

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

MESMERISM AND HYPNOTISM.

PART III.

Mr. Myers closes the article on which I have been commenting ("Human Personality in the Light of Hypnotic Suggestion") with an impressive summary of the results to which he believes these experiments to point. They throw, he conceives, a new light on man's will, memory, and character. They indicate that his self-hood is neither permanent nor stationary: that his sense of free-will is shifting and illusory: his memory multiplex and discontinuous; and "his character, a function of these two variables, and directly modifiable by purely physiological means." He believes that the threshold of discovery alone has been trodden, and that infinite possibilities lie in future experiment.

"One such discovery (he concludes), that of *telepathy*, or the transference of thought and sensation from mind to mind without the agency of the recognised organs of sense, has, as I hold, been already achieved. This is in itself enough to revolutionise the whole aspect of the problem, and to suggest that if so transcendent a capacity be indeed lurking among the obscurer and rarer vital phenomena, then the shifting phosphorescence which we feared might hang above decay, may in truth resemble rather that blaze of turbulent vapours which hides and bears witness of the sun. The proof of this, if it comes, must be slow in coming. But it has ever been men's error to lack patience when their highest interests were at stake. We hope too proudly, despair too decisively, from the half-conscious feeling that questions of primary importance must needs be settled one way or the other. For my part, I believe that many questions which the religious world deems to be already closed in one sense, and the materialistic world in the other, are really only just beginning to come within the purview of science. I maintain that we are just learning to understand the first elements of problems which so many preachers have solved with a peroration, so many philosophers with a formula, so many physiologists with a smile or a sneer. It is, as I hold, to experimental psychology, to an analysis whose growing power we can as yet hardly realise, that we must look for a slow but incontrovertible decision as to whether man be but the transitory crown of earth's fauna, between ice-age and ice-age, between fire and sea; or whether it may truly be that his evolution is not a terrestrial evolution alone, not bounded by polar solitudes, nor measured by the sun's march through Heaven, but making for a vaster future, by inheritance from a remoter past."

I pass now to a rapid consideration of a most important paper entitled "Multiplex Personality," in which Mr. Myers

dwells on some facts and conclusions which have been hinted at in the articles already noticed. He deals with the problem of Personality in man, and begins by citing cases to show the extent to which the "dissociation of memories, faculties, sensibilities may be carried without resulting in mere insane chaos, mere demented oblivion." Two pre-eminent cases form the text of his discourse—Louis V (not Louis the Fifth, as I vainly thought at first) but Louis V—: and Félicité X (not Félicité the Tenth) but Félicité X—: the surnames being suppressed. The case of Louis (as I will call him) has been described in the *Journal of Mental Science*, for January, 1886: and in *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, Part X. His life has been melancholy indeed: "the neglected child of a turbulent mother" born in 1863, sent to a reformatory at ten years old; at fourteen, frightened by a viper and thrown off his precarious mental balance, he developed symptoms of epilepsy and hysterical paralysis of the legs. He was transferred to the asylum of Bonneval, and after two months of tailoring had a hysterio-epileptic attack—fifty hours of convulsions and ecstasy. From this he awoke "no longer paralysed, no longer acquainted with tailoring, and no longer virtuous." "His memory was set back, so to say, to the moment of the viper's appearance, and he could remember nothing since. His character had become violent, greedy, and quarrelsome, and his tastes were radically changed." He had been an abstainer: now he drank all the wine he could get hold of. He escaped from Bonneval and finally turned up at the Rochefort Asylum in the character of a private of Marines, convicted of theft, but supposed to be of unsound mind. Now he is gone from the asylum in much improved health, opportunity having been taken meanwhile to conduct with him, or upon him, a most instructive series of experiments.

This is the record of his state when the experiments were begun. Paralysis and insensibility of right side: indistinctness and difficulty of speech. He harangues perpetually, abusing his physicians, preaching "with monkey-like impudence" Radicalism in politics and Atheism in religion: making bad jokes, and remembering only recent events, except two scraps of his previous life, viz., his vicious period at Bonneval and part of his stay at Bicêtre. In this state the physicians at Rochefort tried the application of various metals to the surface of the body, a method of treatment much favoured in hysterical cases by French physicians. Steel, applied to the *right* arm, transferred the whole insensibility to the *left* side. With this startling change occurred a *complete change of character*. "The restless insolence, the savage impulsiveness, have wholly disappeared. The patient is now gentle, respectful, and modest. He can speak clearly, but speaks only when spoken to. If he is asked his views on religion and politics, he prefers to leave such matters to wiser heads than his own." Talk of Rochefort and his regiment, he will declare that he knows nothing of Rochefort, and never was a soldier in his life. Asked where he now is, he replies, "I am at Bicêtre: it is January 2nd, 1884." It is found, in effect, that he has now (the *left* side being paralysed) memory only of two short periods (different from those remembered when the *right* side was paralysed)—"periods during which, so far as can now be ascertained,

his character was of the same decorous type and *his paralysis was on the left side.*"

These are the first and second states out of a series of six or more through which he can be made to pass. Here is another, the fifth. "If he is placed in an electric bath, or if a magnet be placed on his head, . . . all paralysis, all defect of sensibility, has disappeared. His movements are light and active; his expression gentle and timid. But ask him where he is, and you find that he has gone back to a boy of fourteen, that he is at St. Urbain, his first reformatory, and that his memory embraces his years of childhood, and stops short on the very day when he had the fright with the viper. If he is pressed to recollect the incident of the viper, a violent epileptiform crisis puts a sudden end to this phase of personality." What does all this mean? Probably, as the doctors surmise, something such as this: A sudden shock has effected a profounder severance between the functions of the two hemispheres of the brain than has been observed before. The alternate predominance of right or left hemisphere seems to affect memory and character as well as motor and sensory innervation. "Inhibit his *left* brain (and *right* side) and he becomes, as one may say, not only left-handed but *sinister*. . . . Inhibit his *right* brain, and the higher qualities of character remain, like the power of speech, intact. There is self-control; there is modesty; there is sense of duty . . . but, nevertheless, he is only half himself." Memory is deficient, connected only with the one state in which he finds himself. Restore the equipoise of the two hemispheres and we find a change in the patient fruitful of psychical possibilities. "He is, if I may so say, born again; he becomes as a little child; he is set back in memory, character, knowledge, powers, to the days before this trouble came upon him or his worse self assumed its sway."

I have rapidly sketched this case as a typical example. For Félicité X——'s case I must refer my readers to Mr. Myers' article (*Nineteenth Century*, p. 654 sq.), merely noting that in her case the somnambulist state has become the normal life: the superior state has gradually pushed out the inferior, which was predominant. She is a better woman both physically and morally now that the state which was abnormal and transitory has become normal and dominant. But what do we mean by normal? "Nothing more than 'what happens to exist.'" We find ourselves in waking hours in a certain state, and we assume that that is our normal condition. But we know nothing of our innate capacities or of the means by which what is latent in us may be stimulated into activity. We have seen in many instances a retrogressive change, as in the insane. We are brought in the lunatic asylum face to face with much that is painful, ludicrous, grotesque. Is there any reason to suppose that spontaneous or induced changes in personality may not be sometimes in the direction of improvement, as in Félicité's case? Mr. Myers adduces many reasons and quotes some strong cases to show that there is cogent reason to believe that in hypnotism we have a new form of moral as well as physical therapeutics. One of these cases is very striking. It records the successful hypnotisation at the Salpêtrière, in 1884, of a female criminal lunatic, by M. Auguste Voisin. From the lowest depths of vice, crime, and fury this unfortunate was gradually rescued by being hypnotised regularly. She gradually became sane when in the trance, though she raved when awake. In the trance she voluntarily confessed her crimes (some of them then unknown to the police) and made good resolves for the future. Two years have elapsed (July 31st, 1886), and she is now a nurse in a Paris hospital and her conduct is irreproachable. M. Voisin has followed up this case with others equally striking.

And here I may interrupt the thread of my narrative to urge attention to the bearing of this question of hypnotism on the treatment of the insane. Thanks chiefly to the untiring efforts of Mrs. Weldon, a blaze of light has recently been let in upon private asylums. I hope it is not too much to say that their days are numbered, and that it will henceforth be impossible to kidnap people and immure them for life in these worse than prisons, on the mere word of two men who are engaged to remove a troublesome and, perhaps, eccentric relative from the way of some rich man who can afford to pay for the accommodation. This scandal, I hope, is past. But the reform is not complete yet. Private asylums should be absolutely swept away at once and for ever. They are an anachronism and a gross abuse, affording facilities for dark deeds suited only to the Dark Ages. But there is room, besides, for much improvement in the treatment of the insane. No doubt we have moved forward a long step in the direction of humanity and gentleness of treatment. But the experiments of these eminent French doctors—and they are all, I believe, eminent in the front rank of their profession—point to mesmerism as a curative agent in mental disease which ought not to be any longer overlooked. The French, as a more excitable people, are very possibly more amenable to this form of treatment than the more stolid Englishman. But difficulty should be no bar to the attempt. The insane, too, are less easily mesmerised than those who are in possession of their senses. But, again, the benefit to be conferred is immeasurably greater. Nor must I lose sight of the painful and depressing suspicion which I can never shake off that our asylums contain within their walls many who are as sane as those who keep them in durance. There are, I have reason to suspect, in those living tombs, many poor victims of ignorance and misunderstanding on the part of those who wrongly think them mad; mediums partially developed, or partly possessed; some who have rashly and with unbalanced mind meddled with things too high for them, and who have found reason unseated on its throne thereby. An expert inspection of asylums from the point of view of the Spiritualist would produce, I firmly believe, some startling facts. A treatment of the insane, actual or presumed, from the standpoint of mesmerism would produce, I also feel confident, some most beneficial results.

"M.A. (OXON.)."

THE "NATIONAL REFORMER" AND SPIRITUALISM.

The *National Reformer*, which is edited by Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., and Mrs. Besant, recently referred to the special number of "LIGHT," and confessed that the evidence was certainly overwhelming. But in a subsequent issue the editors say, "If anyone desires to convince us of slate-writing, or desires us to express an opinion as to how it is done, it would be necessary that we should be afforded the personal opportunity of witnessing and examining the occurrence. No amount of printed matter will have the slightest effect on us." We don't suppose it would, considering the opinions to which the editors have committed themselves. Mr. Bradlaugh had an opportunity of investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism when serving on the committee of the Dialectical Society appointed for the purpose. And we all know how he acted in the matter. If the editors desire to be convinced of what we conceive to be a great fact, they must place themselves in a position to patiently examine the phenomena; but their "opinion," however favourable, would not in the least convince the world that Spiritualism is true.

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.

PSYCHOGRAPHY IN AN INACCESSIBLE INCLOSURE.

Since my communication in last week's "LIGHT," I have had an interview with the owner of the padlock-slates, and his friend, Dr. X. They showed me all the slates with the writing upon them obtained at the sitting with Mr. Eglinton, and went through the complicated experience described in "LIGHT," exactly as it occurred. And as the incidents described appear to constitute a crucial proof for the genuineness of slate-writing, the writer of the narrative is desirous of authenticating his evidence by the publication of his name: Mr. Percy Wells, of 26, Cambridge-gardens, North Kensington, an old acquaintance of mine.

When Mr. Wells had written his question in the padlock-slates in the front room, he carried them locked into Mr. Eglinton's presence, at the table in the back room where the sitting was held. He then unlocked the slates for a moment, and held them out partly open, with the back of the upper slate turned to Mr. Eglinton (so that he should not be able to see the inquiry written inside), for him to drop a morsel of pencil inside. As soon as this was done Mr. Wells locked the slates again and laid them on the table, from whence they were never removed. Dr. X. was in entire agreement with Mr. Wells in the description of this preliminary, of which they had obviously both the clearest recollection.

I suppose that the keenest scent after an opportunity for trickery must admit that there was no possibility of Eglinton's writing anything on the slates while they were thus held out by Mr. Wells, with the opening towards himself and the hinges and back of the upper slate towards Mr. Eglinton. The slates during this short interval were as truly inaccessible to him as when they were lying locked upon the table. It is, then, literally true that the inside of the slates was inaccessible to Mr. Eglinton during the whole course of the experiment. And all possibility of substitution was excluded by the name stamped all over the frames, in addition to the absurdity of supposing that a pair of similar slates could have been prepared by divination beforehand.

The witnesses could not be mistaken as to the simple conditions which made it impossible to attribute the writing to Eglinton himself, and if the genuineness of the phenomenon is not to be established by such evidence as this, it would be idle to offer further proof, short of bringing the phenomenon in question under the actual observation of the sceptic.

December 4th, 1886.

H. WEDGWOOD.

SONNET.

What moved thee, soul, say, what could thee inspire
To seek once more conception's murky stain,
A baffled traveller, trying once again
Earth's beaten paths, with hopes to rise up higher,
If trod with steadfast heart and pure desire?
What moved thee, then, to challenge carnal pain,
But that the strife should rest no longer vain,
The thirst to join for aye the heavenly choir?
For brought you not your stain? The stain you bear
Came straight from whence you came—the doubting brain;
Frail nerve; the faltering knees. Yes, all were there!
They could not lead thee thence above the plain;
Too weak the lungs, as then, to breathe the air
Of yonder azure heights where joy shall reign.

T. W.

MR. E. W. WALLIS will lecture at Blackburn on Sunday next.

THE French journal, *La Lumière*, has reappeared under the able direction of Madame Lucie Granges.

THE German Spiritist paper, *Licht mehr Licht*, which has been in existence over seven years, has ceased to exist.

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

(TRANSLATION FROM *Psychische Studien*.)

(Continued from page 580.)

XI.

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

The same fact is reported also by another witness, Mr. Plimpton, co-editor of the *Cincinnati Commercial*, reprinted in Colonel Down Piatt's newspaper, *The Capitol*, at Washington. From the plan of the room added to the report it appears that the table was in the middle of the room; on one side was the medium; on the other, opposite the medium, near the corner of the table, Dr. Wolfe; on the third side was the aperture of the fringed valance surrounding the lower part of the table. Mr. Plimpton sat fronting this aperture, about a pace from the table. According to him the following is what happened: "Dr. Wolfe procured a platter of flour, and asked if they (the operators) could leave an impression of the hand in it. They rapped affirmatively. The request was written that the doctor would hold the platter at the corner of the table furthest from Mrs. Hollis. He did so. The hand appeared, and after fluttering over it with a rapidity of motion that seemed electric, rested in it for a moment, and then shaking off the adhering particles, was withdrawn. Mrs. Hollis was requested to place her own hand in the print. The finger-marks were half-an-inch longer than her fingers. It was the impression of a man's hand, full-sized, with all the strong, anatomical markings of such a hand. Moreover, had Mrs. Hollis undertaken the feat, she must have changed her position, and brought her shoulder even with the top of the stand to have reached so far. But her position was not changed, and the physical impossibility that she could have done it was demonstrated past our doubt. And how could a full-grown man have concealed himself under the table? I turned it over instantly the impression on the flour had been completed. Was it illusion? The impression on the flour was seen by other people afterwards. If they saw it, so surely did I see the hand that made it." (*Startling Facts*, p. 565, ed. 1883.)

Even for the explanation of this phenomenon Dr. von Hartmann makes no concession of his theory. He grants, indeed, that there is no longer hallucination. He no longer says, as in the above case of the feeling of touch, "there remains the possibility" of a real, objective cause, but asserts it quite determinately, in saying "the impressions obtained afford indubitable proof that in these cases we have not to do with the transfer of hallucinations." (P. 49 Tr.) But what is his explanation? I venture to believe that for every one, even for the representative of positive science, an impression produced under the above-mentioned conditions—or in general as soon as the authenticity of this phenomenon is conceded—would afford a completely cogent demonstration that we have here really to do with a temporary formation of a body bearing an organic human shape. But for Dr. von Hartmann the inference is different. That he may be faithful to his theory of nerve-force, he gives it here an extraordinary development; it can bring about not only movements of objects, but even plastic effects. According to him, such an impression is produced by "a system of push-and-pull lines of nerve-force acting at a distance." (P. 47 Tr.) And if the body producing this result (or, as here, the hand,) is *visible*, that again, as in the foregoing cases, is an hallucination—the combination of a real result with an hallucinatory effect. As we see, and as we have seen before the logical inconsequence into which Dr. von Hartmann falls, and which was only "probably" so when the question was of his explanation of the feeling of touch, has increased; and now, when he offers us an extension of the same hypothesis for the explanation of the impressions, it attains its height and becomes a fact. I see a hand appear—that is an hallucination. I see this hand, I handle it, I feel it—the sensation of touch may be actual, but the visual impression is an hallucination. I see this hand move an object, write; the physical effect produced is real, but the visual impression is hallucination. I see this hand produce a mark, proving that it is indeed a hand—the mark is actual, but the visual impression is hallucination. Thus the witness of our senses is accepted for a series of real effects, but is rejected singly and alone in the special case of sight, though one of the real and permanent effects (the impression) proves the agreement of sight and feeling with this real effect. So we

have on the otherside a phenomenon bearing all the appearance of a body, and establishing itself as such by all effects ordinarily produced by bodies: it is visible, it is tangible, it moves another body, it leaves behind it enduring traces, it penetrates another body—all these predicates are admitted by Dr. von Hartmann as really objective, with the single exception of its visibility. Why? On what ground of logic?

And this logic will seem yet more strange if we ask Herr von Hartmann for the definition of a body in general on the principle of his own philosophy. Matter, he answers us, is nothing else than a system of "atomic forces"—a system of dynamics. (*Philosophy of the Unconscious*, Coupland's translation, Vol. II., p. 167.) Thus if in my hand I hold another hand, according to Hartmann I hold "a system of atomic forces," and he does not refuse to this the predicate of visibility, nor does he characterise the witness of this one of my senses as hallucination. But when I hold in my hand a so-called "materialised" hand, which I declare that I both feel and see, and to which Hartmann applies the same explanation, since he regards it as "a system of lines of force," in this case he tells us that the feeling of touch is real, but the impression of sight of a hand is an hallucination! Why? On what logical ground?

When once in the phenomena in question the feeling of touch is admitted as real, objective, and produced on one organism by a "system of force," where is the difficulty of conceding also the predicate of the real and objective visibility of the same "system of force," as soon as the subjective witness for the one and the other is the same? Never will Dr. von Hartmann be able to show the logic of his negation of this predicate. And so his hallucination-hypothesis, after all the admissions which he has made, since he allows the objective reality of the same phenomenon for other sense perceptions, presents itself as entirely groundless from the point of view of logic.

(To be continued.)

"TWIXT TWO WORLDS."

It is not uninteresting to note the complete change of tone which has characterised the Press recently in regard to their attitude towards Spiritualism. The last issue of the *Cambridge Chronicle*, in a lengthy review of over two columns of *'Twixt Two Worlds*, remarks:—

"A copy of this remarkable work has been sent us, and a careful perusal of its contents has induced some singular reflections. One may be mentioned here. Either extreme gullibility, or the rapid development of most wonderful talents, long in a great and general measure undiscovered or neglected, is one characteristic of the age, which the volume before us, particularly when regarded side by side with other recent publications and some platform and pulpit utterances, makes it difficult for the uninitiated and unprejudiced to determine in any satisfactory degree; so far removed from ordinary mundane experiences are those narrated, so highly accredited commonly are the narrators and the affirmants of the truth or genuineness of their statements, and so guarded against imposition or undue credulity in their latest investigations have these inquirers been—those who know them cannot readily think of them as suddenly dropping into the category of knaves and fools. But it would proclaim the occupation of a position unenviable in more senses than one were the difficulty allowed to preclude an intelligent examination of the evidence submitted; and like the *Standard*, in giving a two-column review of Madame Blavatsky's new book on her 'supernatural' experiences, we, in dealing with those in *'Twixt Two Worlds*, do not propose to enter into any argument as to their truth, still less to ridicule them; they may speak for themselves."

"This record of marvels, however wrought, is 'A Narrative of the Life and Work of William Eglinton,' by Mr. J. S. Farmer. We know that no epithets have, by ignorant or meagrely informed detractors and calumniators, been deemed too vulgar or abusive for association with the subject of the story; but the day is at hand, even is, when the language of such shall no longer usurp the place of honest mention where mention at all is made, and honourable argument. The author of the present work is experienced, able, and discerning; and he has given to the world in precise and graphic detail, descriptions of manifestations so astounding as cannot be ignored when brought under notice without betraying folly or bigotry of the most lamentable kind—acceptance of inferences or deductions is not involved and should not be easily suffered."

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.]

Mediums and Conjurers.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In the last number of the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research Mrs. Sidgwick cites a letter of mine published as far back as the year 1877 on the above subject. I then found myself in agreement with Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace in suspecting that mediumship and conjuring sometimes went together in public exhibitions. What Mrs. Sidgwick cites quite justifies her conclusion with regard to my then opinions. Nor have I any particular wish to modify them. I should not now lay so much stress on the bewildering nature of conjurers' tricks as I then did. But I see no reason to doubt that any manual dexterity which a conjurer may acquire would be most effectively supplemented by any psychical powers that he might also possess. Nor do I doubt that no mere conjurer can perform by trick what I lately recorded as witnessed by myself and two friends in the presence of Mr. Eglinton. Lastly, I do not believe that any conjurer can act as a public medium, being devoid of any psychical power, without being very soon found out. I doubt if he would last a month.

December 5th, 1886.

"M.A. (OXON.)."

Re-incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The doctrine of "Re-incarnation," for which "Lily" pleads so earnestly, has always been rather a stumbling block to English Spiritualists. It must be admitted that it makes sad havoc with our conceptions of our personal identity. Nor is this all or the worst of it. We lose with our identity all the tender associations from which, to many, it derives its chief value. The loved ones whom we are rejoicing in the hope to meet again in a blessed reunion, where are they and what are they and who are they now? Will they have returned to earth when we seek them in the Heavens? Moreover, it is not to all of us agreeable to contemplate a return to a condition of existence to the experiences of which we can look back with entire satisfaction. To be quit of this world and its ways, its imperfections and insufficiencies, its inequalities and contradictions, constitutes to many thoughtful and experienced persons a great inducement to look forward with complacency to another; and to feel that one has to return to it and to begin the wearisome journey over again can scarcely by such be contemplated without dismay. That we shake hands with life and bid it farewell is one of the compensations for the uncertainties of death.

On the other hand, there is much in the doctrine of Re-incarnation that by a sober imagination may be recognised as not unreasonable and not absolutely impossible. We, most of us, believe that there is work to be done hereafter in the purification and progressive development of our being, lessons to learn, experience to gain, faculties to be developed or depressed, before we can hope to settle down in the mansions of Peace. It matters, perhaps, little where these salutary exercises may take place. We know of this condition of existence, and we do not know absolutely of any other; and no doubt the experience of most of us will testify that a very adequate degree of purgatorial fire may be realised in it, without going elsewhere.

Possibly the doctrine of Re-incarnation may be a truth, but perhaps not the truth, else wherefore are we to be born again? unless regeneration and re-incarnation are convertible terms which some of us would not be disposed to admit. Thus much may perhaps be affirmed. There is sufficient ground for believing this doctrine for those whom it comforts, and adequate reason for declining to accept it for those whom it offends.—Yours sincerely,

19, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.,
December 6th, 1886.

A. A. WATTS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As you have again re-opened this question I wish to make a few remarks on the letters which appear in your two last numbers.

I will first advert to an expression of "M.A. (Oxon.);" on this subject. He said lately that we have no "clear" idea or

remembrance of any former existence. But surely this is an uncandid and unfair representation of the case. To say that we have no "clear" memory of a former life is to imply that we have at least some dim and hazy recollection of it—some faint impression. Now what is the truth? That we have absolutely no trace of it whatever—not the most distant glimmering of such a fact. Search the archives of your memory, descend into the deepest recesses of your spirit, and you cannot evoke the ghost of an idea of any ante-natal existence. And yet the editor of *Sphinx* actually writes, "I am convinced of the fact of oft-repeated re-incarnation of the spirit of man upon the earth and other planets." As he is convinced of the fact, perhaps he will give us some few traces—some faint memories—of these oft-repeated re-incarnations.

He well knows that he can give none. How, then, has he got convinced of the fact? Simply by the plausibility of a neat and compact theory. He cannot conceive the origin or first start of a spirit, nor can he conceive the creation of spirit; therefore he assumes that it must always have existed in the abysses of the past eternity. He may retort, "Can you conceive it any more than I can?" Assuredly I cannot, but that is no reason why I should assume that of which we have no warrant whatever in the depths of our own consciousness. It is a question which belongs to the unfathomable mystery of Being or Ontology. It is well to have a profound sense of the mystery; but it is not well to seek to solve it by a gratuitous speculation which is itself surrounded by insuperable difficulties.

What are those difficulties? That we have no memory of any one of these oft-repeated re-incarnations is surely unaccountable. And the more so because thereby the very object of them seems wholly frustrated. How can we profit by the lessons of a former existence if the memory of it is wholly obliterated? This scheme seems to combine the *maximum* of suffering with the *minimum* of advantage. But that is too flattering an estimate. One can trace no advantage. How can one profit by the bitter consequences of a fault when we do not remember that any fault was committed, or that we were alive to commit it? Cycles of conscious existence have left a total blank! They have bequeathed no retrospect. We have neither the pains nor the pleasures of memory. Surely neither wisdom nor goodness can be traced in such a monstrous constitution of things.

I quite agree with the view taken by your correspondent, "V.," who says "it is an idea as horrible to contemplate as it is contrary to all my conceptions of the goodness and justice of God, and one which I think must have originated among earth-bound spirits either in or out of the flesh."

Cicero expressed a natural feeling to which every heart will respond when he wrote—"If some god would grant that I should again be a child and again squall in the cradle, I would utterly refuse his offer, nor I should be willing, having reached the goal, to be brought back again to the starting place." That this process should be repeated hundreds and thousands of times only makes the imagination more hideous and ghastly. A more unhappy, dreary, and disheartening prospect cannot be presented to the human mind. It is all theory without a single fact to back it.

In this world of nature, and clogged with the earthly body, we cannot either conceive or comprehend the processes of spirit. I would say "Wait the great teacher Death and God adore." These are the things "which the angels desire to look into," but which we, in our low stage of being, cannot hope to explore.

Barnmouth, North Wales.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

A Long Letter in Direct Writing.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I had a séance with Mr. Eglinton for direct writing on the 26th of November last, at which I obtained an unusually long letter. It was the forty-sixth I have received from my spirit friend and guide V. during the last two and a-half years through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship, besides a great number in automatic writing through my own.

Mr. Eglinton, as usual, placed a sheet of note-paper upon a slate with a very sharp point of lead-pencil; he held the slate pressed against the under-surface of the table with his right hand, his thumb being on the top of the table; his left hand was held in both mine. We waited for some time before I heard the sound of very rapid writing on the paper, which continued for five minutes (I timed it by the clock in the room), during which time Mr. Eglinton seemed more than usually distressed or drawn upon, and he appeared very exhausted at the conclusion.

When he withdrew the slate from beneath the table and I removed the paper, I found three sides and a-half covered with the writing I know so well; it was beautifully clear and distinct and very minute. Mr. Eglinton said he thought it must be the longest letter I had received, but I differed with him, as I have had some very closely written letters, which quite filled the four sides, and one, for which we had to put a second sheet, of which a page and a-half were likewise written. When, however, I came to read it I began to suspect that he was right, and when the next morning I copied it into my note-book, I found that it really was the longest letter in direct writing I have ever received. It took me exactly one hour to copy, though I wrote very quickly, and after it was finished I had the curiosity to count the words, and found that it contained 978. I wrote to Mr. Eglinton to tell him he was right in his conjecture, as I have counted the words in one or two other long letters, but they have not much exceeded 800.—Yours truly,

V.

Eliphas Lévi and the Antiquity of the Tarot.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—A copy of William Postel's *Clavis Absconditorum à Constitutione Mundi* (The Key of Things Hidden from the Foundation of the World) having fallen into my hands, I find, firstly, that the key-plate is introduced by the editor, A. Franc. de Monte S., and has been altered by Eliphas Lévi in *La Clef des Grands Mystères* to support his own theory. The editor has also added a table and explanation of the *Clavis Absconditorum*, stating Postel's meaning to be, that everything was fourfold; that, therefore, as Christ was born, lived, died, and rose again, so would the same process be passed through by every Christian, and by the whole Church. There is not a word or sign implying any belief in the Tarot; the plate and table are not the work of Postel.

The remainder of the book contains the *Clavis Absconditorum*, which merely announces the speedy coming of Christ (in 1553), and a list of his writings, firstly, of those published, containing *De Originibus Gentium—Mysteriis Brachmanorum Ex libris Noachi et Henoch sumptus* (this, I suspect, is Lévi's "Genesis of Henoch"); secondly, of unpublished works, *De Restitutione Naturæ Humanæ in Conditione quo ante peccatum fuit*.

Mr. Waite (the translator of Eliphas Lévi) will therefore see how completely his doubts as to the antiquity of the Tarot are justified. The fact is, that Eliphas Lévi, whose general and profound knowledge of occultism I should not dream of contesting, is in some matters amazingly inaccurate. For example, in "Lily's" translation of Trithemius, *De Septem Secundeis*,* it is stated that the reign of Michael commenced in A.D. 1879, but what follows in the *Rituel de la Haute Magie* about the nation which has been crucified and will rise again to hold the keys of the East, is inserted by Eliphas Lévi to flatter the French.

TRUTHSEEKER.

[The Tarot is a method of Divination by means of symbolical cards, seventy-eight in number, and supposed to be the originals of our modern playing cards. Eliphas Lévi believed it to be the work of Hermes, and pretended to account for all exoteric dogmas and unveil their significance by its means.—Ed.]

THE *Wood Green and Southgate Times* of Monday next will contain a descriptive account of the recent London Spiritualist Alliance meeting at St. James's Hall, and also an interview with Mr. W. Eglinton, under the heading "A Modern Wizard." The paper is published at Comeragh-road, Wood Green.

If we concede that the universe is permeated, guided and controlled by intelligence, and it is difficult to conceive of it under any other hypothesis, it is impertinent to inquire what is the ultimate object of all this wondrous world we see, which has become the habitat of man; and what is the end of his existence. If he is a mere animal destined to live his brief day, subject to accident, disease, disappointment, and the vexations and annoyances that are inevitable in his best estate, and perish at death, it is a stupendous, tantalising failure. But if, as Spiritualism teaches,

"This is but the vestibule
Of great Nature's training school;
The *raison d'être* may appear,
To us poor mortals, living here;"

if this is the nursery of spirits for a broader and better field of existence, our trials seem plausible and beneficent.—*The Golden Gate*.

* So written on the title page. *Secundeis*, however, seems to stand for *Secundicerius*.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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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, £2 2s. 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 11TH, 1886.

A GOSPEL OF HAPPINESS.*

Mr. Calder has devoted three goodly volumes to the exposition of his views on the means and methods by which human happiness may be best promoted. In the course of the volume now under notice, he wages uncompromising war against popular systems of theology, and notably against the elaborate Church organisation and system of ceremonialism which successive ages have reared on the narrow basis of the teaching of Christ, such as we gather it to have been. He sees the churches all round him tottering to a fall, losing their hold on the thinking part of the people, teaching that which has no merit in truth and practicability, dogmas accepted only by virtue of the prescription of antiquity, and rejected as soon as sifted and analysed. He finds this state of affairs destructive to the moral life of the nation, and he sets himself to inquire if there be not, perchance, some gospel other than this "creed outworn" that will make "for happiness" to mankind.

In the course of his dissertations (which err, we think, on the side of diffuseness, and might be compressed with advantage to his argument) he is iconoclastic to a degree that will startle some of his readers. Few dogmas or doctrines escape his onslaught. He is holden by no consideration of reverence for a belief that he does not accept, merely because it is old and widely accepted. He lays about with vigorous common sense, and his resounding thwacks light on many an ancient absurdity that sounds hollow enough as he smites it. Into this part of his dissertation we have no intention of following him. He merely gives utterance to what many thoughtful persons have arrived at for themselves, and what many persons, who are not specially thoughtful, but whose prejudices we desire to treat with all due respect, would receive with that white heat generated in an exceptional degree by any theological discussion. A single example of our author's views must suffice. "The death-knell of traditional theology has struck. In France, Spain, Portugal, and Germany religion is at a very low ebb, while in Italy, the headquarters of Roman Catholicism, the Church is scorned with unparalleled intensity. . . . Eternal wisdom has been challenged by faith so quaint that either it or the order of nature, securing human development and happiness, must be swept away. . . . Nations have long sadly needed emancipation from the fallacies of antiquity. . . . Too long has superstition reigned. The conflict between light and darkness is terminating in the triumph of the former:

and we have the prospect of substantial progress in moral improvement, working on lines laid down by their Divine Author."

When the author becomes constructive it is seen that he is fully impressed with the persistence and dominance of Law in the universe. Breach of law means sin; entails disease, misery, and punishment. No man can be made virtuous by Act of Parliament: no man can push his burden of sin on to the shoulders of another. The evils that beset every social system are such as these: Hatred, strife, dissimulation, dishonesty, intemperance, sloth, extravagance, pride, uncharitableness, injustice, lying, licentiousness. These are to be combated, not by idle denunciation on doctrinaire grounds, but by the vigorous cultivation of these contraries: Love, peace, sincerity, honesty, sobriety, industry, thrift, humility, charity, justice, truth, and chastity. Alas! for the Bill Sykes of our modern civilisation. He is a product of it: we are responsible for him: and we fear that it will be long before this counsel of perfection will reach down to his descendants, even under most favourable conditions of development.

What these ideal conditions should be is thus set forth: "Life is too valuable to be trifled with. Children from earliest years should be trained under sanatory rules of health and morals, so that they grow in their observance, and under their benign influence keep in safety, and thus avoid multitudinous diseases, immorality, and crime. The schoolmaster who taught the fundamental rules of health and morals would deserve well of mankind. . . . Pure blood, pure habits, pure thoughts, pure actions make centenarians: adulterations corrupt and destroy."

In the course of his work Mr. Calder shows abundant evidence of very wide reading. We have quotations from Cardinal Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, and from Thomas à Kempis's *Imitation of Christ*, along with others from Plato's *Republic* and Carlyle's *French Revolution*. Cardinal Manning finds himself in company with J. Stuart Mill; Archbishop Tait, and other prelates, with Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer, Rénan, Huxley, Matthew Arnold, John Morley, Max Müller, and S. Laing. We range from Cicero and Menander to Emerson and Huxley. And through all it is evident that our author quotes because he wants the writer's thought, not to make a vain display of worthless erudition, which indeed would be wholly alien from the transparent sincerity of his aim throughout.

VARIOUS additions to the list of Second-hand Books will be found in the proper advertisement column.

THE Hon. Roden Noel has just issued a new book entitled *A Sentimental Journey through Literature*. It is published by Kegan Paul and Co.

M. DONATO, the French mesmerist, has been prohibited from giving public performances at Amsterdam, the excuse made by the authorities being that they were "dangerous to health and to the public morals."

FATHER IGNATIUS, who has at different periods of his career witnessed remarkable spontaneous phenomena at his retreat, will hold services at the Westminster Town Hall, on Sundays, December 12th and 19th, at eleven and seven.

OUR excellent contemporary, the *Golden Gate*, says it has already secured 10,000 subscribers for its Special Christmas Number. The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of Chicago has a weekly circulation of 14,500 and the *Banner of Light* of Boston 13,000. When will our readers help to make our journal self-supporting by giving us a circulation like any one of our popular contemporaries?

THE *Glasgow Evening Citizen* says that some attention has been drawn to the remarkable prophecy made by a native of Tiree—where the crofter evictions have taken place—sixty years ago. Often during the sixty years has the story been repeated that a body of red-coated soldiers, with swords and bayonets glancing in the sunshine, was seen in a vision passing along the sands of Tragh Baugh, and during that period the seer, who is still alive, clung to the belief that his vision would some day be realised, and strangely enough it has been to the letter.

*For *Happiness*. By Alex. Calder, Officer of the Legion of Honour. Author of *The Man of the Future* and *The Coming Era*. Trübner and Co. 1886. Price 10s. 6d. May be obtained of the Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, Strand.

THE FUTURE OF "LIGHT."

At a meeting of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, held on Tuesday last, the position in regard to this journal was carefully considered. It being clear that the sum required for the complete scheme was not likely to be forthcoming, the Council deliberated as to the course to be pursued. It was unanimously decided that "LIGHT" should be maintained, and that the efforts of the Council should be concentrated on that purpose to the exclusion of other parts of their proposed scheme. It was considered that sufficient funds would be forthcoming to conduct the paper without payment to editor or manager. This, the Council very reluctantly felt, obliged them to make arrangements for unpaid service, since the present condition of affairs could no longer be maintained. Forced, therefore, by unavoidable circumstances to make a change, they decided, with the fullest recognition of the high value of the unremunerated services of the present editor (who is not able to continue to give his unpaid service), to appoint a Committee of Council, consisting of the President and Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, to conduct the paper; and another Committee, consisting of the Treasurer and Secretary, to supervise the finance. The Council, having thus finally settled all questions regarding the future of "LIGHT," feels justified in asking for funds necessary for this limited scheme. About £150 in addition to moneys already promised is needed.

W. STANTON-MOSES, M.A.,
President London Spiritualist Alliance.

SPECIAL FUND.

[AMOUNTS ALREADY RECEIVED OR PROMISED.]

	£	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
Mrs. Hennings	5	5	0
T. A. Amos	5	0	0
"M. A. (Oxon.)"	5	0	0
B. Baikie	5	0	0
E. Dawson Rogers	5	0	0
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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
"V."	5	0	0
A. A. Watts	5	0	0
Mrs. Basil Woodd	4	0	0
Mr. Charlton T. Speer	3	3	0
Dr. Wyld	3	0	0
F. W. Percival	3	0	0
Mrs. Percival	2	0	0
A. Friend	2	10	0
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R. C. R.	1	0	0
S. R.	1	0	0
Mrs. Garratt	1	0	0
R. Catling	0	10	6
Hon. Roden Noel	0	10	0

Subscriptions or promises should be sent promptly to Morell Theobald, 62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E. A form will be found on the front page.

THE PRESS AND SPIRITUALISM.

For some time past we have noticed a complete change in the tone of the Press in its relation to the movement, and the offer made to the London Spiritualist Alliance authorising them to invite a number of representatives of the Press to witness the manifestations of Mr. Eglinton has, in some measure, enabled us to note the change of attitude to which we allude. A few years ago the whole of the journals of this country were apparently determined to crush Spiritualism if they could, but as it progressed we presume many of the editors became converted to our views and have been less virulent in consequence. To-day—if we except the *Daily News*—there is not one respectable paper in the kingdom that does not accord Spiritualism at least a hearing, and in some cases it is openly defended.

The special representative of the *Borough of Lewisham Gazette* having been invited by Mr. Eglinton to a slate-writing séance, gave a lengthy report of two columns of what he witnessed, from which we extract the following :—

"Science has established, beyond the possibility of controversy, that cause and effect are correlated, however complex. The very complexity of the one or the other, however, occasions difficulty in tracing out the labyrinth or ascertaining the rationale. Labour in this respect has its reward, and repeated investigations often end in completely setting at rest any preconceived objection or prejudice. What is true of science, pure and simple, is also true, within certain limits, of metaphysics. Indeed, whether the nature of the subject be metaphysical or philosophical, superhuman or sensuous, spiritual or natural, there are ends consonant with beginnings, which, by dint of energy, may be found to be unquestionable correlatives. Religion has its basis on similar relationships, and thus furnishes a reason for its pursuit. If the existence of an intelligence, other than the human and ordinary kind, can be established beyond question, by whatever means, something will have been done to confirm, in a practical way, the continuance of life after death. It is, however, only necessary to demonstrate the existence of the intelligence in question, in order to set people thinking for themselves, and so draw their own conclusions from the phenomena witnessed."

This is not a bad introduction to what follows, and coming from a sceptic is valuable.

"Taking with me," he says, "from this neighbourhood, a shrewd, keen-sighted, practical gentleman friend—one whose judgment on business matters may be relied on—we both felt our way with every precaution. The séance took place in Mr. Eglinton's study, a small room with a large window some six feet wide, admitting, at three o'clock in the afternoon, when the sitting began, the full daylight—an excellent condition for scrutiny. I and my friend, both strangers to Mr. Eglinton, immediately took view of the situation, taking every possible precaution to ensure accurate and constant observation, in order to preclude the possibility of trickery."

Writing was obtained on the two slates brought to the séance by the reporter and his friend; questions unknown to Mr. Eglinton were pertinently answered; the number of a cheque belonging to one of the sitters was correctly written in the Brahma-lock slate; figures dictated by the sitters were written in the colours demanded; a long message was written between the slates, and many other phenomena occurred, to notice which would occupy too much of our space. As the result of the séance, the reporter concludes as follows :—

"Not one of the five slates, whether used singly or doubly, ever left our sight during the séance. I and my friend are both as convinced of the genuineness of the psychographical results as we are of our own existence. Entering Mr. Eglinton's house with a view to an impartial investigation of the phenomena, we left the house with a conviction of their reality and of the entire bona fides of Mr. Eglinton. After all, the difference between the ordinary interpretation of spiritual entities and that enforced by these phenomena, is only one of degree and not of kind."

The editor, in commenting upon his representative's report, says: "The phenomena here recorded are, to say

the least, startling." No doubt they are to those who take the trouble to investigate for themselves.

The subsequent week the *Borough of Lewisham Gazette* contained the following important letter from the Rev. G. R. Badenoch, LL.D. :—

"I have read with interest the statement by your correspondent of his interview with Mr. Eglinton. A friend of mine had often urged me to go and test this matter for myself. I over and over again declined, and laughed at the whole affair. At last I consented. I told Mr. Eglinton I disbelieved the whole matter, but my mind was open to conviction, and that I would judge according to my senses. I made every precaution, just as your correspondent did. I asked questions, and I received intelligent replies, and to the point. The speed of writing the answers was remarkable. As you know, the average number of words that a speaker utters on a platform is 120 words a minute. The writing, mark you, in long hand, was as rapid as that. There were different kinds of handwriting on the slates, indicating that there were different spirits replying to questions on different subjects. I came away thoroughly satisfied that the whole was genuine—no trickery—and that the statements of the Bible about the relation of the unseen world to us were confirmed. I do not scruple to give my name."

EASTERN FAKIRISM.

Mr. Fitzgerald Molloy, who is well-known to many of our readers as the author of the *Four Georges, &c., &c.*, has long taken an interest in spiritual and occult subjects. For several seasons he was a regular attendant at the séances of Captain James, and he was at one time, we believe, private secretary to Mr. S. C. Hall. The following account, therefore, of what are certainly inexplicable phenomena, written by Mr. Molloy in Algiers, and sent to the *St. James's Gazette*, will be read with interest.

"Last night an extraordinary religious ceremony was celebrated here by the Aissouli, a fraternity numbering among its members Arabs, Nubians, and Kabyles. The scene of the rite was the open court-yard of a house in the Arab quarter of the town. This court—entrance to which was obtained by a dark, narrow vestibule opening from the street—was paved with red tiles, surrounded by columns supporting horse-shoe-shaped arches, which in turn upheld an upper gallery, the pillars of which were connected by a stone balustrade breast-high. On this occasion the tiles were covered by matting, over which was spread a Persian carpet. In the centre stood a low table, on which a tall candle burnt; and on it also were an urn filled with burning coals, a naked sword, a spear, and the leaf of a prickly-pear. In an apartment looking on the court some venerable chiefs in turbans and snowy burnous—grave, dignified, silent—sat cross-legged on low couches. In the court, seated in like manner and forming a semi-circle round the table with its solitary light and grim weapons, were about twenty men, serene-eyed and mostly white-bearded. In the gallery above, veiled Moorish women looked down upon the scene. On a rope suspended from the columns swung an oil-lamp. The court-yard was crowded with dark-faced Arabs and Kabyles, who presented in the half-light a picture no words can paint.

"At a sign from the master of the ceremonies, who was seated in the semi-circle, those surrounding him began to beat tambours, the sound of which fell in rhythmic measure. To this was presently added a monotonous chant, rising and falling with equal cadence. Occasionally and suddenly there broke from the women above a wild cry, having nothing plaintive and little human in its tones, appealing like the notes of a trapped bird, uncanny as laughter heard in sleep, the while an Arab boy, seated by the urn, flung incense from time to time into the burning coals until a heavy fragrant smoke filled the air. When the beating of the tambours had continued for about fifteen minutes, an old man sprang from amongst the spectators into the semi-circle, with all the gestures of a maniac—jumping into the air, flinging his hands wildly about, and swaying his head to and fro in a manner that would have seemed grotesque had it been less painful to witness. By degrees, and with some difficulty, an attendant removed his turban, scarf, and short jacket. The tambours now beat more violently, the chant became more vigorous and the incense heavier than before. The old man's face was deathly pale, his eyes were glazed and fixed; his scattered grey hairs stood up as if from fright. His frantic movements gradually increased; and, when he had arrived at the crisis of his frenzy, the sword lying on the table was passed to the chiefs, who, blessing it, handed it back. The master of the ceremonies then presented it to the fanatic, who, seizing it with a frantic cry and waving it several times over his head, plunged (or seemed to plunge) it into his neck. The blade would not penetrate. Placing the handle of the sword against the shoulder of one near him, he leaned on the point; but with like effect. Having bared his waist, he then caught the sword at hilt and point, and struck his body with the edge of the blade several times, howling and gesticulating the while; but the skin seemed uninjured. He next struck the point upon his side; but no traces of blood were visible. Finally, he placed one foot upon the burning coals, holding it there for a couple of minutes, and then removing it apparently without injury. After this his gestures

became more frantic; he howled and jumped into the air, until he suddenly fell back into the arms of two men.

"Meanwhile two young men had, with piercing cries, jumped into the circle, and, each with his arm around the other's waist, swayed their heads backwards and forwards, gently at first, but with ever-increasing violence, until their chins touched their chests and the backs of their heads touched their backs. Their strong frames trembled in every limb, their dark faces became distorted. Nothing more terrible can be imagined than the appearance they presented. In due time one was given a red-hot shovel, which he received with frantic yells and gestures of delight, rubbed his fingers on it repeatedly and licked it again and again, crowing after each act with savage glee. The other was then presented with a spear, which he suddenly stuck into one eye; but with no apparent injury or pain. He then took the spear, and, resting it against his stomach, struck the handle with a large stone; but though the stone broke, the spear never penetrated beyond the skin. Presently these men fell down exhausted. Others, in the course of the evening, came forward in like manner. In the midst of his contortions one of them took a live scorpion, held it between his teeth, and then ate it with apparent relish. He likewise took a mouthful of the prickly-pear and chewed it; but no blood came from his mouth. This man and another who performed the same feat roared like beasts, and in taking mouthfuls of the prickly-pear thrust forward their heads and snapped at it instead of using their hands, which were free to convey it to their mouths. Later on, two others took long sharp needles, and, having heated them in the flame of the candle, stuck them in their tongues and cheeks.

"The actions I have mentioned were repeated by others; the spectators sitting tranquilly by—those in the semi-circle beating their tambours and chanting incessantly, the Arab boy burning incense, the women crying shrilly from above. Each of those taking part in the spectacle sprang suddenly from the ground where he had been sitting silently; each used the same gestures, and having performed his part sank helplessly to the ground. A few minutes served to restore them to their usual composed demeanour; they calmly took their places amongst the spectators, to all seeming neither injured nor fatigued. By the permission of an Arab chief, I was permitted to test the genuineness of the weapons and can vouch for the sharpness of the sword and spear. I know the scorpion was living, and that I could not handle the leaf of the prickly-pear."

VIA DOLOROSA.

I said to my Soul, "Art thou weary?"

I said to my Heart, "Art thou sad?"

From the ills and the shadows dreary,

From all that is sinful and bad;

From doubt that is born of hopes blighted,

From weakness the outcome of woe,

From cruellest pangs of the slighted,

From sufferings that none else do know;

From darkness devouring the daylight

In a world where nothing can last,

And the weak arm of faith to hell's might

Is but as a gleam overcast;

Where famishing hearts all around ye

Grow cold in the night of despair,

When offered a stone as a bounty

For the love they had hoped to share:

A world where want stalks amid plenty,

Whose gospel is selfishness—sham,

Whose God is a word vain and empty,

Or monster to torture and damn;

Where all that is fair as the flowers

Soon perish at breath of base man,

And the spirit that guides the hours

Knows nought beyond this life's brief span.

Would'st lay down thy burden of sorrow,

O Heart of hearts, cruelly prest?

Would'st murder the light of the morrow,

O Soul that is longing for rest?"

Then my Heart did swell within me, and my Soul did make reply:

"There is light among the shadows and that light can never die:

There is honour mid dishonour which will leaven by-and-by:

There are smiles of heav'nly sweetness between every frown and sigh:

There are moments in this earth-life that lift our thoughts on high:

There are moments, too, when mortals feel their "lost ones" hovering nigh:

Would I live through toil and trouble, question not, nor ask me 'Why?'

Look around and mark—nor heed me—*Truth must live eternally.*"

CAROLINE CORNER.

THE TEST OF SPIRITUALISM.

Our American contemporary, *Light for All*, prints a thoughtful paper, "read in the parlours of Hamilton Church, Oakland," on "The History and Philosophy of Spiritism." The writer is a firm believer in the truth of the phenomena of Spiritualism, as all, indeed, must be who have patiently and seriously inquired; but he gives a word of wise caution. He says:—

"Never since the days of Buddha has any system or idea so rapidly and so thoroughly traversed society and modified its thought as has this system of modern Spiritualism which the Rochester knockings introduced. It checked the stalwart march of materialism and at the same time forced free-thought upon its investigators. It remodelled philosophy by adding forgotten factors to the range of thought. It was democratic and simple in its operations, with little parade or pretentious initiations. It was overwhelmingly evidential, and the more so that the evidence was within reach of everyone wherever a fireside and a table existed. I first became acquainted with it in 1860, twelve years after its birth. My experiences would simply be a repetition of what hundreds of thousands would tell you, and probably what you have heard scores of times.

"But what are we to say of the spirit theory, what has it said to the millions who have questioned it? When I look back twenty years I feel pained and pleased; pained because I have not yet received the fulness of satisfaction I anticipated from it, and pleased that it has given indubitable evidence of an occult power seemingly superhuman and intelligent. It is very much like ancient spiritism in its operations and results. It starts us out on the spiritual pathway; we accept its guidance in full faith and hope; when suddenly we feel ourselves groping along bewildered and undecided as to which way to go, or we are plunging in the quagmires its wild fires have led us into. How many and painful are the reminiscences of hundreds! Fortunes have been squandered, valuable time misemployed, hunting shadows! Now it is a gold mine, or a diamond-making machine; then a Cocos island expedition or a brotherhood colony in some outlandish place or other; or human vanity takes the place of cupidity and pseudo philanthropy, and in its spiritual hot-house development how many thousands have dreamed of bursting upon an astonished world as Admirable Crichtons, with a universal knowledge at their command which they never acquired or merited; and, sadder yet, not only have the floodgates of cupidity and vanity been opened, but that of sensuousness has followed, disguised under the name of advanced thought, with sophistries and persuasions the most seductive, to the destruction of thousands of happy homes. I have often been reminded, when thinking of these things, of that forcible allegory, the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, into which He was led by the Spirit. If we must accept the spirit theory, and I know of no other in accord with the facts presented, it would seem that man's selfishness is tested to the utmost whenever he touches the things of the spirit. I leave you to judge whether the age has stood this test of its dispensation, and whether it is worthy of being awarded higher duties awaiting higher aspirations resulting from the high inspirations it has received.

"One thing more: I have never yet been able to identify the communicating intelligence. Others claim to have done this satisfactorily; I have not. I have to me satisfactory evidence that spiritual intelligence exists; but the what, the how, or the why, is to me very obscure. But the 'that' is very much. It proves my own spirit entity, that I belong to the great brotherhood of spirituality, that in me exist those wonderful powers common to spiritual beings, only needing the development which education and evolution will bring to pass in their own due time."

THE *Truthseeker* says: "The late Dr. W. B. Carpenter is often referred to as an opponent of Spiritualism. He may have been, in one sense; and yet many who quote him would do well to remember a passage in his *Principles of Physiology*, in which he says, 'It behoves those who rest on experience as the basis of all knowledge to beware of excluding all experience save their own.'"

"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 WREATH AND THE RING."*

Why this work should have been so entitled is not apparent. Perhaps it was not desired that it should be apparent, because, though purporting to be a story or novelette, it is, in fact, a sermon broken in to bits, with fancy narrative intervening.

Its design would seem to be the confusion of Spiritualists, members of the Church of England, especially clergymen, and other such heterodox persons, and their conversion to better courses, to wit, "the doctrines of the New Dispensation," by which, in this relation, is understood to be signified the tenets, theological and spiritualistic, of the Swedenborgian Society.

No cultivated Spiritualist, it may be premised, is insensible to the value of the writings of Swedenborg. He was indeed the first "Spiritualist," by which we mean the first person instructed in the laws regulating the spiritual world, or a portion of it, by means of conversation and communication with Spirits out of the flesh, and his experiences are priceless. But, in some respects, Spiritualists prefer his practice to his precepts; and while ever willing to learn from his experience what may illustrate, or be lacking in, their own, they, with all respect to him, decline to accept him as an infallible teacher, because his works afford—as do the works of all men—abundant evidence to rebut such a presumption.

We have said that this work is a sermon in the guise of a novel; a somewhat insidious attempt to administer a powder in a spoonful of jam, which may, it is to be feared, be resented by unsuspecting individuals who may have been tempted to purchase it for their entertainment and not for their instruction, beguiled by an ornate and secular exterior, and a seductive and sugary title. Like most theological productions, it will be found to be mainly of interest to those who agree with it. It seems admirably adapted to the use of young persons, preferably of the female sex,—for it contains "love" as well as "wisdom,"—of the Swedenborgian persuasion, to whom it affords polemical weapons of offence and defence for dealing with their young friends who may not have attained to the "New Dispensation."

But, in this respect, it must not, we think, by such be too absolutely relied upon. It recalls to the mind those valuable vocabularies and guides to conversation with which we are some of us accustomed to arm ourselves when bound on foreign travel, the dialogues in which would be precious indeed if only the foreign persons addressed could be counted upon to reply "as per book," which they will rarely be found sufficiently accommodating to do. So will it be, we imagine, with some of the classes of persons addressed by these arguments.

In its quality of a story or novelette it may be noted that the Spiritualists are represented by two gruesome old ladies comparable to the witches in *Macbeth*, if only there were three of them, and their "spirits" spoke the truth, which it is to be regretted they are far from doing.

There are also two clergymen—a rector and a curate—and other dummies. These personages, as may well be believed, have a very bad time of it indeed at the hands of the hero, Mr. Fred Freeling, "an estimable young man," as he is very handsomely, under the circumstances, described by one of them. This young gentleman keeps a "diary," from which copious extracts are provided for instruction and edification. He reads burial services of his own composition, in no wise abashed by the presence of the rector, inflicts discomfiture upon the curate at all points, and cuts him out with the young lady; argues with the medical man, puts lying "spirits" to the blush,—in so far as they can be supposed to be capable of it,—to the great disparagement of their mediums, the ancient sybils aforesaid, and sets to rights all and every body else, on all imaginable subjects, with an invariable superiority of argument rendering him absolutely insufferable. Much that the "estimable young man" says may be admitted to be true if not new, the property already of the much despised Spiritualists, earned before Mr. Fred Freeling was thought of, by their own observation and experience and held by them in common with, and not by derivation from, the Swedish seer, whom, as we have said, they will always be ready to venerate if not called upon to worship.

The following extract from the diary of the "estimable young man," in which "he discusses the spirits," will adequately possess our readers with the quality of the arguments with which he does so:—

"To drop into that miserable attitude of listening at the key-hole and peeping through the window blinds of the spiritual world

* *The Wreath and the Ring.* By James Spilling.

would be for them—that is, would-be certain inquirers—a misfortune. When the owner has locked his doors, and closed the shutters, and retired into the innermost chamber, it is wretchedly mean to seek to learn his secrets by playing the spy, even though we have to lower ourselves down the chimney. Yes. Especially after he has issued a manifesto declaring all that we can possibly want to know! And, after all, what can we learn? Nothing! Nay, are not reports gained by such treacherous means untrustworthy and misleading? . . .

“What new truth has Spiritualism yet announced? Its highest aim seems to be to discredit the *old*, it has not the genius to announce anything new. It has turned men away from the truth, and has supplanted religion in their minds by a devotion to the inanities of materialised spirits—to stories of the defiance of time, space, and matter by frolicsome ghosts, who abstract coins from locked drawers, pilfer a neighbour's fruits and plants to convey into closed darkened rooms, light fires and boil kettles for belated maid-servants, and perform such other fooleries.”

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. R. MASON.—See answer to J. L. Brayshaw.

C. GRAY (Birmingham).—Your communication is not of sufficient general interest to warrant its publication in these columns.

G. W. SANDERSON (Chicago, Ill.).—Your letter (which, by-the-by, did not bear any address) is a tissue of unwarrantable insinuations.

MRS. H. KENDALL.—We regret to say we have been quite unable to arrange a séance for you, and for the next three weeks or a month we shall have no further opportunity.

J. L. BRAYSHAW.—*Magic Unveiled*, which has been shelved for the past few months on account of press of work and other reasons, is now being completed. If you would prefer not to wait, your subscription can be returned.

C. JONES (Bayswater).—There is no *branch* of the London Spiritualist Alliance at Clifton, but there are Spiritualists resident in that town. Perhaps some of them may be disposed to help you in your inquiries into Spiritualism. [We commend this to our Clifton friends who, if disposed to render assistance, might kindly address us at 16, Craven-street.—Ed.]

T. JONES (Monmouth).—The numbers of “LIGHT” you require have been sent. The hieroglyphics you enclosed *may* be of genuine interest but as far as we can judge they are only the scrawls of an undeveloped medium. If you will look you will observe the characters are nearly all alike. You should persevere, and in time you would no doubt get intelligible communications.

K. S. RAMA RAU (Kurnool, India).—Your request has our attention. As regards experimental research we should advise you to commence with mesmerism. Gregory's *Animal Magnetism* is the best handbook on this subject. Our advertisement columns will give you the fullest information as to recent literature. *Present Day Problems* has been definitely withdrawn for the present.

E. T. SALE, J. B. GLEDSTANES, AND OTHERS.—We have now received the desired information with reference to “The White Cross Library.” This series of booklets is now issued fortnightly in Boston, Mass., and is “edited” by Mr. Prentice Mulford. The publication was commenced in May of the current year, and was continued monthly for six months, subsequently being issued fortnightly, *i.e.*, with the November number. Each number is complete in itself, and the price for one copy each of the fortnightly issue is (for England) 10s. per annum; for one copy monthly, 5s. per annum. The numbers already issued are as follows:—1. “You Travel When You Sleep.” 2. “Where You Travel When You Sleep.” 3. “The Process of Re-embodiment.” 4. “Re-embodiment Universal in Nature.” 5. “The Art of Forgetting.” 6. “How Thoughts are Born.” 7. “How to Keep Your Strength.” 8. “The Law of Success.” Orders may be sent through the Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, and the back numbers would probably arrive in a month from the date of order.

THE Spiritualists of Newcastle are exceedingly active just now, according to the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*. The Editor says:—“They have been growing almost silently, side by side with the other creeds of the city, and much more rapidly than some. Time was when the Spiritualists of Newcastle were held in open contempt. But the Spiritualists are a pushing class; by lectures and other means they attracted many to Weir's Court, and when driven from that place recently, owing to the site being wanted, they carried with them to the new rooms in Pilgrim-street a good muster roll, which has since swelled. The society has succeeded in collecting a capital library bearing on their belief. A healing class, at which it is stated cures by magnetism alone have been effected, is held every Sunday morning, and on the Sunday afternoon what is termed a lyceum is conducted in the Northumberland Hall. The last-named institution is for the Sunday education of children in the doctrines of the society. There are those who laugh at and ridicule the doings of the Spiritualists, but it is clear that our peculiar people have the strength of their convictions sufficiently developed to command attention and secure sympathy.”

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

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

Members of Council.

President:—W. STANTON MOSES, M.A.

Vice-Presidents { E. DAWSON ROGERS.
STANHOPE T. SPEER, M.D.
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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.)

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

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

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—“I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated ‘magnetic,’ ‘somnambulist,’ ‘mediumic,’ and others not yet explained by science to be ‘impossible,’ is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

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

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, F.R.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.”—*Traces 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

more narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which, even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil.”—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

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

CONJURERS AND PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not 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 nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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