

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.)"

BEFORE BIRTH.*

PART II.

There are some incidental points on which Mr. Pearson's speculations are interesting; but not always, as I think, in the direction of truth. As to the composition of the soul, we find a difficulty in deciding, "because, so far as can be judged, we are in the first stage of 'Egohood.'" Now, that is by no means sure. All that can be affirmed is that in our present state of life we have no clear recollection of any that may have preceded it. But there is reason to believe that, so far from our all being "in the first stage," no two human beings are exactly on the same plane of progression. Probably we have come to this world as a school of training, from various other states of being; and it is very conceivable that the special training afforded by earth-life may be needed by individual souls at very different stages in their development, very much more probable, surely, than that we all go through the same mill with the same unintelligent regularity, divergent as we all are in tastes, in aptitudes, and in the necessities which we severally feel. As Mr. Pearson well puts the case, "From the remote past the development of the mind-structure on its upward path has been a process of modification by its environment," and that process has left us all on various stages of progression. From this state onwards the same processes will fashion the soul. "In a new and higher environment, some of the responsive capacities and predispositions which the human mind-structure now possesses will disappear from disuse, while new ones will be evolved by necessity. And thus the soul will pass onward and upward through purer and nobler stages of existence till personal perfection be attained, or perhaps *personality itself, be merged in something which is higher.*" Precisely.

"The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar."

It reaches this life by various approaches, through various stages of existence, developed by various methods, as its selective consciousness leads it to choose what is fittest. It passes into its next state (which, *pace* Mr. Pearson, we ought to expect to be very similar to the present, for there are no startling gaps in the continuity of Nature), what it has made itself in its present environment. It does indeed in favourable processes of development, pass on and up

through purer and nobler lives, till the dross is purged away and it enters into its Nirvana, the "rest that remains" for it, the life of contemplation. Mr. Pearson has in the main rightly divined the methods of the soul's development.

The answer, then, that Mr. Pearson gives to the questions with which he started may be stated thus in brief: "The soul, as such, does truly arise for the first time in man. But its elements have pre-existed, originally as simple mind-stuff, and at a later stage as lower mind-structures; and finally, so long as we bear in mind the material character of mind-stuff, we may in this sense correctly speak of the soul as a product of universal spirit." Its evolution is perfectly orderly, and, "like all evolution, may well proceed under the guidance of Deity, though, of course, not the Deity of ecclesiastical dogma. Evolutionism, indeed, does not require such a belief; but, so far from banishing it, directly suggests it. Evolutionism expressly declares its inability to define the infinite, or to describe the unknowable; but, though we cannot know, and, therefore, cannot properly predicate, anything of the Divine Power in itself, we can pronounce upon its manifestations in relation to ourselves, and, so far as we are able to interpret these manifestations, they reveal to us a system of inviolate order. To ascribe, therefore, to the Deity the commission of a miracle seems, from this religious standpoint, positively impious; and thus the Evolutionist is constrained by the double claims of Religion and Science to reject any theory of the soul which involves a miracle at every birth." Some, no doubt, will regard this conception of a universe working out its development without the aid of miracle as in some sort of sense unworthy of our ideas of a Supreme Power. But Mr. Pearson is on higher ground than that occupied by such an objection when he does not "hesitate to declare that the conception of a universe harmoniously evolving, under Divine control, by fixed laws, is incomparably higher than that of a universe whose life and development can only advance with any semblance of harmony by perpetual miraculous interventions."

The days of old, when the Deity was conceived of as an Omnipotent Man, with human faculties, and even human passions, infinitely developed, are past and gone. The anthropomorphic conception, if it exists still, lingers only in the intellectual waste places of the earth, where it is thought wicked to apply God's noblest gift of reason to the highest use to which it can be put. We no longer regard it as sure that the universe was made expressly for man's honour and glory; nor do we conceive of a Creator who is perpetually employing miraculous intervention in order to prevent this world and its inhabitants from going hopelessly wrong. We have learned better methods of honouring God; we have gained higher ideals of the means by which He works. Those who are still young can well remember the storm that raged round the devoted head of Darwin when he suggested that man derived his physical characteristics through the anthropoid apes. "The question," once said Mr. Disraeli, in a celebrated speech at Oxford, "the question is, Is man an ape or an angel?" and then he avowed himself "on the side of the angels." As a matter of fact, man

* The Nineteenth Century. September, 1886.

is neither ape nor angel, but he has affinities with both. The span of time that separated the storm which greeted Darwin's *Origin of Species* from the hushed and reverent silence which received his body in Westminster Abbey, was short enough to make one hope with Mr. Pearson that, "as we are ceasing to resent our physical ancestry," we may not "refuse to acknowledge that our mental powers are a heritage from the past. Science has widened the domain of consciousness, and neither man nor the higher animals can claim it any longer as an exclusive gift. The old barriers of thought which shut off the animal from the vegetable kingdom are rapidly being broken down. Seeing that life in all its diverse forms can be traced back to a single source, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the pedigree of the soul itself may reach back to a simple mind-stuff unit."

"Development must be the law of the whole universe." It is impossible to resist the conclusion. The old ideas are fading all round us. Where the ghosts of old cosmogonies still survive, they flit past us pale and perturbed, embarrassed by their antagonism to the developments of modern scientific knowledge. They have barely sufficed for a preceding generation; assuredly they will not suffice for one that is coming. As in the pages of the Bible we see the development of the God-idea from its earliest and crudest form to that revealed by Jesus Christ; so since that time man has slowly rejected what of mean or ignoble thought even then survived from the past, and has steadily raised his conceptions of Deity. "Early religion took delight in exalting [as it conceived] the Creator at the creature's expense: the religion of science prefers to regard all nature as sanctified by the Deity made manifest therein." And so the old debasing conceptions of matter find themselves out of place. "To degrade matter is not really to glorify God, for the baseness imposed upon it seems to cast a shadow even upon Divine grandeur itself." It is more truly reverent to believe with Carlyle that "This fair universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed city of God: that through every star, through every grass blade, and most through every living soul, the glory of a present God still beams."*

It will be seen that I have employed Mr. Pearson's terms, but without necessarily acquiescing in their exactness. I have pointed out, indeed, what I conceive to be a confusion in the use of the words Individuality and Personality. When Mr. Pearson speaks of Soul in some parts of his argument, I should prefer to use the term Spirit. Soul I regard as being the intermediary between the external—the physical body which adapts the spirit to its environment in its present life—and the innermost spirit which it thus conditions. When the physical body dies, by virtue of its being no longer needed, the soul becomes the "spiritual body" which enshrines the innermost indestructible principle, and adapts it to its new conditions. But Mr. Pearson's nomenclature is always intelligible in this respect, and is used with perfect consistency. If I have succeeded in conveying to my readers any conception of his argument, I shall have rendered them a service. I hope they will study for themselves what I have aimed only at introducing to their notice.

"M.A. (OXON.)"

THE *Christian Register* says: "Disparage Spiritualism as we may, it has come to stay. Its idiosyncrasies show it to be a heterodox child with orthodox progenitors."

BELIEVING in a future life, most Spiritualists, so-called, become contented, alas! over that fact and hug that idea to themselves, and never realise the infinitude of possibilities for the human mind—its great spiritual growth, its duties to other souls in this earth-life, and that Heaven is not in the future life any more than it is here.—*Golden Gate*.

HERE AND NOW.

The closing decades of the nineteenth century are evidently burdened with mighty events. The portents are in the air—in the elements of mind and matter—in the deep mutterings of thunder heard all around the sky. Society is a seething caldron; a spirit of unrest, of agitation, of disturbance, pervades the institutions of men. The idols of conservatism,—of time-honoured institutions, are tumbling down, and everywhere the new is springing from the ashes of the old.

The world never before seemed to have so great a need as now for men—for brave, strong, cool-headed and noble-hearted men. It needs men who can think and plan—men who can make plain the crooked paths in which the multitude are aimlessly wandering—magnetic men, and women, too, who are capable of leading humanity out of the night of error and into the clear light of the new day now dawning upon the world.

There are those who, like croaking ravens, or ill-omened birds of night, are ever ready to predict evil to the race. They live in the night side of nature, and see everything in a dim and distorted light. What to them are hideous phantoms of the air are to others only the shadows of harmless things, which will disappear with the dawning. The friction and clashing of the elements—moral, social, and political—are only Nature's polishing processes—the mills of the gods, whence are ground out higher types of humanity—grander conditions and qualities of soul—better and more durable institutions.

There has been evolved in these modern times a new factor in our civilisation—a force hitherto unknown, save in tradition. The windows of Heaven have been opened, and a marvellous light from the unseen world has poured into the hearts and consciences of vast numbers of the children of men. What is to be the outcome of this strange and mighty influx of power and knowledge from the other world no one can tell. What will be its effect upon existing institutions—how will it change and revolutionise the purposes and pursuits of men?—are riddles no one can solve. Are the physical and spiritual worlds to be interblended, and the veil now rent in twain to be swept wholly away? Are men and angels to walk hand in hand ere yet the former have crossed the dark river? Are the wise ones of other planets and spheres to take an active part in the redemption of our world? It would seem so; indeed, such is the fact already.

May not this be the dawning hour of the coming day—the golden day foretold by prophets, and dreamed of by poets and sages, when knowledge and righteousness shall cover the earth as the all-embracing sky covers the land and the sea? The world is certainly and rapidly approaching great changes, and those changes, whatever they may be, must be for the betterment of humanity. The guiding spirit ever leads upward; and never before was there such faith in the Eternal Good. It is only when man turns his back to the light divine that he loses his way and gropes in darkness for awhile. The tidal wave of spiritual truth now setting in, and sweeping over the world, is certainly for man's enlightenment. It is the beckoning hand to call him homeward—the light in the window to guide his wandering footsteps to the heart of the All-Father, where is rest and peace forever more.

Then why should we doubt or dread, or borrow trouble of the apparent confusion of the present? What though we are shooting the rapids; let all true men and women stand firmly at their posts of duty, with unwavering faith in themselves, and in the Divine Life and Love of which they are a part. Beyond lie the still waters, and the peaceful haven.—*Golden Gate*.

CONTENTMENT is a very good thing until it reaches the point where it sits in the shade and lets the weeds grow.

* Sartor Resartus, Bk. iii., ch. 8.

ISRAFEL.*

This is a volume of miscellaneous prose and verse, divided into three categories, viz., Letters, Visions, Miscellaneous Poems. The letters and the visions seem intended to tell the same story, in so far as they tell any; the former designed apparently to explain the latter. The explanation they afford is, however, less distinct than could be desired if the object of it is to make clear, and yet more definite than would seem to be desirable in the interest of the Visions, which, being poetry, would on the whole be best left with its edges, if it may be so said, uncut, to make upon each mind or emotional nature the impression acceptable and profitable to itself. Out of both, however, it may perhaps be gathered that the writer has, or has had, a friend of an exceptionally pure, exalted, and powerful nature: that in contemplating his character under an emotion similar to that which gave rise to the Laureate's *In Memoriam*, the writer, by employing the divine exaggeration of analogy, has constructed to himself a conception of the nature of the angel or presiding masculine influence—its Michael, so to speak—of the new age or order, which in all spiritual aspirational natures is being now earnestly looked for, and by some such realised to be in actual operation. In realising the Divine personage symbolised, the symbolical human person is lost by, or absorbed to, the seer, who sees only the being symbolised, and celebrates in a distinctly deep and genuinely earnest spirit the virtues and Divine attributes of the angel under the name of Israfel.

This inductive method of arriving at a spiritual conception by means of a material symbol, belongs, no doubt, to the higher order of mysticism, by which "the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made"; and to the individual employing it for his own needs, highly elevating and profitable for instruction. But how far its revelations may be of similar profit to others it would be difficult to speak with any assurance. To be intromitted into such a spirit by the magnetism of the book would be a distinct gain to most persons, but "the bread of truth," says the proverb, "is not made for all mouths," and surely this may also be said of the wine of mysticism. Speaking generally, we should say that the profit of this book to most readers will not be its dogma, or body, but the spirit in which it is written. It is pure, elevated, and aspirational, and the book is moreover singularly free from that arrogant individualism which disfigures so frequently the utterances of those entering the spiritual region or life, and as yet unaware of the phantasies of the "Dwellers on the Threshold." In these respects there is much in it in common with the beautiful volumes of poetry in this order of Ella Dietz, though it lacks the powerful lyric flow which carries the reader away with it in those charming compositions.

The miscellaneous verse in the volume is very graceful, as will be seen from a specimen given last week. It might be wished that there were more of it.

THE old adage is true: None is so blind as he who will not see. As the swine value not pearls, so cares he not for the gems of truth, however beautiful and costly they may be.—ISAAC KINLEY.

WE are as we think. With reason as their master, the passions strengthen and ennoble; and the gentler emotions are as the flowers which complete and beautify the vase which holds them.—ISAAC KINLEY.

I CAUGHT the glimpse of a truth. It was but a shimmering light, and soon the clouds floated over it and all was dark. I had seen the light and knew it was there. But because their eyes had not seen it, some doubted, some smiled, and some mocked in derision. I peered and peered into the darkness. Rifts came and closed, and came again in the cloud, and with each reappearance the light was more brilliant. At last, oh, joy! the clouds dispersed. The fair orb was unobscured, and the whole horizon became luminous.—ISAAC KINLEY.

* *Israfel: Letters, Visions, and Poems.* By the Rev. Arthur E. Waite. (See advertisement column).

A MESSAGE FROM ONE "GONE BEFORE."

The following communications are sent to us by a correspondent, on whose *bona fides* we can rely, as interesting for two reasons—firstly, on account of their intrinsic value as reflecting light on the life beyond; secondly, because they were written under conditions of remarkable simplicity. Our correspondent says:—The circumstances were these: My young brother-in-law died at about eighteen. He was one of a large family. His eldest sister, then approaching the period of her own death, which occurred a year or two later, was controlled to write as a medium. Very shortly after his death Spiritualism was interesting the family, but I do not understand that any remarkable results of any kind had been attained through the mediumship of any of its members up to the period referred to. The communications I send you were produced through the hand of the elder sister, not herself the sister referred to as present at the time of the death. The first was written as far back as 1874 (on the 7th of May), but it has never passed out of private family keeping till now. I think it is worth publication, however, as illustrative of many views connected with the theory of spiritual life, that are seriously debated by philosophical observers. The writing begins: "Dearest J—,"—addressing by name the sister through whose hand it was being produced, and commences with some recommendations concerning her own health. Thus it goes on:—

"May the 7th, 1874.

"Love, I don't deceive you; I love you too well. Don't doubt me as I am indeed true. Soon I will write without pausing; never mind whether you think it makes sense or not; don't pause; proceed. I am going to tell you more about my life here. It is a pleasure state beyond anything conceivable on earth.

"I am glad your faith in Spiritualism is daily gaining strength by new phenomena. It will be a source of consolation to you as long as you live. Fear not; it is true; the many theories short of the spiritual one will not avail. We are all living, and able to go on in conscious happiness without doubt. Great is the joy experienced by all here over every convert that is gained, and we rejoice in the good of others; therefore their knowledge is a positive good to them. No one knows another truly in our old world; we are more enlightened here. No more misunderstandings as on earth cause separation and misery to those who should be nearest and dearest to one another. Wisdom comes so fast here, we see so much clearer."

The next communication through the same hand is addressed to the writer's (and the medium's) mother, who is still with us.

"My grandfather is old, wise, good, and great. Benevolent on earth, illustrious in feeling, talent, and great excellence, he was one of the best men. He had some failings, but was noble and sympathetic. My grandmother has gone on progressing much faster lately; her feelings now are less earth-drawn. She is higher and nearer my grandfather, and reaps the benefit of his noble assistance and guidance. He is guiding and powerful to all his own. His power and influence remain to us all, and he helps us on by his love. I could tell you more of this life, which is only a continuation of the more material one we have left. Spiritualism has been revealed to you. I passed away knowing nothing, believing nothing, hoping nothing, and found it was only my loss on earth. In my last illness had I been assured it would have made all the mystery of my trial clear, I could have left the world with one half the regret. I longed to live till my feebleness overcame my power to think out anything clearly. My mind through dreams and half-consciousness made everything unreal, and I passed away in a cloud of odd thoughts, and found myself suddenly in a new state of *bodily* feeling which was not of the old weary pain, but not my conception of a spiritual existence, as I thought. I was the same being without feeling so ill. I looked vacantly round for you and my sister T—, and remembered the brandy she offered me. Then I found it was no dream, and I could not understand my missing my nightly land-marks in corners of pillows and resting-places. All these, and many more thoughts flashed through my mind, and I hovered all round the room and

the next room, looked at the lamp burning, and so far I seemed left to myself. I saw my body lying there, and you and Dido mourning over it. I saw then spiritual forms which led me away, who began enlightening me on my new existence. I was forlorn and miserable at leaving you all, just the same as you for me. I longed to be back amongst you. The severance is the same in kind as the grief of those on earth for those departed; but all seems so natural. Never feel afraid of death now you have this new phenomenon. Such a fact the world has not been able to realise before, and all should rejoice who are now on earth who know the joyful tidings of Spiritualism.

"My father looks just as ever, only more loving and spiritual. My grandmother looks younger and more purified, better, happier than on earth. We all know disease and death are over for us. I did not know my sister Emma, but she knew me and made herself known to me as a sister. I was happy and loved her at once as such. She is very beautiful with her glorious spiritual training. Dress is a great part of spirit appearance: the better and purer the spirit, the brighter, whiter, and more lovely the raiment, with greater power of excellent whiteness and purity than can be conceived by earthly minds. Emma is bright, lovely, and accomplished; plays and sings divinely, as she loves music dearly. She literally plays the harp of golden strings, or what appears like it. She is deft and agile, dances, and is light and lovely, charming all around her. I cannot tell you how strangely social circles are formed here; like and unlike those on earth. Emma lives in the happy circle of her guides and instructors who love her as their own, and it is something like family life with a difference. I cannot be of her circle yet, but she envelopes me with a welcoming love, with a dear protective feeling over me as a dear brother. My father is not with her, but she is helping him on, and is always with him as often as she can. She loves him devotedly, and he is proud and fond of her; no jealousy there; all is love, and I am realising now the real happiness of this new state. Indeed, it is a happy state, one of progress, no possible retrogression. There can be no step backwards though progression may, with some, be very slow. Time is the great cure for all evil. Time will bring all darkness into light. You cannot, however, begin too soon on earth your desire to do well, as it is an assistance in this state, but if you should neglect your opportunities on earth there is no need to despair, as all works out right, and only the very darkest and most ignorant are to be pitied, as it is long for want of desire before they can emerge. Good night."

A SLANDER by innuendo is the meanest kind of slander. It leaves the one thus maligned no ground of defence. It is not only unmanly but cowardly.

In Spiritualism there is nothing but good; but whoever invokes it as an aid to fraudulent practices, or would use it as a mask to conceal falsehood, is in constant danger.

EARTH-BOUND spirits are very near earth-life, and are almost visible to sensitive people. We know that those which we call lower spirits—not always bad—are the ones that are able to give physical manifestations, while the higher spirits can influence and give impressions, but cannot move tables or do the sensuous things known as physical manifestations. The lower spirits are often used by the higher as an architect, or a capitalist here has to use mechanical labourers to carry out practically their ideas in erecting a building. Thus the higher control the lower, which seems to be a law in nature. The labourer or employé removes a heavy stone, he does it directly; the capitalist does it indirectly, and is the power, for he controls. Something analogous to this occurs in spirit life, between higher and lower spirits.—*Golden Gate.*

ONE-IDEA MINDS.—These are dangerous, not so much to others as to self. When a person finds himself contradicting or doubting everything that has not passed under his own observation, that one is losing his senses. The most expanded and cultivated mind that ever existed in mortal form, could not possibly be all-wise. Eternity is infinite, and time slowly reveals its secrets of knowledge and power. But man in his ignorance and arrogance scouts all new truths, and would crush each in turn to the earth and out of existence, if he could. He, however, is as weak as he is blind, and as he cannot grasp a new revelation, neither can he annihilate it. It lives, and revivifies whomsoever will receive it. There is a tendency in the mind that may cause it to harden and grow stiff, as the joints in old age, but, for the latter, physicians inform us there is a preventive in a certain course of diet. So it is with the mind. We must give it proper food, and stimulate it with pleasurable thought and generous reflection, cultivating a love of investigation, and, above all things, cease to dispute what we do not understand.—*Golden Gate.*

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

The Sealed Envelope Test.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—I have read with great interest the correspondence upon the subject, but am very much surprised to find that your correspondents appear to be ignorant of the fact that it is quite easy to open and re-seal a well-gummed and sealed envelope. The method is as follows:—A hot knife is passed beneath the seal close to the paper, with the result of detaching the former in a perfect state; the envelope is now exposed to the vapour of steam, and in a short time becomes quite ungummed. After re-gumming and reclosing, it is best to pass a hot iron once or twice over the envelope before fixing the seal. This last is done simply by putting the detached seal again on the hot knife, and sliding it off upon the envelope, when it will stick, and if the operation has been performed with the dexterity which a few hours' practice will impart there will be no sign of the letter having been tampered with. I am informed that this method of opening envelopes is well-known to the detective force and practised as a matter of routine in countries such as Russia, where espionage forms part of the ordinary system of government.—Believe me, yours truly,

G. HERSHELL, M.D.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Theobald, in discussing the hypothesis that he himself and his co-signatories should have overlooked the signs of tampering with the envelope at their meeting on the 7th ult., dismisses it as "a thing scarcely to be imagined after a critical examination." But Mr. Massey well points out that the value of a critical examination depends entirely on the personal equation of the critic: and I share his regrets that Mr. Hodgson, through whatever misunderstanding, was not present at the formal examination of the envelope. As an expert in such matters we could have felt some confidence in Mr. Hodgson's guarantee of the envelope as intact.

What is the value of the personal equation in Mr. Theobald's case may be deduced from the fact—which I learn from Mr. Hodgson—that when the slit was shown to him he refused to admit it as a proof that the envelope had been tampered with, and preferred to regard it as a result of the fraying of the edges; and that he persisted in that opinion until the envelope had been cut open, and the gum discovered. Now, such being Mr. Theobald's impression when his attention was deliberately directed to the slit, it is not likely that he would have attached any weight to such slight indications—even if he had observed them—on previous occasions; and the examination under the magnifying glass, of which he tells us, may probably be dismissed as valueless. It should be added that so skilfully had the traces of the fracture been concealed that even Mr. Rogers, as I learn, was unwilling to admit, at the first glance, that Mr. Hodgson was right in asserting that the envelope had been opened.

But, of course, the matter should not rest here. If it be true, as Mr. Theobald would appear to suggest, that the artist to whom the letter was entrusted for engraving has been guilty of a breach of professional trust, let him be exposed. It is a monstrous thing that the character of an honest medium should be imperilled by the irresponsible curiosity of a photographer's assistant. Let all those through whose hands the letter passed, be examined, and, if necessary, their affidavits taken.

But until Mr. Theobald has succeeded in evaluating more satisfactorily his personal equation, it will remain the more probable hypothesis that the fraud was committed, whether by medium or spirit, before the meeting of September 7th.

October 5th, 1886.

FRANK PODMORE.

Psychography.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Now that so much is being written about psychography with Mr. Eglinton, I have not noticed that any one has performed the experiment of which I had the pleasure of sending you an account, and which you were good enough to publish in "LIGHT" for January 23rd of the present year. It was very strong evidence to me that the phenomena were genuine, and that I was as much a partaker in the phenomenon as the other sitters. I sub-

sequently to writing that letter to you have verified the experiment, and am satisfied as to the genuineness of the occurrence. I wrote you an account of the séance in which the verification took place, but as I have no notes of it, and you did not publish my letter I could only give an account from memory, which I don't like to trust in such an important subject. If you have my letter it would perhaps be good policy at the present juncture to publish any part of it that you think advisable. The two observations seem to me the strongest possible evidence that the phenomena are genuine, or that I am a blundering fool, and a party to my own deception.—Yours, &c.

1ST M. B., LOND.

A Correction.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In case it may otherwise be overlooked, and therefore repeated in this week's issue, allow me to point out a typographical error in the title of "Notes by the Way" in last week's "LIGHT." The article in the *Nineteenth Century*, which forms the subject of "M.A. (Oxon's)" remarks, which are to be continued, is not "Before Death" but "Before Birth."—Yours very truly,

48, Allison-street, Crosshill, Glasgow.

Mc G. MUNRO.

October 4th, 1886.

Spirit Manifestations and Electricity.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should be sorry to enter into an argument about the conditions favourable for spirit manifestations with your correspondent "X."; firstly, because my powers of argument are very weak, and, secondly, because he is evidently not a believer in those manifestations, and any proofs I can give in favour of my assertion that an electrical state of the atmosphere is unfavourable for spirit manifestations would seem to him but as "idle tales." I mention the following fact for the benefit of those Spiritualists who may have read his letter in last week's "LIGHT."

I have only recently (since my power for automatic writing has become much stronger) received on two occasions a letter from my mother, who, I am told, is so high in the spheres that it is much more difficult for her to write than for those with whom I am in constant communication. A short time since I was given to hope that I should have a letter from her on the day I usually sit for automatic writing, but when the time came and I sat with my pencil in hand, to my astonishment the letter was begun by my guide who usually writes to me. I inquired why my mother did not write, as she had promised to do if she could, and received this answer, "Your mother is unable to write to you to-day because the power is not strong; there is electricity in the atmosphere, and that is bad for spirit manifestations." I do not suppose electricity affects the spirits one way or another, but it certainly has an influence on their mediums, and possibly diminishes the supply of psychic aura (or whatever it may be called), which gives the spirits their power to manifest. With regard to the glass tube experiment, I simply asked my guide if he thought he could write in a hermetically sealed glass tube, and the answer was that he did not think he could, for that glass was a bad medium; he has written to me direct in almost every other way.—I am, sir, yours truly,

"V."

Mr. S. J. Davey and "V."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent, "V.," in her letter appearing in "LIGHT," October 2nd, 1886, appears to have misunderstood my previous letter appearing in "LIGHT," September 25th, 1886.

"V." appears to think that I feel "aggrieved" because she referred to my correspondence with her in 1884.

One of my objects in writing my letter, appearing in "LIGHT" of September 25th, 1886, was to point out that the breach of "V.'s" promise to me was unjustifiable, but my chief object was to correct the misleading misstatement made by "V." concerning that correspondence, and to protest against "V.'s" speculations as to the motives that have guided me both at the time of the correspondence in question and since.

"V." is mistaken in quoting the passage: "To those persons who have given any time at all to the study of psychological subjects, the idea of trickery or juggling in slate-writing communications is quite out of the question," as having been made by me in "LIGHT," October, 1884.

The passage in question appeared in "LIGHT," on July 12th 1884.

I have already pointed out that previous to July, 1884, I had never performed a single conjuring trick as applied to slate-writing, and I have also pointed out the limited extent of my knowledge of conjuring between July and October, 1884.—Yours, &c.,

Beckenham.

S. J. DAVEY.

October 4th, 1886.

The Glass Test Tube.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Eglinton wrote to me a week ago that the sealed glass tube which I left with him, early in last July, is broken, he having accidentally dropped it whilst showing it to a member of the Society for Psychical Research. He adds, "If you care to send me another I shall be pleased to try it." This very obliging offer I have gladly accepted; and I hope to furnish Mr. Eglinton with another tube in the course of three or four days.

—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Toppesfield Rectory.

CHARLES J. TAYLOR

October 2nd, 1886.

Mr. S. J. Davey's Conjuring Experience.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having been in the Highlands for the last two months, I have not, till recently, seen the whole of the correspondence that has appeared in "LIGHT" with regard to Mr. S. J. Davey. Since my return, however, I have had an opportunity of doing so, and I now write with the intention of clearing up certain misconceptions which have arisen in connection with this subject.

I do this the more readily, seeing that Mr. Eglinton has—in his letter to "LIGHT," August 28th, 1886—said that I will no doubt testify to the correctness of the statements therein made.

I have, I believe, visited Mr. Eglinton six times, always in company with Mr. Davey, and we should probably have gone more often had either of our last two séances been successful.

At our first séance we had results which Mr. Eglinton himself told us were better than those generally obtained by his sitters.

At our second séance, which took place in October, 1884, Mr. Davey told Mr. Eglinton that he had bought a trick cardboard slate, and had experimented with a thimble, to the end of which a slate-pencil was attached, to see if it were possible for writing to be produced in the way suggested by a well-known conjurer. He then informed Mr. Eglinton very truly that he had been unable to get writing in this latter way, and showed him the instrument he had used.

Mr. Eglinton about this time showed us a cardboard slate with a movable flap, similar to that bought by Mr. Davey, remarking, if I remember rightly, that it of course offered no explanation of his manifestations, and that no ordinary investigator could be taken in by it, to which we agreed. This séance was a blank.

Now I wish to clearly point out that these were the only attempts at slate-writing I saw Mr. Davey make in the year 1884.

He was not, I feel sure, "a skilled conjurer" at that time, from which it follows that Mr. Eglinton is wrong in his inference that more value ought to be attached to Mr. Davey's testimony in 1884 than to that of any ordinary person.

The last séance with Mr. Eglinton at which we had any results was on the evening of January 15th, 1885.

October 5th, 1886.

H. A. MUNRO.

WE attract hearts by the qualities we display; we retain them by the qualities we possess.—*Suard*.

If the highest incentive to a noble life, is the good we may do to others, then the greatest restraining influence to avoid the evil is the thought of the sorrow we may bring to others. Ah! how much we need to realise that "no man lives unto himself,"—that our evil deeds bring even greater sorrow upon others than ourselves, and that those others are the ones that love us most, and should be the most dear to us. And you who labour, sorrow and suffer for others should know that such suffering has the divinest mission—the seal of Divine approbation in its effectiveness—that the tears for others shed shall wash them white as snow. So it is that one may sin alone, but the suffering falls heaviest upon the one who loves the sinner most, be it father or mother, brother or sister, whose finite capacity cannot comprehend the ways of "Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
16, CRAVEN STREET,
CHARING CROSS, S.W.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Light:

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9TH, 1886.

PROPOSAL FOR CONFEDERATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am requested by the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance to forward to you for publication the subjoined documents, which are about to be sent out to societies which have already expressed a general adhesion to the principles contained in them.—I am, &c.,

W. STANTON MOSES, M.A.,
President.

OUTLINE OF SCHEME OF CONFEDERATION

Submitted for suggestion and approval by the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

BASIS OF CONFEDERATION.

I. Confederation between independent Societies; not Affiliation of Societies of inferior magnitude or importance to any one claiming for itself superior importance.

II. This Confederation on terms of perfect equality to be arranged between Societies of Spiritualists and Spiritists who accept as a broad basis of belief some such statements as the following:—

1. That there is a life coincident with, and independent of, the physical life of the body.
2. That, as a necessary corollary, this life extends beyond the life of the body.
3. That there is communication between the denizens of that state of existence, and those of the world in which we now live.

In other words, There is a spiritual life uninterrupted by physical death: and, There is communion between the world of spirit and the world of matter.

PLAN.

It is suggested,

1. That each individual Society shall enjoy perfect autonomy.
2. That Societies in Great Britain shall unite on a basis of equality, and form a "BRITISH SPIRITUALIST CONFEDERATION."
3. That Societies of Spiritualists and Spiritists throughout the world shall unite on a basis of equality and form an "INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION."

There would, therefore, be in this suggested Plan Three Grades.

1. The individual Society, with or without affiliated groups of small neighbouring Societies, enjoying perfect independence.
2. A Home Confederation represented by a Confederated Council, at which all representatives of Societies would have equal votes, and would deal with questions affecting British interests.
3. An International Confederation at which representatives with equal votes would deal with purely international questions, and such as affect the interests of all Spiritists and Spiritualists.

From this plan, which aims at stimulating individual societies to systematic research, and to the free interchange of opinion; and next, at the organisation of existing materials which are now without cohesion for lack of some such bond, it is hoped that the following advantages, amongst others, may accrue:—

1. Consolidation of the movement at home and abroad on a secure basis.
2. Facilities for the interchange of free opinion and individual experience.
3. Stimulus to the work of local Societies by
4. Affording increased facilities for systematic study and research: and so
5. Encouragement of better methods of carrying on such study and research.
6. More accurate records regularly published: excluding loose and unimportant detail, and securing attention to important facts.
7. Better methods of dealing with the increasing body of inquirers.
8. A general elevation of the tone of the Spiritualist Press, by securing valuable matter, and better methods of criticism and controversy from capable and practised writers.
9. An annual record of progress by tabulation of reports from Confederated Societies.
10. Formal introduction of Spiritualists who may visit foreign countries to Confederated Societies therein.
11. Introduction of Mediums to foreign Societies, which introductions would be an affirmation of their integrity and trustworthiness.
12. Definite information at first-hand of any generally interesting and important event.

Signed on behalf of the Council,

W. STANTON MOSES, M.A.,
President.

To the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

I acquiesce in the above plan of Confederation, and append my signature on behalf of.....

(Signed).....

MEMORANDUM ON THE CONFEDERATION OF SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES.

[The President of the London Spiritualist Alliance begs to forward for publication a preliminary memorandum on Confederation, which has been separately considered by, and has received the approval of, every member of the Council. He believes that the suggestions there made are of general interest to the readers of "LIGHT," and he will be glad to receive from members of the Alliance any suggestions that may occur to them. It is proposed to draft a plan of Confederation on the bases laid down in the subjoined memorandum, embodying in a more precise form the suggestions made therein. This plan will eventually be forwarded for approval to the various societies and journals, whom it is proposed to approach with a view to Confederation. The present memorandum is tentative, and is published as foreshadowing what the Alliance hopes to carry into effect.]

In the course of my address to the London Spiritualist Alliance, on November 13th last, I stated, in referring to the subject of Confederation, that it seemed desirable* to formulate some simple plan for carrying into effect the objects which I briefly indicated, viz., to aim at "a grand confederation between societies of repute in various countries, in defence and for the advancement of the central principles of our common faith." I further expressed an opinion that "were this realised as the final aim that we should have in view—an organisation of infinite ramifications, whose aim should be to promote the highest and best interests of mankind, and to advance their spiritual welfare here and hereafter—it would be clear to all of us that Spiritualists have laid upon them a serious and solemn charge, and that that charge can only be carried into real effect by such an organisation as I have indicated."

On considering what was desirable, attainable, and immediately profitable, I have been led to exclude any idea of an

* See *Spiritualism at Home and Abroad*, pp. 19, 20.

elaborate scheme, which, in my opinion, would meet with considerable criticism, and would require a complex machinery to carry it into effect.

When it is considered that the societies which we hope to unite into a common bond are of very divergent beliefs and customs in matters non-essential, though they are happily at one in respect of the essentials of our common faith, it will, I think, be agreed that any proposal made by us should be characterised by simplicity in the first instance.

A common bond of sympathy once established, we may hope that in the ordinary course of events, an organisation will be developed more elaborate and complex than we can now venture to propose.

We have already explicitly declined to be bound ourselves, or to seek to bind others, by any but the very simplest confession of faith, which we have reason to believe that all Spiritualists will unhesitatingly accept.

Beyond this, what is to be aimed at? Briefly, to break down the existing condition of isolation, and to substitute for it sympathetic and friendly relations between Spiritualists in all countries; to promote a strengthening of the bonds of sympathy, an interchange of experiences published and unpublished, a reciprocation of confidential information which may be useful for the guidance of the respective managers of societies; and a yearly report to this Council from each society of interesting and important events within its ken, such reports to be tabulated by us, and the results published for the common information.

By these means we should obtain a broad foundation on which a substantial superstructure might in due time, be raised. We should set forth a scheme elastic enough to be sufficiently comprehensive. We should not evoke minute criticism on details, where divergence of opinion might conceivably crop up. We should secure not only a bond of sympathy by the interchange of ideas, but also a mass of information from the most various sources, a knowledge of the difficulties and perplexities which occur to the most divergent types of mind, and materials for an estimate of the general condition of Spiritualism throughout the world, which could not fail to be valuable and instructive.

I would submit, then, with the sanction of the Council, to societies, journals, and prominent Spiritualists throughout the world for preliminary criticism prior to final adoption

A PLAN OF CONFEDERATION ON THE BASIS OF THE FOLLOWING OBLIGATIONS, TO BE CARRIED OUT WITH SUCH NECESSARY MODIFICATIONS AS SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE.

1. A general interchange of views and opinions as occasion serves.

- (a) Accounts of noteworthy facts and phenomena, published or otherwise, within the knowledge of the society communicating them.
- (b) Statements or discussions of points of difficulty that may have arisen.
- (c) Particulars of new books and pamphlets of interest.

[From such an interchange of free opinion, I should expect that we might get profitable public discussion in our journals; and as all records and papers would come to this Council in the end, I should expect to get interesting matter for "LIGHT," and gradually to secure for it a regular system of foreign correspondence. I should also expect that the difficulties of those who view matters differently from ourselves would be instructive. And as English-speaking people have approached the subject in a more experimental and practical way than, e.g., the Latin races have, while they, on the other hand, have been more theoretical and philosophical in their handling of it, I should hope that a free interchange of views might be mutually beneficial.]

2. An exchange of journals, published in various countries, with "Light," and a systematic endeavour to acquaint the readers of them with the progress of Spiritualism in all lands.

[What I contemplate is more than a mere exchange of journals. I want an interchange of matter; a systematic attempt, e.g., to let us know what French Spiritism is doing, and to let French Spiritists know what we are doing. If it were found that "LIGHT" contained regular matter of universal interest it would add to its weight and importance, and, in the end, to its circulation. The question of expense, and how far an exchange with the most important papers only is desirable, would need consideration. The great aim should be to get a common interest in the common work developed, so as further to break down isolation.]

3. Once during each year, at the beginning, or at the end, a Report of the progress of Spiritualism during the year, so far as it comes within the knowledge of each journal or society, to be sent to this Council. These to be tabulated, and a yearly summary published in "Light" for the benefit of all confederated societies.

[Possibly the Alliance might in time see its way to publications in another form, e.g., as *Proceedings*. But for the time being it would be easy to utilise the various journals for the publication of these matters of common interest. Or, if preferred, a MS. report

might be sent direct to the Council, and a brief digest of it, and others of a like nature, might be published in "LIGHT." We should thus give a mass of interesting matter. And again we should strike a blow at isolation, and stimulate sympathetic interest. To facilitate this interchange of Reports, it might be suggested that Presidents of confederated societies should be made hon. associates or members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and its President in turn be made hon. associate or member of each of them.]

4. Interchange of confidential information desirable for the private guidance of managers of societies and journals.

- (a) Formal introduction of visitors, who should be vouched for by Spiritualists of repute, or officially by officers of societies, so as to give them facilities for intercourse with Spiritualists in the countries they may visit, and the *entrée* to any available séances.
- (b) Definite information as to mediums who may go from one country to another, and confidential recommendation or the reverse, with facts for the guidance of Spiritualists in dealing with them.
- (c) Definite information from knowledge acquired on the spot of any occurrence such (e.g.) as an alleged exposure of a certain medium, which it is desirable to get at first-hand.

This plan, with such modifications and additions as the Council may make in it, I propose to embody in a memorandum to be sent to all journals and societies who have received my address on *Spiritualism at Home and Abroad*, with a request that they will express an opinion on its proposals, and, if approved, adopt them and send in their formal adhesion as soon as possible.

On receipt of these suggestions I would lay before the Council a draft plan embodying all such as seemed workable. This would then include the definite and well-considered opinion of Home and Foreign Spiritualists.

It may be added that this plan, if carried out in any complete manner, would involve a great deal of secretarial and literary work in French and German. I have reason to believe that, at any rate until the duties become very onerous, I can get this undertaken by competent hands. By this division of labour I trust that no heavier load would be laid on the willing shoulders of our present hon. sec.

NEXT WEEK'S SPECIAL NUMBER OF "LIGHT."

The number of copies of the special number of "LIGHT" at present ordered, has, as yet, fallen considerably short of our expectations. We trust our readers will save us and themselves disappointment by sending in their orders as early as possible. We cannot reprint the issue, and, after the edition of "LIGHT" worked off on Wednesday next (and which will be limited to the number of copies ordered by that day), is exhausted, that number of "LIGHT" will remain out of print. It will contain about 64 pages, and will, therefore, be four times as large as ordinarily; and, as it will form the most complete mass of evidence in support of the genuineness of psychography that has ever been published, every reader of "LIGHT" should order a good supply of copies for distribution. For full particulars, see our advertising columns.

MR. LAURENCE OLIPHANT dined with Her Majesty the Queen on the 4th inst.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT.—We have often received inquiries for files of Spiritualist journals and magazines. On our back page will be found an announcement in connection therewith. Such an opportunity as the present seldom occurs, as the files in question are yearly increasing in rarity and value.

THE MAGNETIC AND MASSAGE INSTITUTE (158, Marylebone-road, London).—Lady superintendent, Mrs. Duncan; referees and visitors, the Lady Mount-Temple, Mrs. Hamilton, of Sundrum, Ayrshire, Miss Fitzroy, Grafton Regis, the Rev. W. Stainton Moses, M.A., University College School. This Institute has been established for the purpose of treating disease by animal magnetism and massage. The cures effected by the former means, particularly in nervous disorders, are little short of miraculous, and diseases which have for years baffled the best science and skill have yielded almost at once to its application. The massage system (sometimes, though wrongly, called rubbing), now so justly popular, is a most potent remedy in all chronic diseases, debility, paralysis, &c. The treatment by either means can be administered at the Institute, and the massage at the residences of the patients; but it is more advisable for patients if they would receive the full benefit of the treatment to become inmates of the Institute, or of some one of the homes which have been established in connection with it. The best available skill has been secured, and a staff of selected and competent operators is continually in readiness. A personal interview is invited by inquirers at the Institute, between the hours of eleven and two, every day but Saturday and Sunday. Open to the poor for free consultation and treatment at certain hours.

SANCTITY OF SUFFERING.

Longfellow has truly said :—

"Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary."

There is no life, however fair may seem the way, but knows its night of sorrow ; none but have their own Gethsemane. Suffering is the one inheritance to which every member of earth's family is fellow-heir ; it has its mission and purpose in life's great plan—a purpose which we should endeavour to early grasp, and thereby reap the highest good to ourselves. We but begin to perceive the depth and breadth of our innermost nature, and catch the scintillating gleams of the grand possibilities of our divine being, after we have passed through the crucible of affliction.

We cannot understand why discords produce the most profound melody, nor why the imprisoned songster trills his sweetest lays, no more than we can understand why the spirit of man is purified only when the soul has been wrung by some great agony. It seems to be God's system to measure the soul by its capacity "to suffer and be strong."

He who can turn the fiery ordeals of existence into blossoms of loving, gentle thoughts—flowers, whose fragrance shall fill the myriad corridors of pain with a subtle penetration of joy and gladness—is indeed an angel of glory—an angel of peace ; not like Sandalphon in the legend of old, standing by the gateway of the celestial city, but on earth mingling with the sad and sorrowful, often with a bruised and mangled heart—this is indeed the work of the Divine.

So tired, weary one, bowed by the weight of a mighty woe, cherish this thought, that when the golden rays from the sun of Hope penetrate the sombre gloom, that the inner meaning of the lesson will burst upon your consciousness in crystal splendour, and you can say with that sweet singer, Phoebe Cary,

"So let my past stand, just as it stands,
And let me now, as I may, grow old ;
I am what I am, and my life for me
Is the best—or it had not been, I hold."

—Golden Gate.

MR. R. HODGSON CHARGED WITH SUPPRESSING EVIDENCE.

It seems desirable, in the interests of truth, that we should place before our readers the following extracts from a letter written by Colonel Olcott under date Adyar, May 15th, 1886, to Mr. C. Reimers, and published by the last named gentleman in *The South Australian Register* of July 23rd last. The passages quoted speak for themselves :—

As regards the recent crusade of the London S.P.R. against Madame Blavatsky, there is one thing to be said which explains why it has had so little permanent effect upon our Society. The report is so full of personal pique and malice, and shows so little familiarity with psychological science, that experienced and unbiased Theosophists and Spiritualists see that Mr. Hodgson has over-shot his mark, and that his blow will recoil upon himself. . . . Perhaps more than any one else here, I have been grieved and shocked with Mr. H.'s conduct, for—as he himself admits—I threw our most private records open to him, gave him facilities he could otherwise never have secured for investigating, and expected him to deal by us with absolute candour and loyalty. I am also sorry to be obliged to say that, for the sake of impeaching the character of Mr. Damodar—noblest, most unselfish, and devoted of young Hindu philanthropists, and one of the most successful of our psychic experimentalists—Mr. Hodgson suppressed an account—capable of verification by Postal Department and other proofs—of an "Astral flight," or psychic journey, of Mr. D.'s from Cawnpore to Madras on the night of November 4th, 1883, and of the transportation of a certain letter (to me from a gentleman in Italy) from Madame Blavatsky, which very letter was posted to me to Aligarh, N.W.P., on the morning of November 5th, at Adyar, by Madame Blavatsky, and duly reached Aligarh on the 10th, in regular course of post, where I found it on the 12th. This is so irrefutable a case, so outside of the possibility of any theory of collusion or deception, and it so upsets the plan to impeach Mr. Damodar's veracity and integrity, that it was quietly ignored. I am sorry to have to say this, but what other inference is possible when Mr. H. was shown the entries in my diary, from which he was quite willing to copy whatever suited his purpose ?

BARON HELLENBACH'S FIRST SPIRITUALISTIC SEANCE.

"The following interesting anecdote is translated from a book written by Baron Hellenbach, and published ten years ago in Vienna, entitled *Eine Philosophie des gesunden Menschenverstandes*, which, I think, may be freely translated 'Philosophy of Sound Common Sense.' The remainder of his observations with regard to automatic writing are well worth reading, particularly the record of some communications he received in this way through an unprofessional medium (a young married lady), from intelligences, answering questions addressed to Kant, Schopenhauer and Fourier ; but they would make the extract too long for publication in 'LIGHT,' at least in one number."—"V."]

In the month of January, in the year 1857, I was invited by a friend of mine to a ball at his country seat. I left my residence in company with two other persons, and we drove through deep snow in high spirits to Castle O—, a distance of ten miles.

The evening was already setting in when we drew near to the castle, the appearance of which, free from bustle and not lighted up, struck us with some astonishment. Our first greeting was the news of the owner's absence and of that of the giver of the *fête*, who had been summoned by a telegraphic message to the death-bed of their nearest relative, at Vienna. In the haste of departure the notice of the postponement of the entertainment had been entrusted to one person for him to make public to the invited guests, and through some mistake on the part of this third person, who ought to have sent us the news, we remained in ignorance of it up to the time of our arrival. Nothing remained to be done but to stay over the night and to perform our homeward journey the following day. But in this likewise our hopes were doomed to disappointment. The snow becoming deeper and deeper, with the fatigued state of the horses, made the journey so slow that at last we resolved to beg for hospitality at B—, a castle standing not far from the high road, though neither I nor my two companions had ever set foot in this castle, and but for this untoward event probably never should have done so. In these parts there are no good half-way inns, the best being only pothouses, and we were positively forced to seek refuge from the ever-increasing violence of the weather.

The owner of the castle, Countess D., was scarcely known to us, and circumstances had prevented a nearer acquaintance, although her abode was only three miles from our estate. Besides which, this castle was only the occasional residence of the Countess. The meeting, therefore, on both sides was a completely unexpected one. We were received by the lady in the most kind and amiable manner, and gave her an account of our fruitless journey to O—, an additional reason for doing this being that she was related to the giver of the intended ball. I cannot now recall on what other subjects we conversed, and therefore cannot say how it was that our conversation turned upon metaphysics. It is enough that Countess D. told us she possessed a fan, which as soon as she laid her fingers upon it began to revolve, and when applied to a sheet of paper with the letters of the alphabet written upon it would spell out the most interesting answers to questions. In reply to the wish I expressed to witness the experiment, the Countess kindly went and fetched the fan, which was made of ordinary cedar wood. I prepared the sheet of paper according to her directions, and we sat down, in number four persons, at the table, I being next the Countess, who laid the middle finger of her hand upon the fan, which soon began to revolve on the paper. I was then asked by our hostess to put some questions upon any subject I liked.

My knowledge of Spiritualistic and mystical occurrences did not at that time extend beyond what I had gathered from the ordinary newspapers. I knew this much, that the so-called guardian spirit played a considerable part in them, and, therefore, I asked who was my guardian spirit (*Schutzgeist*.)

The folded-up fan, upon which I kept an attentive eye, touched with great celerity the letters arranged on the paper in a semi-circle, sometimes with one end, sometimes with the other, according to which was nearest the letter. The first word which I was able to read was my family name. I asked, "Which one?" and received for answer "Thy father." To the question if he could speak to me the answer "No" was given. As it was possible, indeed probable, that the Countess might have heard of the decease of my father in 1855, though she had no acquaintance with him, it was not unnatural that he should be looked upon as my guardian spirit ; I, therefore, hastened to put the question as to who before then had been my guardian spirit ; and to my intense astonishment the answer given was, "Adele B."

In order to explain to my readers what made this answer appear so extraordinary to me, it will be necessary to cast a fleeting glance over my previous life.

I was born at our family seat in Northern Hungary ; at six

years of age I went to school in Vienna, and during the whole time of my studies at a public school I returned every year to pass my holidays at my father's, till 1845. At about half an hour's distance from us lived a tolerably numerous family, with whom as a near neighbour I was in frequent communication.

The situation of the two castles, together with this yearly reunion after a separation of ten months—in short, everything combined to make the lovely little Countess Adele B., whose age was nearly the same as my own, an object of attraction to me. We loved one another, if it may be so called, for many years, without ever telling one another of our love. The year 1848 took me from my home, and at the same time Adele, with her mother and brother, were cut off from the number of the living. They all three died suddenly of cholera during a short stay in the capital. An idea of my astonishment may be in some measure conceived when a lady, a total stranger to my circumstances, and particularly to my past life, gave me the name of a person with whom she was completely unacquainted, and who, if it were possible to bring me to this Spiritualistic belief in guardian spirits, was the one and only person whose affection could have been the motive for becoming such; for I should have been greatly embarrassed to name anyone out of the number of my deceased relatives and friends who took a special interest in me; such either were still living or had died during my childhood; and of friends I had only lost two, whose death had affected me painfully, with whom I had been in sympathy and of whose sincere friendship I was convinced—these two persons were my tutor, who had died in Vienna as a physician, and Adele B.

All these facts and accessory circumstances would not have puzzled me, whether, for instance, a person either dead or living could give an account of them; whether I have or have not a guardian spirit; and finally whether these communications could take place by means of a fan, a table, or a somnambulist;—these are matters which had never occupied my attention for a moment; the strange part of the thing was that here was something said that had a reasonable connection with facts, that could not have been in the thoughts of any person present except myself, and most certainly was not in my thoughts.

There is no doubt that the Countess was familiar with such communications, and probably possessed great dexterity with her fingers; she must likewise have been quite familiar with the idea of guardian spirits. Whether, however, she had been informed by some third person who had known me in early life of such an entirely unimportant episode, is a question which may readily occur to anyone. No one, with the exception of the brothers and sisters and governess, could have any knowledge of the relations that existed between me and Adele B. As to the first, I was able to institute inquiries whether there had ever been any intercourse between them and Countess D., and I ascertained that at that time, at least, they were complete strangers to one another, which doubtless they still are at the present; and the same with regard to the governess. It is most improbable that these persons should have mentioned a matter of such insignificance, and probably by that time forgotten, to a third person, and that this matter should thus have reached the knowledge of Countess D., and have imprinted itself so strongly upon her memory that when, by an accidental circumstance, I found myself in her company, she should have surprised me by a reference to it.

As this was the first time I ever had the opportunity of experimenting with a medium, politeness demanded that I should acquiesce in the usual way of proceeding and views of the speaker, or rather writer, and later on it became evident to me that if I wanted to get to the bottom of the matter I ought not to act in any way so as to disturb the medium, but should accept everything, at least at the beginning, as it occurred, which in similar cases I would strongly advise others to do. Spiritualists, it is well known,* take everything of this nature as coming from spirits and deceased persons. I must confess myself that, apart from all other considerations, I do not consider such a view to be justified by the phenomena themselves, because the answers bear with them only too clearly traces of the views of the instrument, and the same thing spoken of by different mediums will generally also be spoken of in a different manner. The circumstance that every medium has a different way and manner of answering, agreeing with his character and mental capacity—as far as my experience reaches—proves that the medium is not simply an organ of other beings, but has a very real share in the answers.

One medium whom I knew, a young married lady of about twenty with rare gifts of mind, gave the answers always to the point, clear, short, and never going beyond the compass of the question put; while another answered frequently in Bible language, quite diffusely, and often about things quite unconnected with the question. These two species of medium are the most common. It appears to be always necessary, or at least in most cases it is best,

for the mediums to understand the questions, while the answers are not readily to be expected from their own consciousness; for if a medium has his own views about the question which is put, the answer will generally be in accord with them. The disposition and physical well-being as well as the surroundings likewise exercise an influence. If many strangers are present, a restraining because an intimidating influence is apparent. It is best only to have present such persons as frequently meet and are used to one another, because this faculty of mediumship is a subjective condition, and seems to demand the self-confidence of the medium. If any one drew near, even in the next room, in the case of some experiments I was present at with the needle or index (instead of a fan), when the letters were pointed out with incredible quickness, the writing broke off suddenly, before anyone even was aware of the approach. The first of the two mediums I have spoken of was not at all pleasantly affected by having such questions put to her, and if possible concealed her powers; and just on this account her answers were highly objective, that is, uninfluenced by her own opinions, while professional mediums usually hold themselves as a sort of prophets, and give vent to their own cosmology and philosophical views, to which they make converts.

The more frequently questions are put concerning the common affairs of life, the more frequently deceiving replies are obtained; it is only rarely that the answers to such questions are correct. Questions concerning sickness are generally much more rightly answered, at least so far as I understand such matters. I know a person who was sometimes consulted by a physician about sick persons at a distance, and with good results. As to the phenomenon when taken in connection with ethical and especially with philosophical subjects, my experience is that answers much more frequently prove right, and are sometimes very surprising. It may generally be taken as a rule that answers which the medium could give in an ordinary way might easily be influenced by his own views and thus become falsified, and that such answers only, concerning which he is able to comprehend the question, but has no views or opinions of his own about the subject mooted, place the medium in that objective condition which seems to be necessary for the brain, and such answers are sometimes, though not always, very astonishing.

I have had two Protestant governesses for my children, from whom, after a time, it could not be concealed that a lady medium who was a neighbour of mine often came to my house. The result was that they desired to put some questions themselves, and among others they asked, at my request, who were their guardian spirits. Both of them received in answer Christian names which moved them to tears, so strikingly did they agree with circumstances quite unknown to us in their early lives.

Calm, objective, and continuous observation has at least led me to this conclusion, *that under certain favourable conditions a writing medium can write things which are not in his thoughts, and which cannot be evolved out of his consciousness; in this case the answers are mostly the thoughts of the questioner, but sometimes they go even beyond this.* The proposition "*Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu*," is refuted by experience, at least in its application without exception to all men under every circumstance. *This is a fact which cannot be denied.* Ninety per cent. of these communications may be due to fraud arising from vanity or self-interest, nine out of the remaining ten per cent. may be empty play of thought, still there remains something over which justifies my assertion. I can understand a scientific, cultivated man being loth, as it were, to enter into the circle of superstition; on the other side, however, it is a hard thing to say that the stamp of falsehood rests upon the traditions handed down by historians for thousands of years as well as the accounts of modern Spiritualists; and that everything which the latter assert is only a proof of madness; and I willingly acknowledge my error in having taken everything without exception for silly mystification, before the convincing nature of the facts themselves taught me better.

THE Hon. Milner Stephens, the remarkable Australian healer, is now at New York, on his way to England.

A COLLECTED edition of the poems of Mr. Joseph Skipsey (the Newcastle "seer"), under the title of *Carols from the Coal-Fields, and other Songs and Ballads*, will shortly be issued. The volume will contain a number of hitherto unpublished pieces, and will be prefaced with an introduction by Dr. Spence Watson.

LONDON OCCULT LODGE AND ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL INQUIRY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—Last Sunday evening we had a very interesting discussion with Mr. Sinnett, on the Esoteric doctrine. His replies to questions were of a most scientific and logical character. Mr. Sinnett has promised to visit us again shortly. Next Sunday there will be a séance in the morning, at eleven, with Mr. Hopcroft, and in the evening, at seven, a physical séance with Mr. Williams. Those wishing to attend apply to me, as below.—F. W. READ, secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

* Hellenbach is in error here as regards the views held by Spiritualists to-day; although it was doubtless true in the early days of the movement.

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 impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me.”

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

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—“Far from abating my confidence in the infrences 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.”

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

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.

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