhappy marriage, "she fell into the hands of some fiend-inspired people, by whom she was systematically and continuously poisoned for eight whole years!" But she was saved by a miracle.

After this, and much more, the whole being made startling and impressive by varieties of type, her reception of spiritual influx (or mediumship) takes place. We are not told how it first showed itself, but she had attended many séances, and was not satisfied with the result. And, like other mediums, she is assured at the outset that her mission is one of incalculable importance, more so than any yet given, not excepting that of Christ. The following message, given March 25th, 1879, will show her pretensions.

"Message, 25th March, A.D. 1879.

"THE MOTHER'S DAY.

"For the Holy Mother,—God, the All Holy Jehovah, is the Father of all, but He is your Father in an especial manner, having created and evolved you out of Himself, and given you to the earth at this juncture, for your special mission, to show forth the Glory of the Two-in-One!!!

"This is a mystery before which the angels veil their faces.

"On April 9th, of the year of the Lord 1879, the day of unveiling and revelation of the Mother Queen in the spirit-world, ancient Magi, Hindoos, and Hebrews returned to earth, accept and do homage representatively to the Queen in our house, kneeling in lowly reverence and adoring love, and kissing the hem of her garment. They will carry far the glad tidings. The Divine Mother is to be revealed to all sections of her family, in both worlds, as they can bear.

"Similar reverent and loving homage was previously paid by the saints of the Catholic Church; some of the chief of whom, as St. Catherine and St. Theresa, had been privileged to be among her constant attendants and companions before her unveiling to them and to herself."

\* London: Field and Tuer, 2s. 6d. May be obtained of the Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, Strand.



The following message is delivered to "The Queen" on the same day :—

"The mystery is now unveiled to us through your obedience.—"

"Five days will there come over your spirit the mighty rushes of your Divine Nature, only to be regulated by your letting it flow forth in the outlet provided for you by the All Holy. Then comes the Glory to be unveiled."—

The signatures (three asterisks) are declared to be "the signatures of the Heavenly Archangels."

Many of us, I believe, know the signification of references to Egypt in spiritual communications. We have but to look through any narrative of a progressive development of mediumship to find "The Place of Egypt in Universal (Spiritual) History." So, some time before the first unveiling, "The Queen receives a message from the "Egyptian Sages of the Mystic Altar of the Temple of Sun," in which she is told that "in the Easter dawn of the year was she to be unveiled unto two or three chosen," and "the Angels have announced to us the glad tidings of *The Two-in-One*."

These pretensions are like those of many other inspired persons, who take the symbol for the spiritual truth, and mistake expressions which apply to that truth as having been used to themselves individually. I do not for a moment deny the right of all the different claimants to be "Spouses of Christ." St. Catherine, who was "privileged to be the Mother's constant attendant and companion," had been married with a ring long before. But it is in the sense that they all share that reception of the Spirit which was shown to John in the vision of the New Jerusalem or the Bride. And this symbol embodies an universal truth, referring, not to separate individuals, but to the effect of that out-pouring of Spirit described by Christ as His second coming, and indicating a higher condition of the race.

There are abundant signs of this outpouring at present. It brings the special message needed at this time, and for which the time is ready; namely, that throughout every degree of life the male and female, being essentially one, are equal, and having each different and complementary elements are indispensable to each other's existence. They are out of place now relatively to each other, but the coming Evangel will rectify the dislocation.

No wonder that a principle so fraught with weighty meaning and involving such complicated results, should be misunderstood and misapplied by those who have only as yet a glimpse of its meaning, and who do not half recognise its reality. When it is well understood and acknowledged, that tangled knot, the "woman question," will be untied, with many other social problems which now seem to defy explanation. In the meantime every kind of mistake must arise. Those to whom the truth is spiritually entrusted (is anything given *not* spiritually?) cannot receive it in all its breadth, for they are human, and their powers of reception and transmission are limited. But each one who can receive and transmit at all, i.e., who is what is called a medium, has his or her portion of the message,\* and none can pass it on quite intact, for it must be limited, more or less, by the human personality.

We have had many books containing announcements like that of the one under consideration, and we shall have many more, all varying in outward form and expression with the dispositions and capacities of the transmitters. One of these, "The Two-in-One," by T. L. Harris, touches on the mystery of the Heavenly Marriage in a different way from "The Mother." "Sympneumata," so far as I understand it, is based on the same truth,† and a writer, signed "C. A. P.," in the *New Church Independent*, goes farther into details than any of the others. Each writer probably has something to convey which is wanting to the rest; but each and all seem to think it due to their high calling to disclaim all connection with "so-called Spiritualism" and Spiritualists. If Spiritualists, as a body, had ever laid down any conditions of belief or non-belief to which they required assent, there might be some reason for this disclaimer. As it is we are reminded of the Pharisees, who prided themselves on their belief in angels, spirits, and the resurrection of the dead, yet were fierce in their denunciation of those who could attest the reality of experiences which would confirm the possibility of such facts, and make them better understood.

All that Spiritualism implies is a conviction of the reality of a certain class of phenomena disbelieved in by most educated

persons, and generally ignored by the scientific world. Most of us, having this conviction, hope that the comprehension of these facts will lead to a higher knowledge than has as yet been attained. And one branch of this knowledge will be that of the nature and limitations of inspiration, and the value of the symbol in which every truth is conveyed.

Another direction in which intelligence may be expected to come with spiritual light into the world will be a clearer perception of the nature and causes of insanity. Many of our most enlightened recipients of the Spirit have held that lunacy is generally, if not always, accompanied by possession; and a careful observation of the character of different mediumships will enable us to discover where the work of the true and holy influence, known as inspiration, ceases, and that of the lower spirits, known as obsession and possession, begins.

To learn this we must have, first, a complete understanding\* of the functions of the brain, and their manifestation in action, and feeling, in health. Secondly, the development of mediumship in each case, and its characteristics with reference to the medium's individual character. Thirdly, the conditions of brain, either from disease or disproportion of parts, which are favourable to the admission of spirits of the earth-tending class.

As far as I have seen there is much resemblance between some mediumships and cases of insanity; indeed, they have been known to show so many features in common that the possession of one has more than once been made a pretext for an imputation of the other. The symptoms most usually taken hold of when it is wished to prove a mediumistic person insane are the seeing and talking with spirits, and the automatic writing and drawing. But we know that these circumstances do not prove a man or woman mad. Persons having the best-balanced minds, and the highest and purest moral natures, have often the faculty of mediumship in an unusual degree; as, for example, Oberlin, the leaders of the Cevennes, and many hard-working, pious men and women, whose whole lives have been under holy guidance. We shall find, I believe, that every variety of inspiration depends on, and is determined by, the character of the recipient, as indicated by the brain. Thus, if the attraction for duty and goodness is much stronger than that for selfishness or vice in an individual, the character of his mediumship will be high and holy, for it will be used by the good spirits who are in sympathy with, or near to, the receiver. Extending the application of this idea to all mediumships we find an infinite variety, ranging upwards to the holy saint or martyr, and downwards through a long series of poorly-organised beings to the sensitive, whose pride, cruelty, or animalism makes him or her the ready recipient of evil, earth-tending influences. According to the channel through which it comes the message will be either a true and trustworthy one, received with joy and transmitted intact, or it will be a false statement of earthly matters, or a vitiated version of a spiritual message.

There seems to be some analogy between the poor lunatic who fancies himself a King or an Emperor, and the medium who is "clothed with the sun." But the cases are in some respects different. The madman believes himself to be a King, and dresses the part, and acts according to his idea of it. But the ambitious lady, "before whom Angels and Archangels bow," has mistaken the meaning of her message, and identified herself with the truth she has to convey. In one sense, perhaps, the difference is one of degree; but the question of "how much" is an exceedingly difficult and complicated one, and the pursuit of it would lead me farther than I could follow. The simplest cases, both of mediumship and insanity, are often found among the inmates of a lunatic asylum, and a careful study of these might help us to discover the point at which real brain disease begins, and whether, and how far, it is accompanied in each case by mediumship or by possession.

And the Science of the future, which we may hope will deal more with the internal or *real*, and less with the external or phenomenal, than the Science of to-day, will find all these questions complicated and difficult in the degree that their solutions will enlighten and ennoble the race.

S. E. DE M.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—A number of communications stand over for future issues. We will find a place for them at an early date. Several replies to Hartmann have also come to hand. These will be used in rotation.

\* The Hebrew Prophets called it a "burthen."

† This may be a mistake. There are many things "hard to comprehend" in "Sympneumata."

\* I need not say that this understanding cannot be gained by vivisection, or cutting and maiming the living brain.

## WITCHCRAFT AND THE WATER-ORDEAL.

BY CARL DU PREL,

Author of "The Philosophy of Mysticism."

(Condensed from Dr. Rohner's Translation from the German in the *Harbinger of Light* of July and August.)

## I.

Nations believed for centuries in witchcraft, and in the rationality of treating it by drowning and burning.

How came it that the most prominent men of the Middle Ages were under the delusion of seeing things which scientific men of the present age aver could never have been? This problem is not solved by saying that such men were ignorant or besotted; nor is it solved by calling witchcraft a fungus growth of the Romish Church, for witches were in Protestant as well as Roman Catholic countries.

Every age looks at the objective events of the preceding through its own subjective spectacles. Whatever it looks at through them which does not square with its own scientific view it puts aside either as not having existed at all, or as having lost its proper original significance.

In the Middle Ages it was believed that witches could not sink in water, and to establish the charge of being one, the accused was subjected to the water-ordeal.

This water-ordeal seems to be of Aryan origin, for in the laws of Manu it is laid down that those were to be believed or not believed who, on swearing, sunk or floated in water; and the Sankhya doctrine taught that the Yogees or Fakirs floated in and even walked on water.

Janblichus, the Neo-Platonist, says that those who were seized of the Divine Spirit were enabled to walk over burning coals or across rivers.

Pliny tells of a belief among the Scythians that those who had the "evil eye" could not be drowned. He also says that the Thibians did not sink in water.

Plutarch calls the Thibians sorcerers. He says, also, that the people of Pontius, reputed sorcerers, showed, in a high degree, lightness in water.

These ancient notions about witchcraft and sorcery got confused together in the minds of men in the Middle Ages; and then, by an easy transition, those stigmatised by the Church as infidels were mixed up and confounded with them, and were subjected to the same treatment.

The Manichæans of Soissons were subjected, as infidels, to the water-ordeal. It is said that their chief, Clementius, floated like a log of wood.

The Albigenses were said to be able to walk on the water. St. Bernard says the same of other sects. Their trials by the water-ordeal were preceded by exorcism, until, in 1215, the Lateran Council decreed the ordeal without the exorcism.

The practice fell gradually into disuse until 1460, when there was a revival of it against those charged with sorcery and witchcraft throughout Europe.

In the "Witch Hammer" allusion is made to a phenomenon not mentioned before; it is there said that some witches were condemned to the stake, but in the sentence upon them it was provided that if the flames took no effect upon them they were to be drowned.

So it went on for centuries. In England during the Long Parliament, one Hopkins travelled through the country as Inquisitor, employing the water-ordeal. He caused sixty persons to be hanged in one year. It is on record that during that Parliament there were three thousand executions for witchcraft. Hopkins himself was at last taken in hand by some influential person and subjected to the ordeal; not sinking, he was hung.

It is also related that many, in order to clear themselves from the suspicion of sorcery, went before magistrates demanding to be put through the ordeal, and that some of them did not sink in spite of their efforts to do so.

Trials by water-ordeal did not cease in England until 1776.

In presence of such records of this phenomenon, presented by certain individuals, in all times and in various parts, of floating in water, one cannot evade the conviction that there must be in them a substratum of truth.

Turning to ecclesiastical records, we find that the property of floating in water was attributed to those said by the Church to be "possessed." In the *Acta Sanctorum* it is recorded that a woman "possessed of a devil" was taken to the tomb of St.

Usmar and put into a tub of holy water, and that when the exorcism was pronounced her body was forced out of the tub in spite of the most forcible resistance by the priests.

But the ecclesiastical view of the subject becomes complicated when the notion of sanctity is mixed up with the phenomenon, as it is in the records, by St. Matthew, of Jesus Christ and St. Peter walking on the water.

St. Gregory writes that Maurus, "going into the river at command of his religious superior, to rescue a drowning boy, did not sink in the water, and brought the boy in safety to the bank." It would seem that he had been taken with a sudden trance, for St. Gregory adds, "When Maurus recovered himself he was terrified at what he found he had done."

It is clear that our predecessors regarded the phenomenon of not sinking in water as a fact; and it is a fact which cannot be explained away by modern materialistic methods.

In the water-ordeal the subjects were thrown into the water with their arms crossed and hands and feet bound together, men on either side holding the ends of a rope fastened round the subject, to pull them out should they sink. Three trials were thus made; those who sank at each were set free as innocent, while those who floated were held to be guilty, according to sex, of witchcraft or of sorcery.

**SOMNAMBULISM.**—A case is reported from Tramore, Co. Waterford. A young tourist engaged a room at a small hotel near the railway station, and retired. At three o'clock the same night stragglers saw a man in his night-dress drop from the sill of a window four or five yards to the ground. The fall did not seem to affect him. He walked into the town, when, returning to ordinary consciousness, he found himself near the police barracks, and there, upon his report, was furnished with refreshment and some clothing and then taken to his hotel, where the officer found he had good luggage and valuables.—*Newcastle Daily Chronicle*.

**MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND'S CLOSING MEETING AT THE ASSEMBLY ROOM, KENSINGTON.**—Next Sunday evening will be the last opportunity the friends of Mrs. Richmond will have of seeing her and her husband and bidding them "Good-bye," as they leave London on Monday to take the steamer on Tuesday, October 20th. The guides of Mrs. Richmond will then say a few words suitable to the closing of the discourses for the present season. The guides of Mrs. Richmond and their medium desire to thank the friends in the provinces and suburban towns of London for invitations to deliver addresses, which could not be accepted owing to engagements and limited time. Mrs. Richmond's work during the summer just past has been arduous. There have been about forty-five public and thirty private meetings and receptions, besides other labours, in a little over five months.

**CHURCHYARDS IN SCOTLAND**, though attached to the churches, are not consecrated; they belong to the nation, and in them any burial may be made, with or without rites. Religious ceremonies at interments are unusual, except among Roman Catholics and Protestant Episcopalians, and neither of these are very numerous. There are no rector's fees and no rector's interference with respect to times and breakings of the ground. There is something to be paid; but it is a moderate charge for the grave digging, ten shillings or a little more. A religious disturbance in a graveyard was never heard of in Scotland till recently, when an old lady had a grave opened in one near Glasgow, in which to bury a favourite cat; but a crowd made an irruption with the cry that it was a shame to bury a cat like a Christian. The coffin was smashed, and the services of the police had to be requisitioned to disperse the excited people. They thought that in the matter of freedom of burial, a line ought to be drawn at animals.—*Echo*.

**IS THERE A SIXTH SENSE?**—A writer in the *Toronto Mail* narrates a remarkable instance of the appearance of the spirit immediately after dissolution. He says: "I have read with the greatest interest your articles on the sixth sense question, especially the last one in which you explain the Indian theory of apparitions. I frankly avow that I am more than half inclined to accept it as the true solution of many mysteries. Some years ago—to be more particular, it was at 5 p. m. on the evening of June 11th, 1877—I saw the figure of my brother standing close to me, his face towards mine. He or it was dressed in ordinary clothes. The face was singularly pale. He motioned to me, smiled, and then vanished. I was in my library at the time. It was broad daylight, of course, and the figure appeared near the window. I was not asleep or dreaming, but as wide awake as I am at this moment. I at once mentioned the matter to my wife, to her sister, and to three neighbours, all of whom are still alive. We noted the exact hour of the apparition, and, allowing for difference in time, it was the exact hour of my brother's death at Carlisle, England. He died very suddenly. I had not been thinking of him on the day referred to, nor for several days previously, for on May 20th we had received a letter from him stating that he was well (he was a robust man), and that he should sail for Canada on July 2nd. Will some of your scientific readers explain this apparition? The Indian theory explains it readily."



## TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## WHAT CONJURERS SAY ABOUT PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

### Testimony of Robert Houdin.

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

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

4th May, 1847.

ROBERT HOUDIN."

A fortnight later, M. de Mirville received another letter, in which the 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 unbiased opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional prestidigitator, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### The Testimony of Professor Jacobs.

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

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

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

"Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also the individuality of the spirit in 'spiritic 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.