

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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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.]

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon)."

The *Times* of December 26th has a letter of a very interesting nature on "Religious Hallucination in the Bahamas," which I am sorry not to be able to transfer to these columns. (The fact is that "LIGHT" might profitably be doubled in size when means are forthcoming for the purpose.) The writer is the Rev. F. Barrow Matthews, Rector of San Salvador, Bahamas, West Indies. He comments on an account (*Weekly Times*, August 7th, 1885), of "a remarkable outbreak of religious hallucination in Italy," and he gives his own experiences of a similar outbreak in the Bahamas. About January in last year (1885) it seems a report was current that "a young girl had seen visions and was under some influence not belonging to this world." In the course of a few weeks twenty young girls were similarly affected. A society was formed, and this is what the writer saw at one of the meetings. "About fifty people sat round in a room, singing, clapping their hands, and stamping their feet, keeping time to a kind of monotonous chant. The girls who saw visions were standing in the centre, sometimes walking up and down. They had a vacant kind of stare. Gradually the singing quickened until it became fast and furious. Then the girls would dance, shout, and bark like dogs. After twenty minutes of this they would fall down with a shriek. Their struggles, cries, and foaming at the mouth were dreadful to see, and in many cases it took four or five men to hold them still. After the fit was over they would lie exhausted for about an hour; then, when they came to, they gave very detailed accounts of the visions they had seen One thing was remarkable—they spoke of people doing things many miles away from the place. Upon inquiry it was found that what they had seen corresponded exactly with the events."

This outburst of psychical activity was not confined to one spot. It permeated the island (45 miles by 12). "Girls living at distances of five or ten miles from the 'shouting meetings' would be seized. Being seized with a kind of frenzy, they would run, as if by inspiration, to the spot where the rest were assembled, no matter how far the distance." The explanation, almost of course, was "epidemic hysteria." Five hundred victims of "collective hallucination" which enabled them to exercise accurate "supersensuous perception," during the months from January to July, is rather a startling fact! Yet the excitement has died out, and the authorities are left wondering what can have caused it. They have no

experience or cognisance of waves of spirit-influence. Howitt's "History of the Supernatural" would give the Rev. F. Barrow Matthews some illustrative parallel cases. The case would, no doubt, be referred by some theorists to the explanation of "collective hallucination"; but Spiritualists, who are familiar with the rapid development of these supersensuous faculties under certain stimulating causes, will be in no difficulty as to the true explanation. It is a noteworthy fact that these psychical powers are—shall I say infectious or contagious? Hardly any potential possessor of them in an undeveloped state sits with a fully developed medium without gaining some stimulus to these powers; and few mediums sit in circle with another medium without developing the power of producing psychical phenomena similar to those familiar to the special medium in question. What is the explanation? Is it all hysteria? And will the *cognoscenti* be kind enough to tell me what hysteria is? and how it discerns accurately events occurring at a distance of ten miles? And—but that will do for the present.

The recently issued *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research contains a report on what is oddly called an "Alleged Physical Phenomenon." This refers, it seems, to what the readers of "LIGHT" have heard a good deal of, viz., the ring that is said to have been passed on to Mr. Cecil Husk's arm by some occult agency. Two surgeons, Messrs. W. C. Bull and Victor Horsley, Dr. A. T. Myers, and Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S., examined Mr. Husk at 24, Clarges-street, on April 17th, 1885, and their long-delayed report is now before me. They elaborately measured wrist and arm and ring. They wished to place Mr. Husk under the influence of an anæsthetic in order to empty the blood-vessels and to guard against all voluntary or involuntary muscular contraction, but he was disinclined, and the committee very properly did not press the request. Instead of that experiment, Mr. Victor Horsley took measurements of the right hands of three men; (1) under conditions the same as those applied to Mr. Husk, and (2) when they were under the influence of ether. He obtained by careful measurement a decrease of 10mm. under ether. Now, as the greatest circumference of Mr. Husk's hand exceeded that of the internal circumference of the ring only by 11.5mm., or less than half-an-inch, and as the committee did not consider that all means adapted to reduce the circumference of the hand had been exhausted, they arrived at the conclusion that they "cannot infer that it is impossible that the ring should have come into the position in which we found it by known natural forces." But Dr. Wyld is yet to be heard in reply. And why did not the committee exhaust "the conditions best adapted to reduce the circumference of the hand as much as possible"?

As to the fit of the ring it may be remembered that there was some dispute as to the number of fingers that could be pushed between it and the wrist. The exact space is now defined as that occupied by a solid body of about 23mm. square. I do not know whether any very definite conclusion will be arrived at in this special matter. But I do know that the method by which the ring is alleged to have come into its present place is one that rests, in my experience of other cases, on absolute proof. *What is*

loosely called "the passage of matter through matter" is, as I have frequently testified in these columns and elsewhere, a fact proven in my experience beyond the possibility of a doubt. Those who desire such evidence as I can give on the subject may be referred to that portion of my "Researches in the Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism" which were originally published in *Human Nature*, and which I hope soon to issue in a volume, revised, but in no way altered by withdrawal of any facts or modification of conclusions there stated. I do not venture to express any opinion in the present case, beyond suggesting that when a man's hand has been reduced to the smallest possible compass even $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch is something.

There is no end to the prophets whose burden is upon us. It seems that Nostradamus has fixed the end of the world for the present year of grace. It must be confessed that, so many prophets having prophesied falsely respecting this catastrophe, the effect of any new prediction is largely discounted. This, however, is three centuries old, and is, perhaps, none the better for that. Nostradamus predicted that when Good Friday falls on St. George's Day, Easter on St. Mark's Day, and Corpus Christi on St. John's Day, the end of the world will be near. In 1886 this malign conjunction occurs, hence the dwellers on this planet may expect commotion. One is relieved, however, by the thought that, one after another, these prophets of ill are nailed to the door of failure as vermin are placed in evidence by the hand of the gamekeeper. The other day it was Mother Shipton; in 1872 it was Nostradamus himself, for the same prophetic conjunction of festivals occurred in that year as in the present one. Nervous people, therefore, may take courage, I should like to tax heavily, or still better, to prosecute as criminals the people who trade on credulity and stupidity on the part of those whom they deceive. Zadkiel may or may not be, as regards his almanack, merely imaginative, but is not "Old Moore" an old impostor and nothing in the world else?

If any one wishes to make acquaintance with a good old-fashioned ghost story of the approved creepy type warranted to curdle the coldest blood, I commend Mr. F. Marion Crawford's "Upper Berth," in *Unwin's Annual*. It is ingeniously, graphically, horrible. "I sprang upon the lower bed, and seized something which lay in the upper berth. It was something ghostly, horrible beyond words, and it moved in my grip. It was like the body of a man long drowned, and yet it moved, and had the strength of ten men living; but I gripped it with all my might—the slippery, oozy, horrible thing—the dead white eyes seemed to stare at me out of the dusk; the putrid odour of rank sea water was about it, and its shiny hair hung in foul wet curls over its dead face. I wrestled with the dead thing," and—but the sequel must be read to be appreciated. If this is not enough Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson has his own ghost and its story; and Mr. F. Anstey sends a delightful tale somewhat after the type of Mrs. Oliphant's Tales of the Seen and Unseen. "Marjory," if somebody had not been ill-advised enough to illustrate it, would have been wholly charming. Nor are the remaining stories without considerable merit.

I mentioned last week, in passing, that another old Spiritualist had been removed from our midst. A common friend, who knew him well, and was, indeed, on terms of intimacy with him for many years, kindly supplies the following brief particulars of his life:—

"George Mowbray Sutherland was the youngest son of the late Alexander Robert Sutherland, M.D., F.R.S., of 1, Parliament street, Westminster. He was by profession a barrister, but he soon forsook the law for art, music, and polite society in which he was fitted to shine, being a man of many accomplishments,

He was writing and composing an opera at the time of his death. He was a drawing medium of a high-class and a staunch Spiritualist for twenty years. He met death as a Spiritualist should, without fear and with great calmness. A fortnight before his death he arranged his funeral, and took a touching leave of his dearest friends, and then waited in quietness for the end, which came on the 19th of December, 1885. He was fifty-five years of age. It may be said of him with truth 'His end was peace.'"

I may add that I had cause, from my connection with Spiritualism in a somewhat prominent way, to know how generous and unselfish Mr. Sutherland was in relieving distress and affliction, and in carrying into his life the principles of the faith that he had so long professed.

"M.A. (Oxon)."

THE SHARP HORNS OF THE DILEMMA.—It is not a question as regards Spiritualism of believing in inspired books, or accepting creeds. It is whether millions of ordinarily intelligent people can be mistaken as to the simple physical facts under their personal observation.

THAT Spiritualism is spreading in Catholic countries is shown by the number of journals devoted to its philosophy in those countries. In Italy, within the very shadow of the Vatican, there are four; in France, nineteen; in Spain, sixteen; seven in Mexico; four in Austria; three in Brazil; and two in Cuba.

A PUBLIC meeting of the Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism will be held on Sunday next, January 10th, at the Regent Hotel, 31, Marylebone-road, at seven o'clock. Mr. Mathers will deliver a lecture entitled "Comparative Mythology." We understand this gentleman is a Calvinist and a mystic, so, no doubt, the lecture will be very interesting to students of occult science.

SOMNAMBULISM AND SPIRITISM.—Reviewing Von Hartmann's "Moderne Probleme," in which an essay of sixty-six pages on "Somnambulism" is devoted chiefly to a critique of Du Prel's "Philosophie der Mystik"—in "Die Gegenwart," Dr. du Prel says: "Somnambulism is eminently a modern problem, and all the more that the study of it is the only possible preparation for a competent judgment of the Spiritistic phenomena. It is an anachronism that for our generation Spiritism has anteceded it, and has now to be overtaken by somnambulism, which explains it. Hartmann is not quite right in saying that my 'Philosophie der Mystik' will be to the advantage of two interests to which I am 'in principle' opposed: Spiritism and Orthodoxy. As to Spiritism, I have only lately expressed the opinion that it is not understood by its opponents because they do not study it, but is misunderstood by its supporters because they study it in isolation. I have been able to examine only certain phenomena for myself, and for these I certainly vouch. As to the Orthodox, to them, surely, every ally against Materialism should be welcome; but they will be more bitterly opposed to those who accept a different definition of the other life from their own, than to Materialists. Help the Orthodox I will not; I am no friend to holy water, though I prefer it to petroleum, to which the further domination of Materialism must lead us."

SARDOU'S SPIRITUALISM.—Speaking of Victorien Sardou (regarded as the greatest, next to Victor Hugo, of living French dramatists), the *Pictorial World* says: "It is very strange and worthy of note that this Parisian of the Parisians is a firm believer in Spiritualism. Yes, Sardou is a sceptic and a realist, a man who knows life in every phase, and human nature in its degradations and corruptions, as in its nobilities and innocences, and yet in spite of his keen wit and logical understanding, he will deny the existence of God, while affirming his belief in the supernatural. And for the reasonableness of this belief he will, with all gravity and earnestness, adduce proof after proof. For example, he will tell you he cannot make a sketch to save his life, and then produces a copper-plate on which is engraved a drawing, representing with great exactness part of the house in which Molière lived. Of this Sardou tells the following story: 'Seated at my table one day, with this plate before me, I fell into a reverie. Unconsciously I took up the graver, and, as if impelled by some secret influence, let my hand follow its own direction over that plate. The engraving you see here is the result of several hours of unconscious and purely mechanical toil.' With intense and manifest conviction he asserts that this work would have occupied a professional engraver for at least a month, and calls upon you to notice that all the ornamental lines in it are made up of crotchets and double crotchets so small as scarcely to be visible to the naked eye. Clearly enough," continues the *Pictorial World*, "Sardou recognises that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in his philosophy, and we doubt not that this state of mind is a great advance upon that blameless ignorance of conceit which denies all that it cannot explain."

DOUBTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF INQUIRERS.

II.

[In this column some of the doubts and difficulties which beset and perplex inquirers into Spiritualism are dealt with. This can best be done, we think, by answering the many questions which arise in the course of investigation. Questions are invited from those who seek for more light on these topics, and those of our readers who possess the knowledge are earnestly invited to share with us this very necessary work. In the event of no reply reaching us from correspondents, we will ourselves endeavour to answer the questions.]

Questions Unanswered.

- (11) *Is there any physical effort by the medium at a slate-writing séance? Is it exhausting to him?*
- (12) *Would a mesmerist or clairvoyant if present as an investigator at any circle necessarily affect the medium?*
- (13) *What are the qualities which constitute mediumship?*
- (14) *Are very sympathetic people likely to prove mediums?*

Answers.

(2) It is asked whether the trance state is painful and whether it necessarily affects health? Whether induced by a fellow mortal by mesmeric passes, or by a similar method adopted by an unseen intelligence, it is the reverse of painful to the subject. Unless disturbed by cross magnetism, its effects are decidedly beneficial, being restful and pleasing. Only in cases of immoderate indulgence is it deleterious to health. Should a medium be unwisely entranced many times in the course of a week the subject would suffer both physically and psychologically. Physically from dyspepsia, lassitude, and weakness, as in the case of excessive natural sleep; and psychologically by developing an unnatural sensitive condition out of harmony with physical life, and thereby liable to abnormal influences.—J. H. M.

(3) The inquirer, in asking whether it is possible absolutely to guard against evil effects at a séance, would do well to bear in mind that, to a large extent, the circle brings with it to the séance its own conditions. Discordant elements in the circle open the door to disturbing influences. All the sitters should be in perfect mental and moral harmony. This can only be assured when positive polemics, dogmatic opinions, and selfish inclinations are lost and sunk in an atmosphere of loving fellowship and trust. In such a circle evil influences cannot enter.—J. H. M.

(4) What are "guides" or "controls," and in what respect do they differ from ordinary spirits? "Guides" are guardian spirits supposed to be attached to particular individuals. When the individual is sufficiently mediumistic to be brought under the complete control of such guide or spirit so as to be able (as in trance speaking) to use the organs of speech of the medium for the expression of its own thoughts, the operating spirit is called the "control." Men differ from men, and spirits differ from spirits, but in no other sense can "guides" and "controls" be said to differ from ordinary spirits.—J. H. M.

(5) Why are sobriquets used instead of *bond fide* names by these controls? In promiscuous circles, holding communication for the most part with spirits still on the earth-plane, sobriquets are frequently adopted, in some cases, it must be admitted, for good and sufficient reasons. But in cases of "control," either in trance speaking or automatic writing, the earth name of the operating spirit is nearly always known, although in some cases to the medium alone. It is frequently the case that a pet name is given by the "control" to the medium to whom it is attached, as in the case of Mrs. Richmond, whose spirit name is "Water Lily."* This question of sobriquets opens up the important and difficult one of identity. Are those who hold communion with us really the spirits of our dear departed ones, or are we imposed upon by personating spirits? This, from the nature of the subject, is most difficult to establish by evidence. No experienced Spiritualist would, for one moment, accept as true, without verification, a communication from any unknown spirit who may visit a circle. He would be more likely to accept as Gospel a circumstance related by a casual stranger that he might meet in the street. We give credence to

* Sobriquets have also often been given, in a spirit of jocularity, by the frequenters of public dark circles. This practice, a relic of the vicious methods of investigation which obtained currency in the past, is to be strongly deprecated. It has enormously increased the difficulties attending the solution of the question of spirit identity. To this reprehensible practice must be attributed many of the bizarre names borne by séance-room spirits—the "Peters," "Irresistibles," and others.—Ed

testimony, in proportion to our knowledge of, and confidence in the ability and veracity of the testator. It is the same in spirit communion. If we have enjoyed lengthened, frequent, and confidential intercourse with a spirit whose testimony has always proved reliable, we extend to that spirit a natural trust and confidence. It is here we gain our conviction of identity. "Whether you believe it or not," a spirit with whose features I am familiar, once said to me, speaking in a direct voice—"Whether you believe it or not, we are what we say we are, and that you may take from me as certain." "You really," I replied, "once lived a human life on this earth as we are living now?" "Certainly we did," he answered "My name was T. B. I was known as T. B., the C." This was uttered with an emphasis and earnestness that carried its own conviction.—J. H. M.

(6) It is asked whether a real Spiritualist can be a real Christian in heart and life at one and the same time. My reply is, Yes; most decidedly. The question implies that true Christianity is an affair of the heart and life, and not a matter of creed and doctrine; and that being so there is nothing in Spiritualism to hinder, and very much to help, a man to attain and maintain the condition spoken of. As evidence of this we have in our ranks members and even ministers of almost every Christian denomination, and some earnest Christians amongst us were sceptics till they met with Spiritualism.—E. D. R.

(7) What beneficial result can be obtained by humanity by means of Spiritualism? This is a somewhat difficult question to answer because men vary in their opinions of what would constitute a beneficial result. If, however, it benefits humanity to give it a firm hold of facts in relation to the continuance of life after death; to convert the doubt and disbelief of some minds into assurance; in others, to add to their faith knowledge; to prove to us by absolute evidence that humanity is, and continues to be, notwithstanding the change called death, one unbroken chain of which all the links are inter-dependent; if to do all this and to demonstrate to the grieving mother, sorrowing for the supposed loss of her darling child, that the departed one is with her still, loving and comforting her still; if to give men courage to do their work honestly, manfully, and nobly in this world, with the certain knowledge that there is another and a wider life beyond,—then Spiritualism confers upon humanity a result the beneficial character of which it is impossible to measure. I know it may be said that Christian doctrine does all this; and I would not for a moment undervalue the worth of Christian teaching in these matters. But those who have experience of Spiritualism know, as others cannot know, the vast, the unmeasurable, difference between speculation and certainty, between faith and knowledge.—E. D. R.

[We have also received answers to some of the questions from M. T. and "Invicta." J. H. M. also replied to Questions 6-11. We hope the fact of their replies having been received after other answers had been accepted will not prevent them making further attempts.—Ed.]

THE CIRCULATION OF "LIGHT."—We hope our readers will not fail to bring "LIGHT" to the notice of their friends. Were each present subscriber to do this, there would be no need of Sustentation Funds, or appeals of any kind, to provide for the bare existence of the paper. There has, we are pleased to say, been a steady increase in the circulation of "LIGHT" during the past year, equal, as far as our subscription list alone is concerned, to 30 per cent. If this rate is continued during the next two or three years, the paper must at last turn the corner. But we may perhaps be permitted to point out that if our friends would make a united effort, and get at least one additional subscriber each (and there are few, surely, who could not do at least this), the problem would be solved at once. Meanwhile, we must depend upon our Sustentation Fund, which is languishing as we have never known it languish before. We commend this matter to our friends.

POSSESSION.—The report of Dr. Dudgeon, the medical officer in charge of the Pekin Hospital, contains particulars of a disorder which should be interesting to his European brethren. The Chinese believe in witchcraft, sorcery, and demoniacal possession. Many cases have come under the notice of Dr. Dudgeon in which the patients affirmed that evil spirits had entered into them. Singularly enough, if one person is attacked, others of the same family also become possessed. In one case quoted no less than twenty-seven persons—belonging to different families—are said to have died under this affliction. Dr. Dudgeon declares that some of these cases are neither epilepsy, hysteria, ecstacy, delirium, catalepsy, insanity, nor chorea. "The persons afflicted," he says, "seem to be in ordinary health, but on close inspection something odd and queer, especially about the eyes and speech, might be detected; they seem to be beyond their own will; they feel compelled to act in the way they do." The history in full of several cases of this singular malady is given in the report.—*Evening Standard*.

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RECORDS OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

(Continued from page 4.)

[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:—

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

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.]

CLASSES M. AND O.—RAPPINGS AND PSYCHOGRAPHY.

[Among some of the highly valuable remarks which sundry learned, but theoretical critics are good enough to favour us with, is the fairly frequent one that such phenomena as psychography and rappings would be more satisfactory if they occurred at other places than at the psychic's residence. Without entering into a consideration of the intrinsic value of such remarks, the following account of facts might serve, in some slight degree, to moderate the critical ardour of our clever friends.]

Some time ago I prevailed on Mr. Eglinton to break through his usual rule, and to sit for psychography at the house of my friend, Mr. P. The house is an entirely new one, and Mr. Eglinton had never been in it before. The sitting was held in the evening and commenced almost immediately after our arrival; the other sitters besides Mr. Eglinton being Mr. P., Mr. and Mrs. H., and myself. The slates used were provided by Mr. P. and Mr. H. I may say that Mr. P. had previously had several successful psychographic sittings with Mr. Eglinton at the latter gentleman's house.

We sat at a small uncovered table in the drawing-room, immediately under four or five strong gas-jets turned on full, the whole room being very brilliantly lighted up. Hands being joined over the table, the usual phenomena attending Mr. Eglinton's sittings very soon took place.

Mr. H. wrote a question privately on a slate. Placing a grain of pencil, privately marked by Mr. P., on a slate, Mr. Eglinton held it as usual under the flap of the table. The writing commenced at once, and was found by Mr. H., on inspection, to be a perfectly definite and pertinent answer to his question. The piece of pencil with private mark was found worn down by Mr. P. One or two more questions having been asked and answers similarly obtained, heavy raps were heard in various parts of the room—apparently on the floor, the walls, and furniture. Questioning the raps, we were directed to make a slight alteration in our positions. Various questions were now put, and answered by the raps, which varied in intensity from slight taps to blows of the intensity producible by a hammer or mallet, but having the peculiar, well-known, and, in my opinion, perfectly characteristic sound. An experiment similar in character to one recorded in "LIGHT" of September 26th last, p. 465, was now tried. Mr. Eglinton stood upon four tumblers inverted on the floor, away from the table, and joining hands as before, the raps continued with unabated force, three, five, seven, &c., raps being given at the request of the various sitters, apparently on the table, the floor, and the walls. Mr. Eglinton having resumed his place at the table, several more

questions were put, some verbally, some written privately, and answers obtained on the slates in various ways, namely:—

(a) On the slate held under the flap of the table by Mr. Eglinton.

(b) On slate held as in (a) by Mr. Eglinton and Mr. P., and by Mr. Eglinton and myself.

(c) Between two slates placed exactly one over the other upon the table under our hands.

(d) On under surface of slate placed over a grain of pencil on the table, and

(e) Between two slates placed exactly one over the other and held out by the sensitive and another sitter at arm's length in the air.

In answer to a question, I obtained a written communication from a very near relative, respecting a private matter entirely beyond the cognisance of the other sitters, and of a very unexpected kind. Raps at this point again occurred; and the alphabet having been asked for, a word was spelt out which was of particular significance to me, and which was absolutely unexpected.

The sitting shortly afterwards terminated.

A discussion took place on the subject of the phenomena; and after dinner Mr. Eglinton suggested that a book should be taken haphazard, and that a particular word on a particular page should be asked for. Mr. H. accordingly selected a book, and asked that the fourth word from the left, in the eleventh line of page 3, might be written on the slate. We sat again at the table; the book was placed on the slate with a small piece of pencil, held by Mr. Eglinton under the flap of the table, and almost immediately there was written: "Page three, line eleven, word four, 'THE.'" On inspection this proved to be correct. The book was in my view during the whole of the experiment.

I may mention that the party was of a decidedly "mediumistic" character. "THYMOL."

AMERICAN DOCTORS ON INSANITY.—Mrs. M. M. Watson, who is trying to show that her grandfather, John Anderson, was incompetent to make a will, called Dr. Dimond, as an expert witness. Q.—Is belief in the appearance of the spirit of a human being evidence of insanity, and if so, to what extent? A.—Often; yes, sir. Q.—Is it your belief that all believers in Spiritualism are insane. A.—By no means. The world is full of fools not necessarily insane. Q.—Suppose a person talks with the spirit of a person long since dead, what would that indicate? A.—That he is probably insane. Q.—What would you think of a man who supposes that his family are attempting to get rid of him in order to possess his property? A.—That he was probably under insane delusion. Q.—Suppose a person, without any apparent cause, is under the impression that members of his family are attempting to put him out of the way for the purpose of getting his property. Is he sane or insane? A.—Probably insane. Q.—Is such a person competent to make a will? A.—No, sir. Cross-examined by Mr. Arnoux.—What is the difference between a sane Spiritualist and an insane Spiritualist? A.—A sane Spiritualist is capable, by the exercise of reason and judgment, of being convinced of his error, whereas an insane Spiritualist is not. Q.—What kind of a delusion is a person affected by, who says he is haunted by ghosts? A.—An insane delusion. Q.—Do you remember that Martin Luther thought he was haunted by the devil, and that he threw his inkstand after him? Would you call him insane? A.—I think he had an insane delusion; I always thought so. Q.—Don't you know that Swedenborg claimed to commune with spirits? A.—He might claim to talk with them, but they did not talk with him. Q.—You would not consider a man who swears insane? A.—If a man who is very pious suddenly became profane, it would be an evidence of insanity. Dr. Milne was another expert called. On cross-examination he said that it was an evidence of insane delusion that Mr. Anderson proposed to aid in the establishment of Italian unity to end in a republic of all Europe. He also said that a shuffling gait and shaking of the head and limbs indicate a diseased condition of the mind. Q.—Have you ever heard it said that Governor Tilden was affected with the shaking of the head and shuffling of the feet? A.—I have. Q.—Do you think it at all indicates that he is of unsound mind? A.—It indicates an unsound body; I wouldn't say an unsound mind. Q.—Did you ever hear of any person having entertained the idea of the establishment of a universal European republic? A.—Yes, sir. Q.—Didn't you ever hear that Castelar and Mazzini wrote in favour of that project? A.—Yes, sir. Q.—And a number of other distinguished men in Europe? A.—Yes, sir. Q.—Did you consider them all insane? A.—I considered them sane, but as persons harbouring fanciful and wild notions. The Supreme Court dismissed the complaint. Mrs. Watson had endeavoured to establish her claim to more of her grandfather's money than she was awarded by the will. The Court held that although Mr. Anderson might have been fanciful, yet his mind was perfectly sound.—*Golden Gate.*

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 Collapse of Koot Hoomi."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of the 2nd inst. there is an editorial under the above heading which I venture to suggest is not characteristic of the accuracy which usually marks the statements to be found in your paper.

"Koot Hoomi" has not collapsed, nor is he likely to do so. His existence will certainly not cease at the fiat of the Society for Psychical Research. There are very many persons who are not only satisfied of his existence, but, better still, of his power to teach, and who are quite as competent to form an opinion on this subject as Mr. Hodgson and his colleagues.

That the Society for Psychical Research should have arrived at the conclusion which is elaborately conveyed in their report is of very little consequence to those who have had better opportunity of judging.

It certainly can create no surprise amongst those who listened to Mr. Hodgson's reading of his report in the rooms of the Society last year.

No doubt can be entertained of Mr. Hodgson's good faith in this matter, and that he conscientiously gives his opinion upon the poor material with which he had the opportunity of dealing, but no one with the least psychic perception would have been misled by his manner.

The detail of his report was a masterpiece of intellectual (not psychical) activity, painful in its minuteness, even to the production of insomnia; he was thoroughly successful, however, in demonstrating that he had been working with the wrong tools all through the investigation.

I should have had no more thought of accepting his conclusions as correct than I should those of some intelligent architect if he were to condemn Turner as an artist, because in one of his paintings the walls of a building were not of the proper thickness as prescribed by Act of Parliament.

That the conductor of a journal like "LIGHT" should form an unholy alliance with the Society for Psychical Research in their crusade against the Theosophical Society in general, and psychical phenomena in particular, and echo the cry of "monstrous fraud," is a matter of surprise and regret, as the very arguments advanced by these gentlemen against the probability of the phenomena exhibited by certain members of the Theosophical Society, apply equally against the genuineness of Spiritualistic phenomena.

In estimating the value of the opinion of the Society for Psychical Research on psychical matters, the most condemnatory fact is the general inability they have shown to deal with psychical phenomena above the level of the material aspects of thought-transference and other similar manifestations of psychical faculties.

Of this, illustrations need not be cited, as it is in the experience of most of your readers that in cases involving higher psychic laws, not only have facts been inadequately comprehended, but the opinions of those, who by experience are best fitted to form sound judgment upon them, have been unjustly and unreasonably set aside. One such instance, if not more, is within the personal knowledge of the Editor of "LIGHT." Without going into an analysis of the elaborate report which has just now been launched after six months' preparation, no more surprising fact can be mentioned than the utter disregard which has been paid to psychical laws and possibilities. The investigation has been entirely conducted on the lines of the Scotland-yard detective.

The unsatisfactoriness of such proceeding is too obvious to need any comment; it need only be added that the subjective experience of a tolerably large number of persons has been entirely ignored.

In spite of your general divergence from the opinions of the principal members of the Theosophical Society, you seem inclined to hold that some phenomena at all events were genuine; this shows, at any rate, the difference in dealing with psychical manifestations between experience and inexperience which seeks to cover the whole area of Madame Blavatsky's phenomena with discredit.

If once Madame Blavatsky is credited with any psychical powers at all, the discussion is reduced to individual phenomena, which it is out of place to discuss here; but undoubtedly this would show that before accepting the theory of fraud with regard to any phenomenon the psychic possibilities must first be exhausted.

To judge from the conclusions of the Society for Psychical Research, their chief ground is the opinion of experts with regard to the letters put forward by Madame Coulomb as having been written to her by Madame Blavatsky. Perhaps they are not aware of Madame Coulomb's claim to the possession of psychic powers herself; nevertheless it is a fact.

Whether a psychic can under certain conditions produce writings of absent or deceased persons, which would defy expert skill, is a very important point; and many experienced Spiritualists well answer the question in the affirmative. How far, then, the presumption arising from the first conclusion of the Society for Psychical Research, as well as the conclusion itself, is to be accepted as absolute truth, must depend upon the personal experiences of each one.

As regards the authorship of the K. H. letters, it must not be forgotten that writing precipitated from an immaterial source through a material channel, will partake more or less of the peculiarities of that channel, and also that as the rapport between the external power and the channel becomes stronger, the idiosyncrasies of the channel will diminish and finally disappear.

Notwithstanding this psychic law, so well-known to all Spiritualists, countenance is lent, by the publication of the extracts from the report, to the suggestion that an expert's opinion should decide the honesty or dishonesty of a particular manifestation.

If this rule is to stand good, then there is not a single spiritual medium, private or professional, who would be able to withstand a charge of fraud.

Let me express, before leaving this part of the subject, my disbelief in the theory of Madame Blavatsky's "mediumship" in connection with the phenomena under discussion.

I only desire to point out to our friends, the Spiritualists,—and I have a right to do so as I graduated in their school,—that they are playing into the hands of the common enemy.

We Spiritualists and Theosophists have facts which cannot be taken from us, although their existence is disputed by would-be Psychical Researchers.

We may differ as to the explanations of those facts, but we are bound by ties of common interests, and should unite in opposing the materialism of the age.

In conclusion, as a simple matter of fact which every one is competent to grasp, there is on one side the opinion given by Mr. Hodgson as the result of a few weeks' investigation amongst people of whose habits he had little knowledge, pitted against that of Mr. Sinnett on the other side, whose energetic and careful observation extended over years, and who was, moreover, thoroughly conversant with that particular method of thought, the ignorance of which in Mr. Hodgson's case has led to so much misinterpretation.

No wonder, therefore, that many still believe the work of the patient master hand to be superior to that of the mere tyro.—Yours truly,

Lee, January 2nd, 1886.

EDMOND W. WADE, F.T.S.

[We give insertion to this letter because it contains reflections upon ourselves, but we do not intend to re-open the discussion on "Theosophy." We will reply to it next week. Mr. Wade entirely misses the mark in his letter.—Ed. of "LIGHT."]

"THE Record of a Ministering Angel," by Miss Mary J. Clark, of Utica, U.S.A., is the name of a beautiful volume of nearly 300 pages, just published. It is a cheerful, sunny book, full of the religion of Spiritualism.

THE Secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance would be glad to be informed, confidentially, of *private circles* for psychical research in the provinces, and of any success attending them. He would also like to be informed whether such circles are open to his introduction of *Spiritualists* living in the neighbourhood; in which case he would exercise discretion suited to the wishes of friends. It might in some cases lead to an accession of medial power, and prove an advantage on both sides. A circle of Spiritualists in BRIGHTON is asked for by a gentleman of good social position in society. Address, Morell Theobald, Esq., 62, Granville Park, Lewisham,

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

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TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We have recently sent out a number of unpaid accounts, asking for a prompt remittance. In a great many cases there has been no response, and we mention the matter here in order to urge our friends to remit at once and thus save us the trouble of renewed applications.

Light :

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9TH, 1886.

TYPES OF MODERN THOUGHT.

Three articles of great interest to Spiritualists, and to all those whose minds are abreast of the advanced thoughts of the age, appear in the December magazines, the first being an elaborate and learned article on "The Idea of God," by John Fiske, of Harvard University, author of one of the most profound and thoughtful metaphysical works of the century, entitled "Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy based on the Doctrine of Evolution, with Criticisms of the Positive Philosophy"; the second entitled "Progress in India," by Vamadeva Shastin, a learned Hindoo; and the third, and, from the standpoint of the facts and philosophy of modern Spiritualism, perhaps the most important, is entitled "The Evidences of Spiritualism."

The article on "The Idea of God" is based on the cosmic philosophy of Fiske, and defends the dynamic as against the static theory of the universe. It shows the non-validity of all early cosmogonies founded upon the theory of an external anthropomorphic designer or creator, and defends the evolutionary hypothesis, deanthropomorphising Deity, making Infinite Intelligence work by evolutionary processes through matter, rather than by anthropomorphic volitional processes on matter. The teachings of the paper in question are not atheistic, not pantheistic, but, as the author describes them, cosmic, with an unknowable Deity exhibited in the infinite phenomena of nature, and for whom man may logically display reverence. Professor Fiske's article would well repay careful perusal, and ought to be supplemented by the study of his great work on Cosmic Philosophy, in which his theistic theory is logically developed, and the philosophy of Spencer commended, whilst that of Comte, so far as regards his "Deity of Humanity," and Comtean Sacerdotalism is vigorously condemned.

Our chief interest, however, is in the article by F. H. Bradley, in the *Fortnightly*, on "The Evidences of Spiritualism."

The author affirms that there are three great gulfs to be crossed ere the ordinarily recognised theory of Spiritualism can be rationally established. The first is "to prove that the phenomena are real;" the second, "that they are not the abnormal work of human spirits!" and the third is "to leap from the fact of non-human intelligences to the goal of immateriality and immortal life."

The article is well worth the careful perusal of all intelligent Spiritualists, as the author treats the subject in a fair, catholic, and philosophic spirit, perfectly free from that tone of ignorant ridicule and senseless banter which too frequently characterise literary criticisms of this much misunderstood subject.

The author practically admits the genuineness of the phenomena, an admission that can only be rejected by an incapacity to receive facts, or an entire ignorance of the evidence which has been so abundantly adduced in confirmation of them. A careful perusal of our pages should satisfy any judicial mind as to the reality of the phenomena. He further concedes that the phenomena may "demonstrate minds extra-human and in communication with ours," but denies "that those minds have no material bodies." He further affirms that Spiritualists assert that "souls exist not dependent on the matter connected with *our* souls," and further, that Spiritualists teach that "souls exist without anything that can be called matter at all."

The concessions that the phenomena may be recognised as genuine, and that they may be produced by extra-human minds, are large concessions for a literary critic. The last affirmation, that, in the opinion of Spiritualists, "souls exist without anything that can be called matter at all," is a statement for which he has not given the shadow of a proof.

The affirmation of Spiritualists is that departed friends prove their existence by the production of physical and psychological phenomena, such as cannot be produced by intelligences clothed in flesh; that the forms known as "materialised forms," resembling human beings, which are seen at séances, are not the individuals personated, but are merely matter temporarily gathered together and moulded into human form for the purpose of impressing ordinary living persons with the consciousness of external phenomena, and appealing to them through the instrumentality of their ordinarily recognised senses of sight, hearing, touch, &c.

Intelligent Spiritualists do not, as the writer affirms, say that "souls" (or departed persons) "exist without anything that can be called matter at all." They affirm that the phenomena they witness give evidence of their existence, but of the mode of their existence, whether associated with matter or not, they are silent. We know something of the properties of matter, but of the essential constitution of matter we know nothing; we talk of atoms and molecules, and as a working hypothesis they are useful, but of their real nature or even of their existence as matter we know nothing; they may be merely centres of force, and not material entities. Seeing, therefore, that we know so little of the essential nature of the bodies in which we are now clothed, it were the height of folly to dogmatise respecting the mode of existence in the life that is yet to come. Spiritualists are satisfied to defend facts which they have carefully investigated, to rest upon the legitimate inferences deducible from those facts, and to leave the *modus operandi* and precise nature of the future state of being for investigation when they have reached it, and stand upon the spiritual plane rather than that upon which they now stand and to which they are adapted, viz., the material.

DR. J. M. PEEBLES contemplates issuing at an early date an account of his spiritual experiences, which should prove an interesting work.

L. S. A. CONVERSAZIONE.—We remind our readers of the Conversazione to be held on Thursday evening next, when we hope there will be a large attendance. Particulars will be found in an advertisement on our first page.

RUMOURS of excellent manifestations now being obtained in private circles in Croydon and district constantly reach us, and we shall be obliged if some member attending these séances will favour us with some record of the phenomena obtained. The names and locality will not be published unless wished.

PHASES OF MATERIALIZATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH
IN THE
OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M. A. (Oxon.)"

(Continued from page 8.)

On a subsequent occasion at the same house, the same results were obtained under even more stringent tests. The medium's stockings and boots were removed as well as her other clothing. She was re clothed in dark material, and a velvet collar was stitched round her neck, the part stitched was sealed, and the collar was sewn to her dress. The phenomena of materialization were entirely satisfactory.

Mr. Barkas thus reports a séance with forty observers and the same medium.

"The medium was closed in the corner of the room by a slight wooden frame covered with thin muslin, through which she could be easily seen. The sides of this muslin-covered frame were screwed to the wall on one side, and to an angle bead on the other, and the heads of the screws were sealed with wax, thus totally preventing either ingress or egress to or from the corner in which the medium sat. The muslin-covered frame is upwards of six feet high. Two long curtains suspended from the ceiling enclosed the frame and medium, who under these conditions was firmly secured; and if any materialized forms passed within the curtains it is quite clear that those could not be personated by the medium. . . . The gas was lowered and we sat in dim light, quite sufficient to enable us to see all who were in the room. The first hour the time was occupied in talking with the control, 'Pocha.' . . . Presently, a tall female figure, draped in white, walked from behind the curtains into the middle of the room." . . . Another female form, stouter than the preceding, came out and apparently recognised a sitter. Then a male form took up a guitar and carried it about. He was instantly followed by a female form. Then on her retirement, two small children, apparently not more than two feet high. "One of these patted and kissed my hand. Its hands were very small and warm." Then came "Pocha." She moved about the room freely, shook hands and retired. Mr. Barkas shortly after raised the gas light, drew back the curtains, "and went into the recess for the purpose of examining the muslin-covered frame and the condition of the screws. I found (he reports) the screen firmly fixed to the walls, the screws with their wax coverings intact, and the medium sitting on a chair within the enclosure formed by the screen."

An interesting account of weighing the form is given by Mr. R. Wolstenholme and Mr. T. Edge. The usual cabinet of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society was used, and the medium was screwed in. The record is as follows:*

"A female form walked out . . . I got her to stand on the weighing machine . . . and asked her to lift her drapery up so that we could see the machine. This she did, and taking her hands off the front bar of the machine, stood clearly upon it. The weight registered was 26lbs. I saw her lift both feet on to the machine, and as I was close to it, I distinctly saw her stride off, one foot following the other in the most natural manner. She retired behind the curtains, and instantly 'Pocha' stepped out and asked me to go and inspect the cabinet; this I did, and found the door closed and the screws just as I had left them. Everyone was then invited to inspect the screws, and they expressed satisfaction. After 'Pocha' came a . . . muscular man who shook hands with me . . . To be sure about his height I asked him to stand shoulder to shoulder with a Mr. Thompson; this he did, and from being a few inches shorter he gradually grew at my request until he stood some two inches taller than Mr. Thompson. At the end of the séance Miss Wood was found just as I had left her at the beginning."

Lastly, Mr. Barkas reports a seance,† held at the Newcastle Society's Rooms, where the form was weighed:—

"Four or five forms came forth and were each weighed, the weight varying from four to fifty-four pounds, that of Miss Wood being about seven stone. Eighteen persons were present. Mr. Barkas writes: 'The door was screwed outside by two sceptical strangers present. . . . The nearest sitters were

eight feet from the cabinet. A good gaslight was burning in a large street lamp during the whole séance, the lamp being glazed with ruby coloured glass. The light was good. I could distinguish every sitter, and time by a watch could be read. . . . A female form, draped profusely in white, slowly came out. . . . Near me was a weighing machine. . . . She was asked to step upon the scale, which she did, and her weight registered 27lbs. She retired, and another form appeared; her weight was 56lbs. I ascertained that her height was 5ft. 4in. A small form then appeared, about 3ft. 2in. in stature; spoke, walked, and caressed some of the sitters. She was succeeded by a tall female form, who weighed 45lbs. This form shook hands with several of the sitters, and gradually vanished from our sight in the middle of the room."

It would be easy to multiply similar records, but I have quoted enough to show the critical character of the tests which were applied in the cases adduced. I shall have occasion hereafter to refer to some very similar experiments which were conducted at Melbourne, Mr. George Spriggs being the medium, with perfect success. I am about to deal more exhaustively with Mr. Spriggs's mediumship, and it is convenient to defer my notice of psychical phenomena observed in his presence.

I have now treated the subject of materialization by citing instances of that phenomenon under a variety of conditions, and with many species of test. I could multiply such evidence *ad nauseam*. Even as I write the temptation to change quoted instances for others which have lately come to my knowledge is pressing. But I have resisted it, because, first of all, the time has not yet come for any exhaustive treatment of the subject: and next, because I am rejoiced to think that, under better conditions of investigation, better evidence is daily becoming available. My own dealing with this subject is merely tentative. A chaotic mass of more or less valuable evidence lay before Spiritualists, and I have tried to reduce it to some sort of order: that is all.

But I cannot pretend to any sort of satisfaction with the tentative results that I have arrived at. The citation of isolated cases seems to me to leave much to be desired. Any observer who has pursued a systematic course of investigation will see at once how fragmentary and unsatisfactory is any such treatment of this vast subject. A casual observer who attends a single séance may come away in a mood of bewildered astonishment, but he can hardly hope to have grasped what he has seen, much less can he hope to have gained any true idea of the bearings of a large and perplexing problem. Only when a systematic course of inquiry has familiarised him with the phenomena can he hope to grasp their significance, and to frame for himself some idea of their true meaning. It has been the misfortune of students of Spiritualism that their inquiry has been baffled in various ways. First of all, opportunities of real investigation have been rare and difficult of access. Then, those who have had such opportunities have been, for reasons of their own, doubtless good and sufficient, very chary of taking the world into their confidence. And lastly, we have not got over the age of mere wonder-hunting, when it is sufficient to have seen a marvel, without any attempt at reasoning about it. For these and other reasons it has resulted, first of all, that the best records are not available for public use, and next, that those which are published are, in many cases, not of the best quality in respect of accuracy and completeness. Nothing, indeed, is more difficult than to discriminate between genuine records of true value, and those which are so emotionally recorded as to be of no service to any one but the witnesses of the phenomena described. It is, no doubt, easy to weed out a number of records which are obviously useless for any scientific purpose. But there remain a large mass respecting which it is hard to form a judgment. A too severe criticism would condemn, and lose, I think, much that should at any rate claim consideration. A too hasty acceptance would encumber one's argument with worthless

* *Medium and Daybreak*, June 3rd, 1881.† *Psychological Review* November, 1881.

and even detrimental illustrations. Of this an author must be his own judge; and from his judgment there can be no appeal. His sphere of knowledge must be limited; his judgment must be fallible; but within his knowledge, and according to his light, he must select at discretion. It is for those who follow him in the quest of an almost unknown truth, in excursion into an unfamiliar subject of investigation, to correct his errors and to enlarge the sphere of observation.

(To be continued.)

TRANSITION: CHARLES FOSTER.

The once famous medium, Charles Foster, passed away on the 15th December last, at Old Salem, Mass., of softening of the brain. For more than thirty years he exercised his wonderful gifts both in America and Europe, until lately he had to desist on account of his illness. There were many wasted opportunities in his life, probably due to the position in which he was placed; but taken all in all, he was a genial and charitable man. Few of our readers are aware that the Margrave of Bulwer Lytton in the "Strange Story" was Charles Foster, who was a guest of the distinguished author for more than three months, during which period he submitted his extraordinary powers for examination.

HARLEQUIN DEATH.

We're all in our bodies—and must not come out
Till Harlequin, passing the door,
Taps! then the tenant comes speedily forth,
And the body's a mansion no more.

O strange metamorphosis! out of a hut,
A hovel deformed and decayed,
Where an old feeble woman was thought to reside,
Steps briskly a blooming young maid!

And out of a castle, so grand and so tall,
It towers over trees to the skies,
Creeps a poor little creature, a hunchback in shape
And a pigmy in strength and in size!

A peer's in the cottage; he smiles when he's called,
And blithely walks forward to fame.
A clown's in the palace; but out he must come—
It's well if he blushes for shame!

From *The Scottish Church*.

M^DLLE. GRANGE, the accomplished editress of *La Lumière*, has been making a lecturing tour in Belgium, and has been everywhere received with enthusiasm. The Jesuits are getting seriously alarmed at the spread of Spiritualism in that country, and Father Franco has endeavoured to combat it in a pamphlet, with much the same success as attended Mrs. Partington at Weymouth, when she vigorously strove to push back the incoming tide of the sea with her mop.

We regret to learn that Mr. W. H. Terry, of the *Harbinger of Light*, is likely to become involved in a lawsuit, owing to the arbitrary action of the Customs Authorities in precluding the entry of some pamphlets which had been ordered from America—and which they considered "indecent." Several papers made an unwarrantable attack upon him in consequence, probably owing to the fact of his being a Spiritualist, all of which had the grace to apologise except the *Argus*, against which paper Mr. Terry has entered an action for libel. Our sympathies are entirely with Mr. Terry, and we trust he will be successful in vindicating his character from the foul aspersions cast upon it.

EDISON A MEDIUM.—Rev. A. L. Hatch, Congregational minister, of 59, Liberty-street, New York, furnishes the following statement to the *New York World*: "You know he (Mr. Edison) is a medium, and his great invention of the quadruplex telegraph instrument was revealed to him in a trance state. He sat one day, and passing into that condition seized some paper lying before him, and wrote until he had filled several sheets with closely-written notes. Then waking up, and rubbing his eyes, he said he thought he had been asleep, until his attention was called to the paper, which he had not read through before he broke out with his usual expletives, and said he had got the idea he had been struggling for so long."

SUMMARY OF THE SPIRITUAL PRESS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Banner of Light (Boston, December 19th, 1885).

The *Banner* this week contains a circumstantial account by Mr. John Franklin Clark of the seizure of a form at a materialisation séance held by Mrs. Williams. It will be remembered this lady recently visited England. Although in this case the result was a triumph for the medium, the form when seized having melted in the grasp of the assailant, we must unhesitatingly condemn the methods regulating admission to Mrs. Williams' séances. Unless we are very much mistaken any one possessing a dollar is received. Now experience shows that to thrust a novice into the most delicate phase of spiritual phenomena is unwise, if not absolutely vicious. In the present instance the "spirit-grabber" had never before been at a séance, and unable to appreciate or even understand what he saw, he, honestly perhaps, attempted to expose what he considered to be a fraud. We trust Mrs. Williams will take warning and use more discrimination in future as to who she admits to her séances.—A new book entitled, "Materialised Apparitions—If not Beings from another life, what are they?" is announced. It is, we believe, an attempt to construct a theory in reference to materialisation phenomena.

Religio-Philosophical Journal (Chicago, December 19th, 1885).

The last number of the *Journal* contains a verbatim reprint of the address on Confederation and Research recently delivered by the President before the London Spiritualist Alliance. Concerning the Experimental Research scheme, the *Journal* says: "If Spiritualists will take hold of this matter and make these investigations themselves in a scientific manner, it is sure to produce the most satisfactory results." That is just what we in England, at least, intend to do. It was the end in view when some three years since the idea of a Society for Psychical Research was mooted. Somehow, however, that attempt has failed of its purpose. The Society for Psychical Research was planned and formed by Spiritualists (Professor Barrett has erroneously in the *Proceedings* been credited with this honour); the original intention was expressly to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism; Spiritualists at first formed the nucleus of the membership; and the Society was in its early days indebted to a Spiritualist journal for the necessary publicity, and yet for some reason or another—apparently in deference to public opinion—the Society for Psychical Research, publicly at least, fights shy of the subject it was expressly formed to investigate. Let us hope that the Experimental Research Section of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be more successful. At any rate, being officered by men of experience in matters spiritual, it will avoid the blunder of supposing that a niggling detective spirit is a requisite qualification in those who concern themselves with these subjects. Moreover the Experimental Research Section has commanded the confidence of mediums—another good point. We thoroughly endorse the *Journal's* view that those who seek spirit phenomena as an entertainment are not fit for the consideration of the subject. We do not want any such: we are best without them.

The Golden Gate (San Francisco, December 12th, 1885).

We are glad to see the *Golden Gate* taking a bold stand for the purification of the movement. The abuse attacked this time is the so-called "free platform." In England we are pretty free from the nuisance. We recognise that Spiritualism has quite enough burden of its own to bear without being saddled with those of other tabooed topics, no matter how just and right their cause may be in the abstract. In America, however, "Cranks" are a numerous class, and it is well-known that persons who are not Spiritualists, and who, outside of Spiritual meetings, habitually speak of Spiritualism in terms of the vilest opprobrium, are in the habit of taking advantage of the generosity of Spiritual societies, and upon a free platform airing their crankiness and demagoguery. The *Golden Gate* pithily urges that although "freedom of speech" is a very pretty sentiment in the abstract, yet when it comes to the most outrageous utterances against law, order, religion, and society generally, the brawlers should be made to seek their own time, place, and audiences.—A Dr. Brown, of San Francisco, has made over 75,000 acres in Virginia, worth, it is estimated, from £45,000 to £75,000, towards maintaining a Chair of Mental Physiology,

Psychology, Psychometry, and all the occult sciences. Not a year passes without some munificent gift of this kind being made in America. Meanwhile "LIGHT" and other agencies in England are cramped and crippled for lack of a few hundred pounds.

Licht Mehr Licht (Paris, December, 1885).

Licht Mehr Licht says that Hellenbach and Du Prel are to be regarded as Spiritists; whether they recognise or ignore the founder of the European school of Spiritism is of little moment. "We have learnt in a great centre of civilisation the moralising influence of this philosophy, grounded on experiment; and we have found, moreover, that some guide, such as the works of Kardec afford, is indispensable. All that we hear about the progress of the movement in Germany confirms the truth of this opinion." Our contemporary welcomes the labours of scientific inquirers and acute philosophical thinkers in the domain of pneumatology, because of the value of their authority in cultured German circles. In a leading article dated 15th October, it says: "The boundary-line between the subjective operation of the medium and the interference of an invisible world, which emanated from that estimable quarter, was very rightly pointed out"; also that, "in the case of physical phenomena, if the medium is conscious and in the full use of his organs, the action of the *meta-organism* is excluded. It follows that in the most primitive of all experiments, so-called table-tipping, the operation of a foreign intelligence is clearly manifested."

Spiritualistische Blätter (Leipzig).

Helene von Racovilze, describing some séances with a German physical medium, says: "The spirits followed each other pretty rapidly—once only there was a longish pause, and we began to think the séance at an end, when the conducting spirit ordered the light to be quite extinguished. Now evolved itself one of those wonderfully beautiful appearances for the sake of which alone I go again and again to these sittings, and which admit of no explanation or imitation by any light known to science. To wit: while it is so dark that a white handkerchief is absolutely indistinguishable, and the whitest white is invisible, there paints itself suddenly before our eyes a white, luminous Something, which slowly and gently assumes a beautiful human form, often in the most heterogeneous draperies. When I say luminous, this is, perhaps, not the right expression, but I know of none better; it is a white Something, like luminous snow, which yet gives out no light from it, not even for a handbreadth space,—as phosphorous or electricity, or any of our luminous bodies do. These wondrously beautiful appearances move with majestic motions for a time before our eyes, and then either sink into themselves and disappear as they appeared, or dissolve in a kind of mist."

LANDOR was not far from the truth when in the conversation between Andrew Marvel and Milton he makes the latter say of the life of a student of great men's works, "We enjoy by anticipation somewhat like the power which I imagine we shall possess hereafter of sailing on a visit from world to world." In his private circles that last phrase has been recognised as a "happy inspiration."

LIKE the students of astronomy, called astronomers; of chemistry, chemists; of geology, geologists; of matter, materialists; the students of spirit are called Spiritualists. Now do you see anything more ridiculous in the latter than in any of the former appellations? Chemistry was once denounced as being of the devil, and chemists as having dealings with this gentleman. It is now one of the greatest of all sciences. Spiritualism is meeting with the same fate at present, but when it becomes more universally understood people will wonder how they could have been so stupid as to ridicule or denounce so interesting and valuable a science as Spiritism.—*Golden Gate*.

If we could believe the writer, the "Memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini" afford ample evidence of spiritual phenomena. During his imprisonment at Rome, for instance, when, in the depth of his intolerable suffering, he determined to commit suicide, and was on the point of doing so—"I was seized by something invisible, pushed four cubits from the place, and terrified to such a degree that I became insensible." Later, when in a foul dungeon, a powerful voice bid him hope, and he relates, in much picturesque detail, a vision he had—if vision be the correct term to use, for he felt himself borne aloft and carried into a strange world where a heavenly guide led him and revealed to him surpassing glories. The whole scene is worth reading. See Chapter XXV., Bohn's edition.

THE PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER.

A Demonstration.

It will be recollected by the readers of "LIGHT" that I had a letter in your paper on the 3rd January, 1885, with the above title, and that that and subsequent letters from myself on the same subject were adversely criticised by Mr. Gurney, the result being that I clearly maintained all I had advanced regarding my experiments with Husk and my iron rings.

These letters may be found in the pages of "LIGHT," January 3rd and 10th, February 7th, 14th and 28th, April 18th (see index of "LIGHT," 1885, just published).

In these letters I stated that while I held Husk's left hand firmly in my right hand, I, with my free left hand, examined his wrist and forearm, and satisfied myself he had no ring thereon, and having then, by the request of "Irresistible," taken from the table an iron ring with my left hand, which from its form and size I was satisfied was my own privately marked ring, this ring was taken out of my hand and instantly placed on Husk's wrist, I not having relaxed my firm hold of his hand for an instant. On examination I satisfied myself that it was my privately marked ring, and as in a few minutes afterwards it fell off his wrist, I again satisfied myself of its identity.

This ring I had purposely made of a form and size to render its passage over Husk's hand impossible. Finding, however, that this ring could be forced over the hands of most ladies I experimented with, I had a second iron ring made so small that I failed to force it over the hand of any lady I experimented with, and this ring, on the 28th February, while my friend Mr. Banfyle held Husk's left hand, was immediately afterwards found on Husk's left wrist, and has remained there ever since.

Believing that Mr. Maskelyne, as an ingenious mechanic, was eminently qualified to judge of the possibilities of such a ring being by natural means placed where it was, Husk submitted to that gentleman his wrist for examination, but all that Mr. Maskelyne could suggest was, that my ring might have been cut and welded by cold pressure, or that if altered in shape it might possibly be removed. In reply as to cold welding, that is a form of welding easily detected, and there is no evidence of such in the ring itself; and as to hot welding, as that can only be accomplished when the iron is close on the melting point, experts have assured me that under the circumstances the ring could not have been welded in its present position; and I may add that had the ring been cut and rewelded the size of the ring must almost certainly have been slightly altered and thus have revealed the imposture, and the fire marks on the part of the ring submitted to the fire a second time must certainly have been altered and thus revealed the imposture.

Then, as to removing the iron ring if it were altered in shape. I showed that the circumference of the ring was smaller than the circumference of the compressed hand, and could not possibly in any shape be forced from its position, and this objection I confirmed by making a soft copper wire ring, the exact size of the iron ring, and which easily took any shape required, and yet this wire ring could not be passed over Husk's hand or over any male hand of average size.

Rings when placed on the wrists of mediums under similar circumstances have hitherto almost invariably been removed within a few minutes or hours of the operation, but in the present instance "Irresistible" announced that my ring should not be removed from the medium's wrist until it had been seen and tested by a large number of scientific men, and thus it is, I believe, a unique experiment of this kind, and is, in short, a standing proof of a power—exercised in the presence of mediums—unknown to science.

The case having excited much attention, pressure was put on the Society for Psychical Research to submit the phenomenon to scientific investigation, and accordingly a committee was appointed, and on the 17th April William Crookes, F.R.S., Victor Horsley, F.R.C.S., W. C. Bull, F.R.C.S., and A. T. Myers, M.D., met Husk at 24, Clarges-street, and subjected his hand and ring to careful examination and measurement. And their measurements of my ring, although they are slightly larger than my own, I am willing to accept as correct.

The verdict arrived at by the committee is in these words: "We cannot infer that it is impossible that the ring should have come into the position in which we found it by known natural means."

It will be remarked that this verdict is worded with extreme caution, the double negative used being a form of words which

usually implies an apologetic tone. But, however this may be, the verdict, grammatically considered, is contrary to the figures furnished by the committee, and this can be very easily and clearly shown.

Husk's hand was first moulded and then compressed with metallic tape, and subsequently with copper wire. The committee desired that he should submit to be etherised in order that they might apply crucial pressure, but as he declined to submit to this, three other men were found who submitted to the operation, and the committee seem to imply that had Husk submitted to this crucial operation his hand might have been compressed so as to show the possibility of the ring being removed by natural means; but as the crucial experiments entirely failed to show this in regard to the three other cases, it may be fairly inferred that Husk's hand would not have been found an exceptional one.

Two of the men operated on had large hands, and these, as the ring was much smaller than their hands, I exclude, but man No. 3 had a hand, by a curious coincidence, almost identical in size with Husk's, but slightly a smaller hand.

The various measurements are given in millimetres, and are as follows, the measurements less than the ring in Husk's case being excluded:—

HUSK'S HAND WHEN COMPRESSED WITH METALLIC TAPE.	NO. 3 HAND WHEN SO COMPRESSED.
184	175
195	195
200	196
198	191

From these measurements it will be seen that Husk's hand, when compressed with metallic tape, was considerably larger than the hand of man No. 3 when so compressed.

HUSK'S HAND COMPRESSED WITH COPPER WIRE.	NO. 3 HAND WHEN CRUCIALLY COMPRESSED UNDER ETHER.
184	162
189	180
192	189
194	186

My ring measures 182-5, and from the measurements of Husk's hand it will be seen that they are all larger than that of the ring, and that two of the measurements of hand No. 3, when said hand was compressed to the utmost, are also larger than the ring.

The committee thus admit by their own figures that the ring could not possibly have been forced over hand No. 3, and it is a most unwarrantable assumption that the ring could have been forced over Husk's hand which was larger than hand No. 3, had he submitted to be etherised.

A true verdict therefore would have been in these words: "So far as our experiments have extended they prove that the ring could not have come into its present position by natural means."

With regard to Husk having declined to submit to being deprived of his consciousness, when alone with strangers, who "were determined (as he said to me) that science should have the best of it," I think your readers will not be surprised at his prudence. I think the committee should have invited me to be present at their experiments, and had they done so I could not only have suggested tests which they seem to have omitted, but I think I could have induced Husk to submit to the action of ether, provided he were adequately remunerated for his trouble and risk.

But suffice it were granted that a soft copper ring could have been forced over a body larger in circumference than itself, which, of course, is absurd, it must be still more manifestly absurd to assert that a rigid iron ring which could not possibly be forced to take the ever varying form of the compressed hand in its progress towards removal, could have been removed intact.

The readers of "LIGHT" may, perhaps, be surprised to find the name of Mr. Crookes in connection with a committee whose animus we may infer was unfavourable to the Spiritualistic interpretation of this ring case, and they may, perhaps, conclude that he disbelieves in the possibility of the passage of matter through matter. In this conclusion, no doubt, they would be mistaken, for Mr. Crookes has published his belief in the facts of the materialisation and dematerialisation of forms in human shape, and, therefore, I feel confident, would not assert that the passage of matter through matter, or the materialisation and dematerialisation of other forms of matter, was impossible, and therefore Mr. Crookes on the present occasion is simply to be regarded as fulfilling a duty as a scientific physicist, employed to report on certain physical facts presented to him.

All must admit that the ring case is of great interest and importance, for if it be a genuine Spiritualistic phenomenon, as the greater contains the less, it must render comparatively easy the acceptance of almost every other form of Spiritualistic phenomena.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND.

For 1886.

	£	s.	d.
Hon. Percy Wyndham	20	0	0
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Mrs. Maltby	1	1	0
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R. Baikie, M.D.	1	1	0
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Miss Withall	1	1	0
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A. Cole	0	10	6
Miss Maltby	0	10	6
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F. W. Benthall	0	10	0
R. N.	0	6	2
W. Glanville	0	5	0
Mrs. Edensor	0	5	0

As will be seen, our list grows slowly. The amount at present is far from sufficient, but we are tired of begging and therefore say no more. Our patience, and our powers of persuasion, are alike exhausted.

Remittances may be sent either to Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N., or to Mr. M. Theobald, 62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E.

THE EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH SECTION

OF THE

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE

Has been established with the object primarily of—

Promoting systematic research by experts, including (a) the encouragement of exact methods of inquiry; (b) the accurate recording of observed facts; (c) the regulation of admission to and the graduation of circles, so as to afford a complete and progressive course of investigation and instruction; (d) the more careful treatment of mediums, and (e) the publication in the Spiritualist Press of carefully tabulated results.

And secondarily of—

Assisting inquiry into Spiritualism either by (a) directing inquirers, where necessary, in a preliminary course of reading; (b) advising in the formation of private family circles; or (c) where practicable furnishing introductions to already organised circles.

Members of the London Spiritualist Alliance are eligible for election to the Experimental Research Section. The minimum subscription to this section is £1 1s. per annum, payable in January for the current year, but it is hoped that persons interested in the extension of research will contribute to a special fund for that purpose.

The members of the Research Section are divided into four grades, viz, i—

1. CIRCLES OF EXPERTS,
 2. ELEMENTARY CIRCLES OF INVESTIGATORS,
 3. INQUIRERS,
- all under the direction of
4. A CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CONTROL.

Circles of Experts will study, at their own discretion and opportunity, special groups of phenomena. They will especially direct attention to the means of securing the best conditions of observation. Their experiments will be such as could not safely be made in a less harmonious circle, or by less experienced persons. They will so experiment as to throw light on perplexing problems, and generally to add to our now scanty store of knowledge as to the methods employed by the invisible operators, the results of whose action we are all more or less acquainted with, but of whose methods of operation we know almost nothing.

Inquirers into Spiritualism, upon becoming members of the Research Section, will, if desired, be introduced to some Expert who will give the necessary advice and guidance; will direct their reading, if required; will give help in difficulty, and generally act as Mentor and sponsor to them, until, in due time, they become fit to take their place in an elementary Circle of Investigators. As circumstances allow, inquirers will be drafted into such a circle, or if it be preferred they will be advised and directed in the formation of a private circle.

GENERAL RULES.

All groups of circles of whatever degree are subject absolutely to the direction and governance of a Central Committee of Control. The names of all who desire to take part in these circles will be submitted to that Committee, and the election will be by ballot. Great care will be exercised in the selection of suitable persons, and their arrangement in circles so composed as to secure the utmost possible harmony. These circles will meet, each at its own convenience, in private houses for the most part, and their proceedings will be strictly private. They will be conducted by an Expert Director chosen by the members and approved by the Central Committee of Control. Accurate minutes of all proceedings will be kept by a Recorder; and these minutes, verified at the opening of each meeting, will be submitted at stated intervals to the Committee of Control, who alone will decide as to their publication. No publication will be permissible without the sanction of the Committee; and from its decision there will be no appeal. Each member of the various circles will pledge himself to keep all proceedings strictly private until authority is given for publication. The names of the persons who constitute a particular circle need be known only to themselves and to the Committee of Control.

PLEDGES REQUIRED.

Those who wish to take part in this work will be invited to pledge themselves

1. To an ungrudging assistance, within reasonable bounds, to any fellow member who may be assigned to them for guidance.
2. To sink absolutely any private or personal feelings that may in any way be thought likely to interfere with the perfect harmony that must characterise an inquiry of this nature if success is to be attained; or that may be at variance with the spirit in which alone this investigation can be profitably undertaken.
3. To obey, and submit to the reasonable control, of the Central Committee of Control, which is charged with the administration of this plan, and to preserve a faithful reticence as to any results obtained in any circle, until the records are published by order of that Committee.

No expression of opinion as to theories which may be held to account for observed facts, or acceptance of any special form of belief, is sought from any member. The Central Committee of Control, however, regards psychical facts from a Spiritualist point of view, though it is by no means bound down to any special theory, and may, indeed, receive and canvass any that may be proposed; and the Spiritualist Alliance, as its name implies, is, as a body, professedly Spiritualistic.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CONTROL.

The constitution of this body, together with other details explanatory of the general scheme of work, will be found in the pamphlet entitled, "Spiritualism at Home and Abroad." Persons wishing to join the Experimental Research Section are requested, if already members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, to apply to the President, 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, S.W., who will enter into further communication with them on the subject. If not members of the Alliance, application for such membership should first be made to the Hon. Sec. at the same address. On election, the new member of the Alliance will be eligible for admission, if approved by the Central Committee of Control, to the Experimental Research Section.

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.

The following are a few books which will prove of service to the inquirer. They can be obtained by members from the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance, or they may be purchased of the Psychological Press (see advt. pages), 16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C. :—*Animal Magnetism (Wm. Gregory)*; *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism (A. R. Wallace)*; *Researches in Spiritualism (W. Crookes)*; *From Matter to Spirit (De Morgan)*; *The Debateable Land (Dale Owen)*; *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World (Dale Owen)*; *Planchette (Epes Sargent)*; *Proof Palpable of Immortality*; *The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism (Epes Sargent)*; *Report of the Dialectical Society*; *Zöllner's Transcendental Physics (Translated by C. C. Massey, 2nd Ed.)*; *Psychography ("M.A., Oxon.")*; *Spirit Identity ("M.A., Oxon.")*; *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism ("M.A., Oxon.")*; *Judge Edmonds' Letters and Tracts*; *Primitive Christianity and Spiritualism (Crowell)*; *New Basis of Belief in Immortality (Farmer)*; *Hints for the Evidences of Spiritualism (M.P.)*; *Theosophy and the Higher Life (Dr. G. Wyld)*; *Mechanism of Man, 2 vols. (Mr. Serjeant Cox)*; *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism (N. Wolfe)*; *Arcana of Spiritualism (Tuttle)*; *Spirit Teachings ("M.A., Oxon.")*; *The Use of Spiritualism (S. C. Hall)*; *Spiritualism at Home (Morell Theobald)*; *Pioneers of the Spiritual Reformation (Howitt Watts)*.

These are but a few volumes of a very extensive literature. Not counting pamphlets and tracts, upwards of 2,000 volumes on the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism have been published since its advent. It is therefore manifestly impossible to do more than allude to the fact here.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—“Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone can explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages.”—*Aftonblad* (Stockholm), October 30th, 1879.

BARON CARL DU PREL (Munich) in *Nord und Sud*.—“One thing is clear; that is, that psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find: (1) That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature, or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language. (10) If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

LORD BROUGHAM.—“There is but one question I would ask the author, Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism.”—*Preface by Lord Brougham to "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

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

PROFESSOR BARRETT, F.R.S.E.—“I know and rejoice in the blessing Spiritualism has been to my own faith, and to that of several dear friends of mine. Moreover, I cordially recognise the fact that in bereavement and deep distress numbers have been cheered and consoled by the hope that Spiritualism has set before them. . . . So far from Materialism being true, I do not believe a single person has ever yet lived on this earth who has truly and heartily desired to know if an intelligent and personal existence be possible without our present bodily organism, and has steadily set himself to solve this supreme question with

all the help he can gain from every source,—I say I do not believe any such earnest seeker after truth has ever failed to obtain a clear and definite answer in the affirmative.”

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—“I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated ‘magnetic,’ ‘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 biassed by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

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

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

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

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—“No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, Homeopathy, 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 ascertainable 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.”

CONJURERS AND 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. We give the testimony of one of them:—

Harry Kellar, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, investigated one slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, at Calcutta, 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.”