

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOTH 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.)"

In spite of a most inclement night, a wind that was pitiless in its severity, and the almost universal prevalence of chills and catarrhs, the soirée of the London Spiritualist Alliance was well attended. The proceedings were full of interest. As members get to know each other better, the social character of the meetings, so important for the binding together of elements otherwise incoherent, is more marked. These meetings afford to many of us the only regular opportunities of seeing some of our Spiritualist friends; and the fact of our being brought in contact one with another is not the least benefit that the Alliance has brought about. Mrs. De Morgan's paper on Mediumship was in a high degree interesting and instructive. Some points in it were excellently put, and very necessary for us to bear in mind. For instance:—"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.'" I remember very well in early days several people said to me, "Can we not do without a medium?" "They might ask, Why employ mediums?" (said the Rev. Page Hopps in a recent address). "He did not know why, but perhaps most of them were too thick. Why could they not see the rings of Saturn by means of a poker?" The medium was supposed to be a new kind of priest, writ otherwise. They wanted their gas without a gas-pipe, their electricity without the aid of a battery. We do now know a little better than that: but not so very much that we can afford to neglect any opportunity of learning more about mediumship, and studying the physiological and psychical changes that take place in a medium during a séance. That is one work that I hope the Research Section of the Alliance may take in hand.

Then, as to the system of reiterated tests, catch-questions, and so forth, so dear to some investigators, Mrs. De Morgan has some wise words. Messages had come to some which gave simple evidence that they proceeded from departed friends. It was, no doubt, very right and proper that these should not be accepted as genuine without sufficient probing. But the question is, what is fair, sufficient, and permissible in such cases? "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 guesswork, to *Telepathy* by its old name of thought-reading, or even to the results of a fraudulent inquiry into family circumstances." In how many cases has that been so? The memory of earth and the things of earth seems to be more or less vague in these *revenants*. In some cases it seems to be decided that it is not well for the spirit to be brought at all within the temptations of the lower world from which it has escaped, and so no communication is permitted. When communication is established it would seem to be governed by various impulses and motives. The chief one is affection: most spirits are drawn to earth by cords of love. In some cases it is a desire to redress a wrong; and such cases seem to me to show conclusively how the earth memory is preserved where it might be expected to die out. The affections are not concerned in such cases, and there is, therefore, a survival of something else. The miser drawn to his hoard may be said to be animated by some low form of affection, out the conscience-stricken criminal, who returns to the scene of his crime, is governed by some other impulse. In other cases again, as in those best known to me, there is direct evidence of an organised attempt to give proof of the action of the world of spirit on the world of matter, to give instruction and guidance, and to submit evidence to sifting. It is from this latter set of cases that we shall learn most, for the spirits concerned know most. But we shall not learn by employing the methods which Mrs. De Morgan gently satirises

The intimate connection between the communicating spirit and the medium is well brought out in this paper. "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." This is, doubtless, of universal application. Some curious questioners spend much time in speculating whether the language of a message, automatically written, is the language of the medium through whom it was written: whether the writing would be his or similar to it, and so forth. The answer is that the form is from the medium, the substance from the spirit, and this applies to direct writing as well. But the general principle undergoes many modifications by circumstances. In the series of writings, for instance, some of which are published in "Spirit Teachings," terms of expression peculiar to the medium are frequent, even when the ideas conveyed were opposed to his own. The writing in which most of the communications were made by a sort of amanuensis (for most who desired to communicate were not able to command the hand of the medium so as to write with ease) was a modification of his own, more cursive, and running over the lines more easily. But many communications were made in writing very markedly different; each distinct and with its own plain characteristics. These were such that it was obvious at a glance from what source the message was coming, as one says of a well-known writing, "Oh! here is

a letter from So-and-so." If Mr. Netherclift were to examine these writings, I have little doubt that down below the superficial difference so marked to the eye he would discover evidence that they were all written by the same hand. Handwriting and language, however modified, are from the medium. And not only this, but ideas are unquestionably used that exist in his mind, when they serve the purpose of the communicating intelligence. It seems to be the reasonable law operative in these matters that what already exists should be utilised where possible, and that the form of the communication should come from the medium. It is equally certain in many ascertainable cases that the substance comes from spirit.

When Mrs. De Morgan comes to the subject of materialisation, she has to consider how far the same principle—"like to like,"—which she considers to be the general law of spirit-intercourse, applies. She is disposed to think that "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." I do not feel quite sure that this is so. A prolonged study of the evidence given for the production of these forms through the most successful mediums leads me to think that the mere presentation of a particular face and figure is no evidence of identity. I may be wrong, for this is a question about which we know very little; but I could as easily conceive the presentation of the massive head of a Newton through a child medium as the materialisation of a lovely female figure, or of a little child, through the mediumship of a stalwart man. There seems to be abundant evidence that this is so in fact. The forms presented through a given medium are infinite in variety. No doubt their superficial appearance differs; but if we could get below, as in the case of the writing, I believe Mrs. De Morgan would be found to be right. The massive brow of our Newton might be found empty; and the figure of our friend, so openly characteristic of his deportment, might enshrine nothing nearer and dearer to his sorrowing friend than the entranced soul of the medium, or the spirit concerned in the manifestation. It *might* be so. It might, on the other hand, be found that the whole energy was thrown into the manufacture of this external presentation with a view to identification, and that the *friend* was there wholly, though active only partially.

One more point. The messages are, as Mrs. De Morgan suggests, subject to this same law of "like to like." The spirit establishes community of thought with the medium; and just as in automatic and direct writing the peculiarities of his handwriting are likely to appear, so in trance-speaking the form in which messages are clothed comes from his mind. As no two minds are alike, messages given through different mediums have naturally the superficial points of difference. When we consider the *modus operandi*, it is not surprising that it should be so. When we consider the character of the questions too often put; when we think of the impossibility of translating into terms of our language the things of spirit and the spirit-world; it is not surprising that there should be divergence, contradiction, vagueness. The very remarkable thing is that below all this there should be traceable so real an agreement on essentials.

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RECORDS OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

(Continued from page 99.)

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

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

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

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

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

CLASS O.—PSYCHOGRAPHY.

I called on Mr. Eglinton at two o'clock on Monday, October 26th, 1885, but owing to a stupid misconception on my part he did not expect me on that day, and was not prepared to receive me, having an engagement at half-past two. But I so begged and implored him not to send me away, as I had come some distance, that he very reluctantly consented to try—reluctantly, because he thought it was not fair to me.

I said that I wished the writing to be on paper, if possible. Mr. Eglinton took a sheet and fastened it with a bit of gum to the slate; then, turning his back, he told me to write a question on the slate. This I did, and immediately put it down on the table, the paper uppermost. Mr. Eglinton then slid it along the table and held it by the frame close under the table, throwing first a tiny bit of black lead on the slate. After about five or six minutes we heard a faint sound, then Mr. Eglinton asked me to hold the slate a minute. I did so, and he cut the point off a blacklead pencil and threw it on the slate, and took it again in his right hand; with his left he held both my hands on the table. I saw the edge of the slate and a part of his other hand all the time. In a few minutes we heard writing very distinctly. This was followed by three taps. Then the slate was withdrawn, and the paper was seen covered with writing. It was an answer to the question I had written, and it corroborated a message which I had previously received through the tables. The writing was signed with my husband's name; and although the writing was more flowing than his, some words were exactly in his writing, especially the signature; and there was this peculiarity in it, that it was carefully punctuated. Now, my husband was very particular on this point. Mr. Eglinton told me then to write a question in the double slate. I did so, closed and locked it, and Mr. Eglinton laid it on the table, and placed both hands on it. Almost immediately writing was heard. I unlocked the slate, and on the opposite side to my question an answer was written. This writing was like my husband's. That is all, but how much to me!

I am very grateful to Mr. Eglinton, and I humbly thank God for this wonderful revelation of unknown power.

I have the paper, of course.

W. G.

[Our correspondent furnishes the following additional information.]

I forgot to say that the first three words of the message were written with thick black pencil, and looked smudgy; the rest was apparently written with the fine point which Mr. Eglinton threw on afterwards. I did not ask him how he knew that another pencil was needed, taking it for granted that an impression had been made on his mind.

DOUBTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF INQUIRERS.

VIII.

[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.

- (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?*
- (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.

(13) It is not possible to state the qualities which constitute mediumship, although we hope that the systematic research upon which many Spiritualists are now entering will throw considerable light upon the problem. Taking the mediums with whom we are acquainted, they appear to be of widely varying types of organisation. At the same time it is unquestionable that mediumship sometimes runs in families. That fact, therefore, seems to indicate that the special qualities which constitute a medium are in some way connected with bodily organisation, and that they may be transmitted from generation to generation. It appears, too, that, though in a greater or lesser degree, most people possess these qualities. Yet, inasmuch as most of us, though possessing the ability to sketch, are not capable of becoming artists, so it is not every sensitive who can put his sensitiveness to any practical account. Good mediums are few and far between. The matter is one for experiment and research, and we earnestly hope that a serious attempt will be made to engage in such needful and valuable work.

(18) The violent shakings and noisy jargon of one undergoing development as a medium are probably caused by the inability of the controlling intelligence to get complete mastery over the organisation of the medium. It may be that even the spirit controlling has not the required knowledge of the matter—circumstances at times indicating such a conclusion. Mesmerism throws considerable light upon this question, and we cannot too earnestly inculcate the desirability—we had almost said necessity—of approaching Spiritualism through Mesmerism. We should advise the questioner to attend mesmeric circles, such, for instance, as those which Mr. Price is now conducting in connection with the Research Section of the London Spiritualist Alliance; and, having observed the action of mind upon mind embodied, he will then be helped to a far clearer understanding of the process which a medium, in passing under control, goes through, than he could obtain from any written description we might give.

(25) Our answer to Question 13 partially answers this. As far as our experience goes most people possess the gift of mediumship, but very few are able to turn it to practical account. By development they may increase the latent powers. We should rather say that many people are more or less sensitives, but very few mediums.

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WHAT we call supernatural must be constructed upon the same lines as the natural—the order of things to which we are accustomed and adapted. The testimony of spirits is clear as to this adaptation. It is in the nature of things. The future life is simply a continuation of the present. Spirits tell us that they were scarcely conscious of the change, but for the presence of old friends who had gone before and welcomed them. The future life can be only one to which we are adapted by our present experiences.

PHASES OF MATERIALIZATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH

IN THE

OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M. A. (Oxon.)"

(Continued from page 130.)

At the close of the same year Mr. Smart records* the progress that had been made in six months. The narrative is again confirmed by the attestation of several independent observers.

"On the evening of Wednesday, November 7th, an epoch in the development was signalled by the successful presentation to the view of each sitter in succession of the medium at the same time as the materialized form. The accomplishment of this triumph (which gives a certainty to all the phenomena which have taken place during the preceding ten months, which was perhaps lacking before, except in the eyes of the more intimate friends of the medium, to whom their knowledge of his integrity was a sufficient proof) was initiated by a process which the controls termed 'illuminating.' This being completed, a member of the circle was called forward and introduced just inside the cabinet, where (as the lady reported) there were discernible both the outstretched form of the medium and the white-robed form of the control, the medium being surrounded by a beautiful halo of light. In succession all the remaining sitters were given an opportunity of seeing this sight, the gradual fading away of the encircling halo from the upper part of the form of the medium rendering only the lower part of the form visible to the majority, which, however, was sufficient to prove the independence of the materialized figure and the medium. This séance also was held at the house of Mr. Lewis. The following witnesses attest the above account:—Rees Lewis, Elizabeth Lewis, William Smith, John Andrews, Taliesin Williams, S. F. Wayland, Charles Baker, Moses Williams, Madame Gillies, James Edward Hill, Marian Hill, Emma R. Wayland, J. Rees, Eliza Williams, Thomas Joyce, William Mathews, and A. J. Smart."

Once again, after an interval of a little more than half a year, he reports progress in the following terms:—†

"Our private circle has met at the residence of Mr. Rees Lewis for nearly three years. During that period the medium has been thoroughly known to the sitters both in private and business life, and has developed from the simple movement of the table in response to questions, through the phases of automatic writing, clairvoyance, and trance speaking, up to full-form materialization. Every stage has been slowly evolved under the very eyes of the members of the circle. The same phenomena have been obtained on the premises of various friends and also in the neighbouring town of Merthyr, at the residence of Mr. William Scott. Some of the phenomena transpiring have already been made public. On one occasion twenty-one different forms of varying degrees of distinctness and solidity; materialized in one evening, the ordinary number being about a dozen.

"I will now proceed briefly to mention a few of the more recent phenomena. Our sitting on the evening of Friday, the 5th inst., was a special one, for the benefit of a lady friend. Those present were but four in number. The noticeable events of the evening were the following:—The first form that presented itself was that of a female draped, as usual, in the purest white, while on the forehead glittered a splendid jewel. It differed entirely from the luminous appearance of the well-known 'spirit light,' which seems to emit no rays, while this jewel flashed as the head was turned from side to side. The face was indistinct, but we were given to understand that this was 'Pearl,' Mr. Lewis's daughter. . . . After her retirement we were astonished to see a masculine figure in close fitting garments, bound suddenly through the curtains, jump on a chair, and seat itself on the back, at the same time repeating the name 'Joey.' Before we had time to recover 'Joey' had bounded on to the table, then back into the cabinet, and out again head over heels."

"But the most remarkable event of the evening was this—one of our regularly attending spirit friends, exceeding by some six inches the stature of the medium, attired in a long

* *Medium and Daybreak*, December 21st, 1877.

† *Medium and Daybreak*, August 2nd, 1878.

white robe . . . quitted the room entirely and walked down-stairs. In a few minutes he returned bearing a dish of fruit which he had taken from the larder. This he handed round and partook of. This visit he repeated several times, and on each occasion bringing up some article from one or other of the various rooms below, in testimony of his actual presence on the spot. His greatest effort consisted in his quitting the house entirely through the back door, and presently returning into the circle-room bearing in his arms branches of a fuchsia bush. The position of this bush being against the wall on the right-hand side of the garden, the door of such being on the left, he must have traversed the entire breadth of the garden. The distance of the fuchsia from the cabinet is ninety feet. A second time the garden was crossed, the result this time being some branches from a rose-tree growing close to the fuchsia. The light in the kitchen through which the form had to pass was a jet of gas turned low."

At the séance held on the 14th inst, "A tall form advanced just outside the cabinet. On its left was the window closed with a shutter, but the latter not fitting properly there is a gap between it and the frame, the amount of light coming through being so great as to require stopping by means of a strip of cloth. This was drawn aside and a flood of light admitted which permeated every part of the room to some degree, but fell in a full stream upon the figure. The effect was indescribable. The form was illuminated from head to foot, causing the white garment to glisten like the purest silver. One hand (much larger than that of the medium) placed over the eyes to shade them, and the veins in the arm, stretched out to admit the light, were plainly visible and of the ordinary flesh tint . . . On the evening to which reference has been made the conditions obtained were as nearly perfect as our knowledge on that point could make them, so much so that the curtains were thrown up out of the way over the door of the cabinet (a small room on the first floor, partitioned off from a larger room in which are seated the members of the circle), and our spirit friends were then enabled to wander in and out from one room to the other with the greatest self-complacency and *sans froid*."

"It was at one time a favourite objection of our sceptical friends that those spirit-forms which were of different height to the medium were never seen away from the cabinet. The fact that now the figures of the little children—in spite of their being, as would naturally be expected, less able to 'hold together'—are frequently seen all but in the centre of the circle, while two or three different forms, each five or six inches taller than the medium, and unmistakably different from him in bearing and contour, walk in succession freely about the house, and even into the garden, is only another lesson that the patient cultivation of genuine phenomena is certain, in due time, to shatter to atoms all sceptical theories of imposture based upon phenomena which merely happens to be undecided and equivocal at the time."

"It has invariably been found that the absence of the form from the medium for an unusual length of time, or the attainment of a point unusually distant from the cabinet, is attended with very great exhaustion to the medium, and the same is true in cases where the form has been subjected to the action of strong light."

On Sunday, the 21st, "Peter made a great advance in materialization. He descended to the hall nine or ten times, and there in a good light showed himself to members of the circle who had previously assembled in the front parlour."

"Last evening this was repeated with more particularity; and after these manifestations Peter returned to the circle and dematerialized in front of the curtain. From the white mist which then remained, after numerous attempts and failures, owing to lack of sufficient power, evidenced by repeated risings and sinkings, the figure of a little girl was slowly evolved."*

(To be continued.)

REFERRING to a paragraph which appeared in our issue of the 27th ult., Mr. Alfred Capper, the "thought-reader," has written to say he has been entirely misrepresented, which is as we thought. He has "not professed in the slightest degree to expose Spiritualism," but has, on the contrary, "continually stated in public that from personal experience he is convinced there are many genuine mediums." Mr. Capper's prompt denial of the statements attributed to him does him credit, and his conduct compares favourably with the attitude of certain notorious professors of thought-reading who lose no opportunity of misrepresenting both Spiritualists and Spiritualism.

* Time, 8 p.m.

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.]

Individuality and the "Newnham Case."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It is not to be expected that the abstract and difficult questions discussed in Mr. Noel's last letter can be adequately dealt with in a reply for which permissible space would suffice. But I must attempt to remove certain misapprehensions for which perhaps my own obscurity is responsible. Mr. Noel says that I confess that "the 'second focus of mentation' cannot arise while the ordinary normal impressions remain in full vigour, but can only arise when these are dormant," and adds, "now dormant is precisely what I thought he [I] agreed with me neither of the two intelligent selves were in the 'Newnham Case—' neither dormant nor even semi-conscious." Mr. Noel has here confused what I said of the *origin* of the "second focus" with the *occasion of its manifestation*. The original segregation of the finer sensibilities, so as to form a second mental group, I conceive can only happen during the dormancy of the stronger or coarser impressions, for they would be merged in the latter until they had attained, by the cohesion of frequent separate association, such strength as to make independent co-existence possible. That stage attained, the consciousness may be simultaneous, the *occasion* of the secondary consciousness then not being the dormancy of the primary, but some stimulus to which it, the secondary, is responsive. I am sorry Mr. Noel could have thought from my letter that I had the facts of the "Newnham Case" so little in mind as to assert that her (Mrs. Newnham's) normal state was "dormant" during the answers, and that this dormancy gave occasion for the waking-up of a more subtle self. I was dealing with the case, *throughout and expressly*, on the contrary assumption.

With regard to another passage in Mr. Noel's letter, that "in dealing with consciousness on the same plane," I seem "disposed to make the body, the organism, the delimiting plastic agent moulding personality," I am unable to recognise this as a correct representation of anything I have said or mean. My opinion is, in fact, very nearly exactly the reverse.

On another point, Mr. Noel says that I have not "got hold of the idea" that the "Ich denke" is "an idiosyncrasy," or that there is one "living, actual" Ich denke, and another "logical, abstract" one, and that Kant also erred in ignoring the former. And yet Kant devoted part of a chapter of the "Transcendental Dialectic" (Book II., c. i. "Of the Paralogisms of Pure Reason") to this very point, and to the refutation of the "idiosyncratic" Ich denke as a foundation for a rational doctrine of the soul! If Mr. Noel means that I not only "think," but think *thus*—characteristically, in a way quite peculiar to myself, and in a mode which in fact is my individual difference—that I of course admit. This is only to restate the fact of the modality of consciousness. But the question is, whether this modality, however deeply rooted, is essential and eternal. Now, is not the whole ideal of philosophising and religion to transcend it? Mr. Noel must not suppose that I follow Schopenhauer and Hartmann in placing the Absolute Spirit immediately behind our present experience—the world of Vorstellungen, as we now know it. That, assuredly, is *not* the Eastern view, which I am disposed to adopt. According to the latter, the Absolute Spirit is indeed the Noumenon of all individuals, but there are many stages of individuality to be dissipated successively by progressive realisation of the truth. "The earthly body is the first of the five vestures of the soul in order of ascent to the fontal essence. . . . Each lower is to be resolved into each higher garment of the soul, by a progressive insight into the fictitious nature of them all, till the aspirant passes through the last, the so-called beatific vesture, to the Self within."* When Mr. Noel objects that since I admit no "spirit" other than the one Absolute Subject, I cannot mean an individual soul when I speak of "the incarnation of a spirit" as "the conversion of the spiritual into the earthly mode of consciousness," he fails to see that according to this whole doctrine individualisation is just as predicable of the one mode of consciousness as of the other. I speak of "a spirit," as of "an individual," though recognising in this only a particular manifestation, or mode, of the One Subject. All I say is that

* Gough's "Phil. of the Upanishads," p. 76.

individuality in the one sphere, as in the other, is resolvable. I hold individuality to be the determination of the One Subject in relation to a nexus of its states. In the Commentaries of Sankarāchārya I find a passage thus translated: "It is of no use to object. How can there be a various creation in the One and only Self, unless it abolish its own unity in order to pass into plurality? For there is a multiform creation in the One and only Self, in the dreaming state of the soul, without any suppression of its unitary nature." Now the difficulty of conceiving two or more parallel consciousnesses of the same subject arises solely from what, I submit, is the question-begging fallacy that consciousness requires for the identification of its moments *nothing but* the unity of the Subject. Now I maintain that the reference of distinct states to the unity of the subject (the "Ich denke") requires what may be called an objective connection or association—as between the states themselves—and that as the Subject is *determined* solely by the *content*, or state, of consciousness, contents or states not related *inter se* must occasion distinct self-determinations. Such self-determination is the Ego of consciousness. At the same time the missing link of association may be found in a higher mode of consciousness, which would thus identify the two Egos. But for the due exposition and development of this idea, a metaphysical and psychological treatise would be necessary.

C. C. M.

The Society for Psychical Research and Spiritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I had not wished to intrude further on your space with reference to my appeal for cases of automatic writing including facts not known to the operators. But Mr. Watts' letter in "LIGHT" for March 13th contains a (doubtless unintentional) misunderstanding which I should be glad to set right. Spiritualists, he says, "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 to do so." On this sentence (which Mr. Watts subsequently expands) I have three remarks to make.

1. I assuredly do not think it in any way the "duty" of Spiritualists, or of anybody, to send cases to *me personally*, in preference to anyone else who will take the trouble to collect and inquire into and publish such cases. Considering the importance of the issue, it certainly seems reasonable to invite Spiritualists to strengthen the testimony for the origination of automatic writing in minds other than the writer's. But I am far indeed from desiring a monopoly of the trouble of collection; and I am very glad that the Editor of "LIGHT" is collecting also. If Mr. Watts would do the same I think that it would be useful work. To "M.A. (Oxon's)" collection I have repeatedly referred with gratitude. What I want is, what surely Spiritualists must equally desire, namely, to have as large and as carefully-sifted a mass of evidence before us as possible, which may then be discussed with perfect friendly feeling from many different points of view.

2. As regards my own personal investigation, when Mr. Watts "reminds" me (and we can none of us remind each other too often) that "*research* implies the patient and persistent *searching out* and investigation of facts for oneself," I would venture to refer him to the Society for Psychical Research's *Proceedings* VIII., p. 37, where my *own* efforts are described; and also to point out that I have, in *Proceedings* VII. and VIII., published about a dozen cases of automatic writing of various kinds, derived from friends or correspondents of my own. Besides these cases, which seemed worth printing, my friends and acquaintances have, at my request, been kind enough to make a very great number of experiments, most of which failed to afford results of interest. The number of my friends is not unlimited, nor can I keep them at work at planchettes all day.

3. And this brings me to my third point, namely, that I cannot agree with Mr. Watts in what he seems to imply, namely, that "simple methods of investigation," if carried on by a diligent group, are pretty certain to lead to his conclusion. I venture to dispute the accuracy of his estimate that "thousands of people" have been thus convinced, on reasonably satisfactory grounds, by experiments of their own. If this be so, have one hundred, or have fifty, out of the "thousands" given to the world a detailed, authenticated, contemporaneous account of these weighty experiences—say, such an account as the registrar of a hospital would give of an unusual case? If Mr. Watts would print a list of the recorded cases of information given through auto-

matic writing which he considers conclusive, it would afford the means of discussing his estimate, which at present seems to me vague and misleading.

One word more. I am almost tired of defining my own "attitude"; but as Mr. Watts seems again to allude to it, I will once more say that, so far as I am aware, it is, and always has been, an attitude of cordial co-operation with all those who, from whatever point of view, will take the trouble to make these experiments with diligence, record them with accuracy, and discuss them with candour.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

The "Banner" Free Circle.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should like to explain that the note I wrote you about the *Banner* Circle was not intended for publication. Its object was to draw your attention to what "C. C. M." had written about the want of sufficient verification to the messages there given. I was afraid that an erroneous conception might prevail on the subject were no reply made to that gentleman's remarks, and I hoped to see the matter taken up by you. Every one who reads "LIGHT" will now know of the existence of the *Banner* Free Circle, which, I think it will be granted, is one of the most desirable institutions in the great Spiritual movement. I have experienced, I may say, during the last twenty-five years, my full share of the deception practised by mediums; but it certainly never occurred to me that the acknowledgments of the messages received from surviving friends could not be accounted as evidence. Who, not a lawyer, could imagine the possibility of such a monstrous deception as the regular fabrication of letters would be, unless they came from the friends of the departed? And what would be the object gained, as Miss Shelhamer's circle is a free one, being open gratis to all who like to come?

J. H. G.

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.]

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ATTENTION is particularly drawn to the advertisement on the front page of Mr. Gerald Massey's lectures. Tickets for the course (10s. 6d.) can be obtained at our office.

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Light:

SATURDAY, MARCH 20TH, 1886.

PROFESSOR PREYER ON THOUGHT-READING.

By CARL DU PREL.

TRANSLATED BY "V."

In this, his latest essay, Professor Preyer expresses his opinion that every man when he is awake makes involuntary movements with his head, arms, and other parts of his body, so imperceptible that he himself is ignorant of them, and that these are caused by respiratory, pulsative, and impulsive fluctuations. To control these movements, and graphically represent them for the purpose of physiological and pathological diagnosis, various apparatuses have been invented, the number of which has been recently augmented by one by Professor Preyer, which, for sensitiveness, reliability, and general usefulness seems to surpass those previously known; and which may, therefore, become of great use to physicians.

The portion of the essay which treats of this has, therefore, a value quite independent of the rest. Professor Preyer, however, proceeds further to say that these involuntary muscular movements explain thought-reading. That, in certain cases, this is the fact, he himself proves; but the general assertion is evidently quite unfounded, viz., that my involuntary movements, which are so weak as to be imperceptible to myself, when transferred to another, who holds my hand, are sufficiently strong to influence him perceptibly; especially if he, like Cumberland and others, rushes about the room with me as though he were mad. It can surely not be taken as an incontrovertible truth that another feels more strongly than I do myself, what is taking place in me. This would be like the assertion that an echo gives back the sound louder than the original.

I felt very curious to see how Professor Preyer would account for thought-reading without bodily contact, and my curiosity increased when I read these words (p. 11): "I have, therefore, taken great trouble in proving that the endeavours to secure thought-reading without contact have completely failed." My expectations were, however, sadly disappointed. The only experiments of this kind, spoken of by Professor Preyer are those instituted by Dr. Richet in Paris. I willingly admit that these are not convincing; but negative results, according to the rules of logic, prove nothing whatever against positive results, which have been afterwards obtained. The latter exist in great numbers. I will not refer to what I myself have written in my essay on thought-reading, nor to what has been said since then by Hartmann in his pamphlet on Spiritualism. Professor Preyer takes no notice of either of these essays, as they are not headed by the title of professor. I am, however, in a position to refer him to other opponents of his theory, apparently unknown to him, who, by experiments of the most convincing character, have so completely disposed of the theory of involuntary muscular movement for the last three years, that it is really an anachronism to return to it at the present time.

The Society for Psychical Research in London has appointed a Special Committee for inquiring into thought-reading, and has published an account of the experiments set on foot by it, in the *Proceedings* of the Society, which is illustrated by drawings. Since Professor Preyer only seems to recognise inquirers of

academical standing, I will only instance one member of this Committee, the no doubt well-known to him Professor of Physics, W. F. Barrett.

In the *Proceedings* (1882-1883) the manner in which experiments were carried out is narrated as follows:—

"Our *modus operandi* is the following: The thought-reader (percipient), Mr. Smith, sits at a table in our own room, with his eyes bandaged. Paper and pencil lie within reach of his hands, and a member of the Committee sits on either side of him; another member of the Committee leaves the room and while he is outside the closed door, draws some kind of figure at hazard. Mr. Blackburn (the transferer of the thought), who up to that time had remained in the room with Mr. Smith, is now called out and the door closed; then the drawing is held before him for several seconds, till it is imprinted on his mind. Mr. Blackburn then closes his eyes, is conducted again into the room and placed either sitting or standing behind Mr. Smith, at the distance of about two feet. After a short period of intense concentration of thought on the part of Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Smith seizes the pencil, and in the midst of the most absolute silence among those present, seeks to reproduce the impression conveyed to him. He can, if he wishes, remove the bandage; sometimes he takes it off before he begins to draw; but when the figures do not stand distinctly before his imagination, he prefers to keep the bandage on and draws fragments of the figures as they swim before his mental eyes. During the whole of this time, Mr. Blackburn's eyes are usually firmly closed. Sometimes, in order to make the concentration of thought easier to him, he demands his eyes to be bandaged. Except in cases where it was distinctly specified, he never touched Mr. Smith, and from the time he entered the room, never stood before him or within reach of his eyes. When Mr. Smith has finished drawing what he has been able to do, the original, which up to this time was outside the room, is brought in and compared with the reproduction," &c. (p. 162.)

These *Proceedings* contain as many as twenty-one sheets of *fac similes* of the drawings and reproductions, which we only need to see in order to recognise the fact that we must either account for everything by the theory of imposture, or acknowledge the existence of thought-transference without contact. Contact was only permitted in exceptional cases, especially in those in which the drawings were added to, and it was only once tried, and only in this particular instance did a failure take place, the reproduction not agreeing with the original drawing. On the contrary, when the touch was abandoned, the reproduction was successful, after the original had been held again before Mr. Blackburn's eyes. When after some failures, both Mr. Smith and Mr. Blackburn were instigated to draw the figures at the same time, the one as he remembered them, the other as they had been transferred to his imagination, both drawings agreed with one another, so that the difference from the original arose from defective memory and not from defective transference. I am told that the later annals of the *Proceedings*—which I have not seen—contain even more striking accounts of experiments. I only mention incidentally that I have heard of similar successful experiments without contact, in circles of my own acquaintances.

Doubtless, to be exact, we should not call the transference of thought quite without contact; it is communicated without doubt through some material vehicle, though by none of those material forms of motion known to us; perhaps by that called Od—which appears adapted to this purpose.

The most remarkable instances of thought-transference occur with somnambulists and mediums. Professor Preyer has never experimented with any of the latter, and yet such persons as Cumberland are mere bunglers compared to these. Dr. George Barth, in his pamphlet on "Life Magnetism" (p. 88), says, in allusion to the *rapport* existing between magnetisers and somnambulists, "I once held a regular conversation with a patient, without opening my lips. I formed my thoughts, although only mentally, in such a way as though I intended to give expression to them by word of mouth or by writing, as propositions, and my patient answered them verbally, and as correctly as if they had been uttered aloud and heard by him. Sometimes the subject thinks with the operator, but does not answer him, because he has lost the sense of his own individuality. In other cases he retains a sense of his own personality, understands the thoughts of the operator, and answers him verbally, or obeys him if they are clothed in the form of wishes or commands, or else refuses to follow them."

... Some patients, when they are in a sleep-walking

condition, if this power of community of thought or feeling is strongly developed, place themselves in communication with those they choose, and are able to perceive the thoughts of persons present or even at a distance, if they can attract their attention to themselves. This capacity is seldom made use of, but I am thoroughly certain that it exists, and know many magnetisers, whose credibility is unquestionable, who can confirm my opinion."

Counsellor Bährens maintains the same thing in his essay on "Animal Magnetism" (pp. 227-229). As he was unable once to visit a sick person, he made the trial whether he could cause him to be magnetised by a friend of his, by communicating his will to the latter at a distance. "The experiment was successful; my friend, a merchant of great culture, had received the impulse of my mind, and guided likewise instinctively, treated the invalid just as I had determined on doing myself, namely, by laying both hands upon his stomach. . . . Six months before, I had a most convincing proof of the spiritual communion existing between this friend and myself. My friend was ill and unable to travel; he lived at a distance of three hours' journey from me. One of his daughters had been staying some time at my house, on a visit to my daughters. Her father wished to come and fetch her, but as we thought he was still an invalid, we could not expect a visit from him for some time. One day, at ten o'clock in the morning, it became clear to me that my friend formed the resolution to start at mid-day, and that he would be with me by three o'clock. At table I said to his daughter that her father would arrive at three o'clock; and a quarter before three I said the same thing to his daughter-in-law, who had arrived unexpectedly. Three o'clock struck and my friend appeared, when I made the persons I have mentioned ask him themselves when he had determined on taking the journey. His answer exactly coincided with what I had before said. Since then instances of this extraordinary *rapport* between us have been so frequent that we no longer consider it as extraordinary."

An interesting notice, for which I have to thank Herr Karl Kiesewetter, is found in "Naples and its Environs in the Years 1809 and 1810," by Frederica Brun. At the Court of Murat lived Prince Colubrano, who was a celebrated thought-reader. "Colubrano has, perhaps, one of the best intellects in Naples, and works much, though only for his own pleasure. He occupies himself more especially with politics and medicine. He is a living compendium of poetical beauties of the best Italian and Sicilian poets, which he recites with incomparable force and grace, without ever making a mistake. He possesses not only the outward appearance of Wieland's colossal Mohr, but like him, he is also a magician. Without making a mistake, he answers every question put to him mentally, the substance of which is only indicated to him by the first letter of each word. He goes away, and comes back bringing with him the answer, written frequently in verse; and such verse! I have seen stanzas and sonnets improvised by him in this way, of which Ariosto and Filicaja need not have been ashamed. His answering thus questions put by myself, of the most secret nature, have inspired me with involuntary respect for him. This wonderful gift of divination, which he possesses, is known throughout all Naples. Queen Caroline often sent him initial questions, in fearfully critical times for her and her relatives, which the Prince, like a Cassandra, answered honestly and warningly, but in vain." Prince Colubrano died in 1811, as Neapolitan Ambassador in Munich.

Thus proofs are to be found that in every age and country thought-reading without contact has existed. In recent days, however, Spiritualistic experiences have been likewise added. At one of my very first sésances, I found that I was touched by materialised hands on the spot I mentally indicated. More than that, once on my way home I regretted in thought that I had not held this hand in mine, and at the next séance I went to, this wish, which I had not outwardly expressed, and indeed had forgotten, was complied with in this manner: a hand was laid before mine on the table and quietly allowed me to touch it for the space of nearly a minute.

Facts, narrated by Jaccoliot, the Orientalist and Sanscritist, are of a more complicated character. A fakir who came to him shook some fine sand upon the ground, which he levelled with his hand, and laid upon it a penholder, handed to him by Jaccoliot. Jaccoliot then sat himself down opposite the fakir with paper and pencil. After a few minutes the penholder raised itself up and then Jaccoliot drew at will figures and arabesques on the paper, which were closely imitated, at the same time,

by the penholder in the sand. If the drawing ceased the penholder likewise remained passive. Words and sentences thought of by Jaccoliot were written in the sand; for instance, a certain passage out of the laws of Manu. When Jaccoliot took a closed book, the "Rig-Veda," and asked for the first word of the fifth line of page 21 to be given, the word was written quite correctly in the sand, *Devadotta*; and when he mentally asked the question, "Which is our common mother?" the right answer was likewise given: Vasundarâ (the earth). (Jaccoliot, "Spiritisme dans le Monde," 303, &c.) Here, therefore, we have thought-reading, the active agent of which is either magic operating at a distance (*Fernwirkung*) or invisible phantoms. At other experiments Jaccoliot saw plenty of materialised hands.

The theory of Professor Preyer, therefore, scarcely even begins to deal with the materials at hand for proving the facts. No one doubts that involuntary muscular pressure may in some cases betray the thoughts, but it certainly does not follow in consequence that there is not another kind of thought-transference. The existence of cuneiform inscriptions does not prove the impossibility of that of telegraphic despatches.

Professor Preyer has fallen into the error of most discoverers, that of wishing to explain everything according to his own pre-conceived ideas. When he shall have examined into facts hitherto unknown to him, when he shall have refuted the experiments made by the Psychical Society of London, when he shall himself have experimented with somnambulists and mediums, and in every single case proved either that deception is at the bottom of it, or that his own theory suffices for an explanation, then, and then only, I will allow that he has "taken great trouble in proving that the experiments made to demonstrate the fact of thought-transference without contact, have completely failed."

A well-known searcher after truth once said, "Regard to facts is the foundation-stone of every good theory." If I apply this proposition as the touchstone of Professor Preyer's theory, it proves that his theory is not a good one. He will the less refuse me the right to apply this touchstone because the proposition I have cited was given vent to by no less a person than — Professor Preyer in his essay, "Erforschung des Lebens" ("Inquiry into Life").

MR. W. EGLINTON leaves for Moscow on Monday next.

DR. BRITTEN, the husband of Mrs. Hardinge Britten, is seriously ill.

IF "M. S." will send us her name and address (not necessarily for publication), we shall be pleased to answer her inquiry. This is necessary as a guarantee of good faith, as we never answer anonymous communications.

MR. HOPCROFT, a medium well-known in London, has been creating some excitement in the provinces by placing his hands in gas flames and handling live coal, apparently without injury. This is a phenomenon that frequently occurred in the presence of Mr. D. D. Home, and it should be critically investigated in this instance.

LADY WILDE has, we understand, been engaged for some time on a work on the Irish legends, especially those dealing with the invisible world. Lady Wilde has been able to obtain many old world legends from the lips of the peasants themselves, and in some instances she has reproduced the identical words of the narrator.

THE MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD. — On Sunday evening next, at seven o'clock, Mr. Tindall, A. Mus., will read a paper on "Bible Occultism, and Jesus of Nazareth as an Occult Teacher." After the lecture the general meeting of members will be held. — A. F. TINDALL, A. Mus.

WALWORTH ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 83, BOYSON-ROAD, WALWORTH, S.E. — The annual meeting of this Society was held on Monday, March 15th, when the reports were received. They showed that good work had been done during the past year. The membership had increased threefold, and a balance remained in the treasurer's hands of £1 5s. 2d. Mr. McSkimming was elected president, Mr. J. Veitch, secretary; and Mr. J. Raper, treasurer, for the ensuing year. — J. VEITCH, Secretary.

IN the *Bazaar* of March 12th there appears an advertisement as follows:—"Wanted, good tricks and Spiritualistic apparatus for cash.—A. L., 42, Lucerne-road, Highbury, N." As we were not previously aware that "Spiritualistic apparatus" was sold, we shall be glad if any of our readers can inform us in what it consists, that we may judge from our experience whether the same is of use in explaining away some of the phenomena we have witnessed; and if any clue can be given to the identity of the advertiser we shall be further obliged.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON, THE PROVINCES, AND ABROAD.

LONDON.—On Saturday, March 6th, the Society for Psychical Research held their general meeting at the rooms of the Society of British Artists, the chair being taken by Professor H. Sidgwick. In opening the meeting the chairman called attention to the fact that the paper which Professor Barrett would read, dealing with certain phenomena of the kind called "Spiritualistic," was to a certain extent a new departure, and he desired to explain why this departure was then taken and not before. He pointed out that the Society consisted of two elements occupying distinct positions on this subject—those whom he might call broadly believers in the phenomena of Spiritualism, and those who merely thought that the evidence for these phenomena was in quantity and quality such as to deserve serious and systematic investigation. It was now thought that, the Society having a clear and tolerably established position, the dangers involved in a public discussion between its two somewhat opposing elements were consequently not so great now as they would have been four years ago. It appeared also that the prolonged exclusion of this subject from the published records of the Society's work would be liable to be misunderstood, and would be probably attributed to a disinclination to face unpalatable facts, or to a desire to avoid the expression of unpopular opinion.

Professor Barrett began by pointing out that whether Spiritualism were regarded as worthy or unworthy of serious inquiry depended chiefly upon the place where each person drew the boundary line that, in his own mind, divided the possible from the impossible. It would be folly to waste time upon such things as circle-squaring, or a search for perpetual motion. These are placed beyond the pale of investigation, from already existing knowledge. But there are other things which involve no *contradiction* of what is already well established, but only an enlargement of our knowledge in certain directions; e.g., the sea-serpent, thought-transference, clairvoyance, the phenomena of Spiritualism, and only a few years ago we should have said the telephone and the phonograph. There were some who regarded "Spiritualism" as so intrinsically impossible that its investigation should not have formed one of the objects of the Society, while others thought it should have been in the forefront of the Society's programme.

Professor Barrett regretted that no report had been published by the committee originally organised to investigate the subject, although this omission no doubt arose from their being unable to obtain any conclusive evidence. A record of the conditions and results of experiments was desirable. The instruments necessary for the inquiry into Spiritualism were living beings, and comparatively few in number, and if, after an adequate examination, no phenomena new to science should be exhibited, we should publish the negative evidence and pass on to more profitable fields of inquiry. But such an adequate examination had not yet been made. The real difficulty was in arriving at *conclusive* evidence, pointing one way or the other. Non-professional mediums were difficult of access, and professional mediums were open to the charge of being conjurers. Nevertheless, he thought that tests might be employed which would exclude the hypothesis of conjuring, and that the difficulty of arriving at conclusive evidence had been exaggerated. In this connection he referred to the evidence of the late Professor de Morgan, and Professor Zöllner, and also that of Mr. Crookes, and stated his own conviction that at any rate some of the simpler phenomena of Spiritualism were inexplicable by any causes at present recognised by science. He then proceeded to refer to phenomena witnessed by himself. Most of these were of no evidential value in favour of Spiritualism. But four or five cases stood out as exceptions; they occurred in the years 1875 and 1876, and full notes of each were taken at the time.

In the first two cases the sittings were with private mediums; in the last case the sitting was with a professional medium.

In the first case he would describe he had every opportunity of close and frequent investigation, and he had the records of numerous sittings extending through the months of August and September, 1875. At one sitting there were present besides himself, Mr. and Mrs. C. and their young daughter F.—the medium—a bright, frank, and intelligent child, then about ten years old. Time, 10 a.m. They sat at a large dining-room table facing the French windows, which let in a flood of sunlight, so that the sitters' feet as well as hands could be perfectly seen. Shortly, a sort of scraping sound was heard on the surface of the table; the sound moved about, but was loudest when near the medium, F. Raps were also heard sometimes on the table, sometimes on the back of the chairs on which they sat. F.'s hands and feet were closely watched; they were absolutely motionless when the sounds were heard. After a few sittings the sounds grew in loudness, often being as loud as, and very much resembling, the hammering of nails into a floor. They came more readily and more loudly when music was played, or a merry song struck up,

and invariably they kept time with the music. Sometimes a loud rhythmic scraping, as of a violoncello bow on a piece of wood, would accompany the music. Again and again he placed his ear on the very spot on the table whence this rough fiddling appeared to proceed, and felt distinctly the rhythmic vibration of the table, but no tangible cause was visible either above or below the table. Experiments were made on the possibility of localising sounds such as were heard; and so far as his experiments went he found that he could tell, within six inches, the position on a large table, when a knock was made by a friend beneath the table, and out of sight. The ability to localise a sound depended very much on the nature of the sound; the sounds made by a siren or by a singing flame were extremely difficult to localise. But he felt pretty confident that the knocks and scraping sounds proceeded from a source certainly within a foot of the position assigned; and he noticed particularly that the sounds, though feebler than when near, were sometimes heard ten or twelve feet away from the medium. On one occasion, when no one else was in the room, and it was broad daylight as usual, he asked the medium to put her hands against the wall and see how far she could stretch her feet back from the wall without tumbling down. This she did, and whilst she was in this constrained position, he asked for the knocks to come. Immediately a brisk pattering of raps followed, the child remaining quite motionless the whole time. Professor Barrett gave further details concerning the sounds occurring in connection with F., mentioning that on one occasion a word was misspelt by raps exactly as the child misspelt that word, as he afterwards ascertained; but that a long and careful examination convinced him that trickery on the part of the child was a more improbable hypothesis than that the sounds proceeded from an unknown agency. After some three months, the sounds disappeared as unexpectedly as they had arisen. In reviewing the evidence, Professor Barrett said that we must take into account the hypothesis that some children exhibit an amazing passion for deceiving their elders, and some possess an extraordinary love of notoriety, but he confessed that in this case he could come to no other conclusion than that we had there a class of phenomena wholly new to science.

He then gave some of the details of phenomena occurring in connection with a middle-aged lady in private life, who had found this abnormal "mediumistic" power gradually develop in her presence, and he said that in this case also he could not avoid the conclusion that the phenomena described were inexplicable by any known hypothesis. He considered this case, however, to be of less evidential value than the previous one, where his opportunities were greater for testing the phenomena under varying conditions.

The third case described by Professor Barrett was, he said, exactly of the sort he would wish to have a conjurer's opinion upon before affirming that it could not be produced by trickery. The sitting he would describe was with the professional medium, Mr. Eglinton. On January 5th, 1878, Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood arranged for a sitting at his own house at Queen Anne-street. The observers present besides Professor Barrett, were Mr. Wedgwood, his sister, Mr. A. R. Wallace, and Mr. F. W. H. Myers. The séance was held in Mr. Wedgwood's library at 4 p.m. When the medium arrived, Professor Barrett was permitted to take whatever precautions he thought necessary to prevent fraud on his part. Professor Barrett then described the fastenings to which he submitted the medium, so that, although the medium (who was placed sitting on a chair in the corner of the room, with his hands together behind him), could if he chose, move his legs freely and also turn or nod his head, he could not move the trunk of his body nor his hands nor arms without breaking the fastenings. A couple of small curtains, running on a rail over the medium's head, were then drawn nearly together in front of the medium, leaving a space of from four to six inches exactly opposite the central line of his body. Through this space his face and front of his body could be seen. The curtains hung down on each side of the chair on which the medium sat, so that his legs, from the waist downward, were entirely in front of the curtain. A gas jet, which was the principal light in the room (the window curtains having been drawn), was then lowered, but there was plenty of light to allow of the observers seeing one another. They seated themselves close to the medium, Professor Barrett being so close that not a foot intervened between himself and the medium. Professor Barrett could see that the medium's head presently drooped, and that he went into a sort of trance, whether real or assumed Professor Barrett could not say. Knockings were then heard and upon repeating the alphabet slowly a message was spelt out. Professor Barrett asked, "Can you move anything in the room?" It said by knocks it would try, but nothing was moved. Either one of the observers or else the knocks suggested putting some objects near the medium. Professor Barrett got up and took out three or four books at random, and placed them in a pile on the lap of the medium, and catching sight of a small handbell, added this on the top of all. Upon seating himself by the medium's side he noticed there was enough light in the room to read the time by his

watch true to a second. In a few minutes after this, whilst closely watching the motionless figure of the medium, he distinctly saw the upper half of the pile of books move, the cover of the middle book opening, and allowing the ones above it and the bell to incline to an angle of at least 45°, which he subsequently found was considerably beyond the angle of repose for the bell on a cloth-bound book. The bell did not fall off, did not stir in fact, in the least relatively to the cover of the book; the leaves of the book were then dropped after one another, and then opened up again. Then the lower book opened, and its leaves were deliberately let fall. The whole proceeding was exactly such as would occur if two hands were placed on each side of the volumes, and their leaves slowly run over by first lifting up the body of the book, and then allowing the leaves to drop past, the fingers rubbing against them as they fell. During this process a third hand would seem to be required to keep the bell in its place. He brought his eyes to within twelve inches of the books whilst they were moving, and certainly no human hands were there. Professor Barrett gave other details, and stated that at the end of the sitting the medium was found fast asleep, and the fastenings intact. He then discussed the hypotheses of hallucination and fraud, and said that if the medium was the operator he could not conjecture how the performance was accomplished. The most plausible explanation, he thought, was misdescription on his part, a clever bit of juggling in moving books being mistaken for a larger movement, and ultimately exaggerated into the effect described. But he had quoted from his notes taken at the time, and was not conscious of any exaggeration. Nor did he think it legitimate to apply this exaggeration hypothesis to each case as it arose, and so dispose of an army of observers in detail. When the first observers of a slowly-moving electric fireball recounted what they had seen, they were naturally suspected of exaggeration, or as the victims of some illusion. But as concordant testimony from other independent observers came in, disbelief had been given up, and electric fireballs were now accepted as an enigmatic freak of that inexplicable agency electricity. Similarly, physical phenomena, such as he had described, might be regarded as unaccountable freaks of that mysterious agency we called mind.

He thought there was enough evidence, from trustworthy independent observers, to outweigh the antecedent improbability of the alleged facts, and even to establish a strong presumption in their favour, and was of opinion that the most hopeful advance on the subject would be made by daring hypotheses based upon the study of existing evidence. We must clear the ground first by the theories of imposture, unconscious muscular action, hallucination, exaggeration, and telepathic action, but these hypotheses did not, in his opinion, exhaust all the evidence that exists. Nothing that he had seen or read had given him any adequate proof of extra-human intelligence, but he had been led to conjecture that under conditions which are so restricted that we are not put to intellectual confusion by frequent interruptions of the ordinary course of material laws, *mind could act upon matter directly*. Upon the organised matter of the brain, mind could and did act, *i. e.*, if we admitted mind apart from matter. He then referred to conditions of success in experimenters, and urged that sympathy, or at any rate the absence of mental antagonism, might possibly be one of these conditions, and just as necessary in the psychological world as certain material conditions in the physical world. This sympathy was quite compatible with calm judgment and a clear and accurate observation. Illustrating these remarks by an analogy, he then said that it was because all theories on this subject were so unrelated to our existing knowledge of the physical world, that the psychological problems before us received such scant recognition at the hands of scientific men; but he had good hope that "Spiritualistic phenomena" would eventually be accepted as an integral part of the dual world of matter and mind in which we live, and that a reverent, hopeful, and withal more humble attitude would prevail towards the infinite possibilities that are in each of us.

No discussion took place, and the meeting closed by a statement from Mr. F. W. H. Myers upon a cognate subject. We may mention that the abstract of Professor Barrett's paper here given has been supplied by one of the officials of the Society.

NEW BARNET.—The *Barnet Press* of March 13th, reporting a lecture on ghosts, says that the Rev. George Bampfield, B.A., never fails to draw a large audience, and the announcement that he would, at the New Barnet Mutual Improvement Society, open a debate on the popular subject of "ghosts," ensured a crowded meeting last Monday. The belief in ghosts has generally been put down to superstition, and so many ghost stories are too ridiculous and unlikely to be true, that any attempt to show the possibility of the power of spirits to communicate with those in the flesh has been pooh-poohed. The Rev. G. Bampfield, however, proposed to base everything in his contention on reason, and opposed entire disbelief in all ghost stories, as more superstitious than belief. To argue that because there are some, or many, false ghost stories,

therefore none are true, is as bad logic as to argue that because many travellers have told more than the truth, no traveller is to be believed. The lecturer took for granted the existence of the human soul after its separation from the body, and showed that no argument can be adduced against the possibility of the departed spirits communicating with us who are alive, owing to our extreme ignorance of the world of spirits, for we know not what the spirits are, where they are, or under what laws they live. For aught we know, it may be a most natural thing for a spirit to make itself known to the living, and it may be that such communications take place in obedience to a law of nature. On the other hand, the possibility of such communications can be shown. It may be said that if not contrary to the laws of ghost nature, it seems contrary to the laws which bind us. Spirit is not matter; our eyes and ears are matter, and are open to receive impressions from matter. How could a material eye see a spirit? or how could a spirit make material sounds to strike a human ear? There are two explanations. There is the old-fashioned theory—the belief that the ghost is actually present at the spot at which he appears, and by his power as a spirit can produce the same effect upon the eye as if he stood there in the body. For the power of spirit over matter is great; this we experience in the power which our wills have—we know not how—over the motions of our limbs. It is not unnatural to suppose that the knowledge of a spirit, when no longer clogged by the body, is far greater than before—that the secret powers of matter lie open to him, and that he would be able to gather from the air, &c., around him the material elements by which he could assume a fantastic body. The second modern theory requires no local presence of the spirit. There is a power, it is argued, in spirit to communicate with spirit without the employment of the senses. There are many powers in the soul which lie hid while we are in the body. Such, for instance, is the marvellous power the mind has of recalling every incident of life at the moment of death—evidenced in cases of drowning. Human spirits, when they have left the body, cannot be supposed to be passing a solitary existence, unable to hold intercourse one with another; but such communications must be independent of senses. Then, if they so communicate one with another, why not also with us in the same way? There are signs that such a power exists with us now in life; instances not a few are recorded of living persons communicating at a distance, no use of the senses being possible. Several instances were given to prove this, amongst others one which happened to a near relative of the lecturer's, who saw an apparition of her brother (who was in India) at her bedside. The strange appearance was much spoken of in the family, and great was the surprise of all when the Indian mail brought the news of the death of the brother, and it was found to have occurred at the very day and hour at which the apparition had been seen. The amazing number of such phenomena—witnessed to by persons who have before or after been subject to such sights, men and women of all characters, stern disbelievers in ghost stories many of them—places the fact of such phenomena beyond question. The laws of space, which bind bodies, do not bind spirits. If while still in the body a lady at Cockermonth could communicate with children at Settle (as one of the illustrations showed was done), and a brother in India can communicate with a sister in Somerset, what intervention of space could prevent communication from a spirit out of the body with a spirit still in it? These spirits are able to be seen probably because the action of the nerve tissues which are employed in the act of seeing can be excited from within as well as from without. The mind may act upon the brain, and the brain may rouse the nerves of sight to activity. Proof of this is found in cases of delirium tremens, &c. Not only can ghost stories be shown to be possible, but the difficulties in which we are involved by rejecting them are greater than the difficulty presented by allowing their possibility. After attempting to prove by argument and illustration that this is so, and to show that the disbelief in ghosts arises from the strange coldness towards the dead, the Rev. G. Bampfield concluded by saying that these phenomena can no longer be scoffed at, and moved "That entire disbelief in all ghost stories is contrary to sound reasoning." The chairman, the Rev. G. Twentyman, M.A., then invited a discussion. This was carried on by Messrs. Mosley, Baldwin, Oakeshot, Starr, and the chairman. Though some spoke in opposition to the opener, it was generally agreed that there are laws of the spiritual world which may explain the strange phenomena which are so often occurring, but of which we have as yet but the faintest knowledge.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—On Sunday last Mr. J. S. Farmer visited this city to lay before the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society some proposals of the London Spiritual Alliance towards Confederation, and also to obtain information with regard to the status of the movement in Newcastle. Mr. Farmer intends visiting all the principal centres of Spiritual activity in the provinces, and as he has promised to prepare descriptive accounts of his

various visits, this report will deal only with the actual business transacted on the occasion.—In the morning at 11.30 a Conference was held in the Northumberland Hall to discuss the advisability and practicability of Spiritualistic Confederation as far as it concerned the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society. About fifty persons were present, and Mr. H. Kersey presided. Mr. Farmer addressed the meeting, and commenced his remarks by saying that the fact of the Spiritualists of Newcastle having organised for local work indicated that they recognised the desirability and utility of organised effort. Previous attempts at national Spiritual unity in England were briefly passed in review, special attention being called to the Convention held at Darlington in 1865, and continued in other places during succeeding years, and also to the Liverpool Conference in 1873, the latter of which resulted in ushering into existence the late British National Association of Spiritualists. The causes which led to the abandonment of the central idea with which these bodies started were passed in review; and, coming to more recent times, Mr. Farmer pointed out how the good and faithful work performed by the latter organisation had ultimately borne fruit a hundredfold. The last public act of the Central Association of Spiritualists proved to be the foundation-stone of a new, and he hoped a more lasting edifice; public confidence was thereby restored, inquiry grew apace, old difficulties and causes of dissension disappeared, and the broken ranks were gradually again welded together. Thus, although the organisation, which twelve years before had started with "National Unity" as the central idea of its programme, had failed to achieve its object on the exact lines laid down at the Liverpool Conference, yet in another way it had succeeded in demonstrating the soundness of the idea, and contributed somewhat to its future accomplishment. The rise and progress of the Spiritualist Alliance was then sketched; after which Mr. Farmer said that the position of the Alliance in the Metropolis having been made secure, their attention was directed to the question of friendly alliance between themselves and the various home and foreign societies. It was felt that any course of that kind would do much towards breaking down the isolation that had so long existed amongst Spiritualists, and would open up the way for a policy of united action and cordial sympathy. An appeal to foreign societies had met with a hearty and cordial response. These replies had been received from all parts of the world, and the result was that active measures were being taken to put the question into practical shape. The next step was to approach home societies. As far as the speaker could see, there was no insuperable obstacle to union, provided the platform was broad and free. He thought that the declaration of principles as adopted by the Alliance was capable of the widest application, and he suggested that those principles should be adopted by allied societies. The next point was the method by which union was to be effected. He stated that in approaching the question they had been very careful to avoid any appearance of placing themselves in the position of a parent society which sought from other societies affiliation. He wished to emphasise that fact, and to point out in the clearest manner possible that the London Spiritualist Alliance aimed at Confederation on a basis of equality. Coming down to the details of the scheme, it had been thought desirable that the proposed Confederation should embrace not only large and influential societies like that in Newcastle, but that it should also include smaller societies, groups, and even circles. They hoped, therefore, to see the leading society in each particular district—in most cases the county division would be the most suitable and intelligible—enter into relations with the neighbouring smaller societies and groups, and that then this society, *cum annexis*, should be brought into federation with the London Spiritualist Alliance. Complete autonomy was proposed. As far as local affairs were concerned each society should manage its own business in its own way. They believed a kind of liberal "Home Rule" policy to be a sound one in respect to the matter in hand. National questions, however, that is, questions which would affect the general interest of the movement, they suggested should be dealt with by an International Council, in which each confederated society or group of societies should have an equal voice. In concluding his remarks, Mr. Farmer indicated the benefits which would accrue to all concerned from union of this kind. A lively discussion ensued, in which Mr. T. P. Barkas, Mr. H. A. Kersey, Mr. W. H. Robinson and others took part, each speaker strongly approving of the proposed course of action. A number of questions were put to Mr. Farmer to further elucidate the scheme he had proposed. As a result of the meeting the following resolution was proposed by Mr. Geo. Wilson, seconded by Mr. B. Harris, and supported by Mr. W. H. Robinson and the chairman: "That this meeting of Spiritualists, convened by the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, approves of the efforts being made by the London Spiritualist Alliance in the direction of Confederation between Spiritualist societies at home and abroad, as defined by Mr. J. S. Farmer, and hereby refers the question to the earnest attention of the Executive of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, with a view to find, if possible, a sound mutual basis of co-operation for the strengthening and benefit of our movement." Upon being put to the meeting, the motion was carried without dissent.—In the evening, Mr. Farmer delivered a lecture in the same hall. The Newcastle *Daily Leader* gave the following report of the day's proceedings:—The members of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society met in conference yesterday morning in the

Northumberland Hall, High Friar-street, Newcastle, and the proceedings gathered additional interest from the fact that Mr. J. S. Farmer, of London, editor of "LIGHT," and author of several Spiritualistic works, was present, and gave his opinions on the dissemination and progress of the new belief. In the evening the hall was crowded with an intelligent audience of both sexes, young and old, to hear a lecture from Mr. Farmer on "The Influence of Spiritualism on Modern Thought." To judge by the extent of the audience, the doctrines of the Society must have gained a very wide local diffusion, and Mr. Farmer's address was received with evident appreciation and pleasure. Alderman Barkas was present, and introduced the lecturer as one of the active "spirits" in the propagation of Spiritualist opinions in London. Mr. Farmer, in the course of his address, said Spiritualism during the last forty years had obtained great prominence in modern life and thought, and at the present time it was making vast strides, advancing, as it were, by leaps and bounds. Signs were not wanting that in a very near future its facts would be universally recognised and its opinions widely felt, not only in the religious but in the social life of our time. It was appealing to all classes, and nobody but those behind the scenes could form any idea of the extent to which Spiritualism was honeycombing society in the Metropolis. Would it be wrong, then, he asked, to claim it as the great fact of the nineteenth century? Like the Protestant Reformation, this new reformation came just when it was needed. The first was the outcome of the birth of thought, and the second was the result of free thought and free inquiry. Spiritualism made science religious, and religion scientific, uniting them both on one common ground. It was founded on the solid basis of science and of fact, and demanded no exercise of faith, but what reason approved after full investigation. At the conclusion of Mr. Farmer's lecture, Alderman Barkas intimated that the lecturer would next explain certain pictures which were exhibited from the platform representing various Spiritualistic phenomena. These, he said, illustrated those that they themselves had witnessed. Mr. Farmer then proceeded to explain the plates, and made some rather curious and startling statements—startling and curious at any rate to those unacquainted with the mysteries of the new order. At the close, the pictures were examined and discussed by a good many of the audience.

VIENNA.—A correspondent who has for a considerable period been residing in Vienna, and who has recently returned to this country, supplies us with the following interesting particulars as to the status of Spiritualism in the Austrian capital. He says:—"In reply to your inquiry about Spiritualism in Austria, and particularly in Vienna, I must begin by telling you that the antagonism and persecution on the part of the ruling Romish Church has so much increased that the few remaining members of the Local Society (*Nächstenliebe*) are compelled to keep very quiet for fear of losing their concession. The police have to be informed of all meetings twenty-four clear hours before the appointed time, and they may enter at any period and prohibit the same if they think proper. No civil or military official is permitted to join the society. The existence of this supervision will partly explain why no response was sent to the friendly invitation of the London Spiritualist Alliance for Confederation. The death of the late President, the renowned Professor Delhez, and editor of their journal *Licht des Jenseits*, which died with him, has greatly added to the decline of the society, especially since his aged successor, the noble Upper Privy Councillor, Herr Franz Dohnel, has by illness been prevented for a long time from attending the meetings. Among the few remaining members are several excellent mediums for writing, painting, speaking, personification, &c. Rappings are heard nearly every time they meet at the society's rooms, or at their private circles, and the records of the latter are full of striking evidences of communion with disembodied spirits. But in private life outside of this association many circles are held and excellent results in all the various phases are obtained in the different strata of society. Among the nobility, even about the Court, are some excellent mediums, but there is no regularity nor system, nor much application of the valuable lessons taught. There is rather too much striving for marvellous novelties. Among the scientists, through the personal activity of a few prominent members, driven to it by the latest publications of Hellenbach, Du Prel, Hartmann, &c., and in connection with Mr. Eglinton's last striking results in Vienna, there is at present great activity, and by the strong effect which Mr. G. Gessmann produced through his improved hypnoscope, together with his experiments upon hypnotic sensitives and psychic mediums, the daily journals are actually opening their columns to the pros and cons of the subject instead of, as formerly, abusing everything and everybody connected with it. What has prevented or greatly impeded the interest of the better educated classes is the positive dogmatic religious form and the shockingly blind and superstitious practices of some Spiritualists in Hungary and Bohemia. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that in many towns and villages, especially in the latter country, regular Sunday meetings for worship, and several week-night circles, are kept up. Marvellous manifestations occur, and the number of the so-called Spiritists increases very rapidly in spite of priestly antagonism and persecution. I will conclude this with the following brief details of some of the many occurrences in a family at Vienna, composed of a widow, her only son, aged seventeen, her niece of fifteen, and a female servant of about twenty-five—all good orthodox Catholics, and perfectly ignorant of Spiritualism before these occurrences. All sorts of startling and strange noises, moving of the furniture without anyone near it, doors and drawers locked and unlocked, keys disappearing and thrown at the feet unexpectedly, pieces of paper with written messages flying down from the ceilings, various articles brought into the room by invisible agency, candles lighted, voices speaking, large chalk writing suddenly appearing on the floor and furniture, &c., &c. At a séance held there with them by myself and three other friends, a four-legged deal table was lifted up without contact."

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,
- all under the direction of
4. A CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CONTROL.

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

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

GENERAL RULES.

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

PLEDGES REQUIRED.

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

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

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

CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF CONTROL.

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

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By "M.A. (Oxon)."

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect.

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

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

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

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The following are a few books which will prove of service to the inquirer. They can be obtained by members from the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance, or they may be purchased of the Psychological Press (see advt. pages), 16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C. :—Animal Magnetism (Wm. Gregory); Miracles and Modern Spiritualism (A. R. Wallace); Researches in Spiritualism (W. Crookes); From Matter to Spirit (De Morgan); The Debateable Land (Dale Owen); Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World (Dale Owen); Planchette (Epes Sargent); Proof Palpable of Immortality; The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism (Epes Sargent); Report of the Dialectical Society; Zöllner's Transcendental Physics (Translated by C. C. Massey, 2nd Ed.); Psychography ("M.A., Oxon."); Spirit Identity ("M.A., Oxon."); Higher Aspects of Spiritualism ("M.A., Oxon."); Judge Edmonds' Letters and Tracts; Primitive Christianity and Spiritualism (Crowell); New Basis of Belief in Immortality (Turner); Hints for the Evidences of Spiritualism (M.P.); Theosophy and the Higher Life (Dr. G. Wyld); Mechanism of Man, 2 vols. (Mr. Sergeant 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.”—*Aftonbladet* (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 incredible, 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 biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

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

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

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

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

CONJURERS AND PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

Harry Kellar, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, investigated the slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, at Calcutta, regarding which he said:—

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