

# Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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[The Editor of "LIGHT" desires it to be distinctly understood that he can accept no responsibility as to the opinions expressed by Contributors and Correspondents. Free and courteous discussion is invited, but writers are alone responsible for the articles to which their names are attached.]

### NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

#### MESMERISM AND HYPNOTISM.

##### PART II.

The next article that I desire to note is one by Mr. F. W. H. Myers on "Human Personality in the Light of Hypnotic Suggestion." Here the writer approaches and partly deals with the problems of consciousness that beset and perplex many of the phenomena of Spiritualism. I will endeavour to present in brief abstract some idea of the conclusions—negative and tentative, and by no means conclusive—which Mr. Myers sets forth. They are of high value, none the less because, on a superficial view, they seem to contradict what Mr. Myers and I agree in holding "as uniquely important." Experimental Psychology, the first serious exponent of which among us was Serjeant Cox, seeks to attack the great problems of life and mind by exact study. First come the spontaneous states: sleep and dream, trance, hysteria, somnambulism, and so on to death and dissolution. Then come the induced states: narcotism, hypnotism, and the like, by observation of which—of the machinery thrown slightly out of gear—we qualify ourselves to return to the normal states and disentangle the problems that they present. Mr. Myers professes a certain qualified belief—a "conviction which he can nearly prove"—in the fact that he has "some kind of soul." That is probably so. I entertain no doubt of it myself, and regret that he should not be equally assured in his conviction. From this qualified belief he starts to dissect the evidence. Reid's *Intellectual Powers of Man* supplies him with a working definition, which, though a century old, represents the average idea. "Personal identity depends on the continued existence of that indivisible thing which I call myself. . . . My thoughts, actions, feelings change every moment: they have no continued, but a successive existence: but that Self or I to which they belong is permanent. . . ."

That is the old idea. What is the outcome of modern scientific analysis? Here is the rough sketch:—

"We start with the single cell of protoplasm, endowed with reflex irritability. We attempt a more complex organism by dint of mere juxtaposition, attaining first to what is styled a 'colonial consciousness,' where the group of organisms is for locomotive purposes a single complexly-acting individual, though when united action is not required each polyp in the colony is master of his simple self. Hence we advance to something like a common brain for the whole aggregate, though intellectual errors will at first occur, and the head will eat its own tail if it

unfortunately comes in its way. We have got here to a state like that of the mad John Henry, who alternately boxes his right ear, saying that John is a ruffian, and his left, saying that Henry is a fool. We rise higher, and the organism is definitely at unity with itself. But the unity is still a unity of co-ordination, not of creation; it is a unity aggregated from multiplicity, and which contains no element deeper than the struggle for existence has evolved in it. The cells of my body are mine in the sense that, for their own comfort and security, they have agreed to do a great many things, at the bidding of my brain. But they are servants with a life of their own; they can get themselves hypertrophied, so to speak, in the kitchen, without my being able to stop them. Does my consciousness testify that I am a single entity? This only means that a stable *cenesthesia* exists in me just now; a sufficient number of my nervous centres are acting in unison; I am being governed by a good working majority. Give me a blow on the head which silences some leading centres, and the rest will split up into 'parliamentary groups,' and brawl in delirium or madness. Does memory prove that I was the same man last year as now? This only means that my circulation has continued steady; the brain's nutrition has reproduced the modifications impressed on it by stimuli in the past. My organism is the real basis of my personality; I am still but a colony of cells, and the unconscious or unknowable from which my thoughts and feelings draw their unity is below my consciousness, and not above it; it is my protoplasmic substructure, not my transcendental goal." The *personality* (as I prefer to put it) masks and comprehends a number of states of consciousness, of which, in what are called my waking moments, I am imperfectly aware, and sometimes wholly unaware.

The three elements of human individuality, so far as we can get at them analytically, are *central will*, *continuous memory*, and *homogeneous character*. What light does hypnotism throw on the persistence of these characteristics? And first, on that well-worn question of man's *free-will*. In an uneducated subject—"a heedless, vacant mind"—almost any suggestion is at once accepted. Q. "Your name?" A. (suggested) "Nebuchadnezzar." Aroused from trance: "Why did you say that?" Any excuse is made, except the right one that the suggested idea was dominant. No subject admits this: yet to an unprejudiced observer that is the one and only reason for the absurd statement. Mr. Myers gives some records within his own personal experience which show that the free-will of the subject is absolutely controlled without his being in any way aware of it. These cases, which I have no difficulty in accepting, though I venture to think that the canons of evidence favoured by the Society for Psychical Research would exclude them, point to a very definite conclusion. This is advanced a step by such an experiment as the following of Professor Liégeois, "whose speciality is medical jurisprudence, and who has taken much pains to induce Dr. Liébeault's patients to commit a number of crimes—as murder, theft, perjury, &c.; and has made them give him receipts for large sums of money which he has never really lent them." Really, a most uncomfortable area of experiment, and, I think, one to be avoided. However, here is one of the psycho-vivisectional results.

"I have spoken of my friend M. P., a former magistrate. I must accuse myself of having endeavoured to get him murdered, and this moreover in the presence of the *Commissaire Central* of Nancy, who witnessed the occurrence.

"I provided myself with a revolver and several cartridges. In order to prevent the subject, whom I selected at random from

among the five or six somnambules who happened to be at M. Liébeault's house on that day, from supposing that the thing was a joke, I charged one of the barrels and fired it off in the garden, showing a card which the ball had pierced. In less than a quarter of a minute I suggested to Madame G. the idea of killing M. P. by a pistol-shot. With perfect docility Madame G. advanced on M. P. and fired at him with the revolver. Interrogated immediately by the *Commissaire Central*, she avowed her crime with entire indifference. 'She had killed M. P. because she did not like him. She knew the consequences. If her life was taken, she would go to the next world, like her victim, whom she saw' (by hallucination) 'lying before her, bathed in blood.' She was asked whether it was not *I* who had suggested to her the idea of the murder. She declared that it was not so—that she alone was guilty, and that she would take the consequences." "[It had not been suggested to her that her act was due to suggestion.]"

It seems to occur to Mr. Myers that some exception may possibly be taken to this suggestion and stimulation of crime and fraud. He is afraid that "experiments like these will produce in the minds of many readers a feeling of moral shock and alarm." Unquestionably they will. Nor will this feeling be lessened by the consideration that a prolonged course of such hypnotic treatment must tend to sap the moral consciousness, if it do not lead to such mental and moral confusion as to present a man perpetually in a state in which "he is not himself at all," or at any rate in which he has no means of knowing whether he is or is not himself, if he have a self. It is idle to contend that only "a few picked specimens of a sensitive nation" can be thus hyper-hypnotised to their utter confusion. We have not yet gone far enough in experiment to know what latent powers we all possess. It is equally idle to recommend to a subject "who feels that he is becoming too sensitive to get some trustworthy friend to hypnotise him, and to suggest that no one else will be able to do so." He may not know when he is becoming, till he has become, too sensitive. He may have no trustworthy friend. He may not wish or feel able to invoke his aid. He may be, in fact, too far gone before he is able to pull himself up. This species of moral vivisection (by no means, as Mr. Myers says, free from the objections brought against physical vivisection) seems to me obnoxious to all the arguments that can be brought against experiments on the living body, and to some others besides. When one of the most recurrent arguments in Mr. Myers's mouth, intended to impugn the validity of any communication of facts which could conceivably have been in the "unconscious memory" of a medium, is that he might have heard or read or known of the fact and have forgotten it, I read in Mr. Myers's essay with some amusement that "the subject, unless told to remember the acts, will absolutely forget them, *always* when they are performed in the hypnotic trance, and *generally* when they are performed by the subject after he has been awakened from the trance, and in a condition apparently normal. They remain no more in the subject's mind than if he had read them in a book and forgotten them." Yes! but when we produce something that we did *not* read in a book and forget, we are met by the criticism, "Oh! you must have heard or read it and forgotten it." This is to hunt with the hounds and run with the hare.

To return. "I can hardly suppose" (says Mr. Myers) "that the mere perusal of a string of anecdotes like these will produce much effect on persons who have never themselves seen anything of the kind." I find no special difficulty in according assent to what is brought forward. But I cannot forbear a smile, as I read this naïve utterance, when I think of its perfect applicability to the attitude of certain prominent members of the Society for Psychical Research to the phenomena of Spiritualism. If they could only have satisfied themselves by personal observation,—

a privilege denied them for reasons to me inscrutable—our "string of anecdotes" would acquire a quite new significance and value. The Society for Psychical Research "anecdotes," however, are very interesting and pertinent, though I do not think I need quote instances of "alternating memory" or of suggestion in the hypnotic state realised in the midst of waking life. "Memory's record" (says Mr. Myers) "is not a book on clean paper, which we print as we go. It is a parchment palimpsest, on which one recent text is fairly legible, but which may show all forms of unknown scripture when the right re-agents are applied." The strongest and clearest argument against the experiments which Mr. Myers recommends:—a conclusive argument—*if it be true.*

There remains to consider a point raised in the paper now under consideration and amplified in one yet to be noticed. "Hypnotism, like education, is mainly a process of inhibition. Can we get the processes to coincide, and make people virtuous by hypnotic suggestion?" Mr. Myers thinks that we can, and he adduces arguments to me most impressive in favour of his conclusion. Before I pass to this subject of "hypnotic moralisation," (which I shall conveniently do in considering the article on "Multiplex Personality,") it is right, as I question Mr. Myers's arguments, that I should give his statement as to the "result of often repeated hypnotisation." "It is complicated," he says, "by the effects on bodily health, on which I cannot enter here. I will merely remark that Mdlle A. E. has probably been hypnotised oftener than almost any one living, and that the effect on her character seems to have been unmingledly good." A characteristically guarded utterance. *Valeat quantum.*

"M.A. (OXON)."

(To be continued.)

THE Penzance Society of Spiritualists is increasing its number of members.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN is again at work in the provinces. Her lectures are always worth listening to.

THE Kensington Society of Investigators into Spiritualism have taken rooms at 33, Kensington Park-road, W.

A WARM controversy is being carried on in the *Rochdale Observer* in reference to Spiritualism. These discussions seldom do any good beyond drawing the attention of the public to the subject.

MR. H. J. NEWTON, the president of the First Society of Spiritualists, New York, an able and competent investigator, has been obtaining very successful materialisations at his residence under absolute test conditions.

DR. WOLFE, the author of *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism*, is experimenting in the United States with considerable success with a private medium for the production of paraffin moulds. We rather wonder that this form of manifestation should not have been more completely investigated in this country.

"LIGHT."—All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be sent to "The Manager of 'LIGHT,' 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, W.C.;" and *not* to the editor. Cheques and P.O. Orders should be crossed "——and Co." All communications intended to be printed should be addressed to "The Editor." Compliance with these directions will facilitate a satisfactory keeping of the accounts.

THE Brookfield Unitarian minister is evidently a liberal-minded man. On the occasion of the interment of one of the local Spiritualists in that district he offered to conduct the service or to take part in it, or if they (the Spiritualist Society) preferred it, to leave the church entirely at their disposal to conduct their services in perfect freedom. This is how it should be. How many ministers of the Gospel will do likewise?

REMARKING on the attitude of certain members of the Society for Psychical Research, the *Harbinger of Light* says: "We are inclined to agree with the editor of 'LIGHT,' who expresses an opinion that evidence and argument are thrown away upon people who have made up their minds they will not see. A number of members of the Society for Psychical Research are evidently prejudiced against the Spiritualistic theory and devoting all their energies to the evolution of new theories to account for every psychical fact which is forced under their notice. The result is likely to be a 'fiasco,' as no medium of repute will be likely to submit himself to the unfair treatment to be expected from their hands."

## MESMERISM.

Animal magnetism is a force residing in all living things; in the human body it is the means by which the will (which by the way is a property of spirit) acts. It is on the same plane of nature as the soul: animal magnetism and the soul being on the *astral plane*, ordinary magnetism being on the physical plane. As common or ordinary magnetism acts on iron, so does animal magnetism act on soul. But this is only a rough simile, for animal magnetism is infinitely more subtle than the former, and, being on a higher plane, cannot properly be compared with it at all.

When a magnetiser mesmerises his subject he pours his magnetism into him by the action of his will (the passes usually made, though a great aid, are not to be considered absolutely essential). If the operator be sufficiently powerful, he will, by the attractive force of his magnetism, draw out, as it were, the soul of the subject from the body, leaving the latter in a sleeping or vegetating condition. By that I mean that the body now contains no soul, but is simply a mass of living cells, resembling a mass of *amœbæ*. The mesmeriser having now got the soul of the subject practically entirely free from the body, drawn out by the attractive power of his magnetism, it becomes, for the time, his slave, and is bound to do his bidding. It is not necessary for the operator to speak to his captive held in magnetic bonds in ordering him to do this or that, any more than it is incumbent for him to order his own hand to move when he wants to write. He performs this latter action by means of his own animal magnetism, directed by his will; and it is by exactly the same means that he now communicates his desires to his prisoner. The *modus operandi* would be something like this: suppose it is required to know what Mr. A. may be doing in the next room. The operator wills that the subject shall proceed to the next room, see what Mr. A. is doing, and come back and report. Now the subject's body cannot go, so it is his soul that is sent on the errand; the soul again, on returning, could not speak, so it has to make use of its body to express what it has seen; and in that manner carries out the will of its temporary master.

If what I have said is the true explanation of mesmerism it is easy to see what constitutes its use and abuse. Public or private performances to gratify idle curiosity, or to afford amusement to a giggling and unsympathetic audience, who care little whether the operator or subject suffers either physically or psychically so long as they are amused, or as a means of livelihood, are plainly gross abuses. It is evidently wrong to play with and make fun of the soul of another man from ethical points of view, to say nothing of endangering a person's bodily or mental health, by showing off phenomena to persons who know nothing of the condition of matters, and so running the risk of cross mesmerism, besides others that may exist, but have not yet become known to us in this but little understood subject. On the other hand, its use is equally plain; first for its clairvoyant properties in the diagnosis of disease—it cannot be ethically wrong to use it, with all necessary precaution; and for the purpose of alleviating pain in another; it should, therefore, whenever possible be utilised by medical men for this purpose. Again, the magnetic sleep, when not misused for frivolous joking or similar purposes, and when deep, is always said by subjects to be extremely refreshing. Sick people who have been thrown into the mesmeric trance almost always if not invariably, on awakening, feel much better than they do after ordinary sleep. This is perfectly intelligible. The sleep is produced and controlled by the mesmeriser, who has attracted the soul out of the body, and holds it in his keeping, thereby allowing the vitality of the body to regenerate the latter's powers, undisturbed as it otherwise would be by every little rustling or movement of persons in the room.

1st. M. B. LOND.

## M. AKSAKOW'S REPLY TO DR. VON HARTMANN.

(TRANSLATION FROM *Psychische Studien*.)

(Continued from page 533.)

## XI.

## (bb) MATERIALISATION AND DEMATERIALISATION OF HUMAN FORMS—LOGICAL INCONSEQUENCE OF DR. VON HARTMANN'S HALLUCINATION AND NERVE-FORCE THEORIES.

In the foregoing chapter, on the ground of empirical transcendental facts of the penetration of one body by another, as on that of the admission in principle of the hypothesis of dematerialisation and rematerialisation applicable to such a body, we logically arrived at the admission of the possibility of a formation or materialisation of longer or shorter duration, of another body of similar nature at the expense of the given body, and our researches in this province have yielded facts of materialisation of inanimate bodies at the cost of other similar bodies, not merely temporary, but also really permanent. We have obtained facts of the materialisation of fabrics through the mediumship of a fabric, of a plant through the mediumship of a plant, and of a metal through the mediumship of a metal. We will now pass on to the most numerous, most developed, and most extraordinary facts of this nature, to the temporary materialisation of human forms through the mediumship of the human body.

This phenomenon comprises, in the chronological order of its development, the materialisation of the hand, the face, the bust, and the whole body.

In transcendental photography we have given us the positive fact of the production of similar, though to our eyes invisible, forms. It has revealed and established the presence of vaporous bodies of different shapes, which by little and little assume the human form, at first undefined, then in increasingly distinct human outline, finally to complete recognisability. We shall soon recover the same succession of facts in the province of materialisations cognisable through experience by all the senses, and through all the actions of which a material organism is ordinarily capable.

But it is not necessary for our object to pursue this phenomenon in all the phases of its development. Our aim is to show that the phenomenon is *no hallucination*; thus if we succeed in proving the objective reality of the materialisation of a simple human member—say of a hand or foot—that is all we need. The rest is only a question of degree or variety in the same phenomenon.

The non-hallucinatory character of the appearance of a hand can perhaps be shown:

1. By the contemporaneous seeing of several persons agreeing in their testimony.
2. By the contemporaneous seeing and feeling of several persons agreeing in their testimony, the impressions of these two senses being in accord with one another.
3. By physical effects produced by such a hand, as movements of objects before the eyes of the witnesses.
4. By the production of enduring physical effects, which are certainly the most cogent proofs, as
  - (a) Writing produced in presence of several persons.
  - (b) Impressions of the same hand produced on a soft or blackened substance.
  - (c) By certain effects produced on the same hand by persons present.
  - (d) By the production of other forms from a given substance by the same hand.
  - (e) By the photography of phenomena of this sort.
5. By the weighing of a similar appearance when it attains the development of a human form.

All these proofs are to be found in the records of Spiritism.

I. and II. From the beginning of the Spiritist movement phenomena of visible and palpable hands have been produced; reports of this phenomenon going back to February, 1850, thus scarcely two years after the first "Rochester rappings." (See Ballou: *Spirit Manifestations*, edited by Stone, London, 1852, p. 44 and pp. 192-202.) It was then produced by full light at the séances, which were held at a table, and has continued up to the present, as innumerable reports agree. According to Herr von Hartmann this phenomenon is an hallucination, either of sight only or "a combination of visual and tactile hallucination." But that he may not here fall into contradiction with his explanation of impressions of organic forms, he is ready to admit a double explanation:—"As to hallucinations of touch in

particular, the possibility remains that felt pressure of invisible or visionary hands, feet, &c., is also derived from a system of dynamical push-and-pull lines, presenting the analogy of the pressure of hand-surfaces without corporeity behind them." (P. 95 Tr.) So that the feeling would be no more an hallucination, but "a real pressure of dynamical push-and-pull lines," or even "a dynamical effect of mediumistic nerve-force." Thus if I hold in my hand a materialised hand, the seeing of this hand would be an hallucination, but the feeling of its touch would be real, my hand would be impressed by a system of lines of nerve-force. It may here be asked: Why should the seeing of an apparent hand for a space of time be hallucination? If a system of lines of force can make the feeling of touch, it could just as well make one of sight. It would not be logical to ascribe to nerve-force the predicate of tangibility and deny it that of visibility; since the assertion and denial of the predicate have the same foundation. Or in other words, there would be nothing logical in the admission of a real objective cause of the influence on the feeling, and the denial of the same equally real objective cause of the influence on the sight, if it is a question of the same phenomenon and the same testimony. The logical consequence of this double explanation would be that the hallucination-hypothesis, which plays so large a part in the mediumistic philosophy of Dr. von Hartmann, would be in non-accord with the predicates of his nerve-force hypothesis, which is for him just as important, and so this non-accordance, hitherto only probable, will turn out, as we shall soon see, to be a positive fact for the developments which Dr. von Hartmann gives to the phenomena produced by nerve-force.

Class III., to which we now pass, contains the proofs afforded by physical effects. These also, according to Herr von Hartmann, cannot prove materialisation; for the seeing of the hand is just mere hallucination, and the movement of an object by this hand is only an effect produced by the nerve-force of the medium agreeing with the hallucination transferred to the sitters: "The case is similar when seen forms, as to which there is a certainty that they are pure hallucinations and not illusions, raise material objects, carry them about, hand them to a sitter, &c. . . . When these movements have happened within the range of action of the medium's nerve-force, and do not exceed the mode and strength of performances by means of this force, there is no reason for referring them to any other cause." (P. 97 Tr.) So we have here an hallucination stuffed out with nerve-force. It is useless to dwell longer on this point; it is only to be remarked that the logical inconsequence of this explanation would be raised, and the testimony of sight and touch strengthened, to a degree corresponding to the physical effect produced. Herr von Hartmann often repeats the expression, "within or outside the range of action of the medium's nerve-force"; but he gives no definition of the boundaries of the nerve-force; it might be represented as extended or even unlimited at his pleasure. In view of the absence of this definition it is impossible to test his theory by facts.

IV. We pass on to the proofs, which are in our view positive and constant confirmations, in the production of enduring physical effects. We have here in the first place:—

(a) Writing produced by a materialised hand, which hand is apparently detached from the rest of the body, is seen in full light by the witnesses, the medium remaining visible the whole time. According to Herr von Hartmann this phenomenon would be nothing more than hallucination sustained by nerve-force: "It would not be surprising if in the case also of writing at a distance by mediums, it should be reported that the strange writing hand had been seen by the observers, which up to the present has not happened, so far as I am aware, at least not at sittings in the light; but that would not afford the least ground for seeking in such visible hand anything else than a transferred hallucination of sight." (P. 97 Tr.) Without stopping to consider this reasoning, which is not distinguished from the foregoing, we will here only remark that Herr von Hartmann has done well to qualify his statement that the phenomenon has not yet happened in the light by the addition, "so far as I am aware," for it has often so happened. Thus Robert Dale Owen reports of a séance with Slade, that by full light a hand came from under the table, and wrote a communication in English upon a sheet of paper lying on a slate which rested on his knees; whereupon another hand came and wrote some lines in Greek on the same sheet of paper. The details, with fac-simile of the writing, will be found in *The Spiritualist*, 1876, II., p. 162. In his book, *People from the Other World*, Colonel Olcott even gives the sketch of a materialised hand which wrote on a book which was

offered to it. (P. 182.) See also the numerous experiments of Dr. Wolfe, recorded in his book, *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism* (Cincinnati, 1874), pp. 309, 475, and elsewhere. Herr von Hartmann is also deceived when he says: "The few reports which speak of writing by a visible spirit hand are of no weight, as they refer to dark sittings, in which the shadowy outline of a hand on self-luminous paper is said to have been indistinctly seen." (P. 50 n. Tr.) Mr. Crookes' testimony on this point is distinct: "A luminous hand came down from the upper part of the room, and after hovering near me for a few seconds, took the pencil from my hand, rapidly wrote on a sheet of paper, threw the pencil down, and then rose up over our heads, gradually fading into darkness." (*Phenomena of Spiritualism*, p. 93.)\*

A similar fact, happening in the presence of several witnesses, is reported by Mr. Jencken in *The Spiritualist*, 1876, II., p. 126, with a sketch of the hand producing the writing.

(b) The attempt was very naturally long ago made to obtain impressions of the hands which momentarily appeared and disappeared at séances, for such an impression would afford positive proof that one had to do with the actual formation of a definite body. I cannot say exactly when this attempt was first made, but I find in my notes a reference which dates back to the year 1867. The impression was obtained on white clay. (See *Banner of Light*, August 10th, 1867.) Later on these impressions were made on fine flour or on smoked paper. We have in regard to this phenomenon the cogent experiments of Professors Zöllner and Wagner. See also the facts of the same kind obtained by Reimers (*Psychische Studien*, 1878, p. 492; 1879, p. 249) and by Jencken (*Spiritualist*, 1878, p. 134; *The Medium*, 1878, p. 609). In these cases, the hands or the feet which left the impression were not seen, but the conditions under which the impressions were produced were such as to exclude every ordinary physical means; thus, with Zöllner the impressions were effected between two slates which he kept on his knees, and with Wagner between two sealed slates. (See *Psychische Studien*, 1878, p. 492; and 1879, p. 249.) In other cases the bodily form producing the impressions was seen during the performance itself, and the result was found to agree with the form observed. "This attempt," says Dr. von Hartmann, "so far as I am aware, has never been made; I know of only one isolated report, that in a materialisation sitting the impression of a simultaneously visible (but not palpable) child's foot was produced." (*Psychische Studien*, VII., 397, p. 96 Tr.) "This report requires, first, confirmation by similar observations of others." (*Id.*) I can supply this "confirmation" from the experiments of Dr. Wolfe with the medium, Mrs. Hollis. The experiments took place at a table by full light, the table having round it a valance of black calico, reaching to the floor, with an aperture of about six square inches. In the following experiment Dr. Wolfe was alone with the medium. He says: "The next experiment, at the table, was with a dish of flour. This I placed on the chair, and requested Jim" (Nolan, one of the invisible operators) "to make in it the imprint of his right hand. In two or three minutes, a slender, delicate hand, as unlike Jim's as could be, came out, and after hovering over the flour a few seconds, retired again. In five minutes it reappeared, and settled deep in the flour, leaving a perfect imprint of itself in the soft, snowy bed. The flour fell from the hand, but it did not dissolve, as I had seen it, at the cabinet. I then procured another plate of flour, by request; and this time Jim put his hand in it. The matrix left was half as large again as the first. After first closely inspecting Mrs. Hollis's hand, to discover any flour dust there might be upon it, but in vain, I requested her to place her hand in the imprints, which she did, and in the first there was room enough to receive two hands the size of her own, and in the second enough and to spare. The imprint which she subsequently made of her hand, in flour, was smaller, and entirely different in structure." (*Startling Facts*, p. 515, ed. 1883.)

(To be continued.)

The Russian *Revue* contains Mr. Akakoff's account of his remarkable photographic experiments during his visit to London in the summer. We shall hope to have them translated for our columns.

\* [This was at a dark séance, but Mr. Crookes observed it. "The result was not less satisfactory on that account. I was sitting next to the medium, Miss Fox, the only other persons present being my wife and a lady relative, and I was holding the medium's two hands in one of mine, while her feet were resting on my feet. Paper was on the table before us, and my disengaged hand was holding a pencil."—*Phenomena of Spiritualism*, p. 93.]

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 Future of "Light."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

Sir,—I am much interested in the contemplated acquisition of "LIGHT" by the London Spiritualist Alliance, and have little doubt that immediate assistance will be rendered to effect the object in view. But though you express yourself as reluctant to consider any alternative plan, should expectations not be realised, I may, perhaps, be pardoned for offering the following suggestion:—

I cannot say that Spiritualists are as united in their exertions as might be, nor will they disinterestedly support an organ in which they are not directly concerned or considered. A scheme, therefore, to unite the London Spiritualists with those of the provinces, making the ownership of "LIGHT" the direct means of co-operation, is, perhaps, worthy of consideration. Should the Alliance fail in securing the entire control of "LIGHT" by the means adopted, of which there is little chance of probability, a limited liability company might be formed, disposing of as many shares as possible in London, and offering the rest to the one hundred, or so societies of the provinces. Each district would then have a direct interest in the welfare of the organ, and its circulation would increase in proportion. If need be, the paper could be localised in the manner adopted by many of our provincial "dailies," thereby adding a second impetus to the spread of the cause and the dissemination of "LIGHT."

I believe the plan is quite feasible, and would have the result of consolidating the interests of Spiritualists throughout the United Kingdom.—I am, yours faithfully,

88, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough.

L. W.

November 28th, 1886.

"Hidden Mysteries."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

Sir,—In your issue of November 13th appears a letter signed "Associate S.P.R.," on "Hidden Mysteries," in which he states he has had a strong belief in Spiritualism; and that the testimony of so many clever and intelligent men and women as to the existence of an unseen power further confirms this. Then he adds what that belief is. I regret that this thoughtful man does not think still further than seems to be the case with him. "If like attracts like," I would urge him to seek those whose aspirations are of a higher nature, and I have but little doubt his estimation of spirit intercourse would then be all he desires it to be. Whilst it is true that Almighty God has hidden certain things from us that it is impossible for mortal man to know, I believe there are many wonderful things that will be revealed to him for his benefit and his good, and at the same time point out to man how marvellous are His works. Only yesterday I stood in an office in this town and heard a watch tick three miles distant. Had any of us testified to this some few years since—well, I do not wish to say what we should have been thought of. There is a command to seek in order to find; also an injunction to be wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. I am glad to say my experience has been of a very different character from that of your correspondent, and although I may not be so "Christian" as some, it is not only my desire but my determination to have nothing to do with that class of Spiritism he calls Necromancy or Witchcraft. Beyond this phase, however, there is one higher and holier, which will give delight and fresh courage to his desponding soul.

Porquay.

W. T. R.

The Power of Sympathy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

Sir,—Some seventeen years ago, when I first endeavoured to investigate Spiritual phenomena, I remember having been struck with a paragraph (I now forget in what work) in which the author spoke of two Fakirs in India, who when present at a wrestling match always agreed to help one of the two champions with the concentrated force of their sympathy, and that it so happened that the one they aided with mentally invariably won. This, if true, would tend to show how the sympathy of

gifted persons can more or less influence the doings of people around them, and might enable us to establish a precedent, through which people who earnestly look into these as yet faintly understood forces might derive some ray of light, so as to better comprehend how it is that doubt and a hostile feeling may act upon and paralyse the powers of a medium.

It is with ever-increased interest that I read your paper.

Mrs. Sidgwick has done what few would stoop to do, in order to spread her name far and wide, and gain the applause of the great majority of thinking people who, as yet, from proud ignorance, are averse to Spiritualism. But I believe that we shall all, in the long run, have reason to thank her, because she has unwittingly, but obviously, rendered Spiritualism a great service.

We are doing but little here, apparently, but the seeds are sown; and they will shoot upwards some day, and offer strong resistance to materialism and ecclesiasticism, with perfect certainty of an overwhelming victory!—Yours truly,

Florence, Italy.

SEBASTIANO FENZI.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. B. P. B.—Thanks. We are glad of the assistance you proffer.

MINOT J. SAVAGE.—The copies of the Eglinton number of "LIGHT" have been despatched.

NOTICE.—A new selection of second-hand books for sale is announced in the usual columns this week.

A. ENGEL.—Your report of séance has not yet been published. It will appear shortly, and we will then send you a copy.

J. H. G. AND OTHERS.—We are making inquiries as to the publications of the White Cross Society. Particulars shall be given next week if possible.

W. W. ALLEN.—You have been misinformed. Owing to various causes the publication of *Magic Unveiled* has been delayed, although it has been half in type for months. It has again, however, been taken in hand, and the Editor of the English edition hopes very shortly to complete his work.

As an instance of the supposed influence that can be exercised upon the mind of a living person by one who has passed away, a lady writes to us an account of a strange incident in her life. About a year after her father's death, she one night aroused her husband by sobbing and trembling violently, while tears rolled down her cheeks. She explained that she had just had a most vivid dream, in which she had seen her father assemble all his children in his room in their old house, and tell them that the family heirlooms were being disposed of to strangers. The same dream recurred the next night. A day or two afterwards this lady, while walking in the town where she lived, saw her father's favourite walking-stick, with a gold band bearing an inscription, a gift from his children to which all had contributed, in the possession of a stranger. The sight so affected her that she fainted. Later, upon making inquiries, it was found that the stick had changed hands on the very day previous to her first dream. Neither she nor her husband, she adds, are believers in Spiritualism, and till then attached no importance to dreams.—*The Christian World*, November 25th, 1886.

PERHAPS the most sensational use to which mesmerism has ever been put has been the frightful scene which a daily paper recently described as having occurred at Dijon. A mesmerist, M. Torcy, accompanied by his subject, a cataleptic young person, named Mlle. Lucia, entered a cage of lions in Signor Salva's menagerie. The animals seemed at first quite stupefied on seeing strange persons before them, but they soon began to show their molar broadsides and to prepare for action. M. Torcy lost no time, and having sent Mlle. Lucia into a magnetic trance, he told her to fix her gaze on the beasts and to place her arms before them, which she did with perfect impunity. She was then plunged into a cataleptic fit, her body was stiffened, and her feet and legs fastened to two stools. The animals, goaded by the keepers and by vigorous thrusts from M. Torcy's sticks, were made to jump several times over the young woman's body. This inhuman exercise was continued until the audience, wound up to the highest pitch of terror and excitement, owing to the ominous growling of the infuriated lions, cried out, "Enough!" The three actors in this extraordinary scene were loudly acclaimed by the spectators; but it is to be hoped, in the interests of civilisation, that the authorities at Dijon will speedily put a stop to any repetition of the degrading spectacle, which was more worthy of an assembly of Cherokee Indians than of the inhabitants of a large and prosperous French city.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager," and all communications intended to be printed should be addressed to "The Editor."

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Column, £22s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Light:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4TH, 1886.

THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE AND "LIGHT."

A FINAL STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT.

As we have now entered on the last month of the year, and as the time is very near at hand when the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance must finally decide on their course of action, it seems desirable that I should lay before those interested a last statement of the case. For it is important that it should be distinctly understood that the future of "LIGHT" is what is at stake. I know that few people read circulars, and that fewer still take them literally. I hope that my readers will make an exception in favour of the present instance. I assure all who may need the assurance that the facts, as presented, and the determination of the Council as stated, are put with literal exactness, and with a determination to adhere to what is set forth.

Towards the £600 required to carry out the plan proposed so small a sum has been hitherto promised that I am compelled to consider two courses of action.

1. *A wholly inadequate sum may be raised.*—In that case the Council would decline the responsibility of conducting "LIGHT," and would leave the future of the journal to be decided by its proprietors. What that decision might be it is impossible for me to predict. But one thing is certain. The future cannot be as the past. A new order of things is absolutely essential: and to that end funds are equally essential. Speaking for myself, as a considerable contributor to "LIGHT," I say very definitely and decisively that I should, in this eventuality, reluctantly terminate my connection with the paper; and, speaking as President of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, that my colleagues and I would not further entertain any proposal involving responsibility with regard to it.

2. *A sum so considerable as to enable a part of the proposed plan to be carried out may be raised.*—In this case it would be the duty of the Council to consider what their exact position is. They have asked for a round sum which would enable them to move forward without being crippled by want of reasonable funds. Six hundred pounds would give them twelve months' respite from financial anxiety, and would probably enable them so to act as materially to diminish the sum required in 1888 for similar purposes. That is the ideal. But supposing instead of £600 something more than half the sum—say £350 or £400—is promised. What would the situation be then? It seems to me, subject to the decision of the Council, that it would be our duty then to consider what essential part of our plan can be carried out with such funds, and to decide whether we deem it wise

and expedient to carry out such a maimed and mutilated scheme. We could, no doubt, abandon the idea of taking over the Book Depot. We could state that our funds were not adequate to remunerate an Editor with any honorarium that he could accept or we could offer with any sense of self-respect. It is conceivable that the paper might be conducted directly by a Committee of the Council. These are alternatives, and others may occur, which are, at best, so many expedients, more or less apt, for half-doing what cannot be done thoroughly.

I will not discuss them. But I wish to reiterate that in all this the London Spiritualist Alliance is not itself concerned financially. It is living and working within its means, such as they are, and owes no man anything.

Finally, the replies to the appeal, if they are to be serviceable, must enable the Council to take the final and irrevocable step before the end of the present year, 1886: It is, therefore, imperative that any promise of help should reach Mr. Morell Theobald (preferably on the form which will be found on the first page) with all convenient despatch. It would be indeed deplorable that dilatoriness on the part of any who intend to send a contribution should be, as it will be, equivalent to a refusal.

November 27th, 1886.

THE SPECIAL FUND.

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance ask for the sum of £600 to enable them to assume the conduct of "LIGHT"; to acquire the property and business of the "Psychological Press"; and for other objects specified in their recent circular.

	£	s.	d.
Hon. Percy Wyndham	20	0	0
H. Wedgwood, M.A.	10	0	0
C. C. Massey	10	0	0
S. T. Speer, M.D.	10	0	0
Mrs. Stack	10	0	0
The Misses Ponder	10	0	0
T. A. Amos	5	0	0
"M. A. (Oxon.)"	5	0	0
B. Baikie	5	0	0
E. Dawson Rogers	5	0	0
Major G. le M. Taylor	5	0	0
Morell Theobald	5	0	0
Henry Withall	5	0	0
J. M. Templeton	5	0	0
Mrs. M. (per W. Eglinton)	5	0	0
Mrs. Rudd	5	0	0
F. W. Percival	3	0	0
Mrs. Percival	2	0	0
A Friend	2	10	0
G. P. Serocold	2	2	0
Anon	2	2	0
D. G. FitzGerald	2	0	0
Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Maclean	2	0	0
Mrs. Cowley	2	0	0
Mrs. Maltby	2	0	0
Mrs. Filby	2	0	0
Jas. Dewar	2	0	0
A. M. L.	2	0	0
Horace Carter	1	1	0
Mrs. James	1	1	0
Geo. Davis	1	1	0
G. D. Haughton	1	1	0
Miss Maltby	1	0	0
Mrs. Cottell	1	0	0
Mrs. Darling	1	0	0
Hy. Carter	1	0	0
A. Glendinning	1	0	0
E. T. Sale	1	0	0
F. W. Thurstan	1	0	0
Hon. Roden Noel	0	10	0

Further subscriptions or promises should be sent promptly to Morell Theobald, 62, Granville-park, Lewis-ham, S.E. Further particulars will be found on p. 586.

the charge of trickery might creep in, so as to allow the readers of the *Journal* to estimate the plausibility of the suggestions by which she would invalidate this important evidence for the genuineness of slate-writing.

H. WENWOOD.

### IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

Full often in our lives has come a day  
When pausing where two paths divergent lay,  
We pondered deep and long, which one to choose,  
Fearful that, either followed, we might lose  
The rare enjoyment of a happy hour,  
Or grateful incense of a fragrant flower,  
Or glimpse of some fair land where shines the sun  
On giant groves, and where the rivers run  
Through furrowed fields, and through the shadowy ranks  
Of cypress trees that weep upon the banks.  
We fear to lose so much : but knowing not  
The changeful chances of our future lot,  
We set out boldly on the chosen track,  
And then so often comes the looking back,  
The baffled strife our cherished goal to win,  
The mournful, hopeless cry, "It might have been."

Sometimes the soul, when with great sorrow wrung,  
Recalls a time, long-fled, when lightly hung  
The course of future years in Fate's great scale,  
And sees how, all unwittingly, an influence frail  
As morning dews that on the grasses gleam  
Destroyed the even balance of the beam—  
Unknown to us the deep decision made—  
And turned our path from sunshine into shade.  
A passing thought, a look, a trifling deed ;  
A word unspoken in an hour of need,  
Or spoken when 'twere better left unsaid ;  
Some written line that we by chance have read—  
All these can shift the scene with subtle hand,  
And round our future draw an iron band.

We never think that such a little thing  
Can ever such tremendous sequence bring,  
Until too late, and then we backward turn  
The page that we have filled, and dimly burn  
The light of other days in vain regrets  
For opportunities gone by. The spirit frets  
Against its destiny, and deep within  
Our hearts we mourn for what we "might have been."

Ah, soul! look upward, trusting ; kiss the rod,  
And know there is no "might have been" with God.  
From Him, whence lowly we draw near,  
We learn of love that casteth out all fear ;  
We find a Faith that, in Oblivion's sea,  
Whelms every dread and doubt eternally ;  
A Hope unfaltering to us is given ;  
A tender Charity, as broad as Heaven ;  
A perfect Peace, a calm, untroubled Rest—  
Through these, all things seem right and best.  
We rise triumphant over death and sin,  
All pain and sorrow in our joy forgot,  
And looking backward on our "might have been,"  
Thank God that it was not.

SUBSCRIBERS RESIDENT ON THE CONTINENT will greatly oblige if, when they send remittances through the Post-office, they will kindly forward to us, at the same time, a notice that they have done so. We frequently receive "orders" through the Post-office without any intimation as to whom they come from, and do not know, therefore, to whose account to credit them.

NEW THEOSOPHIST PAPER.—Our Paris correspondent telegraphs : Lady Caithness has brought out a Theosophist fortnightly paper in French. It takes the name of *L'Aurore* ; or, *le Jour Nouveau*, and appeals to religious persons of all countries. The editress, repudiating the charge of Theosophy being anti-Christian, calls it the wider Christianity. Her task, she says, is at once humble and great—it is to give France the moral strength which it needs. France is, in the opinion of Lady Caithness, undermined with materialism. The journal will give a synopsis of everything in the current literature of other nations, and, above all, of England, that has reference to spiritual, philosophical, and religious questions, and try to infuse a fresh current of Eastern ideas into the worn-out religions of the West.—*Daily News*, November 30th.

### RE-INCARNATION.

Having just read in "LIGHT" of this week an article headed "The Re-incarnation Theory," the first part by the editor of *Sphinx*, the second by "V.," will you kindly allow me space in your columns for a few words on the subject, the belief in which has been of such vital import and intense comfort to myself that I long to impart to others so great a blessing ?

To this end I would like, with your permission, to set forth as concisely as possible the process of reasoning my own mind has gone through, to arrive at a conclusion which has been to me as the uplifting of a heavy veil that had hidden from me—in the contemplation of the extremes of social position in this life—that perfect justice without which there could not exist the other attributes of supreme divinity, perfect love, and perfect wisdom.

But that veil once lifted, the joy of realising that our God is indeed the one perfect and therefore Supreme God, in whom all perfections are balanced and centred, was and is to me a joy so intense and soul-satisfying, that my greatest happiness lies in endeavouring to make others sharers in this most sublime and blessed belief.

And thus I reasoned :—

What at least is the true meaning of Re-incarnation ?

Is it not but a continuance through human stages of that process of evolution, or gradual development of the elementary spirit or essence from the Creator which we call life (or the active principle of creation), and which is already widely recognised as God's universal law for progression through the sub-human stages ; by which the spirit vivifying the earliest germ or protoplasm, works its way up and up and up by re-embodiment through all grades of progressive life, until it reaches the highest sub-human stage ?

Now if we recognise these progressive stages or lives of the spirit from the earliest protoplasm to the highest sub-human form, where lies the difficulty of believing that these lives of progression are continued after the spirit reaches the human stage, and so on and on up to the highest ?

Is it conceivable that when, as man, responsibility or soul-consciousness commences (that special characteristic of the newly-born divine image within him, which is eventually to educate and fit him for angelic life in Heaven), is it conceivable, I say, that then for the first time in his progressive career, and just as the spirit is struggling into conscious life, with its first glimmerings of light (though little more than a comparative protoplasm in this higher scale of existence), it can in one short life make so sudden a bound of progress as to fit it, on throwing off that earth body, to enter upon the higher type of existence as the angel ?

Does its previous course, and manner of progression warrant this assumption ? And, is it common-sense ?

Picture to yourself the lowest type of bushman, and then say if the spirit of that man can possibly be fitted for immediate life as the angel, with angels.

And yet that man has the Divine Spirit within him, with all its Divine potencies concentrated therein, as the angels have ! But they have gone through all those stages of human development that he is only now entering upon, as a later atom of God's continuous stream of Spirit, and therefore in the more infantile stage ; and therein alone lies the difference.

Can an infant in its infancy be a Herschell or a Humboldt ? Can any reasoner on sub-human evolution believe that a snail in one life can become a race-horse in the next ?

Therefore, does not common-sense itself show us that humanity forms no exception to God's universal law of the gradual development of the spirit ? and that it has to pass through many incarnations as man, as it had already done through the sub-human stages, and thus progress in the conscious and responsible condition, as it had previously progressed up to that condition ? And only when all these necessary stages are passed through, can the spirit be fitted to quit for ever the earth-life for the heavenly and angelic. And even beyond this must continual development still be the law through all stages of angelhood ; ever with increasing progress, throwing off the old garment for a newer and higher (as it had done such unnumbered times in its earth-lives), and ever aspiring to a nearer and still nearer union with its Divine Parent.

Thus the perfect wisdom of the Creator is seen to be so infinite in its comprehension that it embraces time and eternity in one grand law—universal, unchangeable, and eternal in its Divine grandeur and equally Divine simplicity.

### PSYCHOGRAPHY IN INACCESSIBLE ENCLOSURES.

As Mrs. Sidgwick, in the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research for November, has thought fit to pass judgment on the evidence collected by Mr. Eglinton in his defence, and published in "LIGHT" of the 16th October last, she cannot complain if her judgment is in turn brought under discussion in the columns of "LIGHT."

She says (p. 469), "I have read with care the evidence brought forward by Mr. Eglinton about his slate-writing. None of it appears to me to differ in essential characteristics from that which was printed in the *Journal* for June; and no more than that, therefore, does it exclude the hypothesis of conjuring."

It will be remembered that the taint by which all the evidence published in the *Journal* was, in the judgment of Mrs. Sidgwick, rendered worthless, was its dependence on continuous observation, the only way of escape from the necessity of such observation being the production of the writing on a surface so enclosed as to be inaccessible to the Medium during the course of the experiment. But among all the cases of slate-writing reported in the *Journal*, Mrs. Sidgwick found no instance, satisfactory to her, of writing in an inaccessible enclosure. The absence of any such instance, from the opening it gave to the hypothesis of conjuring, was the essential characteristic of the evidence published in June; and when Mrs. Sidgwick reports that none of the evidence in Mr. Eglinton's collection differs from it in essential character, she virtually asserts, by the plainest inference, that no instance of writing in an effectually closed receptacle is to be found in that collection. It will be for Mrs. Sidgwick to reconcile such an assertion with the instances reported at pp. 495 and 491 respectively of the current volume of "LIGHT." At p. 495 we have the following from Mr. George Seymour, of 41, St. Augustine's-road, Camden Town:—

"On one occasion, having purchased two slates similar to those you generally use, I took them home and thoroughly cleaned them. I then screwed the frames together, after inserting a small piece of pencil. At my next séance you then held the slates so fastened by one corner; my sister held the opposite corner. After a short space of time the sound of writing was distinctly audible, and on unscrewing the slates with a screw-driver, which I had brought with me, the words 'this is true' were found written inside on that part of the slate farthest from you."

The evidence at p. 491 is given by a gentleman who (as in many of the cases reported in *Phantasms of the Living*) withholds his name, but is willing to give a personal explanation to any sceptic referred to him by Mr. Eglinton. Omitting unnecessary particulars, he says:—"On the 25th November, 1884, I arranged, in conjunction with Dr. X., a West End physician in full practice, to hold a slate-writing sitting with Mr. Eglinton at 12, Old Quebeestreet, and we were accompanied by our respective wives. We reached Mr. Eglinton's at three o'clock, Dr. X. and I each taking one of Faber's hinged slates and two new schoolboy slates. My hinged slate was carefully secured with a good padlock, the wards of which could not be moved without making an audible sound, and the frames of my three slates were profusely stamped on both sides with my name. We left our wives talking to Mr. Eglinton, and taking all our slates with us went into an adjoining room. Dr. X., on his hinged slate, wrote three questions occupying several lines, whilst I wrote a question standing with my back to the window, which faced the street and in a corner. On our return to the room we sat at the table in the manner that has so often been described, Dr. X. and I having our respective slates in front of us."

After describing certain proceedings with the other slates, the writer proceeds:—"He (Mr. Eglinton) now asked me for my padlock slate, which up to this moment was

under my hands; and I placed it on the top of the table between him and Dr. X., and they put their hands upon it. After waiting a short space of time we distinctly heard writing, which according to Dr. X.'s watch took seven seconds, and on opening the slate I read the following words, but not out loud: 'Your father sends you his love.' I closed the slate, locked it and put the key in my pocket, and said, 'That is not the reply I want.' I made a written record on the same day of what took place, and having submitted the record to Dr. X., which he confirms, I vouch for the truth of what I have written. *My observation was continuous and without the break of a second.* I went determined to expose fraud if I could find any, but, leaving out of the question altogether the writing on the school-slates held under the table, I vouch for the truth of the writing on the hinged slate secured by a padlock, which never for a moment left my hands until placed by me upon the table between Dr. X. and Mr. E., who immediately put his five fingers upon it, and they remained there until after the writing was finished. If Mr. E. is a conjurer, and in broad daylight can pick a lock, open a slate, write upon it, with four pairs of eyes fixed upon him, and close it and lock it without being detected, *he is the cleverest conjurer in the world.*"

It is certain that the evidence, as it stands, in both the cases above cited exhibits a clear account of writing obtained on slates effectually closed against the medium during the entire course of the experiment, from the first appearance of the slates in his presence to the discovery of the writing. If Eglinton managed the writing by conjuring it could only have been done by substituting a pair already prepared with the writing inside for those brought by the inquirers. But this, in the case of the padlocked slate, was effectually provided against by the name stamped all over the frame, not to mention the impossibility of Eglinton having guessed that a particular kind of hinged slate, secured by a padlock fitting a particular key, would be brought for him to practise on. With regard to the case of Mr. Seymour, he informs me that Eglinton did not know how the slates were to be secured, and consequently could not have provided himself with a similar pair. He had, moreover, taken the precaution of marking the bit of pencil placed inside. "Do you suppose," he asks me, "that Eglinton can keep a stock of slates, one of which shall be exactly like mine—screwed together with two old screws; that when you come in at the door he shall see exactly what your slate is like, shall search among his stock while you are in the room, select the one prepared exactly like yours, and substitute it before your eyes?"

To suppose that Eglinton could have unscrewed the slates, or picked the lock of the hinged pair padlocked together, accomplished the writing and fastened up the slates again without being observed by the sitters, is too absurd to deserve consideration, although suppositions not less grotesque are necessary to invalidate much of the evidence rejected by Mrs. Sidgwick on the score of dependence on continuous observation. In a case of my own experience, for example, where I obtained in a very few minutes a well-executed drawing on the marked face of a card placed within the locked slates, Mrs. Sidgwick must suppose that Eglinton managed, while I kept hold of his left hand, to unlock the heavy frame which he held in his right, and draw on the card a slightly-shaded figure of a female floating in a difficult attitude, and lock the slates again without my having a glimpse of the operation.

Mrs. Sidgwick was under no duty to notice the evidence published in "LIGHT," but when she took it upon herself to do so, and reported to her Society the total failure of the evidence, her sense of judicial fairness to one whom she had attacked with so much persistence, should have led her to notice these cases, which, *prima facie* at least, were free from the taint of dependence on continuous observation. She should have indicated the nature of the loophole by which

Later on she had an opportunity of speaking to St—— about it, who told her he was prepared to abide by all his wagers.

“Councillors K——e and Von B——r spoke to Eschenmayer of the prediction long before the King's death took place, and the latter asserts that he could easily cite as many as 200 witnesses of this fact.”

Eschenmayer brings forward this case against Hufeland and Stieglitz, who asked for facts and not arguments, and he remarks in conclusion:—“Yet still another subterfuge! *All was only an accidental coincidence—futile word worthy of imbecility!*”

CARL KIESEWETTER.

### A SONNET.

Mysterious night! When our first parent knew  
Thee, from report Divine, and heard thy name,  
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,  
This glorious canopy of light and blue?  
Yet, 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,  
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,  
Hesperus, with the host of heaven, came,  
And lo! Creation widened in Man's view.  
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed  
Within thy beams, O Sun? or who could find  
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,  
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?  
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?  
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

—BLANCO WHITE.

We learn that during the residence of the Swedish Royal Family at the castle of Drottringholm recently, several remarkable séances were held, the medium being a personal friend of the Queen of Sweden.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Harbinger of Light*, writing from Taranaki, N.Z., says: “The interest in the Spiritualistic movement is increasing in a wonderful manner. No matter where you go the subject is almost sure to crop up.” He further expresses his gratification to find “that a subject that was formerly only received with ridicule and abuse, is now discussed in the same manner as any other knotty or scientific problem.” As it is in New Zealand so it is everywhere.

M. GOODFELLOW, the Jersey medium for materialisation, to whom we alluded recently, has been getting himself into trouble in that island by admitting promiscuous sitters to his séances. Until incipient mediums learn the importance of placing themselves under the best conditions, they should allow some competent friend to assume complete control of the admission of people to witness such advanced phenomena. Again we give this word of warning to those who ignore this advice.

FAITH IN IMMORTAL LIFE.—I cannot agree with those who tell us that without faith in immortal life men can live as noble lives as now. I think that without a future life our interest in the present world would dwindle. Human life, ending here, would become more insignificant and uninteresting. We should still have conscience and the sense of duty; we should still have the natural affections and sympathies; we should still have reason and judgment to guide us; but hope would largely go out of our lives, and, with hope, courage and energy. Faith in a continued and advancing existence, in which death makes no change or pause, has been the incitement to progress in Christian lands. It animates to new endeavour; it gives fresh encouragement in the midst of disappointment; it prevents life from becoming a burden; it renews our youth; it revives God's work in the midst of the years.—J. FREEMAN CLARKE in *The Christian Life*.

THE UNIVERSAL MERCY BAND.—Lord Mount-Temple, who with Lady Mount-Temple has just returned to his villa residence at Babbacombe for the winter months, has been attending meetings in the district on behalf of the Universal Mercy Band movement. The movement was started only recently, and has for its object the protection of all from cruelty, and inculcating, particularly into the minds of children, feelings of kindness and mercy. There are in existence 5,700 Mercy Bands, with nearly 500,000 members. Lord Mount-Temple is president of the Universal Mercy Band of the British Empire, and he is accompanied in his work of founding branches of the Band by Rev. Thomas Timmins, who, as the apostle of mercy, has travelled largely, addressed hundreds of thousands of children and grown-up people, and enrolled nearly 500,000 members of the Band. Unsectarian and unpolitical, the organisation has been well received by all good people everywhere, and as in America, so in England, the work has been declared to be for the welfare of society, and for the glory of God.—*The Christian Life*.

If an error is popular, the greater is the need of its being refuted; if a truth is unpopular, the more is the need of its being spoken; if a folly is fashionable, the greater is the need of its being exposed and denounced.

## LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

16, CRAVEN STREET, CHARING CROSS, W.C.

### Members of Council.

President:—W. STAINTON MOSES, M.A.

Vice-Presidents { E. DAWSON ROGERS.  
STANHOPE T. SPEER, M.D.  
HON. PERCY WINDHAM.

T. A. AMOS.  
MAJOR-GENERAL DRAYSON.  
JOHN S. FARMER.  
C. C. MASSEY.  
J. H. MITCHNER.

W. PAICE, M.A.  
MORELL THEOBALD.  
ALARIC A. WATTS.  
G. WYLD, M.D.

Hon. Treasurer:—HENRY WITHALL.

Hon. Secretaries: { MORELL THEOBALD (for General Purposes).  
W. PAICE (for French Correspondence).

Librarian:—B. D. GODFREY.

1. The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance are desirous of submitting to its Members, and to Spiritualists generally, the following facts in relation to its organ “LIGHT,” and to the special work of the Alliance therewith connected.

2. “LIGHT” has been maintained for some years by a “Sustentation Fund,” supplementary to its subscription list and sales, raised with some effort, from year to year; and, from its commencement in 1881, by the services given wholly gratuitously, of its Editors—services which it has become impossible for the present Editor any longer to render on such conditions.

3. The work of the Alliance associated with the publication of “LIGHT” has been supplemented by a dépôt for the publication and sale of books on Spiritualistic and Occult subjects, and for affording information to inquirers.

4. This work has also been conducted under the superintendence of the present Editor of “LIGHT,” and is in the same condition as respects the services of that gentleman as has now become the Editorship of “LIGHT.”

5. “LIGHT,” although the organ of the Alliance, is not at present under its control. It is the property of the “Eclectic Publishing Company, Limited.” Mr. Farmer owns the Publishing and Bookselling Dépôt referred to.

6. As, however, neither is a source of present profit, and funds for the now needful payments for Editorship and Superintendence are not available, the Council has reason to believe that the management and control of both would readily be handed over to it on very equitable terms as to a division of future profits, if the Alliance were in a position to assume such responsibilities.

7. The circulation of “LIGHT” has been a gradually increasing one for some years. The past year's sale and subscriptions have amounted to a larger sum than that of any former year; and the profits of the Book Dépôt have been sufficient to cover all expenses except those of supervision.

8. The Council are, therefore, in a position to affirm with confidence that it is with an increasingly prosperous and not a failing enterprise that they are now called upon to deal.

9. After giving the matter their most careful consideration they are of opinion that the time has arrived at which they might with great advantage (if indeed it may not be said that they must, if possible,) take over the conduct and management of “LIGHT,” and of the Book Dépôt; but this they can only do with the practical assistance and support of the Members of the Alliance and of those who are interested in Spiritualism and in the possession by it of an Organ or Voice in these arduous days. If support cannot be secured to some such scheme, the Council are unable to see any alternative but that “LIGHT” and the Book Dépôt should be given up at the conclusion of the year.

10. The best services in the Council individually and collectively will be readily given in furtherance of the scheme now propounded by them; and they are assured that they may confidently rely on the important literary help with which “LIGHT” has hitherto been favoured by the staff of unpaid literary collaborators who have contributed so essentially to make the journal what it is, and which will, it is anticipated, enable the Council further to improve it, when their control of matters connected with it shall be direct and effectual.

11. In view of these circumstances, and especially of the critical condition at the moment of affairs as respects the Editorship of “LIGHT,” the Council are desirous of raising by voluntary subscriptions or donations, the sum of £600, inclusive of the amount hitherto subscribed annually to the “Sustentation Fund,” which amounted in the present year (1886) to £200; and they venture to ask the Members of the Alliance and friends of the cause—all in fact who have derived knowledge or comfort from Spiritualism—to co-operate in placing that sum at their disposal.

12. With this aid, they will be enabled to conduct “LIGHT” for the next year, paying a reasonable honorarium for Editorship, and to keep afloat the Bookselling Dépôt. They feel a lively assurance, from the gradual increase, year by year, in the receipts from both sources, that, if they can be kept afloat for a year or two, they will prove not only self-supporting, but a source of profit material as well as moral, to the cause of Spiritualism.

13. A form is subjoined which can be returned to any Member of the Council, or to the Honorary Secretary, Mr. M. Theobald, 62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E., and in which such contribution as you may be kindly disposed to entrust to the Council in furtherance of their work, as above set forth, can be entered.

(A Form for return to the Secretary will be found on the first page.)

And what lessons do we learn from these considerations? What are they designed to teach us?

First, that God's perfect justice has ordained that every atom of the life-essence or spirit flowing from Him upon the earth shall go through one and the same process of development of its Divine potencies. So that no one atom shall say to another, "I am better than thou," knowing full well that in former stages of existence he had been but as his brother atom then was!

Oh, what charity does this teach us, and how truly home to us does it bring the universal brotherhood of mankind!

Next, it most surely teaches us that all will sooner or later become the angel, and enjoy the happiness of that state of development.

And is not this in perfect consonance with perfect parental love, which would not that even one of His little ones should perish?

And can we not, thirdly, see how Almighty Wisdom alone could have ordained and organised a law of such perfect and universal justice in conjunction with such perfect and universal love?

Thus, have we not reason for realising—so far as God's atoms are able to realise while in the flesh—that our God is in very deed not only the Supreme God, but the Supreme Father-Mother of the Universe; leading up all His offspring in supreme wisdom, love, and tenderness to Himself, the Alpha as He is the Omega of all aspiration!

And now, in conclusion, let me say how painfully I feel my total inability to express suitably the thoughts that swell the soul on this grand subject—and I trust this will be borne in mind by those who peruse my words.

But if I succeed in imparting to only one soul by their perusal new glimpses of light and happiness, my labour of love will be a matter for intense thankfulness to my God.

May God grant it.

"LILY."

P.S.—Perhaps I should add that having done my best to elucidate my views, however inefficiently, I trust I shall not be deemed discourteous by stating that an already large correspondence, with many home duties, must prevent my entering upon any controversial correspondence on the subject.

THE Wellington (New Zealand) Association of Spiritualists has over 100 members. Mr. McLean is the president.

MR. COLVILLE has returned to Boston from California, and has resumed his lectures at the Parker Memorial Hall.

A CORRESPONDENT of Dr. E. B. Tylor's has discovered a veritable witch's ladder, which has been photographed and reproduced as an illustration for the next issue of the *Folk Lore Journal*. It will be accompanied by a full description of the curious circumstances attending its discovery.

THERE has been quite a lively passage of arms between Mr. Gerald Massey and the Newcastle Spiritualists relative to the amount demanded by the former for his lectures. It should not be forgotten that in Spiritualism, as in everything else, "the labourer is worthy of his hire."

EIGHT hundred persons paid for admission at the opening ceremony of the Openshaw Mechanics' Institute recently, some 150 having to be turned away for want of room. Mr. R. Brown, an inspirational medium, occupied the platform, and was listened to with evident pleasure. Truly some of these provincial meetings put London Spiritualists to shame.

MR. ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, the distinguished naturalist, is now in America lecturing before the Lowell Institute of Boston, and the John Hopkins University of Baltimore. The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* says:—"We have been solicited by representative people holding positions in Church and State, to prevail upon Mr. Wallace to lecture in some of the leading cities upon the subject of Spiritualism. We hope Mr. Wallace may be able to so arrange his engagements as to do this, for nothing on which he could speak would attract so large audiences and so much popular interest." This is saying a good deal for the popularity of American Spiritualism.

LADY WILDE's book that is to be out next week, on *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland*, is more than a compilation of national traditions already published; it is the joint work, as it were, of the late Sir William Wilde and of his widow, the gifted lady whose name is so much associated with Irish poetry. Sir William Wilde, for many years before his death, employed a number of persons in all parts of the sister island to note down, from the lips of the peasantry, the popular beliefs, the old-world stories, the romantic fairy tales, current among the remote country sides. These have been collected, put into order, and accompanied by sketches of the Irish part, by Lady Wilde.

## PROPHECIES OF THE SOMNAMBULISTS, WANNER AND KRAMER.

(FROM *The Sphinx*, NOVEMBER, 1886.)

TRANSLATED BY "V."

The Spiritualistic séance held in Munich, at which the death of the late King was predicted (see the August number of *The Sphinx*, p. 135), has naturally created a great sensation. But this verified prediction does not stand alone, and a parallel one may be found in the prophecies of the Stuttgardt somnambulists Wanner and Krämer, who as early as the year 1812 accurately foretold the death of the King Frederick of Wurtemberg, in 1816. Eschenmayer gives a detailed report of this in the first volume of his *Archives of Animal Magnetism*. The most important part of the account is as follows:—

"The first prediction was made in 1812, on or about the 12th July, in the presence of the Court physician—Klein, 'Oberfinanzrat' St—, and the wife and daughter of the latter. It ran as follows:—'His Majesty will die in an unusual manner in the year 1816, between the 18th and 20th of April.' (To Klein) 'You will receive another communication on the subject, and another person' (whom she named) 'will precede him.' The somnambulist imposed the strictest secrecy on all present, as she said the slightest imprudence might entail upon them, and especially upon herself, the gravest results, and that she would probably be accused of being mad. Later on Fräulein Wanner said that 'the year in which the death would take place was a certainty, but she might be mistaken in the month.' To this Frau von St.— adds that afterwards her husband told her he had elicited the further information that the month might be that of October."

Eschenmayer wished to have further questioned Councillor von St.— on the matter, but had no opportunity of meeting him. He says: "So much, however, is certain, that St.— was so confident of the fulfilment of the prediction at the end of October, 1816, that he offered to wager the whole contents of his wine cellar with several of his friends on the event."

The somnambulist, Krämer, who was under the treatment of Dr. Nick, gave utterance to the following prediction in the presence of her doctor, of the Court physician, Klein, and of Professor L—t, on the 17th April, 1816:—K. His Majesty will die this year in the month of October. N. Will it be the beginning, the middle, or the end of October? K. The end of October. N. Can you say the exact day? Is it the 26th? K. No. N. Then is it the 28th? K. On that day he will be struck with apoplexy in the head and breast.

Dr. Klein had been to Augsburg, from which place he returned on the 28th October, when immediately on his arrival a King's messenger appeared and asked for a surgical instrument for the King. "Like a flash of lightning Klein recalled the prediction, announcing the King's death." And in fact on this day the King was struck with apoplexy from which he expired on the 29th. Eschenmayer gives the following evidence in confirmation of these facts.

"Dr. Christian R—sz. Several months before the event Professor L—t gave this gentleman a sealed note, in which the afore-mentioned prediction was written down, with the stipulation that the seal should not be broken before the expiration of the time mentioned. But as little by little the report of the prediction became publicly known, this precaution was needless, and L—t allowed R—sz to open the note. When R—sz became acquainted with the contents and circumstances attending them he too became a believer in the prediction, and won two wagers he made about it. One of the persons he betted with is Major C—, the other is unknown to me.

"Minister von W— an active supporter of the magnetic theory, spoke in society of this wonderful prediction in view of the possibility of science throwing some light upon such phenomena. It is a fact that he wished to make a wager about it with Count —z.

"Councillor von St— is a witness that some three or four months previously St— offered to wager the contents of his wine cellar that the prediction was verified by the end of October or at least before the 11th November.

"I myself for some reason told Madame von W— of the prediction about three months before the death took place,

## WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LORD BROUGHAM.—“There is but one question I would ask the author. Is this Spiritualism of this world 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,’ ‘sommambulic,’ ‘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 formulae 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, Homoeopathy, 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*, 1834, 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 sances, 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 sance.

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 adding 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 near 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.

## Miscellaneous.

## THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

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