

# Light:

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

"WHATEVER DOETH 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 Experimental Research Section of the London Spiritualist Alliance is now organised and at work. Mr. Price, of 7, Duke-street, Grosvenor-square, is holding mesmeric séances every Monday evening at 16, Craven-street, at 7.30 p.m. A course of four séances is intended to show the action of embodied mind on a mesmeric sensitive, as preparation to the understanding of the action of mind or intelligence apart from a human body on a medium. It is a great gain to approach the study of psychical phenomena generally, and the facts of mediumship in particular, through the avenue of mesmerism. In no other way can so much light be got on what are at best perplexing and bewildering facts, little understood at present, and too often approached without any serious attempt to correlate them and refer them to any coherent theory. We are, I hope, at last coming to a time when such study as this will be seriously entered upon, and the attempt to direct the attention of all inquirers, and even of experienced Spiritualists who have not had previous opportunity of such study, to the phenomena of mesmerism is one of the highest interest and importance.

Mr. Price has three "subjects" over whom his control is extremely rapid and complete. A pass or two and a suggestion, for example, renders the body so rigid that it can be placed with the head on one chair and the heels on another, and in that impossible position will remain for any length of time, and will support a heavy weight placed upon it. I, for instance (though I do not think the experiment is one that was wise, or should be ventured on again), tried the rigidity of one of Mr. Price's subjects, so placed on two chairs, by suddenly and without warning, throwing the whole weight of my body on the unsupported mesmerised sensitive. The frame was perfectly rigid, and did not yield in any appreciable degree to this sudden super-position of a weight of eleven stones. Insensibility to pain is another phenomenon that is shown. A single rapid pass, accompanied by a suggestion, seems to remove from a finger of the sensitive all sense of pain. On one occasion, I was occupied in testing this in the case of one of the subjects, and Mr. Price's attention was also diverted from a second subject who was muttering to himself that his fingers were no use to him, and that he could not feel anything with them. I paid no heed to his grumble till on turning round I found him illustrating his want of feeling by stirring the fire with his fore finger. He had burnt it, unfortunately,

very plainly and unquestionably, before we could rescue him from his position. I should never have suggested so painful an experiment, but, since the sensitive selected it for himself, it came home to me as convincing in a high degree.

It may be of interest if I say here that these Monday evening mesmeric séances are open to all members of the Research Section, and that any such member can attend at any one of them at his pleasure. Four consecutive séances, however, are designed to illustrate what Mr. Price undertakes to show, and he then commences again. The first of the series was held on March 1st. It will be easy, therefore, for any member who may wish to attend to calculate when a new series will begin. Mr. Price has also very marked healing power. I can personally testify to his gifts as a curative mesmerist, though, fortunately for myself, I have not had occasion to invoke his aid for any serious ailment. The soothing influence of the cool air that accompanies his passes is very marked; the quivering fingers seem to bring with them a calming and healing power that is very real, and in no way attributable to fancy.

In addition to these mesmeric séances, the Central Committee has arranged for Investigators' Circles with Mr. Husk and with a private medium. A circle devoted to spirit-photography will commence operations when this arctic winter, with its snow and fog and all-pervading gloom, shall have yielded to spring. I had hoped that Mr. Eglinton's services might have been given to a circle of experts for the investigation of materialisation phenomena. But then came, first of all, his illness, from which I am glad to learn that he has so far recovered as to feel warranted in resuming his work. And now he is about to start for Russia and Germany, where I trust that his powers may be even more serviceably used than they could be here, in the interests of M. Aksakoff, Baron Carl du Prel, and Dr. von Hartmann. From the candid and impartial manner in which this last-named gentleman has approached the consideration of Spiritualism without the advantage of personal experience, I should hope for the best results (from my point of view) if he had the benefit of investigation with Mr. Eglinton. These causes do some little to hamper our work. We want more mediums: that is the fact. But we cannot get them ready-made to our hands, and we can but make the best use of what we have. The Research Section obviously cannot pretend to place a guaranteed medium at the service of every anxious inquirer. But what it can do, what it is doing, is to utilise existing material, to encourage reasonable methods of investigation, to promote the keeping of careful and exact records, and to introduce law and order into what has been too long a loose and disorderly investigation, too often, in addition, inaccurately conducted and emotionally recorded.

This has been one of the errors of the past. The phenomena of Spiritualism have been in themselves so startling, they have come on us so suddenly, they have been so separate from other experience, not hooking on (if I may so say) to anything that has gone before, and is the acknowledged property of mankind, that they have been the subject of wonder more than of accurate investigation and observa-

tion. Then, in very many cases, the deepest feelings and emotions of the mind are involved. Smarting under the pain of a terrible sorrow, bereft of all that made the sunshine of life, sore at heart, and yearning for some consolation that may soothe and give hope to the beclouded mind, a man is in no condition for scientific study, though he may be admirably qualified by the very virtue of his supersensitive condition to discern the presence of the loved one that he mourns. His evidence must perforce come to him on the plane of the emotions rather than of exact reason and scientific proof. And this is the condition, these are the circumstances, under which a large number of persons are brought into their first relations with Spiritualism. It is not wonderful, therefore, that some of the most convincing evidence is not recorded at all, nor is it surprising that some, which was very convincing to the person to whom it was intended to appeal, is either recorded loosely and so loses force, or appeals to a mere student with less power than it did to its first possessor. It is time that some attempt should be made to introduce into records of Spiritualistic phenomena precision and accuracy. This is one work which the Experimental Research Section sets itself to accomplish. Each circle will have its expert Director, and its Recorder, who will keep careful minutes of all proceedings: for no fact, however apparently minute, is without significance where all is as yet obscure. And this body of evidence, so collected, will be sifted and arranged, before publication, by qualified minds, who are trained in habits of observation, and are familiar with the subjects with which they deal.

In thus writing I shall not be suspected of undervaluing the emotions and the imagination as factors in the investigation of Spiritualism. In some recent Notes (page 73) I cited remarkable evidence of the power of love in these inquiries. I wrote (and I adhere to every word) that sympathy and love on the part of an investigator had a marvellous influence on the results obtained. I added: "This is the expression of a law which he who would penetrate far into these mysteries with any advantage to himself must learn to respect. He may indeed investigate certain superficial phenomena from the intellectual plane." . . . "But the keenest logical faculty, the most over-mastering will, is second to the still more masterful power of love." I wholly believe it. It is most usually not till the emotional depths of the being are stirred as sorrow or suffering alone can stir them, not till the angel descends into the troubled waters of the soul, that one is intromitted into the inner sphere of Spiritualism. It is then that a man gets evidence that he knows to be true, that tests and traps and tyings are abandoned or never thought of, and that he is face to face with spirit, seeing as he is seen, without disguise and without a doubt. I am not likely, therefore, to undervalue the power of this master-key to the hidden mysteries of spirit, nor to attach undue importance to a so-called scientific investigation of phenomena that can be approached in that manner. The two things are distinct, and the one is in no way incompatible with the other. The only fear—and it is a real danger that I foresee in the future—is that the attention of those who possess, to a large extent, the ear of the public should be wholly concentrated on the more superficial aspects of a subject the depths of which they have not sounded, and possibly are not able to sound, for the reason that spirit does not enter into their calculations.

These considerations acquire a present significance from the fact that the Society for Psychical Research has determined, I am informed, to approach the subject of Spiritualism with an intention of studying some of the phenomena which certain of its more prominent members are willing to bring before it. At the last meeting Professor Barrett read a paper—which I had not the advantage of

hearing, and which I cannot therefore criticise in any way—in which he brought to the official notice of the Society some experiences of his own. There has been, no doubt, some impatience on the part of Spiritualists at what they have deemed a neglect of the evidence which lay at the door of the Society for Psychical Research while it was occupying itself with a mission to far distant India in search of marvels. There has also been some desire that the Society should move more rapidly, and should not concern itself so exclusively with Thought-transference, Telepathy, and kindred subjects. For myself—and I speak for myself alone in what I say—I have not shared this feeling as completely as I do share the belief and general attitude of Spiritualists on other matters. I think that the attempt made, and very successfully made, by the Society for Psychical Research to approach these occult phenomena from the side of antecedent and accepted knowledge, to correlate them with that which Science accepts, to bridge over the gulf which has seemed to separate them from the known and admitted facts of our common beliefs, has not been so fully appreciated by Spiritualists as, in my opinion, it ought to be. I think, too, that the service that the Society has rendered us by making it possible to get attention to our facts in organs of public opinion that were before closed to them is one for which we are insufficiently thankful. That is my own private opinion, which I force on none of my friends.

But, holding that belief, I have some fear that the general attitude assumed by the Society may make it difficult for it to arrive at such conclusions respecting Spiritualism as I should consider correct. In the present state of our knowledge we are quite unable to say why it is that some persons, able, conscientious, patient, painstaking, and unsparing of time, money, and attention in their researches, should be apparently unable to get any convincing personal evidence. But the fact has to be admitted and reckoned with. It is regrettable and unfortunate that some of the leaders of the Society for Psychical Research should be in this position. I do not presume to speculate as to the cause of a fact which I deplore; and it would be, indeed, impertinent in me to do more than allude to the matter for the purpose, important to my argument, of adding that, if those who chiefly direct the movements of the Society had been so fortunate as to have the same experience personal to themselves as I have obtained, I should look forward to any report on Spiritualism which the Society for Psychical Research may issue with more confident anticipation than now possesses me. I fear that the attempt to study Spiritualism from the side on which the Society will approach it, and with an ignoring of the action of spirit, which has so far characterised its conclusions, and which seems to me a fatal omission of attention to an essential consideration—the key to the whole problem—I fear that this may seriously hamper the investigation on which the Society has embarked. This, however, should not trouble us. The penetralia may not be accessible to such inquiry; but even the most superficial phenomena of Spiritualism are in many cases accompanied by evidence of intelligence apart from a human brain, and if the Society does nothing more than force on public attention evidence of the action of an unrecognised force, governed by an intelligence not referable to a human brain, it will have done much for which I, at least, shall be thankful.

REAR-ADMIRAL CROWN and Lieutenant Crown, of the Imperial Russian Navy, two Spiritualists of many years' standing, have arrived in London from China.

We have received Part II. of "Homes and Work in the Future Life," by Miss Theobald. As we intend to notice this pamphlet in a future issue, we now simply content ourselves with announcing the fact of its publication. The price is one shilling.

## DOUBTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF INQUIRERS.

## VII.

[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.

- (13) *What are the qualities which constitute mediumship?*  
 (18) *What is the meaning of the violent shaking and noisy jargon of one undergoing development?*  
 (23) *Frivolous manifestations are said to have an important meaning. What is there of importance in the floating about of the fairy bells at a dark séance?*  
 (24) *In what manner are objects transported at dark séances?*  
 (25) *Is it true that people generally are endowed with the gift of mediumship?*  
 (26) *Why do the intelligences teach the doctrine of re-incarnation on the Continent and disclaim it in England and America?*  
 (27) *Is marriage favourable, or is it unfavourable to mediumship?*

## Answers.

(17) To show that table-tilting is not the useless thing implied in the question, I will relate an experience of mine which shows that astonishing results can be obtained from a table; results quite out of the knowledge of the sitters. About a year ago I, with my sister, was sitting with a lady friend, Miss X., a native of Cornwall. We had a long message from the spirit of a Cornishman, dead many years. In this life he was a Cornish wrecker. He gave us a full account of a chest of treasures, said to be sunk in the River Fowy, and gave us minute directions to enable us to find it. Miss X. then left the table for the purpose of affording a better test, as neither I nor my sister had been in Cornwall. She said, "Of course you can tell us the name of a large house, an old house, in the neighbourhood which you have described?" The table correctly spelt out the name of the house, and the name of the family who have lived there since the time of the Crusaders. Neither I nor my sister had ever heard of the place or people before. When the questions were asked Miss X. was at the other end of the room. This shows, I think, most conclusively, that "when the sitters are uncertain"—in this case they were absolutely ignorant—the replies are *not* invariably incorrect. Miss X. is mediumistic; nothing more.—G. A. W.

(20) The length of time necessary for the development of such mediums as Messrs. Herne, Williams, Husk, and Eglinton varies considerably. In some cases the progress has been very rapid; in others quite the reverse. There is no fixed rule. Whether the development is relatively slow or rapid, it is almost invariably gradually progressive in reference to the phenomena themselves. As an illustration of the length of time required for development in some cases, it may be mentioned that in "Twixt Two Worlds" it is stated that the course of development through which Mr. Eglinton passed for psychography was very prolonged. For upwards of three years he sat almost daily for that phenomenon, and not a scratch was obtained. Sustained, however, by an assurance from his invisible co-workers of ultimate success, he persevered, and at last got marks, then words, then finally got intelligible messages, but not until another weary six months had past. From the time, too, when he was able to devote his special attention to this phase of the phenomena up to the present time a distinct development can also be traced.

(22) Darkness is not a *sine quid non* among the conditions for the production of physical manifestations. It is true that in the case of most mediums the phenomena are stronger in darkness than in the light; but, with few exceptions, manifestations are readily obtainable in a modified light, such for instance, as twilight, firelight, &c.

MR. W. EGLINTON has resumed his séances for psychography, having quite recovered from his recent serious illness.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

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

## The Society for Psychical Research and Spiritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In some recently published utterances of Mr. F. W. H. Myers I find "any educated Spiritualist" invited to answer two questions, arising out of a recent communication in "LIGHT."

Presuming to claim for myself "the benefit of clergy" I will ask permission to reply to them.

It would seem that Mr. Myers is dissatisfied at not receiving an answer to inquiries addressed by him to an anonymous writer in "LIGHT," and, in expressing his displeasure at the reticence of this personage, he delivers himself as follows:—

"Now, does any educated Spiritualist think me *unfair* because I am not impressed by letters of that kind! Does he not agree with me in making small account of anonymous dogmatism and third-hand gossip, whatever be the cause which they are meant to support?"\*

I think I may venture to assure Mr. Myers, in reply to these inquiries, that no Spiritualist, "educated" or otherwise, nor any other person, I should conceive, would think him unfair because he is not impressed by an unverified statement; nor would they dissent from him, I hope, in making small account of gossip and dogmatism—anonymous or otherwise—and whether advanced to support their views or the reverse.

But the object with which I trespass on your space is, as may well be believed, not so much to answer such inquiries as these (which were probably not intended to be answered), as to avail myself of the invitation which I assume them to convey, to explain to Mr. Myers what my association with Spiritualists leads me to believe they generally do think unfair on the part of himself and others associated with him in Psychical Research.

They think it *unfair* that Mr. Myers should regard it as their duty to furnish him with facts with which he and his friends may supply themselves by the same simple methods of investigation as have enabled thousands of people so to do; and that he should systematically make it a reproach to them that they do not fulfil this assumed obligation in regard to him, which they respectfully repudiate. I take the liberty to remind Mr. Myers that "research" does not imply merely the reception, tabulation, and analysis of evidence voluntarily supplied by others, but the patient and persistent *searching out* and investigation of facts for oneself.

They think it *unfair* that they should be invited to furnish "facts" to those who make an open secret of a disbelief in their capacity for discriminating them. There is something in their judgment ludicrous in an appeal to them, on the part of such persons, to supply "facts."

They think it *unfair* that they should be, individually, invited to enter into personal and confidential relations with the Society for Psychical Research, so long as the writer of an article published in "LIGHT" in February, 1885, under the title of "Spiritualism at Home," and other similar deliverances, is a member of the governing body of that Society, and his mode of pursuing psychical research, and of giving publicity to the results of it, as illustrated in those articles, is thereby endorsed by that association. They have no quarrel with this gentleman, but they mistrust him; and, in matters peculiarly involving the exercise of discretion, good taste, and good feeling, they must be excused if they,—or many of them at all events,—find it difficult to dissociate from him those who prominently and publicly associate themselves with him in such researches.

They think it *unfair* that the Society for Psychical Research should have made no visibly serious efforts to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism, which the simple common-sense of thousands of "educated" people has enabled them to verify with ease; and that the Society should have issued a commission to investigate frauds in India (after the Kiddle-Koot Hoomi exposure quite unnecessarily), while it has studiously ignored truths at home urgently needing investigation by it, if it does what is its professed object to do.

They think it *unfair* that they should always be addressed by the Society for Psychical Research,—or those who must be

\* The italics are mine.

regarded as representing it,—in the language and spirit popularly definable as that of “the very superior person.” They are of opinion that if any intercourse is possible between them and the Society for Psychical Research this attitude (which I must ask the gentlemen employing it to excuse my saying is not well-bred), may, with advantage, be abandoned; or,—not to be unreasonable,—I will say held in reserve until it shall have been justified by superior results.—I am, sir, sincerely yours,

19, Cheyne-walk, Chelsea, S.W.

A. A. WATTS.

March 9th, 1886.

#### The Idea of Individuality, and the Newnham Case.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—I must express sincere regret that I misunderstood “C. C. M.,” though I think his letter was not so clear as to make this an unpardonable offence. His present letter is very subtle, putting his position as clearly as a position so very remote from, and unfamiliar to, ordinary Western thought is capable of being put. I must say a few words on it, though I fear my many pre-occupations may hardly permit me to do justice to the very important controversy involved. For the question whether we ourselves have an illusive or a real individuality is the very point in dispute between East and West, and I regard it as most vital. But that is indeed the ultimate issue raised in this “secondary self” controversy, and I am extremely glad that “C. C. M.’s” last letter makes this perfectly plain; so I cannot be sorry that I have drawn him to pronounce himself on the subject, for I know no more capable representative of Eastern thought in this country.

Most of us over here think that the Eastern mind, with all its subtlety, has not grasped the idea of individuality at all, and that herein its system of thought is vitally defective. “C. C. M.” blames me for appealing to common-sense as regards the Ego, and urges that philosophy has to correct it. Now certainly I cannot sympathise with the Britannic barbarian’s scorn for philosophy, so painfully resembling that of a rude untutored hind for some priceless jewel which he takes for glass, or some rare vase from Thebes or Hissarlik, which he takes for common earthenware, and parts with for a few pence. I agree with Milton concerning “Divine Philosophy,” and “dull fools.” Yet I am bound to say I think philosophers as a rule a somewhat wrong-headed race, who invite, and even deserve some of the sneering inattention they receive, just because they will spin their metaphysical cobwebs with a too stubborn indifference to this same much vilified, and vulgar common-sense. Philosophy should surely make clear, put in order, harmonise for reason the deliverances of common-sense, rather than trample upon, ignore, and contradict it.

Thus we have had so-called explanations of the moral sense, and of the causal judgment, which simply consisted in explaining them away: there was an intricate apparatus of formidable words, and a shuffling together of various notions, while the conjurer bade us behold the very ordinary genesis of some mystic and cherished idea heretofore regarded by us with a too implicit faith, and a too blind idolatry; but when we looked with open-mouthed admiration for the thing itself which he had promised to produce for us, lo! it was nowhere, and there was nothing for us but empty words, or some barren abstraction that bore no resemblance to the truth or principle we cherished. Yet surely to *eliminate* an idea is one thing, and to *explain* it is another! Now Mr. Myers and “C. C. M.”—I must add also some of the later Germans, and Spinoza, though not Leibnitz and Descartes—seem rather to ignore and contradict the deliverances of common-sense (which simply means universal intuition) about individuality than to harmonise, and illuminate them. Yet since all reasoning must assume primal intuitions as ground and premise for itself, it is simply suicidal, as well as ridiculous, to saw off the branch upon which it sits by explaining away intuitions of equal authority and validity with those which it accepts as incontrovertible.

“C. C. M.” tells us that there is one universal subject, of which our individualities are but illusory modifications and limitations. Now that is a statement, as it seems to most of us, purely in the air; it finds no response from common-sense, neither from subjective introspection, nor objective observation. We know nothing of one universal Ego with an infinitude of experiences that may be cut up into sections, or mapped out in divisions, which constitute distinct and separate individuals, each with his own initiative idiosyncrasy and freewill. Our intuitions tell us, on the contrary, of many living concrete originat-

ing subjects, or individuals, each with his own peculiar experiences, and character; though they tell us *also* that all these have one common nature, reason, and constitution, which enables them to communicate and sympathise with each other. When you proceed to explain yourself or me by denying all the differences between us, you simply eliminate the ideas you professed to make clearer, leaving only an empty logical abstraction without living content, or any actual validity whatsoever.

Let us examine “C. C. M.’s” position more closely. There is considerable agreement between us, I am glad to know. For instance, I hold with him the doctrine of Swedenborg as to the phenomenal world of present experience being a representative appearance of, and derived from, a higher and more spiritual intuition, to be fundamentally true. But directly we come to the question of *individuality*, our agreement ceases! He says that there is here a “vertical breach” in the continuity of consciousness, a breach in the “discrete degree” of consciousness, because here we have different levels. I have admitted and maintained that in my articles on this subject, as in my last letter. But “C. C. M.” is now trying to show us how the illusion of *individuality* comes about; and, so far as we have gone, he certainly does not succeed. He has pointed us to one universal subject or Ego, a common consciousness up in the spiritual world; but he fails to show us how this results in many distinct centres of self-conscious and self-distinguishing individuals in the actual phenomenal world of ordinary experience. The “breach” between the two would indeed account for the lower mode of consciousness not being aware of the higher, while yet the higher is aware of the lower; at least I am disposed to think so, difficult as the conception is to us now. But still there being only *one* real conscious substance, or Ego, behind the variety of present phenomenal experience, why should there be an intuition of *more than one*, of several distinct Egos or subjects, each with its own freewill, its own idiosyncrasy of continuous and highly varied experience? The close and constant association, or relation of a certain given aggregate of feelings and ideas constitutes this limitation of individuality, “C. C. M.” explains. But why and how should this be? What makes this so close and constant relation, or association? No doubt Buddhism answers, desire. Infinite conflicting desires there must be, then, in the one Ego, or subject. But each of *us* may have these *without* becoming thereby split up metaphysically into many self-distinguishing selves! Why these special groups of conscious differences in desire *resulting in separate persons*? For remember that your experience at a given period may be almost precisely similar to mine, not only externally, but also internally. We may have the same feelings, desires, ideas, and communicate them to each other. While at one period of our lives our own experience may be utterly different from what it was at another period; our characters may be quite changed. Yet we do not identify ourselves with each other, though we do identify ourselves with ourselves at these different periods. Does not this look as if it were the fundamental, secret, mystic, and absolute difference of individuality that makes, constitutes, brings about the divers groups, associations, and relations of ideas and feelings, not the diversity of groups and relations in the one Ego that brings to birth the individualities? It must be the Egos themselves that bring about that *peculiar* “breach of continuity” in consciousness of which “C. C. M.” speaks, if it corresponds with the long, continuous, and varied, *yet self-identified* idiosyncrasy of experience to which individual memory bears witness. The Eastern view leaves these “breaches” and diversities of experience unexplained, whereas the admission of a fundamental original difference of individuality in the spiritual sphere explains them. “C. C. M.’s” account of personality seems to me a mere external and nominal, not a vital and veracious one, corresponding to intuition, and actual experience of concrete life. He has not got hold of the idea, but (as I think) confounds the logical abstract, “*Ich denke*” (useful for purposes of thought) with the living actual “*Ich denke*,” which is always, and must always be an idiosyncrasy. And that, too, is the error of Kant. Then in dealing with consciousness on the same plane, he seems disposed to make the body, the organism, the delimiting plastic agent moulding personality. Here I think he puts the cart before the horse. If the body forms the conscious self, what in turn forms the particular body? The view of Aristotle and Stahl seems to me the true one, which is the exact reverse of this. If it be replied, the Absolute Ego forms the body; I answer, but how, unless by help of the Idea of the Person, body and soul? The Idea of an organism is needed to mould it,



and assign all its functions; but these Ideas in God are living creative spirits. These, in close harmonious union, form their successive phenomenal bodies, yet not without help from their phenomenal temporal souls (their Karma), for the body is a material changing phenomenon of the soul.\* But I have no wish to misunderstand my friend, "C. C. M." again; and I could almost hope that we are agreed when he says "the incarnation of a spirit" is "the conversion of the spiritual into the earthly mode of consciousness." Yet I fear he cannot mean here what one would at first infer from the words. For, since he has not provided us with "a spirit" other than the one Absolute Subject in the spiritual sphere, there is no "a spirit" to become incarnate other than that. And then we must ask him, what determines the one subject to this limited organic incarnation in a particular body, which itself (if I understand him) in turn determines the distinct personal soul, or mind corresponding? That the one Absolute works up to the body, which in turn makes the conscious individual, is, of course, the view of Schopenhauer and Hartmann. Now if you can believe in an abstract Unit as the source and substance of things, you can probably believe also that its manifestations in time are casual, and without rhyme or reason. But otherwise philosophy, with her inordinate claims to explain the universe, is at least bound to be serious, and if she provides us with a cause at all is surely bound to give us one with some obvious adequacy to produce the particular effects we want to have explained.

And now, finally, a word on the "secondary self." Of course if there is no proper self at all, there may be a thousand in one, or one in a thousand. That is the radical difference between us, and "C. C. M." is right to begin by trying to prove that there is no real individual self, only an illusive self. I submit, however, that he has failed in his endeavour to cancel the intuition of common-sense on this point. But, further, I confess that his argument to prove a second simultaneous focus of mentation in one self seems to me, if I understand it, without validity. The second "focus of mentation," he himself confesses, cannot arise while the ordinary normal impressions. Now, dormant is precisely what I thought he agreed with me remain in full vigour, but can only arise when these are dormant. neither of the two intelligent selves were in the Newnham case—neither dormant, nor even semi-conscious. He seems to assert that when there is a breach of continuity in experience, and this takes on a new character, then there is necessarily a new Ego (p.112). This I cannot admit. Else, when I dream, I should not be the same person as when I think awake. The experience is perfectly different then, nor have I necessarily any recollection of the waking state. Again, is a clairvoyant, or a somnambule an altogether different person from what he was in the waking state? It seems to me untrue to say so only because he has passed into a different sphere or phase of experience; though dominant influence of another spirit, his magnetiser, may come in here; a principle which, no doubt, largely explains alternate personality; except where one spirit seems positively to have expelled another. His memory of the waking past is only dormant or potential, and when he passes into the deeper stage of somnambulism, he can remember it, as well as his former somnambule experience. I quite acknowledge many possible strata of conscious experience between the earthly, and the highest heavenly. The very interesting experiments of Dr. Wyld and others establish that. And, if you please, you may speak of these as new "foci of mentation," or new "selves." But that must be only loosely and metaphorically. This, however, does not make the simultaneity of two full-blown consciousnesses in one self, where one does not recognise the other for its own, at all more conceivable, though, indeed, the higher, in proportion as it is eternal, and not in time, may be conceived, as I have formerly said, to co-exist with the lower. But I have already urged, I fear too often! that there is no question here of such a case. Because Mrs. Newnham was not entranced, but was in full possession of her normal senses and faculties, making, so far as appears, full use of them; if not, then the story has not been correctly told. But if she was entranced, then we do not want two selves at all, for we have simply Mrs. Newnham entranced

\* Body is manifestation of soul. The law of heredity comes in here, because we are not isolated, but solidary, individual conscious monads of one universal conscious organism. Solidarity more and more manifest is the real individuality, but never the loss of all distinction. Jacob Bohme ought to have set this question at rest for ever. The One implies the Many, the Yes the No, the Same the Different, the Universal the Particular, Being Manifestation, I You. "C. C. M.'s" belief in successive layers of illusive personality is of no avail, since all are illusive, and the reality is the One=Nothing—an abstract unit.

and clairvoyant, having entered into her own inner and deeper and truer self. (We do not hypostatise our normal selves, because we refuse to deny the eternally distinct reality of our higher and fuller!) "C. C. M." seems now to assert that her normal self was "dormant," and that this gave occasion for the waking up of a more subtle self; but I do not so read the narrative published. If it were so, I do not see how "C. C. M." could assert his distinct agreement with me that neither of the two selves concerned was semi-conscious, but that the consciousness of both was self-conscious and fully-developed. Now, according to "C. C. M.'s" own showing in this last letter, in such a case there certainly could not have been two "foci of mentation" in one self simultaneously, opposite each other, one of them not recognising the other. If, on the other hand, Mrs. Newnham was half asleep, the questions were possibly answered by Mrs. Newnham entranced, and she was only semi-conscious with her ordinary senses; but then assuredly she was in no proper sense of the word split up into two selves! Choose your horn! Or can it be seriously maintained that we have a "secondary self" every time we are falling asleep? Surely not! In that case our one focus of mentation, our one Ego, is only half aware of the outer world, but more fully of the inner, that is all. I may look out of window, and think out a problem at the same time, without being two people because I am doing two things; and I may be half aware that I, the same person, am doing them; but Mrs. Newnham was not even half aware that she was answering and understanding the questions, though aware that she was watching, expecting, and writing.

If automatic writing indeed rouses the second self, then since the first is wide awake, they must necessarily merge, physiological centres and meta-organisms notwithstanding, or perhaps with the help of these; for these do not in the least "embarrass" my idealism; yet I do think Mr. Gurney has shown that the logical necessity of such, though it must doubtless exist, is not at present evident to us.

(What "C. C. M." says about association of ideas appears hardly relevant, because these are not simultaneous, but successive in memory.)

I must now leave the issue of this controversy with your readers. To me it appears probable that the foreign intelligence was mesmerised by the strong preconceptions of Mr. and Mrs. Newnham, a principle which I believe often accounts for the answers and behaviour of the intelligences that communicate through a medium.

Allow me to express my warm admiration for the masterly letter of "E. M." on the "Higher Life;" a letter which seems to me absolutely conclusive.—Yours truly,

RODEN NOEL.

#### The Moral Character of Communicating Spirits.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The letters which have lately appeared in "LIGHT," respecting Spiritualism and open séances, seem to me to be of importance. Professor Barrett, in a letter some weeks back, suggested the danger which might be attendant on those who exposed themselves to all manner of spirit influences, without knowing the source of such influences, whether good or evil. Now, there is a possibility or rather probability, to my mind, that such free exposure to unseen and unknown spirit influences, must, in the nature of things, be risky. In human life, we can guard ourselves against contamination by the powers of observation we possess. In spiritual matters we have little or no means of determining the true character of the same. We can but imperfectly take for granted (and then cautiously) spirit statements. We are in the position of blind men who are compelled to derive all their information from sound only, and not from sight. Imagine a colony of blind men and women with a few who had sight, and consider how much at the mercy of those blessed with vision the blind inhabitants would be. There is a great deal of assumption of great names in spiritual manifestations, particularly in the case of trance speakers. But what is to prevent the attendance at our séances of a dozen of lately executed criminals? We cannot be certain that we may not all the time be harbouring some atrocious murderer. It is well-known to those who have experimented in automatic writing, that most objectionable and blasphemous answers are frequently given in reply to proper questions. We say this, not to depreciate the value of Spiritualism, but to protest against the unlimited confidence shown by some inquirers in spirit manifestations. Spiritualism is an aid to Christianity and the Higher Life (moral, not corporeal). But communications received from unexplored regions, and in the absence of all credentials, and with no means of testing the authenticity of the same, if offered, must ultimately result in the demoralisation of the inquirers, who will become a receptacle and a prey of designing and degenerate spirits.—Yours truly,

G. R. V.

(Member of the Society for Psychical Research.)

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"  
16, CRAVEN STREET,  
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## Light :

SATURDAY, MARCH 13TH, 1886.

### THE HAUNTED HOUSE AT W—.

In "LIGHT" for November 7th, 1885, there appeared a report of proceedings at an alleged haunted house at W—. It will be remembered that this report, signed by Mr. A. G. Leonard, "on behalf of the committee," detailed some violent manifestations which occurred during a visit made by several members of the Society for Psychical Research to the house in question, we having been invited to join the party as guests.

It is now our painful duty to state that, owing to certain circumstances which have just come to our knowledge, neither of us now regard the report as of any evidential value whatever. At a certain period of the proceedings two of the other members of the circle deliberately set themselves to deceive the rest of the party, and this action was subsequently followed up by what we cannot but regard as a most unwarrantable piece of deception. In these circumstances we decline to remain responsible for any statements made in the report, inasmuch as this discovery of *mala fides* on the part of two of the circle throws grave doubt on the genuine character of a large portion, if not all, of the manifestations which occurred during our visit. As in spite of our protests the sittings were held in total darkness, the value of the evidence rests entirely upon the assurance received from each one at the time that he had conscientiously acted in perfect good faith. If, however, some members were capable of violating their professions, it is perfectly clear that no reliance can be placed on what took place at any of the séances, for granting freedom of action on the part of any one of the circle, and bearing in mind a case of deception which we now discover subsequently took place, we have no guarantee as to the genuineness of anything that occurred.

It is a pitiful story, and we sincerely regret that, in our desire and willingness to be of service to those whom we had every reason to regard as honest seekers after truth, we exposed ourselves to treatment such as would hardly be expected towards guests and from gentlemen. These are the bald facts, and it is only right to the public and ourselves that this unexpected development of the affair should be placed on record. Personally we consider that throughout we have been dealt with in a most unfair and shuffling manner. We should, however, have allowed much that was personally distasteful to us to remain unpublished had not these new facts come to light. Loyalty to truth, however, now compels us to speak out. We do so with much pain and regret, and all the more because although only two members of the W— party were actively engaged in the first act of deception, yet we fear that some of the others, certainly the majority of the party, were accessories after the fact. Unfortunately, too, this discovery throws considerable doubt on some of the cases upon which Mr. F. W. H. Myers has founded his articles on Automatic Writing, one of the persons concerned being the authority quoted in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*.

JOHN S. FARMER.  
W. EGLINTON.

### SOME THOUGHTS ON MEDIUMSHIP :

*Being an Address by MRS. DE MORGAN, read at the Conversazione of the London Spiritualist Alliance at St. James's Hall, on Thursday, March 11th, 1886.*

It has been said lately by a few Spiritualists whose sayings have most weight among us, that as very many facts have been collected and recorded, we may, without being charged with haste or impatience, feel justified in trying to find a theory which will fit them. The few ideas I have put together do not deserve so grand a name as a theory. Most of them are familiar to many Spiritualists, and they have this claim to be considered, that they are gathered from the teaching of the spirits themselves, having all been given, in whole or in part, from the descriptions of mediums quite unconnected with each other and perfectly trustworthy.

When, more than forty years ago, the announcement was made that those who had disappeared from among us had given unmistakable proofs of their continued existence and identity, it was curious to see the way in which the intelligence affected different minds. To many of those who had been sunk in despair for what was felt to be an incurable sorrow, the news came like light in the darkness. They agreed that it was no matter how the signal was given, provided that it were a *real* signal, intimating that we were remembered, loved, and waited for. To a few persons—those who had let their minds dwell on the purely earthly accompaniments of death, the shroud, the coffin, and the grave—the idea of the departed had become so identified with these things, which in reality belong entirely to our earthly state, that they were seized with horror when told of the simple experiences which had given their informants unmixed delight. An affectionate woman, who felt in this way, once said to me, "Oh dear ! I had become quite satisfied that those I loved were peacefully sleeping in their quiet graves, at rest till the Judgment Day ; and now you tell me they can be called up at the pleasure of a woman who calls herself a Medium !" And nothing could alter this state of mind ; though proof after proof was given, and arguments enough to convince David Hume—if he were able to receive them ; and if arguments *ever* convinced anybody.

The above is an extreme case, but even now there are persons who feel a similar repulsion, though in a less degree, even while longing for the electric touch which would bring them conviction, and in a moment change all their ideas of death, making this world almost a Paradise—a vestibule to the Heaven lying beyond.

But the idea of "the Medium" is still a "Lion in the way," deterring inquirers whose experiences might bring joy to themselves and illumination to others. In this state of uncertainty and possible misapprehension, it may be well, although to most Spiritualists the subject of mediumship is a familiar one, for us now and then to express our ideas of its nature and limitation, and to ascertain how far it may be trusted to convey the message across the river of life.

Many persons in their early experiments obtained only a few words, giving the name of the departed, an assurance of his or her happiness, and perhaps some reference to the circumstances of the inquirer, which, the entire ignorance of the Medium being certain, were held a guarantee of the spirit's identity. These messages astonished and delighted many, as far as they went, and it was not suspected that their brevity and literalness were due to anything but a reserve inseparable from the suddenness of the occasion. But those to whom they had come began to say, "Next time I get an opportunity I will put such or such a searching question, and if that is answered rightly, there cannot be a shadow of doubt." So a question involving the particulars of some intricate family quarrel, or the departed friend's opinion on some knotty point of science, was put as a test ; the answer was rambling and wide of the mark, the test failed, and the first communication through the same Medium, which had gone far to produce conviction, was set down to guess-work, *telepathy*, by its old name of thought-reading, or even to the results of a fraudulent inquiry into family circumstances.

I am sure we have all witnessed a series of incidents like these, and many suggestions have been offered in explanation of the discrepancies and difficulties. Some of these have been accepted ; but there are, I think, points on which there is still doubt, and the best way of setting this doubt at rest will be to find out how far we have cleared our way ; and, when that point is reached, to see whether the conclusions deduced from the

simpler phenomena are not applicable to those of a more complicated and seemingly mysterious character.

On the hypothesis that they are spiritual beings who communicate with us (and this belief forms the bond of our union, and the reason for our appellation), we can hardly, I think, deny their claim to know what they are doing, and how they are doing it. And even if their explanations seem to be in some degree modified in the various statements made through different mediums, the reason for these variations becomes apparent as the process of transmission becomes intelligible.

I need hardly remind those present how very vague and unconnected were all our first ideas of the powers and functions of a Medium, and of the nature of his work. I once heard it said, in a circle of educated people, "Surely we might do without the Medium, as the Spirits know how to rap for us." And another said, "If my friend can spell his name, he can spell the name of the man who stole my watch." But neither of these things could be done, and the questioners relapsed into disbelief. Like Dr. Johnson, their sagacity defeated its own end, though in a different way, for he, when he had had the poor Medium strapped to a board, and had thereby prevented the free passage of the delicate element required for the spirits' working, rejoiced, as some of our *savans* have done, in the cessation of the sounds, and the triumph of science and philosophy over superstition and ignorance. And we may feel sure that those clever persons who direct their attention to devising tests and to discovering imposture are, like the Leviathan of learning, throwing obstacles in their own way.

It is true that many seeming discrepancies meet us at the outset, but these disappear as we go on, and the apparent contradiction proves the underlying truth, as the disturbances in some of the paths of the planets only served, by indicating an unsuspected centre of attraction, to make known a new planet, and thus to confirm the law which they seemed to contradict. One analogy leads to another. The great law which regulates the movements of the material world is Attraction. The great law of the spiritual world is Sympathy. And whether we call it natural law in the spiritual world, or spiritual law in the natural world, we shall, I believe, acknowledge the truth of Swedenborg's assertion, that everything spiritual has its correspondence in something on earth.

But how does this apply to mediumship? We soon found that there must be a similarity of disposition, of feeling, or of thought between Spirit and Medium, before the first could use the last as his messenger. "Like to like" goes through both worlds, regulating the relation of Spirit to Medium, and of healer to sufferer. But we forget sometimes that sympathy in taste, talent, or feeling is a *spiritual* relation, whether both parties are in the body or not; so, in saying that there is a sympathy between a spirit and a mortal, we only express the fact of the existence of sympathy between two individuals.

But, as in the case of earthly attractions, there never yet has existed between friends—or between twins, in whom such instances are most often found—absolute and complete similarity in every minute detail of character (for such resemblance would constitute identity); so there must be degrees of greater or less likeness between a spirit in the earthly and one in the spiritual body.

Differences of feeling and thought indicate a variety in the proportions of those elements whose aggregate forms the character, and the more of such elements are common to both, the better can a Spirit in the next state convey his message through one in this world. Those persons who believe with Dr. Gall that each element manifests itself through a portion of brain, have a ready explanation, both of the varieties of character among mortals, and of the receptivity of some sorts of influence by some mediums, and rejection of the same by others. They see why a friend who has left us can send a loving message through Mrs. A., and may appear to have forgotten all about it, and to be quite full of some scientific question, in writing through Mr. B. In few words, just in proportion as the medium has qualities resembling those of the Spirit, will be his or her ability to receive and convey messages from the dweller on the other side.

The next thing we have to consider is the method of communication used by the spirits. Here I must again recur to the statements made, through various independent Mediums, by the invisible sources of influence.

These explained to us how the writing and drawing were accomplished by the substitution of a power emanating from the Spirit for that force in the human body by which the

different muscles are made to do their work in obedience to the will. This power, nerve-force, or whatever we like to call that whose nature defies analysis, is projected by the sender through the organisation of the Medium. When the two are thus *en rapport* a kind of identity is established between them; the Spirit's thought or feeling regulating the Medium's action, so that they are in fact as one; but only in those portions of character which are common to both.

Of one thing we are certain. A Medium is not merely a *pipe* through which any kind of message can be conveyed. And, with the information given us, and the confirmations it has received in many ways, we may ascertain with tolerable clearness the part to be assigned to each, the Spirit and the Mortal, in the production of the message. In the rapped-out, or written sentence, the sentiment conveyed, which is *its* spirit, is from the departed one; the language and imagery in which it is clothed are furnished by the recipient still in the body; and supply the external form or *body* of the message. So we have arrived at the fact, long known to theologians and divines—though they could not explain *its how* or *wherefore*—that there is a human and a divine element in every communication from the higher to the lower sphere.

There is no reason to suppose that any manifestation of spirit is an exception to these laws and processes. The writing, drawing, and speaking, which are called *direct*, and which come seemingly without the Medium's intervention, are as much dependent on his organisation as are the same manifestations when he holds the pencil, or when his vocal organs are perceptibly influenced by the unseen power. In all the cases of so-called direct and independent communication, a *something*, drawn from the Medium, and, with what modifications we know not, from those present, is indispensable. This "human element" may be found in the language both of the "direct" and the "indirect" communications. Examine these carefully and you will find some peculiarity of words or of spelling which will reveal the share taken by the mortal. I believe, however, that the relative proportions of the two elements vary, but that there is never entire absence of the human, even when languages quite unknown to the Medium are used. Mr. Gladstone's celebrated séance with Mr. Eglinton, when Greek and other languages are said to have been written, would—if correctly reported—form no exception to the rule, for Mr. Gladstone has Greek enough to supply all that was wanted, and more; and probably, if the truth were known, mediumistic power to contribute the higher elements required.

The foregoing suggestions on the laws and processes of mediumship will be worthless unless they apply to the construction of the materialised form as well as to the simple message of affection, or the sublime "burthen" of an Eastern prophet. I have never seen these curious materialisations under perfectly satisfactory conditions. In fact, in the only cases in which I have witnessed them at all, the apparition was evidently the Medium herself, dressed for the occasion, and *possibly* entranced. But the many particular descriptions given by close and competent observers leave no doubt of their genuineness, and the imperfections observable in them and analogous to those of other forms of mediumship, are in truth the best evidences of it. I take the testimony of Mr. Barkas, Mr. Blackburn, and "M.A. (Oxon)," given in "LIGHT," as sufficient to establish the truth of the occurrences.

Even where the figure formed is complete enough to insure a kind of recognition, there is never, as far as I can learn, *perfect* identity with what the spirit was when on earth. It is said, "The face was that of my relation, and one or two actions were characteristic, and intended to recall the memory of him, but the head was smaller, or the forehead lower, or the humorous or intellectual expression was wanting." The resemblance seems never to be perfect, and to consist of fragments of similarity, or even identity, rather than of a strong general presentation of the whole being.

On the supposition that I have approached the truth in tracing the law of sympathy and affinity between Spirit and Mortal, with the channels it opens and the limitations it implies, all these differences and imperfections become intelligible. The Medium who supplies material for a body must have physical or external qualities resembling in some degree those of the spirit personated; but he may not have the mental or moral gifts which would produce the expression required. To present a materialised form like that of Newton or Sir William Hamilton, the brow and head with their full and *spacious* development must be given; but this needs in the Medium the large and

finely organised brain, such as is only found once in fifty years, if so often, and such as would find its work in a very different field. But as there are many resemblances and analogies between all sorts and conditions of men, so many Spirits can draw from Mediums unlike themselves in many ways, enough of characteristic form or manner to make themselves recognised, though it is doubtful whether any spirit of a very high class or character has shown itself in material form except to circles of near relations, who would recognise it by the physical characteristics, and make allowances for the incompleteness in other ways.

In all the most complete manifestations, as far as I can find, the medium is entranced. The direct writing, drawing, and voice are no exceptions to this rule. The deeper the trance, the more perfectly is the temporary body of the image or of the message supplied. There are, however, degrees in the entrancement, but the consideration of them would make this paper too long.

The little that has been learnt on the nature of the material supplied by the Medium, and adopted by the spirit, must next be noticed. In the materialisations this element, called by "M. A. (Oxon)" the "pabulum of the spirit form," seems to be in a condition more nearly approaching what we call *matter* than the element which fills the same place in any other spiritual manifestation. But it is likely that with a better comprehension of all these processes, the ideas hitherto held on the subject of "spirit" and "matter" will undergo an entire change.

At a recent gathering of our friends some most interesting pictures by M. Tissot, of the process of materialisation, were shown to us. By these, and by many descriptions, we learn that, as the Medium is entranced, a bright spot appears on his side. This emerges and spreads, till it falls, looking like a filmy gauze, on the floor. Within this mass a head and parts of the body appear, draped or dressed in the remainder of the *pabulum*. It is not unlikely that this process, the attraction of "matter" to a *life*, or *spirit*-centre, may be illustrative of the action of life all through creation.

There have been many representations made by Spirits through Mediums, of the process of death. These I believe came to us chiefly in the early days of Spiritualism; and the clearest and most perfect one that I have seen is in a series of drawings made many years ago, through the hand of a little girl of twelve years old. They were collected and lithographed by the late Dr. Gully, and their genuineness is unquestionable. In the first drawing the dying person is lying on a couch. From the mouth, nose, eyes, and forehead issues something in the form of a flame. These seem to have been meant to represent light clouds.

Over this drawing is written:—*The material of which the spiritual body is composed.*

In the next drawing these emanations have coalesced a little way above the recumbent form, composing another body rather smaller than the one from which it has issued, but united to it by a band of the cloudy "material." There are other drawings, showing the degrees of elongation of this "silver cord." In the last picture the union is entirely broken; the dead form is laid in the grave, and the joyous risen Spirit, guided by angels, is welcomed by the dear friends who have gone before.

This little series of pictures forms one of very many similar representations given by voice, pen, or pencil at different times and through quite unconnected channels. By what we are thus taught we can perceive how the inner *here* becomes the outer in the next state, and we have thus a key to the doctrine of correspondences, which has been a stumbling block to many inquirers. The most material or external portion of the investiture of the spiritual body will be recognised as that drawn by the Spirit from the Medium to make the materialised form. Some seers, however, have pointed out the difference between the process of death and that of materialisation. In the first case, the spirit, they say, leaves the body first, and draws the investing soul-substance, which they call the *vehicle*, after it. In the second, a spirit already disembodied attracts this substance to itself, from the medium.

This vapour, cloud, or misty light is seen by those who have the inner vision in different degrees and conditions in all mesmeric and spiritual operations. As it contains the element of *life*, it would naturally be expected to convey health, as in mesmerism, to the diseased patient, and like the life force in the body, to act upon the nerves and contract the muscles of the

sensitive, even passing from his frame to render inanimate matter susceptible to the operation of higher spiritual power.

One word upon the messages. I think, but hope for correction if the suggestion is wrong, that they are of two kinds; the first and simplest describing things and affairs of this world, in language and imagery common to both Spirit and Mortal. The second, relating to things of the spirit world, familiar to the Spirit, but not coming within the ken of one still in the flesh. In both cases, the Spirits tell us, their meaning is conveyed by producing community of thought, or *telepathy*, between the two. In the latter case, the spirit who would impress upon the mortal recipient a truth which his mind *cannot* receive in the same form, still impresses the heavenly idea, and according to the mental organisation of the medium, it finds images, and is given out in terms *corresponding* to its meaning. As these terms and images vary, no two minds being alike, it is difficult sometimes to detect the identity of meaning in all the statements made by Spirits on their own condition. But when the principle of correspondence is understood, we know that such descriptions, given from one sphere to another, *must* be given in symbol, and we recognise the truth that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered our hearts to understand the things God hath prepared for those who love Him.

And if the law of sympathy which I have tried, though so poorly, to enunciate, is the true one, does it not afford the strongest of all motives to cultivate those pure and unselfish feelings which shall attract to us incessantly the holiest influences? If our belief has this effect no one can hesitate for an answer to the question: What good has Spiritualism ever done? It is true that it cannot predict a rise in the price of stocks, or tell the name of a winning horse; but the fruits of its unseen though certain and irresistible work will be seen in a regenerated world.

### "LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND

For 1886.

	£	s.	d.
Remittances and promises already announced ...	214	2	4
Mrs. Hennings, per J. S. F. (2nd donation) ...	5	0	0
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### THE DISSEMINATION FUND.

[This fund is intended to provide a centre for the dissemination of Spiritual literature, and also to meet the ever increasing demand for information, guidance, and assistance on the part of earnest inquirers into Spiritualism. To carry on the work effectively during 1886, at least £150 are required. The Report and Balance-sheet for 1885 were published in "LIGHT" for February 6th.]

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS AND DONATIONS PROMISED OR RECEIVED.

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Remittances may be sent to John S. Farmer, 16, Craven-street, Strand.



## PHASES OF MATERIALIZATION.

## A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH

IN THE

## OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M. A. (Oxon.)"

(Continued from page 105.)

Lastly, inasmuch as it gives in convenient summary the conditions under which the most remarkable manifestations were witnessed, together with a precise account of one of the most pronounced of them, I append the material portions of a letter of Mr. A. J. Smart's addressed in the first instance to the *Medium and Daybreak*, and subsequently reprinted:—

Since Christmas last, our private circle (for the purpose of whose meetings Mr. Lewis has kindly set apart a room at his residence, Montgomery-terrace, Roath) has patiently sat two evenings in every week for the development of these phenomena. I need not trouble you with the details of its gradual progress. You are familiar with the "day of small things" in these matters, the first few faint raps, then the appearance of the tiny luminous cloud moving and shifting to and fro, the growth of this cloud in size and distinctness as the power gets stronger, its gradually assuming more definite shape, and finally, after a number of persevering sittings, the *début* from the cabinet of the fully materialized form, arrayed in gracefully flowing garments of dazzling whiteness. One of the best possible proofs of the genuineness of Spiritualistic phenomena is the watching their growth from an almost imperceptible beginning to the extraordinary and substantial developments which they afterwards attain.

Our circle is no promiscuous one. There is no pecuniary element in our meetings, but simply the honest and Divinely inspired desire for truth and Spiritual knowledge. It is not even instituted for scientific investigation and experiment (though I have every sympathy with circles honestly working on this basis). Every sitting is emphatically a religious service of the most sacred kind. We do not therefore indulge in anything in the shape of ordinary tests, but we have instead as proofs of the reality of the phenomena, first, their gradual growth and extension week after week under our very eyes, and second (best tests of all), the tried integrity and known incapability of deceit of the friend to whose mediumship we are indebted for our opportunities of observation, and the proved good faith of his controls during the past eighteen months. At the same time, our experience (which tallies with that of many others who have sat under the same conditions) is that the controlling intelligences have, voluntarily and unsolicited, favoured us with tests both of genuineness and spirit-identity of a more conclusive nature than any we could have ourselves devised.

"We have had the medium in view at the same time with the spirit-form; we have had direct writing in various styles done by the form while in the middle of the circle; we have seen two forms at once, in the one case those of an Indian maiden holding by her side a little child: and in the other case, those of a tall male figure, bearing a child in his arms; the black hand of a little Indian girl has been frequently protruded from the cabinet, and used in such a way as to prove its complete flexibility; the substantiality of the forms has been proved to us by touch, by their handling material objects in our sight in the most decided way, stopping and setting on the musical box, advancing to the centre of the circle and stamping with the foot, exhibiting the hands, bare feet, and knee; breathing on the hands of the sitters; sitting in the chair at the table, and writing, and sitting at the organ, pressing down the bellows, and causing the notes to speak. One of our spirit-friends, the father of one of the sitters, is accustomed, after establishing the fact of his temporary materiality by pressing heavily on the heads of the sitters, and striking their hands, to dematerialize in our sight, the head sinking gradually until within about a foot of the floor, where it remains until dissipated into a white, fleecy cloud, which slowly drifts back into the cabinet. This dematerialization is a proof that there is no transfiguration of the medium of the kind "M.A. (Oxon.)" has recently written about. We have also had the direct voice to a small extent, single words (uttered with great difficulty) having been heard and understood on several

occasions. The robes in which these forms appear are a marvel in themselves, being of a brilliant whiteness, without a single crease, and some of them containing at the lowest estimate from fifteen to twenty yards of material. "Snowdrop," whose *forte* is the materialization of shawls, has given us many curious illustrations of her art. These shawls are materialized sometimes in our view outside the cabinet, and at other times inside and then brought out, where they grow larger or diminish in our sight. They are sometimes of a thick, heavy texture (as we have ascertained by touch); at other times they are very large, and of a gauzy, semi-transparent appearance; at other times like lace of the most intricate pattern.

These phenomena, occurring as a rule in a good light, have from time to time been witnessed, and can be testified to by about twenty-five different persons, men and women of intelligence and uprightness, whose good faith, integrity, and ability to observe and judge for themselves it would be ridiculous to call in question—some of them at first sceptical, but now happily numbered among the faithful.

Up to the present time more than a dozen distinct individualities have manifested themselves (sometimes seven or eight in one evening) of both sexes, of all ages, from the little child to the aged adult, and exhibiting different physical peculiarities and marked mental distinctions. Some of them have given tests of identity of the most convincing kind, and among them are included relatives and friends of the sitters, and fellow-townsmen recently deceased. As before intimated, our séances are actual religious services. Every effort is made to impress the sitters with a consciousness of the solemnity of the occasion, so as to induce a properly receptive frame of mind. The consequence is that our evenings are harmonious and therefore pleasant and successful in the extreme. We believe in a policy of discriminating exclusiveness. No doubt there is a necessity in the present stage of the movement for public and paid circles. Those who are fitted for this branch of work will take it up. But there is also a necessity for strictly private and select circles, where the conditions shall be rigidly kept by a number of persons who meet time after time, without addition to their number, in order that phenomena which it is impossible to develop in more promiscuous circles may be cultivated, and the results given to the world through the Press by credible persons. This stimulates other circles by showing what can be done, and it is in these circles that development of new and more advanced phenomena takes place. Having this policy in view, we are careful as to the introduction of strangers. Only one at a time is admitted, who must not only be a friend of one of the members, but known to be a person fitted to enjoy and profit by the privilege. It is no doubt to this exclusiveness, which keeps the conditions at a superior elevation, that we owe the advanced phenomena we obtain. When anything special is attempted, we are obliged to shut out visitors entirely.

On the evening of Sunday, the 3rd inst., our circle assembled under specially stringent conditions, which, with a view to completeness, I may as well mention, viz., abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and animal food, throughout the day (an easy matter for us, since we all, more or less, completely abjure these things), absolute fasting after the mid-day meal, and the indulgence in a bath (a very practical sort of baptism, and no doubt similar to the origin, with the same special purpose in view, of that now empty and misunderstood ceremony), prior to entering the circle-room. This preparation was in order to ensure the purity of the magnetic emanations from the circle.

The occasion was a solemn one, being no other than a leave-taking between the members of the circle and one (the beloved spirit-wife of one of the sitters, who passed from this earthly sphere some twelve months since), who has taken a prominent part in these materialization séances, and who was about to enter a higher sphere.

After the opening of the meeting by the reading of an invocation and the singing of a hymn, we waited patiently until at length there issued from the cabinet and stood in our midst the fully materialized form of our spirit-friend, clad in robes of such snowy and dazzling whiteness as forcibly to remind us of the "shining garments" of those other glorified spirits who, 1800 years ago, stood within the sepulchre. Taking from the table a bouquet of flowers, she presented them, in turn, to some of the sitters to inhale their fragrance. Then, as we stood up to receive her, she took from the table a platter containing food in the shape of a few biscuits, and herself handed them round to those present one by one. Retiring a little distance she took up a small piece of cake and ate it. We

then sat down, and she came round handing us pieces of cake. Our spirit-friend then several times traversed to and fro the entire length of the room, and, to prove her materiality, opened and shut the room-door. After this she advanced again to the table, and taking therefrom a tumbler containing milk, she again passed round the room handing the tumbler to each in succession, for the purpose of taking a sip of the contents; in doing this she had several times to return to the cabinet to gain fresh power, but eventually succeeded in favouring all the sitters in this way, she herself in each case handing and receiving back the tumbler. Finally, she retired and stood a few feet from the curtains, and raising the tumbler to her lips was clearly observed to drink a portion of the remaining contents; the sound of drinking was quite audible, and the gentleman to whom the tumbler had last been handed, having noticed on his returning it that it was about half full, stated that its contents had palpably diminished since our spirit-friend applied it to her lips.

Our friend then retired into the cabinet, and from thence rapped out a message that she would try and walk downstairs. It was found that at the moment there was more light in the hall than the temporarily materialized form could stand with safety; she however took the arm of Mr. Lewis, walked across the room, passed with him through the open door, up a few steps just outside, and across the upper landing as far as the door of a room opposite, and then returned. The distance between the cabinet and the point thus reached having been measured is found to be about thirty-five feet. This extraordinary effort was repeated. The fan-light in the hall having now been darkened, our friend again took the arm of Mr. Lewis and proceeded with him downstairs as far as the hall door (which we could hear touched) and back again. This is a distance of about fifty feet from the cabinet. This, too, was repeated. A third time the effort was made, but without the same success, the power becoming weak, and our friend having to retreat rapidly to the cabinet. During this experiment it was imperative on the sitters to remain seated, to avoid interfering with the magnetic cord linking the medium and the materialized form together.

After this, standing at the table in full view, she gave through the alphabet (the direct voice not being sufficiently distinct in articulation to be intelligible) the following message, "I shall go, after to-night, to a higher sphere." In answer to questions, she intimated that she had no hesitation whatever in passing through the change, that afterwards she could only come amongst us when the conditions were very superior, that this change was analogous to the physical process of death, but without its gloom and terror, and concluded with the message "God bless you all. Go on in the good work." She shook hands with each one present (placing two or three of her fingers in contact with the sitters', but not grasping them), by way of farewell, and leading her husband to a vacant seat which she placed beside her, embraced and kissed him. Thus ended one of the most affecting and impressive sésances I have ever been present at.

The medium, as might be expected, exhibited indications of considerably exhausted vitality.

3, Guildford-street, Cardiff.

A. J. SMART.

We testify to the occurrence in our presence of the incidents above narrated:—

REES LEWIS.	FLORENCE WAYLAND.
JAMES A. HOGG.	TALIESIN WILLIAMS.
MARY C. HOGG.	MOSES WILLIAMS.
S. F. WAYLAND.	JOHN ANDREWS.
EMMA WAYLAND.	CHARLES BAKER.

15, Kerry-croft-street, Cardiff.

THE *Greenock Herald* recently published a long account of some interesting phenomena occurring in the presence of a medium in the year 1576, and who was afterwards tried for witchcraft, condemned, and burned. Our modern psychics may congratulate themselves that they are living in the nineteenth and not in the sixteenth century.

THE *New York Tribune* says that "the Spiritualists' settlement near Neshaminy Falls has grown so large, that the adherents of the faith have decided to build a temple at Neshaminy to be devoted exclusively to their religious belief. They have formed themselves into a chartered organisation, and will found a town at Neshaminy. At present they own 110 acres of land, thirty-two of which are given up to park purposes. The rest has been divided into building lots."

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON, THE PROVINCES, AND ABROAD.

LONDON.—MR. GERALD MASSEY'S LECTURES AT ST. GEORGE'S HALL.—Tickets for the course of lectures to be delivered by Mr. Gerald Massey at St. George's Hall may be obtained at the office of "LIGHT." The price of a ticket for a reserved seat for the whole series is 10s. 6d.

MARYLEBONE.—MR. A. F. TINDALL writes:—The Marylebone Association, meeting at the Regent Hotel, will commence a fresh quarter on March 25th, under a slightly new title, namely: "The London Occult Lodge, and Association for Spiritual Inquiry." The deeper we go into these matters the more we feel that if a Spiritual Science is to be built up we must investigate all departments of the occult. We believe that even in this land there is much occult truth hidden, which by patient search can be discovered and utilised. We ask all in sympathy with us to help us by joining our Society, particulars of which I shall be happy to give. Next Sunday Mr. Montgomery will read portions of "Isis Unveiled," and he will then afterwards lecture on what has been read. We think that occasionally it would be advisable to read and discuss some well-known work. On the following Sunday I shall read a paper on "Bible Occultism, and Jesus of Nazareth as an Occult Teacher."—30, Wyndham-street, Bryanston-square.

MIDDLESBROUGH.—A correspondent writes:—It has been a great pleasure for me to come back to Middlesbrough for many reasons, and one of the chief among these is the satisfaction I have at meeting with one with whom I was the pioneer in the cause of Spiritualism here fully fifteen years ago, and at finding that the faith, which so far as I knew was professed then only by his family and one or two others, now numbers its hundreds of adherents. I ought to mention that I was formerly connected with the Middlesbrough Press, and even then did what I could in a quiet way to advance the cause by indirect newspaper support. Since I came here lately I have been doing a quiet work, in the way of having private sésances among my friends; and I have made two converts already. I have certainly been much surprised at the results of sésances I have been giving here and other places. They have been merely sittings for answering questions by table-tipping, but these are answered so correctly, and so frequently correctly that I begin to think I have hitherto unsuspected powers as a medium. I attended a Spiritualistic meeting in a public hall here, when an address was delivered by a Mrs. Yarwood. Her audience consisted chiefly of the working class, and she gave some remarkably correct delineations of the spirit friends of some of those present. I was pleased to find the hall crowded; and the audience appeared to be decidedly appreciative. What a change since I and two or three others were about the only Spiritualists in Middlesbrough!

PORTO RICO.—This island boasts no less than five journals devoted to Spiritualism.

NANTES.—The Spiritualists at Nantes are represented by *La Religion Laïque*, directed by M. Verdad, formerly editor of *L'Antimatérialiste*.

HOLLAND.—The transition is announced of M. Plate. This gentleman was one of the moving spirits in introducing Spiritualism into Holland, and the movement in that country is indebted to him for the Dutch translation of the works of Allan Kardec.

BUENOS AYRES.—We have received a new journal devoted to Spiritualism, entitled *Luz del Alma*. It is published monthly in Buenos Ayres. The first number contains, amongst other interesting articles, a translation of the report of one of the Committees of the London Dialectical Society.

BARCELONA.—From recent issues of *El Faro Espiritista*, the organ of the Spiritualistic Federation of Valles, we learn that an alliance of Spanish societies has existed for some years. They have been in the habit of holding a periodical congress on an average three times in each year. One of the principal confederated societies is one having its headquarters in the capital, Madrid. The Federation seems to have turned its attention to practical matters, with the result that circles have multiplied on all sides. In Barcelona alone, it is stated that there are upwards of 100 circles meeting regularly.

We have for disposal a copy of "Art Magic." It will be remembered that the edition of this work was a very limited one, and the book is so scarce now that copies fetch an enormously enhanced price. This one may be had for £5.

## 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 ls. 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. :—

1. CIRCLES OF EXPERTS,
2. ELEMENTARY CIRCLES OF INVESTIGATORS,
3. INQUIRERS,
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 seances, and what to expect.

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

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

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

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a 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 seance.

The first indications of success usually are a cold breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitchings of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly, Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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; Zollner'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. W. W.*); 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 contemporaneous, 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. . . . Nevertheless, loyalty to truth compels me to acknowledge the evil and the good that have come under my own observation. . . . 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 anylegerdemain, 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 ascertained laws—in other words, will become the subjects of a science.” These views will prepare us for the following statement, made in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1864, p. 336: “We have only to add, as a further tribute to the attainments and honours of Mr. Senior, that he was by long inquiry and experience a firm believer in spiritual power and manifestations. Mr. Home was his frequent guest, and Mr. Senior made no secret of his belief among his friends. He it was who recommended the publication of Mr. Home's recent work by Messrs. Longmans, and he authorised the publication, under initials, of one of the striking incidents there given, which happened to a near and dear member of his family.”

## 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, Bellachin, 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 the slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglington, 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.”