

# Light:

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

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The following words of Robert Dale Owen, written as far back as February 28th, 1860, to the *Boston Investigator*, in reply to some criticism of *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, not more ignorant, or less bitter than such criticisms were and are, of books dealing with the subjects of Spiritualism, are worth introducing to a generation that has not seen them. No writer wrote with more cautious restraint, with a nicer discrimination, and with more courtesy and good feeling than Mr. R. D. Owen. His letter throws an interesting light upon his early attitude to the subject of Spiritualism, and as such I reproduce it:—

*To the Editor of the Investigator (Boston, U.S.A.).*

SIR,—It is not worth anyone's while to take much trouble about my consistency. In the first place, it is a matter of little consequence; for it is much more important to test the truth or falsehood of a man's opinions than to inquire whether he has already held them. In the second place, my consistency will take care of itself. To those whose good opinion is worth having it will readily suggest itself that an honest man can decide a case only in accordance with the evidence before him at the time. If, for instance, a judge has to determine the right of a certain claimant to a piece of property, to establish which right six witnesses are brought forward, he may, after hearing the evidence, give judgment against the plaintiff. Yet if, upon a new trial, six other witnesses appear, testifying to additional facts, he must be a fool, or worse, who should hold that judge bound, under penalty of being set down as a knave, to decide in the second case exactly as he did in the first.

There are, indeed, some opinions which a good man cannot change; for example, his opinion of bigotry. Of all the mental vices which act as stumbling blocks in the way of human civilisation, this is one of the most mischievous. It is a vice both of the head and the heart. It is a vice springing from that self-conceit, which has been said, and truly said, to be more hopeless than folly itself. And it is a vice of a thousand phases. It may and does assume the form of political bigotry, of scientific bigotry, of religious bigotry, of irreligious bigotry, and many others. Religious bigotry is probably the most common of its types, but several of the others are quite as malignant.

This last fact is overlooked by many. Bigotry consists, not in believing too much or too little, but in believing in its own infallibility. It makes a Pope of itself, and issues its bulls from its own Vatican of presumption. The bull may be one that sets up certain articles as imperative, and anathematizes all who dissent from these; or it may be a manifesto denying all religion and anathematizing all religionists. Its actual character is not changed by its particular object. He who would clip or stretch the creed of his neighbour on the Procrustean bed of his own belief or disbelief, is an invader of good will upon earth, and an enemy of free inquiry.

Against this spirit of bigotry, in all its Protean shapes, I have ever warred; and while I live I shall continue the war-

fare. Whatever else is true or false, this, at least, is incontrovertible, that man has a right to his honest opinions, undisturbed by persecution or denunciation, in word or deed.

Some of your correspondents have yet to learn that abuse proves nothing except the lack of good sense and good feeling in the abuser. No great truth was ever established, no great error was ever exploded, by a weapon so worthless. It breaks in the hand, and pierces the flesh of him who employs it.

There are certain duties which we all owe our neighbours, among them the obligation not to impute a bad intention when a good one can be fairly presumed. He who violates such a duty not only commits a grave moral wrong, but interposes, as far as in him lies, an obstacle in the path of human progress. An Inquisitor, sitting in judgment on motives that are inscrutable to him, he mischievously diverts men's minds from the dispassionate examination of principles, to the angry condemnation of him who holds them. There are few things we can do that tend to injure the cause of truth more deeply than this.

A book which I have recently written, entitled *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, has attracted some notice in your columns. I claim to have that work judged on its merits or demerits, not by the pictures which others may choose to draw of it. If it cannot stand the test of the most rigid examination, let it fall.

Those who may peruse it will find that it is written strictly according to the inductive method, that best of all Bacon's gifts to posterity; the surest enemy of superstition, the surest ally of truth. They will discover also, that while it brings up a long list of (alleged) facts, most of them collected by myself, and all of them supported by an array of testimony which it is idle to dismiss with a *pooch-pooch*, I have suggested, rather than declared, the results. Whatever other faults the book may have, no candid man will accuse it of dogmatism.

Its numerous narratives are adduced in support of the hypothesis, that there have been in past ages, and still are, occasional interferences from another world in this; not miraculous interferences, but phenomena governed by natural laws as unchanging as those which determine the motions of the planets. To my own mind the evidence collected is sufficient to prove this. To others it may appear insufficient. So be it. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

It is idle for a man to protest his own sincerity. But to some of your readers who have perused my earlier works, I desire to say a few words.

Have you discovered, in my writings, any traces of moral cowardice? Do they afford indications of any desire to abandon truth, let her lead whither she will? Do they not afford proof, that I have carefully studied what may be called the infidel side of the question; and that I am familiar with the weightiest arguments which can be adduced in proof that no sufficient evidence touching any state of existence other than this can be found?

Then, if I am to be judged, as I think I may fairly claim to be, by my antecedents, I am, in connection with such inquiries, neither cowardly nor ignorant. And, in that case, is it unreasonable for me to ask, that you will either suspend judgment, if you have no time or opportunity to examine the *Footfalls*, or else that you will read the book and then let me speak for myself!

I ask this the rather because the question at issue is an important one; a question of a very practical nature, fraught with much influence on human character, involving many points which bear directly both on the improvement and happiness of mankind.

I should much regret, therefore, for their own sakes as well as mine, if any of my old friends or readers should prejudge me,

taking their opinions of my last work from idle tirades or senseless invective. Even if my book should fail to convince them that ultramundane agencies sometimes operate here, it may persuade them that no former work of its author bears evidence of more laborious or more conscientious research than this. They will not be surprised to find that many of its opinions are far from being orthodox; but they *may* be surprised, after what they have heard of it, to discover that it is not a work on what, in modern phrase, is called Spiritualism, being an examination of spontaneous phenomena, not of those that are evoked, treating not of table-moving, mediums, trance-speakers, and the like, but of occurrences and appearances that present themselves neither provoked nor expected by human beings, like the rainbow or the aurora borealis, or the wind that bloweth where it listeth, uncontrolled by the wishes or agency of man.—I am, your obedient servant,

New York.

ROBERT DALE OWEN.

February 28th, 1860.

This same writer contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* (November, 1874) an interesting notice of some experiences of his own in Italy. One of these (reproduced in the November number of *Facts*) is instructive.

August 23rd, 1856, we had a sitting at the house of an English physician, resident in Naples, all present being English or American, yet familiar with the Italian language.

The table was boisterous and unmanageable, tilting violently from side to side. At the word of command it waltzed, beat time to the polka, went into the next room, returned, and would hardly remain still. Unable to get any communication, we asked: "Is there anyone in the circle who ought to go out?"

Answer: "Sophia Iggulden."

She left the table accordingly, and, as soon as she did so, the manifestations were quiet.

Mr. Dale Owen, I believe, considered the phenomena of table-moving, rapping, and the like, to be "electrical and magnetic." No instrument, even the most delicate, has traced any electrical disturbance during a séance; such as can be referred, I mean, to the phenomena themselves. Magnetic, in a certain sense, I imagine that they are, *i.e.*, that the magnetic or psychical force of medium and circle provide the means used by the communicating Intelligences. But as to these Intelligences: is it not they who give "character" to the proceedings? Why should the presence of Sophia Iggulden cause the table to be boisterous, and to behave in such a demonstrative fashion? An excess of psychic force in her? Hardly. I have seen, in a large circle where two mediums were sitting opposite to each other, the manifestations so circumscribed and confined to the neighbourhood of one of them that a chalk line drawn diagonally across the table would have almost accurately defined the area of silence and the area of psychical activity. When I was first brought into personal contact with these physical phenomena I sat in vain with two powerful mediums: nothing occurred. As soon as I left the room phenomena were produced readily. My return again stopped them: my absence was hailed with a perfect salvo of applausive raps. Then, as though I had caught the infection, the "power" manifested itself in my own presence. To suppose that all this is the action of a blind force is to confuse the instrument with the agent.

Another of Mr. Dale Owen's early experiences:—

July 9th, 1857: Again our own circle. We had ascertained by repeated experiments that, while the table could spell out any word which I thought of, it never, in any instance, seemed able to read a word in Mrs. Owen's mind, and, if urged to persevere in the attempt, would reply: "All dark," or, "No light," or some similar expression.

On one occasion she thought of the word *soap*, and it declared as usual that it could see nothing. Then Mrs. Owen said: "I'll go into my bedchamber and touch what I thought of." She did so, the room being quite dark; then returned and asked: "What did I touch?"

Answer: "No——"

Mrs. Owen: "It's going to spell 'no light.'"

I said: "Let us make sure of it. Please go on,"—and it spelled "s e." I urged it in vain to finish the word. I could get nothing more.

"Is that all?" I asked. "Yes." "Does it mean you cannot see?" "No." Then first it occurred to me that it had spelled the word "Nose."

When I suggested this, Mrs. Owen, after reflecting a little, burst into a hearty laugh, and asked: "What did I touch it with?"

Answer: "Soap."

Thereupon she explained to us that when she entered the dark room, groping about, she had laid her hands on a cake of scented soap, and smelled it, and that she distinctly recollected (but not until the table recalled the fact) that she *did* touch her nose with it. After telling us this, she relapsed into thoughtful gravity. "*The thing*," she exclaimed at last, "must have followed me in the dark, and seen everything I did."

Yes, the "thing" followed her, and was in no way hampered by the darkness. The presence or absence of the mysterious faculty known as "mediumship" accounts, I imagine, for the ease with which Mr. Dale Owen's mind was seen into, and the darkness which surrounded his wife's.

I have not often seen a more compact illustration of the extreme rapidity with which we dream than the following, which, originally published more than thirty years ago, is reproduced in the *Spiritual Offering* (December 11th), whence I extract it. I confess that I find it hard to understand the process by which this almost instantaneous impression on the brain of a number of successive acts and states—the sick-room, the death, the mourners, "a day or two in the family," the funeral, the sermon, the procession of ten or twelve miles—this seems beyond explanation to us, constituted as we now are. The past, and the states that constituted it, successive in time, and various in place, seem all present to the dreamer at what is practically the same time. No time and no space in the world of spirit. This is the narrative:—

"One of the clearest and best illustrations of the almost utter annihilation of time and space in dreams from incentive to conclusion, which has come under our observation, is that of a writer in the *National Magazine*, upwards of thirty years ago. This writer says: 'On a very warm afternoon I was sitting in a somewhat lazy posture, listening to a friend who was reading the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. As he commenced the obituary of a deceased preacher, I became drowsy, and although I felt considerably interested in the article, soon fell asleep and dreamed.

"I thought I was standing by the bedside of the sick man, watching the progress of his disease, while a number of anxious friends sat in different parts of the room, or hung quietly over the bed. In the course of what seemed to me five or six hours, death came and released the sufferer, amid the sobbings and prayers of afflicted relatives. I remained with the family a day or two, until the funeral. The assemblage on that occasion was large, and the services were long and impressive. The funeral sermon, which was preached in the house, appeared to me to be nearly an hour in length. I listened to it with great interest and shall never forget the solemn impression it made upon my mind. After this, a procession of carriages was formed, and the deceased preacher was borne to a distance of ten or twelve miles to his grave. He was buried at the side of a large plain, old-fashioned brick church which stood near the corner of two streets. Here the funeral service was read, and after seeing the grave filled up, the company slowly departed. I lingered behind to indulge in the serious reflections that had been excited in me by the mournful occasion. I very well recollect standing in front of the church, at some little distance, and remarking to myself that, in case a monument should be erected over the remains, it would not look well unless there should also be one on the other side of the church to correspond with it. After this reflection I turned to leave the spot, and suddenly awoke. You may judge of my surprise when I found my friend still reading the obituary, and that he had read but two lines of it during my sleep.'

"Had the narrator of this remarkable dream made himself

acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the deceased minister's funeral, it is not altogether unlikely that they would have proved to be the prototype of his dream. Equally strange things have happened, and are happening, every day."

The *Croydon Chronicle* of Christmas Day contained some reflections so entirely on the lines of the leading article of last week in "LIGHT," that I am struck by the coincidence. The writer moralises over the spectacle that Europe presents at the close of this year, and on the contrast between the promised millennium under the reign of the Prince of Peace, when men were to learn war no more, and the stern reality—"several millions of Christian men, armed to the teeth, and furnished with all kinds of murderous weapons of destruction, only waiting the word of command to rush at each other's throats in deadly conflict." The standing army of Russia is 614,000 in Europe alone, besides a large force in Asia. Germany puts into the field 437,000, and is bent on increasing her army at once. France has a force of 471,000, and is openly waiting her opportunity to fly at Germany and recover her lost provinces. It is, indeed, an ominous prospect, and one that may well give us pause when we vaunt ourselves of our Christianity. Whatever else it has done for us—and the blessings we owe it are not to be too lightly thought of—it has not yet brought the reign of Peace, nor inaugurated the epoch of the true Brotherhood of Man.

"M.A. (Oxon.)"

#### CLAIRVOYANT PREMONITION OF DEATH.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* prints the following ghost story, which we transfer to our columns for preservation and verification, if possible. It reads more like the creation of the brain of Hugh Conway or Wilkie Collins than like a narrative of sober fact. But "truth is stranger than fiction," and the question of the exact truth about this story, if ascertained, will throw an interesting light upon the manufacture and dressing of such stories. It is no secret that the Society for Psychical Research has found many a promising story melt away under investigation. And this particular account, not received at first-hand by the correspondent who sends it for publication, bears marks of manipulation which seem plain, though they may be due only to editorial dressing. Such as it is the story is told thus. We hope to trace and report upon it hereafter.

Remarking that the ghosts of *Phantasms of the Living* are "simple apparitions," the correspondent of the *Pall Mall* proceeds:—

The following story may interest your readers, as being less easy of explanation. I do not profess to have heard the story at first-hand, but it was told by Mr. Butler to Lady Bloombfield, and therefore, we imagine, might easily be traced to its source. Mr. Butler (not the Doctor, but quite a different person), when a boy at Harrow, contracted a most intimate friendship with another lad. They worked, they walked, they played together; and in order still more solemnly to emphasise their friendship they one day cut a hole each in the other's arm, and signed a paper each in the other's blood, binding the one that died first to appear to the survivor in person at the moment of his decease. After leaving Harrow, however, the lads saw but little of each other. Their lives lay far apart; the friend went out to India, Mr. Butler to college, and then to the English bar. An eager correspondence was maintained at first, but as years rolled on it slackened, and the friendship gradually died away, as boyish friendships will. One wintry day, Mr. Butler, oppressed by business, worried and overworked, felt the necessity for a breath of country air, and, cold as it was, determined to run down to that comfortable little inn, the Wheatsheaf (by Virginia Water). That evening he was sitting in the parlour, the better to enjoy his pipe, when he was startled by the face of a man looking in at the window. He did not know the face, and yet it seemed to have a mysterious attraction for him. He got up presently, under pretence of relighting the pipe, and passed before the window to examine the face more closely. It reminded him of

something, he knew not what, of some one. Yes, it suddenly flashed across his mind that was the face, not of the boy he had known so well, but of a man such as that boy might have grown into, such as he probably would be now (though Mr. Butler had not seen him for years). Disturbed by this sudden re-awakening of old recollections, Mr. Butler spoke to the landlord. "There's a man looking into the window," said he. "Impossible, sir," was the reply. "That window only looks into the court, and the gate of that was shut an hour ago." The face had disappeared: Mr. Butler, unsatisfied, resumed his seat, but could not rest—a strange haunting sense of uneasiness took possession of him; once more he rose to his feet. "It is stifling in here," he said. "I must go out; I cannot breathe!" "You had better not, sir," said the landlord, as he opened the door; "there's a keen east wind blowing, and you'll catch your death of cold."

Now, the Wheatsheaf is close to the lake, and Mr. Butler, stepping over the threshold, stood looking out across the water. A dark and gloomy night—and as he gazed the darkness seemed to grow and gather itself together, deepening into a sort of focus which appeared to him like the mouth of a tunnel, and as he watched there came out of the tunnel a train, all brilliantly lighted from within by lamps, and as the train approached he saw in the centre carriage two men engaged in a mortal struggle. One had the other by the throat, and was forcing him backward towards the window. The man thus attacked was resisting with all his might, when suddenly the door of the carriage flew open, and he was hurled violently to the ground, falling at Mr. Butler's feet. Then, bending over the man, Mr. Butler looked into his face, and, behold! it was the same face he had seen gazing in at the window, and which had affected him so strangely only a few moments before! And again, even as he looked, the face had melted into air, the lighted train, the tunnel, the body of the victim, all had disappeared, and he stood alone there by the water's edge, in the deep, dark wintry night. With a cry of horror he staggered back into the house, and in answer to the landlord's anxious inquiries said: "I am ill—evidently in a high state of fever—delirious. It won't do for me to be laid up here. I must get back to town as fast as I can." And, late as it was, he went off to the station, and back by the last train to London.

The next morning Mr. Butler awoke, somewhat refreshed by his excursion, in spite of the unpleasant associations connected therewith. He found awaiting him some interesting work, into which he plunged, and the incidents of the past night were forgotten. Two days later, however, they were recalled to his recollection when, walking in Piccadilly, he saw, on the other side of the way, a gentleman whom he had known slightly in former days as being the brother of his schoolboy friend. Mr. Butler crossed over to him at once. "What news of Arthur?" he inquired. "Bad news," said the other, gravely. "Dead?" said Mr. Butler. A melancholy shake of the head was the only reply. "Killed? thrown out of a railway train?" continued he, excitedly. "Too true," returned the brother, regarding him with undisguised astonishment. "But how on earth did you know? We only received the telegram from India this morning!"

MRS. LYNN LINTON'S new novel, *Paston Carew, Millionaire and Miser*, adds one more to the list of recent books in which Spiritualistic experiences find a place. The old miser is most powerfully drawn. He gloats over his gold, pursues his revenge with the tenacity of a bloodhound, and consults planchette on all the great crises of his life. Of course she betrays him, and even his "Tarot" leads him wrong. He leans on a broken reed, and meets his ignominious fate without one redeeming trait in his character save his pathetic love for his only child. The book deals with a repulsive subject in an admirable manner.

MRS. KINGSFORD.—We are requested to state that Mrs. Kingsford's letter which appeared in our last issue was written, not to the editor of this journal, but to Mr. Eglinton, at his request, for the information of a foreign friend, in the course of last summer. Mrs. Kingsford is not now living in Kensington, having only taken a place there for the season, but has gone abroad for her health, which has for some months been in a very critical state.

THE LONDON OCCULT LODGE and Association for Spiritual Inquiry, Regent Hotel, 31, Marylebone-road.—On Sunday next, at eleven, Mr. Hopcroft will hold a séance. In the evening, at seven, Mr. Sinnett will deliver an address on "Re-incarnation." As Mr. Sinnett is the best known exponent of this doctrine, all interested, whether in opposition or otherwise, should attend. On the following Sunday morning Mr. Price will commence a series of mesmeric experiments.—F. W. READ, Secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

### "THE DORSET POET."

There has lately died at his rectory of Winterbourne, Came, the Rev. William Barnes, B.D., long known as "the Dorset Poet," many of his poems being written in the vernacular. After his death there were very laudatory leading articles in both the *Times* and *Daily Telegraph* concerning his verse, which is voluminous, and the county of Dorset has held, lately, a meeting at Dorchester, headed by Bishop Wordsworth, of Salisbury, with respect to a memorial about to be erected to record his name as a poet of high order. His verses often touch upon ghost lore. Here is a specimen, taken from lines on

#### THE GIRT\* WOLD HOUSE O' MOSSY STWONE.

But if, in Heaven, souls be free  
To come back here ; or there can be  
An e'thly pleâce to meàke 'em come  
To zee it, vrom a better whome,—  
Then what's a-twold us mid† be right,  
That still, at dead o' tongueless night,  
Their gauzy sheàpes do come an' glide  
By vootways o' their youthvul pride,  
And while the trees do stan' that grow'd  
Vor them, or walls or steps they know'd,  
Do bide in pleâce, they'll always come  
To look upon their e'thly hwome.  
Zoo, I would always let alwone  
The girt wold house o' mossy stwone :  
I woulden pull a wing o'n down,  
To meàke their speechless sheàdes to frown.  
Vor when our souls, mid wonce become  
Lik theirs, all bodiless ! an' dumb,  
How good to think that we mid vind  
Zome thought vrom them we left behind ;  
An' that zome love mid still unite  
The hearts o' blood wi' souls o' light,  
Zoo, if 'twere mine, I'd let alwone  
The girt wold house o' mossy stwone.

The very next deals with

#### A WITCH.

There's thik† wold hag, Moll Brown, look zee, jus' past !  
I wish the ugly, sly wold witch  
Would tumble over into ditch ;  
I woulden pull her out not very fast.  
No, no. I don't think she's a bit belied,  
No, she's a witch, aye, Molly's evil-eyed.  
Vor I do know o' many a withren blight  
A-cast on vo'k by Molley's mutter'd spite ;  
She did, woone time, a dreadvel deal o' harm  
To Varmers Gruffs' vo'k, down at Lower Farm.  
Vor there, woone day, they happened to offend her,  
An' not a little to their sorrow,  
Because they woulden gi'e or lend her  
Zome'hat she come to bag or borrow ;  
An' zoo, they soon began to vind  
That she'd agone an' left behind  
Her evil wish that had such pow'r,  
That she did meàke their milk and eàle turn zour,  
An' addle all the aggs their vowls did lay ;  
They coulden vetch the butter in the churn,  
An' all the cheese begun to turn  
All back ageän to curds an' whey ;  
The little pigs, a-runnin' wi' the zow,  
Did zicken, zomehow, noobody know'd how,  
An' vell, an' turn'd their snouts toward the sky,  
An' only gi'ed woone little grunt, and die ;  
An' all the little ducks an' chicken  
Wer death-struck out in yard a-pickin'  
Their bits o' food, an' vell upon their head,  
An' flapp'd their little wings an' drapp'd down dead.  
They coulden vat their calves, they woulden thrive ;  
They coulden seàve their lambs alive ;  
Their sheep wer all a-coath'd, or gi'ed no wool ;  
The hosses vell away to skin an' bwones,  
An' got so weak they coulden pull  
A half-a-peck of stwones :

The dog got dead-alive an' drowsy,  
The cat vell sick an' woulden mousy ;  
An' every time the vo'k went up to bed,  
They were a-hag-rod \* till they wer half dead.  
They us'd to keep her out o' house, 'tis true,  
A-naillin' up at door a hosse's shoe ;  
An' I've a heàrd the varmer's wife did try  
To dawk a needle or a pin  
In drough her wold hard wither'd skin,  
An' draw her blood, a comèn by :  
But she could never vetch a drap,  
Vor pins would ply an' needles snap  
Ageän her skin ; an' that, in coo'se,  
Did meàke the hag bewitch 'em woo'se.

Do'set.

### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

#### SPECIAL FUND.

The following subscriptions represent the total amount promised in response to the special appeal made for support. The full scheme which the Council was desirous to carry out has been of necessity curtailed, and in a measure abandoned, by reason of lack of funds. But even the expenses incident to the conduct of this journal require a larger amount than has yet been promised. It is probable that some may have deferred till the New Year what they intend to give, not wishing to burden the Old Year with an additional expense. If this be so we beg to ask such intending subscribers to communicate with us as soon as is convenient to them. This fund, we may remind our readers, is quite independent of the London Spiritualist Alliance subscription.—EDITORS OF "LIGHT."

#### [AMOUNTS ALREADY RECEIVED OR PROMISED.]

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Hon. Percy Wyndham	20	0	0
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Richard Pearce	5	0	0
William Tebb	5	0	0
Stuart Menteth	5	0	0
Lady Caithness	5	0	0
P. H. Nind	5	0	0
N. Fabyan Dawe	5	0	0
Mrs. Basil Woodd	4	0	0
Charlton T. Speer	3	3	0
Dr. Wyld	3	0	0
F. W. Percival	3	0	0
Mrs. Percival	2	0	0
Mrs. Procter	3	0	0
Thomas Pole	3	0	0
A. K. and E. M.	3	0	0
Major General Earle	3	0	0
A Friend	2	10	0
(Second Donation)			
G. P. Serocold	2	2	0
Anon	2	2	0
D. G. FitzGerald	2	0	0
Colonel and Mrs. Lean (per W. Eglinton)	2	0	0
Mrs. Cowley	2	0	0
Mrs. Maltby	2	0	0
Mrs. Filby	2	0	0
Jas. Dewar	2	0	0
A. M. L.	2	0	0
Hon. Mrs. H. Pigott-Carleton	2	0	0
Miss Withall	2	0	0
Miss H. Withall	2	0	0
Mrs. Ringwood	2	0	0
F.	2	0	0
Hon. Auberon Herbert	2	0	0

\* Great.

† Might.

‡ This.

\* Hagridden in sleep.

	£	s.	d.
Lady Mount Temple ... ..	2	0	0
S. Dixon ... ..	2	0	0
Mrs. Parrick ... ..	1	10	0
Horace Carter ... ..	1	1	0
Mrs. James ... ..	1	1	0
Geo. Davis ... ..	1	1	0
G. D. Haughton ... ..	1	1	0
K. E. N. ... ..	1	1	0
Mrs. Sainsbury ... ..	1	1	0
Arthur Cole ... ..	1	1	0
Mrs. E. Carter ... ..	1	1	0
C. A. P. ... ..	1	1	0
Miss Everard ... ..	1	1	0
"Lucis Amicus" ... ..	1	1	0
C. E. J. ... ..	1	1	0
Mrs. James ... ..	1	1	0
J. N. Gledstones ... ..	1	1	0
Miss Maltby ... ..	1	0	0
Mrs. Cottell ... ..	1	0	0
Mrs. Darling ... ..	1	0	0
Hy. Carter ... ..	1	0	0
A. Glendinning ... ..	1	0	0
E. T. Sale ... ..	1	0	0
F. W. Thurstan, M.A. ... ..	1	0	0
P. P. ... ..	1	0	0
R. C. R. ... ..	1	0	0
S. R. ... ..	1	0	0
Mrs. Garratt ... ..	1	0	0
E. S. W. ... ..	1	0	0
Mrs. Senior ... ..	1	0	0
R. D. S. ... ..	1	0	0
Miss Phillips ... ..	1	0	0
R. D. S. ... ..	1	0	0
Mrs. Mackinnon ... ..	1	0	0
F. Tennyson ... ..	1	0	0
G. C. Frames ... ..	1	0	0
Rev. Maxwell H. Close ... ..	1	0	0
R. Catling ... ..	0	10	6
Hon. Roden Noel ... ..	0	10	0
Mrs. Godwin ... ..	0	10	0
Thomas Bell ... ..	0	10	0
E. B. S. ... ..	0	10	0
Thomas Tayler ... ..	0	5	0
F. M. ... ..	0	5	0

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### THREE SEANCES WITH MR. EGLINTON.

(From the French. TRANSLATED BY "V.")

*First Séance, 1st November, 1886.* At Mr. Eglinton's house, 10 a.m.; ordinary conditions. The experiments chosen by me. Slates used brought by me. Weather foggy.

Experiment (a).—I took, at hazard, from the bookshelves, containing about 200 volumes, a little volume entitled *British Aviary*. Upon one of my slates I wrote: "Page 78, line 4, word 6, colour red." The book was placed upon the slate with two morsels of chalk, one grey, the other red. The whole was then held under the table by the medium, his left hand being held in both of mine. After from ten to twelve minutes the answer obtained was as follows: "Page 78 is not numbered; there are not six words on line four." Then, for the first time, I found that the book only contained seventy-six pages, followed by several pages of advertisements, *not numbered*; the fourth line, printed in very small characters, only contained five words. The answer to my question was written in grey chalk, not red as I had requested.

(b) A similar experiment, made with the same book. I wrote upon the slate:—"Page 20; line 3; the first word of the line grey; the second red; the third pink; the fourth green." The slate was placed as before under the table, the medium's thumb being visible and his other hand held in both mine. We waited five minutes without results, at the end of which I suggested that perhaps we should obtain something if we put the book *upon* the table. Mr. Eglinton asked verbally if we should do so, and three raps, signifying "yes," were given. I then placed the volume, which I enveloped in a cloth, upon the table, after which, at the medium's request, I assisted him in holding the slate pressed against the under side of the table. At the end of two minutes the answer was given, the words being written in the order of the colours requested. The words are:—"Ply—them—with—egg." I opened the book at page twenty, and at line three we read the words as given above.

(c) I asked on the slate for news of a deceased friend. Answer: "We have no more power now, good-bye."

*Second Séance, November 4th, 10 a.m.* Weather very bad.

I had been unwell the two preceding days. I brought with me two pairs of slates, tied together by myself. The first contained questions similar to those given on the previous occasion; the second a question relating to a deceased person.

The first pair of slates was placed *upon* the table, our four hands resting upon it; we waited for half-an-hour, but nothing took place. The second pair was then put upon the table; after twenty minutes, no results. We then tried a common experiment. An ordinary slate, having a question written upon it by me was held *under* the table. After ten minutes of waiting—nothing!

The séance was completely blank, though Mr. Eglinton said several times that he felt there was "power."

*Third Séance, November 6th, at 11.30 a.m.* Weather rainy. Mr. John S. Farmer present. I brought with me six common school slates, upon one of which I had written a question relative to a deceased person, and upon another questions similar to those at my first experience. I took my place at the table between Mr. Farmer on my right and Mr. Eglinton on my left.

(a) The first slate was held by the medium under the table, we holding our hands so as to form the chain. After waiting ten minutes we obtained the following answer: "X. (the name of my deceased friend) is not here." The spelling of the name was correct, but the accent and the dots over the i's were not given.

(b) We then took the second slate upon which I had written these words before leaving home: "Would you please write page 17, line 8; the first word yellow, the second green, the third brown." At my request Mr. Farmer took a volume at random from the book case and wrapped it in a newspaper. He then placed it upon the slate, which was held under the table by Mr. Eglinton, and after waiting several minutes the order to "uncover the volume" was written upon the slate.

Mr. Farmer unwrapped the book out of Mr. Eglinton's sight and mine, and then replaced it upon the slate which I was holding in the meantime, and which the medium then took from my hand; neither he nor I having up to this time seen the book; and shortly afterwards words to this effect were written: "It must go up." To comply with this wish we placed the volume upon the table, and covered it with our hands, while the medium continued to hold the slates with the different coloured chalks. Some illegible words then appeared on the slate; they were washed off, the slate was replaced under the table, and then was written in capital letters the word "Tie!"

In obedience to this order (a caprice difficult to understand), Mr. Farmer took the volume, and having tied it across, he placed it upon the slate, when immediately we heard the sound of chalks writing, and when the operation was concluded we found the three words, "as—an—associate," written in a firm and legible hand one above the other in the three colours which had been asked for, and running parallel with one side of the frame of the slate. Parallel with another side was written, not less correctly, another message.

Mr. Farmer now left us, and Mr. Eglinton saying that the "power" still continued strong, we continued our experiments alone.

I had taken a halfpenny from my pocket, had marked it beneath the table (in such a position that I could not see it), and some time before had placed it with a bit of blue chalk in Mr. Eglinton's Brahma-locked slate. The slate had been closed, our arms resting upon it, and the key remained on the table; but up to this time nothing took place. Mr. Farmer having gone, I opened it to ascertain that the contents were there as before, then having relocked it, I placed it upon the table, and we rested our hands upon it, but nothing was heard. Mr. Eglinton then placed upon one of my slates a morsel of pencil and covered it with a small wooden lid, which happened to be at hand; then holding the whole under the table, the top of the lid in question being pressed against the under side, we heard almost immediately the sound of writing under the lid, and read on the slate the words: "We will try." Having then placed our hands upon the locked slate, which had remained the whole time upon the table, we heard the sound of writing. I unlocked it and found written inside, with the blue pencil, the date 1885, which was that upon the marked halfpenny. The medium appearing exhausted, we terminated the séance. The foregoing account is copied from my notes, taken immediately after these séances.

(Signed) ARTHUR ENGEL

(Ancien membre des Ecoles Françaises, d'Athènes et de Rome).  
29, Rue Marignan, Paris.

MR. MILNER STEPHEN, to whose marvellous cures we referred in our last issue, has taken rooms at 17, Orchard-street, Portman-square, W.

A DARK HOROSCOPE.—"T. W." writes:—"In giving dates for the horoscope of Louis XVII. of France, in "LIGHT" of December 25th, in the seventeenth line, October 8th, 1789, should be October 6th. This would not have been important except that, in seeking a horoscope, exact dates, even if possible to the minute, are of primal importance."

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

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#### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

#### TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We have recently sent out a number of unpaid accounts, asking for a prompt remittance. In a great many cases there has been no response, and we mention the matter here in order to urge our friends to remit at once and thus save us the trouble of repeated applications.

## Light:

Edited by "M.A. (OXON.," and E. DAWSON ROGERS.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8th, 1887.

#### SPIRITUALISM AND RELIGION.

Amongst the difficulties to be encountered by those whose duty it is to deal publicly with Spiritualism, in its varied phases, one of the most conspicuous is that which arises from its inseparable relationship with Religion, in the popular aspect of the word. Advancing us, as it does, even in its most elementary forms, a step nearer to the causes more immediately influencing the conduct of life; it elevates us, in so doing, into a more sensible proximity to the great First Cause of such causes, and as a consequence, to a more serious consideration than before, of our relations with it and of the laws regulating the higher inward life which represents it.

Those who have pursued Spiritualism or have permitted it to guide and govern them, beyond the region of external phenomena, will have found this, in some shape or other, to represent to them their next stage of progress. To some the earlier stages of Spiritualism have been the means of communicating the infinite comfort of confirming Revelation already accepted, or if not absolutely accepted, regarded by them as, if possible, deserving of acceptance; and even perhaps of discovering to them aspects of religious truth, more spiritual and interior, underlying, vitalising—even though in some outer forms destroying—the shapes of that belief hitherto adequately represented by Christian formulas. For Spiritualism is nothing if it do not spiritualise; and spiritualisation can only be effected at the expense of the form, or outer representative manifestation.

To others whose natures are different, and who have not yet been led to formulate, or to seek to do so, any distinct belief, more or less realised, founded on Revelation, or even to desire to look in that direction for it, Spiritualism has operated for comfort in quite a different way, affording them not spiritualisation but "matter," or material, out of which some system of thought on religious subjects has been developed, if usually contracted by the limitations of the individual nature, consonant with, and adequate to, the immediate requirements of that individualism. To some negative natures it may, for a time, we think only, have even intensified negation, for it is an infrangible law of spirit that "like attracts like."

To recognise the religious aspects of Spiritualism is, as we have said, at once our duty and difficulty. Our duty—because, without it, there is no spiritual progress or movement possible. It is all but a "tinkling cymbal"—a sound without sense. Our difficulty,—because, in entry upon it, unending conflict and confusion of reasonable diversities of opinion and planes of spiritual revelation, and unreasonable concurrences of prejudice and intolerance, have to be encountered at every turn.

But this duty we must fulfil,—this difficulty we must seek to deal with. In doing so from time to time, as occasion serves or necessity enforces, we must claim from those to whom we address ourselves the same effort to divest the mind of individual prejudice, the same freedom for the expression of individual judgment, the same liberality and candour of spirit, which, with due regard to the necessities of occasion, on which we must claim to exercise our own discretion, we shall seek ever to apply to the honest and reasonable opinions and feelings of others.

#### FAITH AND WORKS.

Spiritualism has as many sides as human nature, of which it is indeed the lining. It has its fads and its phantasies, its wisdom and its follies, its writers and its readers (the former, we are sometimes inclined to think, judging by results, the most numerous); its prophets—sometimes false; its martyrs—sometimes spurious; its ministers of religion,—sometimes self-ordained (we once knew a bishop amongst us—self-consecrated); and even its mendicants. To speak harshly or even disrespectfully of the latter, would be indelicate in us, not to say indecent; subsisting as we are compelled for the present to do on the contributions of the benevolent. A writer of begging letters is not to be too rigidly set down as an impostor, for when a gentleman says he needs money, he may usually be credited with speaking the truth. We mean, therefore, no disparagement, on this score, to a correspondent who informs us, (we do not regard this information as exclusive,) with much detail upon which we must not expatiate, that he has long been a Spiritualist and has derived from this belief a confidence in the beneficence of Providence which he feels is beginning to be seriously sapped by the apparent indifference of the higher powers to his misfortunes. This deplorable condition of things, tending, he says, to his giving up Spiritualism and becoming agnostic, he suggests may be removed by some manifestation confirmatory and consolatory,—taking a pecuniary form,—through our mediumship. His growing agnosticism in this direction has, we fear, extended to us; the replies of our "spirits" are negative and afford us not a "rap"; and we can only seek to preserve a brother Spiritualist from the errors of infidelity, by responding to his own suggestion, by another—given to us, we believe, under control,—viz., that the higher intelligences are sometimes more easily propitiated, and satisfactory results more surely secured, by work than by faith.

#### CONVERSAZIONE OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

—At the next meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, to be held at the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall (Regent-street entrance), on January 28th, at seven o'clock, a paper will be read by Mr. C. C. Massey.

MR. MILNER STEPHEN.—"Afterwards, in New Zealand, I fell in with a brother of Sir Alfred's, Mr. Milner Stephen, also a very noticeable person. In him the hereditary spiritual tendencies had drifted into technical Spiritualism. He professed, and evidently believed himself, to have acquired the apostolic power of working miracles. He was willing to cure you of any disorder whatever, by some simple methods, which he was ready also to teach you to exercise if you cared to learn them—not, of course, gratuitously. I suppose he thought that those who ministered at the altar must live by the altar. I did not see any instance of his power, but his look and manner were lively and clever."—*Oceana*, by J. A. FROUDE.

"MEMORABLE RELATIONS."

(FROM THE UNPUBLISHED PAPERS OF THE LATE  
MRS. HOWITT WATTS.)

I asked Mrs. P. when first she had become conscious of spirit-seeing. She replied that from earliest childhood she had had strange feelings and experiences. She was born in an ancient house on the borders of Wales. Her father was of an old Welsh family, her mother Scotch, and from them she probably inherits the gift of spirit-seeing. Her very earliest recollection was of one day being carried in her grandmother's arms in the garden. All was sunny and beautiful around her, but suddenly she became conscious of the most heart-rending home-sickness. She looked around her—all looked so poor, so wretched, so dreary! It was *not* her home where she was; she was conscious of her real home being so different, so glorious, so tender and beautiful—but where was it? Oh, she must seek, must find it—what should she do! So dreadful was the vague feeling of desolation in the child's soul that she flung herself with violence suddenly upon her grandmother's shoulder and burst into the most violent cries and sobs. This sense of desolation—of the searching for the *lost beautiful home*, more or less never henceforth left her. It would return again and again, throughout her childhood especially, with the keenest grief. Once in the midst of a most beautiful wood the feeling came upon her with such intensity that she sat down and wept as though her heart would break, and looking around her again, all appeared so poor and common that it seemed to her she was descended from some great glory into a very mean estate. No one understood her feelings. She was considered a very ill-tempered child. These odd moods and fits of weeping were called her "tantrums." Her parents, as well as her nurses, were all severe to her, and her life was one of punishment. Years after the first bitter revelation of her "lost home" had come to her, she asked her grandmother if she could recall having carried her in her arms as a little child into the garden, and of her there being seized with a great horror. "Yes, indeed," returned the grandmother. "You gave me a terrible fright; I certainly thought you were gone mad."

I should tell you that the ancient home on the Welsh borders contained one room which bore the reputation of being haunted. Rustlings were heard in it and the sound of footsteps and even voices. At the hours of one to three at night these sounds were most usually heard. Then there would seem to be heard a great rush through the room and a passage leading to it. It was in this very room that, most unwisely, this delicately organised child was made to sleep. The contact with this haunted place only increased and developed the tendency to dreams in the child. At times she found herself looking at figures and scenes which suddenly appeared and disappeared, but all in a vague way until one particular night when she was about twelve years old, and shortly before it had been decided to send her to a boarding school at some distance. On this night she became aware of a sort of double existence. She was asleep in her bed and yet she also saw herself sitting up beside a fire in her bedroom. (There was in reality no fire in the grate, nevertheless, there appeared to be one there.) She sat very sad, cowering over the fire, when suddenly the door of the room opened, and in swept the figure of a very beautiful but sad young lady. She was dressed in a long sweeping gown of rich brown silk, made in an antique fashion which exposed her beautiful neck and bosom, over which fell wild masses of beautiful dark hair. In her hands she bore a golden wand which shone with a weird light. This beautiful lady came up to the melancholy child at the fire-side and said, "I am commissioned to tell you that you are a very bad little girl and that unless you repent of your sins you shall surely die. This is what I am commissioned to tell you. Nevertheless, it may be that God will forgive you and let you live if you repent of all your sins and ask Him to forgive you. But as it is at present you will die in eleven weeks from this time." Saying this the lady in the brown sweeping dress went out of the room. Mrs. Philips says that she then came to herself as she lay in her bed and found herself weeping most violently. She continued to pray and weep for a very long time. Before the eleven weeks, however, had expired she was sent away to a boarding school. Precisely on the arrival of the eleven weeks from the date of her dream or vision, she was taken suddenly ill—apparently from typhus fever, and the doctors declared that nothing whatsoever could be done for the

child, she was in so very desperate a condition. She was delirious, and everybody except one old lady quite gave her up. This lady kept constantly praying that the little girl's life might be spared all through her illness. Mixing up with the delirium did she hear the kind old lady's voice praying aloud for her; hour after hour, still that voice was heard. She had frightful visions as of evil spirits contending for her, and of a white spirit (whom she believed was the lady whom she had seen in the brown dress) keeping them away from her. At length she by slow degrees recovered, to the surprise of all her attendants and doctors.

But she was, as it were, on her recovery, only still more drawn into union with the world of spirits. Her melancholy still clung to her, and she was specially conscious of the earth-bound.

When about eighteen years of age she was living again at home in the weird old mansion on the borders of Wales. She slept near to the haunted room, but the chamber itself was closed and rarely used, for its evil character clung to it as ever. A young friend of hers was come to see her, and on the afternoon of her arrival Mrs. P. said to this friend, "Do not dress for the evening, we shall not do so." They separated, and each went to her bedroom, where they met shortly afterwards. The guest said, "Why, you *did* change your dress after all, and now you have taken it off again!" "What do you mean?" asked Mrs. P. "You came to my bedroom," returned the young girl, "in a lovely rich trailing brown silk dress, with your hair hanging over your shoulders. You opened the door, looked in at me and then went away again! What *did* you mean?" Mrs. P. at once perceived that this must have been the ghost-lady. The haunted room lay between the bedrooms of the young girls. After a while she explained how it really was to her friend. And the two young ladies, being very courageous, determined to sit in the haunted room at midnight, when the noises were usually heard. This they did for three nights, having their needlework and a book to read aloud and lights burning. For two nights nothing at all occurred. But just as they were going away on the third night, saying the whole thing was sheer imagination, first one and then the other felt a cold air blowing, and an awful feeling creep over them, whilst gradually an airy form, grey and semi-transparent, formed itself before their eyes, and the stranger felt a box given her with some violence on her ear. They were thankful to get out of the room; later on they were told that the blow on the young lady's cheek came from the evil spirit with whom the lady in brown was generally seen—she had protected the young lady from further molestation. The story was that a brother had murdered his sister some two or three centuries previously, in that room, by strangling her with her golden girdle. The sister was often seen there, as if trying to raise the spirit of her murderer. She was a sort of guardian spirit of the family. This is only one of many wonderful experiences of Mrs. P. This last summer she and her lovely daughter were on the coast of Ireland (I forget where), but there was a most lovely solitary bay where they at first began to go out sailing in a fisherman's boat. The whole coast was said to be haunted, and many wrecks had happened there. Mrs. P. used to hear spirit voices calling to her out of the depths of the water to come down to them—"Oh, come! Oh, come! Oh, come and comfort us!" The most mournful voices used to sing unceasingly—"Come! come! come!" These pleading voices never ceased, and so strange was the influence that Mrs. P. felt herself almost drawn out of the boat down into the waves to them. After two experiences of this mysterious attraction as of siren voices, she never dared trust herself again on the water in the bay. May not *Lorelei* on the Rhine have been something similar?

THE SPIRITUALISTS OF NEWCASTLE seem to be as lively as ever. We learn from the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* of December 28th, that "a select circle consisting only of members of the Society and their wives," has recently been held in honour of Mr. Everest, a well-known Spiritualist of Brooklyn, U.S.A., who is now on a visit to Newcastle. The medium was placed behind a curtain suspended across the corner of the room, and the observers sat in a double horse-shoe circle round the cabinet. Under these conditions several figures came out into the room, one of which was recognised by Mr. Everest as a friend of his own. The light throughout the séance is described as being "all that could be desired," and the figures were "distinctly seen."

## THE DEATH CALL.

The following narrative is vouched for by Herr Gustav Sellen, who fought as an officer in Greece and witnessed the occurrence which we are about to reproduce in his own words :—

The little band, who were eye-witnesses of the phenomena about to be recorded, consisted at first of five members, two Prussians, a Dane, a Mecklenburger and a Pole : the Bavarian officer, Herr von W., had joined us later. Between the date of his joining us and the beginning of my story, he had become endeared to us all from his genial temperament, open-heartedness, and the distinguished gallantry he had had occasion to display on the day of his arrival. At the time my story begins we were on our way to a neighbouring cloister, there to cement our friendship yet a little closer with a few draughts of invigorating wine. We arrived in a rollicking humour at the cloister, paid for and received the wine, which was placed in an arbour at our request. The Pole, to whom we accorded the honour of being expertest in all that pertains to the art of imbibing, was elected cupbearer. Eagerly each one took his seat and tendered his glass. The Bavarian, possibly still a little shy among his comparatively new companions, was the last who did so. Scarce had the rich juice foamed and sparkled in his outstretched glass when, without being touched, it flew asunder with a shrill and piercing sound. We all felt uneasy, and Herr von W.'s brow clouded : we had just, however, begun to dismiss the event from our minds as an accident, and a fresh glass had been ordered, when one of the Prussians said, "Let us hope it is no evil augury." "Shame !" I retorted, "what can it augur but this, that nobody else can drink out of this glass henceforth for ever !"

By diligent drinking we succeeded in chasing away the unpleasant impression which those few words had only served to deepen ; and when, a few days afterwards, we had a brush with the Turks, out of which W. came unscathed, after performing prodigies of valour, the belief that the bursting glass had been a bad omen was finally expelled.

Not long afterwards we met again in a half-dismantled house, and were about to drink to the prosperity of the cause to which our life-blood had been consecrated, when the door of our room flew suddenly wide open, a violent blow being previously dealt at the wooden handle. Half startled, half dismayed, we set down our glasses, grasped sword and shining brand, and searched the house. But nought could we discover, though there was not a nook or a cranny which could have served as a hiding-place. Again, however, as our glasses clashed anew, with a violent blow on the handle the door flew open, and again we hurried out and ransacked every corner. In vain !

In the mirth of the convivial circle the spook was forgotten. "To the prosperous issue of the intended assault on Naples," cried the Pole raising his glass on high, but, as in the case of the former toast, again the door flew open, accompanied by a blow. Once more we ransacked high and low in search of the unwelcome intruder ; once more our search was vain.

"Look you, now, it shall not fly open any more," said Herr von W., ever the blithest among us ; and with that he bound the handle so fast to the staple that the sharpest sword could hardly have severed the knot at a blow. Emptying our glasses we conquered our repugnance to another toast, and the Mecklenburger raised his glass "to the happy return of us all to the dear Fatherland."

That same instant, as if it would shatter the door, a blow descended on the handle, and we all distinctly heard a hollow voice call the Bavarian's name.

Three days afterwards the storming of Naples was attempted. We were repulsed ; the enterprise cost us but few men, but among these was Herr von W., struck by three bullets simultaneously ; he was mortally wounded in the very first assault, and breathed his last in my arms a few seconds afterwards.—*Licht mehr Licht.*

*The Silence of Dean Maitland* is a novel respecting which various opinions will be held. The portrait of a man who has allowed a friend to suffer for a sin that he himself has committed, has kept silence while that friend wore out his twenty years of penal servitude, has been all the time an exemplary husband, father, parish priest, and finally a cathedral dignitary, and who finally drops dead in his pulpit, openly confessing his sins :—such a portrait seems a little highly coloured. And though the story is told with force and vividness of diction, it is melodramatic and improbable. As a study however, of psychological analysis it will interest Spiritualists.

## 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.]

## Re-incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Form is perishable. What takes form has a beginning ; what has had a beginning, may last for many milliards of years, but must have an end. Consequently, also the human personality may live after death for many centuries, but it cannot be eternal. It once entered time and space : eternal can only be that which has no time nor space.

Pantheism now says : That which is beyond space and time, God, or the Absolute, or the Unconscious, is all one ; the *principium individuationis* rests only within the phenomenal world of space and time. Mysticism says : True, the Absolute, which is the Divine Essence of the phenomenal world, is all one ; but still its nature is development in the individual. It is the Divine Essence which develops in the process of evolution, but this primeval force of the universe is itself individual in every form which it develops, and it retains its individuality in the evolution of every entity through countless changes of form, mineral, plant, animal, and man, rising more or less rapidly, according to circumstances. How is it that these individual manifestations of the All-One differ from each other ? How is it that this Divine Essence, which is but One, can at the same time be (not only in appearance, but in essence) an infinite number of entities ? This is just the mystery of Mysticism. To human understanding this is an impossibility—a *contradictio in adjecto*, a contradiction in terms. Nevertheless it is, and has always been, the belief of Mysticism since the beginning of humanity. This is now also the fundamental principle of all true Spiritualism, and it is at the same time the only theory which can really explain all the difficulties of the evolution theory of modern science.

To the Pantheist there may be a phenomenal world beyond our senses and our earthly life ; but there can be no immortality for him, as he recognises no individual existence beyond the phenomenal world. Spiritualism, however, asserts the everlasting life of the individual spirit. Every Spiritualist, therefore, like every Mystic, ought to acknowledge that there must be something within man which to us is formless, but is the true essence of our personality, and which is eternal although our personality, having begun with our birth, must some day after death fade away as a form and change into another one, as all forms do.

This is the true doctrine of Re-incarnation. It is a thorough misunderstanding to think that personalities are regularly reincarnated. Of course not. There can never exist several personalities of one individual at the same time. Any living person is but the outward representation of an individuality, manifested in the regular course of nature, while a materialised form at a séance is a temporary representation of a transcendental entity. Whether in abnormal cases any individualities have the power to represent two or more different personalities at the same time is not here the question to be discussed. But for anyone who can reason, it is certain that any personality, like any other action of force in the phenomenal world, must work itself out some day, be that day ever so far off. According to Pantheism, the entity is then gone and lost for ever. According to Mysticism, however, there remain some shapeless effects which retain the entity and which will, in the regular course of evolution, cause it to act again in some new shape within this phenomenal world, in exact accordance with the qualities of those mystic effects that remain. The destiny of man during each of his phenomenal lives is to gain the best possible effects for that eternal individuality of Divine Essence within him.

In No. 308 of "LIGHT" (November 27th, 1886, p. 575), "V." asks for what reasons does the Re-incarnation of a spiritual essence take place repeatedly. If the process of evolution tends to the attainment of highest universal perfection by any individual, this evolution can only take place within the phenomenal world, for it is just this world which is to be brought to perfection. The development, therefore, which we may notice in those spirits that manifest themselves mediumistically, is evidently but a spiritualisation of those transcendental remainders of their personalities, that is to say, a development or dissolution of their personal parts into spirit which is (for us, more or less) universal. In order, however, to attain full per-

fection of existence, the process of spiritualisation must be fulfilled within this so-called material world; therefore, Re-incarnation is necessary. This has also been shown more explicitly by "Lily" in No. 309 (of December 4th, p. 584). This development to perfection cannot be accomplished better in the other world; it cannot be accomplished there at all.

D. J. U. HÜBBE SCHLEIDEN,  
Editor of the *Sphinx*.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Being much interested in the correspondence in your pages on the subject of Re-incarnation, I venture to send a spirit-writing which bears on the question.

"Nizada" seems to me to have well-expressed the principles of attraction to Re-incarnation.

To be re-born an English gentleman, or lady of culture, in the nineteenth century, would be, it must be remembered, a distinct progress and a higher experience to (say) a poor Hebrew slave formerly in Egyptian bondage, or even to a Christian martyr of Roman history.

"O."

[COPY.]

Death is but the re-opening of those sluice gates which during mortal life have dammed up the soul in the narrow confines of the body. It is the re-absorption to the skies of a dewdrop fallen upon earth. Why argue for a future existence, when your life is death, and what you call death is but the awakening to life? Your present life is but a lapse and silence in the eternal song: *one phase* of the wondrous existence through which every spirit passes: *one of the many abodes* it will visit for awhile; *one* resting place, whence you may take an upward spring far, far onwards, or may descend to a miserable fall, by idly lulling yourself to the sleep of death-in-life; *one* jewel on a string of varied stones; *one sunbeam*, broken through the prism of mortality!

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Referring to Mr. G. D. Haughton's letters against Re-incarnation, I would call attention to a point of view that every Spiritualist should call his, viz., that the *normal* life is not this earth-existence, but that beyond the grave.

Just as during earth-life we call our waking state the normal part of it, and not that part during which we sleep, so with respect to our transcendental life, this earthly existence in the fetters of the flesh cannot be called normal.

As during sleep we mostly forget the actualities of our waking state as well as our past sleeps and dreams, so while living on earth we necessarily forget not only the spiritual part of our life, but also our previous bodily existences. And as, when awaking in the morning, we recollect all the previous days of our life, so after death we shall see again all our past lives.

Just as the forgetfulness in sleep of the miseries of earth-life cannot be but called a blessing, and as the recollection of these facts in life would disturb our sleep, so we should be thankful to be left during this life in ignorance of what we were and did in previous existences. But though we forget the circumstances of our past lives, we profit from them by what our higher self has acquired in science and virtue.

It occurs very seldom that we remember while dreaming the facts of our waking state, and this only in a confused manner. So some people may bring with them recollections of their former existences, and those only of an intuitional character.

But as there are hypnotic states in which, while the body is deeply asleep, the liberated soul remembers facts that have been obliterated from the memory of the waking man, so there may be, and surely are, persons who have risen to such an elevated condition that they, even while in the flesh, clearly perceive their previous lives on earth and in the spirit, their material body throwing no more a veil on their transcendental memory.

I repeat, that if we would consider our spiritual existence as the *normal* condition and our earth-life only as a passing state, necessary in the plan of our *all-sided* development, then the idea of Re-incarnation would lose much of the repulsiveness it has for some, who are used to look on earth-life as their normal condition.

As the years passed in schools of different degrees are but few compared with the rest of a long life, so the time passed on earth is but very short in comparison to the period of spiritual existence till the next Re-incarnation. And as a man who has passed but through a single class of a school cannot pretend to any but a very poor education, so a man with the knowledge and

experience of only a single earth-life behind him, would hardly have passed even a very rudimentary state.

Each school has several forms, and, to have got a finished education, man must not only pass through all forms of a primary school, but through several others, each of superior degree; so man must pass through all races and stages of mankind from those of a black savage to those of the highest civilisation, to be able not only to rise still higher in the scale of being, but also to help on those of his mates that have lagged on the road.

If we consider *all* we are able to learn in a single lifetime, *all* the foibles, vices and passions (or parts of such) we are able to throw off, and *all* the virtues (or parts of such) we can acquire instead—if we consider, I say, *the total sum of all this* and compare it with our own ideal of earthly perfection (which necessarily is much below the absolute ideal of perfection we are called upon to attain), we must confess that the attainment even of our own ideal would necessitate a vast number of human incarnations. If we consider, moreover, that Nature never jumps, but moves gradually in the direction of least resistance, according to the *lex parcimonie*, man making no exception to the general rule, then we must come to the conclusion that the progress of humanity in general, and of each individual especially, has to undergo the same law of gradual evolution, which will not let him leave this earth-round and will force him to return to it so long as there is anything for him yet to attain.

There are people that do not find such a prospect a very pleasant one. But this is only because of the false view they have formed of happiness. So long as we seek happiness in the outward conditions and surroundings of material life, so long will our expectations of happiness be frustrated; and the more one has bound himself to such a view, the more one will feel the weight of one's error.

But as soon as man seeks the *true* happiness, that which flows from within, and does not depend either on worldly position, or on money matters, or on friendship, or hope of remuneration for the little good one may have done—so soon will he become independent of the clutches of material happiness and have instead gained that one which nobody can confer on him, nor rob him of. Human life, looked at from this point, has as little fearfulness in itself as the school for a good pupil, and anybody able to realise it from this side will not be afraid to recommence it, as much for his proper progress as for a mission to his fellow-pilgrims.

Human life on earth has a fourfold aim, viz.:—(1) To redeem the faults of our previous lives—the wearing off of conditions that have not attained the aim. (2) To try our good intentions formed before the new incarnation—preparation of new conditions to try the force of our good purposes. (3) Continuance of our intellectual and moral training—human evolution. (4) A mission for the general good—spiritual evolution.

As our physical world hinges on the immutable law of equilibrium, so the spiritual world hinges on that of justice (spiritual equilibrium), and there is no Divine love thinkable without the strictest justice being its base. And not only must everybody pay his debts to the uttermost farthing, but he must repay the debt in the same currency in which it had been incurred. Therefore, every sin of earth-life must be repaid by voluntary or involuntary suffering in the present or any future human existence.

In every life all these four aims are partly fulfilled, the one more, the other less; but until the complete fourfold aim in its fulness is reached, life must be repeated, and as long as life on earth has yet left a secret to be learned, or a virtue to be acquired, so long shall we have to return to it, willingly or not. As a pupil that does his duty with a good will and good cheer is the better for it, so should man consciously and cheerfully work at his task, in order the sooner to be released from the bonds of this material existence.

Odessa, December 10-22, 1886.

GUSTAV ZORN, F.T.S.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—After your editorial note on this subject, I cannot, of course, reply at length to the objections raised in your last issue. I will only ask for a word in reply to Mr. Haughton.

"Is the moral condition of mankind . . . after these countless Re-incarnations, sublime and magnificent in the extreme?" asks this correspondent. Well, I was not aware that anyone had maintained that it is. I fail also to compre-

hend the bearing of this argument on the question before us. Certainly, no one at all conversant with Theosophy and the doctrine of cycles would have advanced such a plea. There is no *necessary* advance for the individual. We are not automata; we enjoy within certain limits the power of deciding between motives—good and evil. There is no necessarily continuous ascent either for the race or the individual. Karmic causes must exhaust themselves. If human Egos deliberately foster certain evil tendencies, they must work them out and face the attendant misery. It is only the scientific law of causation applied to moral phenomena. I think also that if Mr. Haughton had remembered that Eastern adepts teach the doctrine of the cyclic progression and degeneration of races—a doctrine borne out everywhere by history and natural phenomena—he would scarcely have opposed the fact of the present undoubted low grade of human morality to believers in Re-incarnation generally.

Mr. Haughton's next few remarks are scarcely to the point. If he will look back to my first letter he will see that I never maintained that all memory of a past life is *obliterated* at death. The essence of it is absorbed into the "transcendental self." At the close of its migrations through matter, all its countless objective lives will be revealed to the perfected individuality.

Then follows a somewhat hasty statement, "Who believe in the myriad ante-natal existences? . . . a mere handful among tens of millions embrace this doctrine." *A mere handful!* What? the hundreds of millions of Buddhists, Hindus, numerous Spiritualists and Theosophists in France, the United States, Spain, &c., &c.! This last assertion I can only attribute to a *lapsus calami*. Mr. Haughton should temper his hasty generalisations with the logic of *facts*. Suppose, however, it were true that Re-incarnationists counted as nothing, what bearing would such a fact have on a truth of nature? On Mr. Haughton's principles Darwin was an empty theorist when he first startled the civilised world with his *Origin of Species*, and Galileo a perfect imbecile to give out his astronomical discoveries during the consensus of contemporary opinion against the reality of such. Surely orthodoxy is not, as has been said, "numerical superiority." It is a pity that such arguments should be used in a free-thinking, liberal age like this.

Mr. Haughton harps again on the possibility of the self-delusion of some mystics as to their alleged remembrances of former lives. Doubtless this is the explanation in many cases, but in the first place few Re-incarnationists ever adduce such evidence in support of their views, and secondly no amount of delusion in some cases can affect the reality of the phenomenon in others. As a rule we cannot recall these memories, because the *organic brain is only the register of the experiences of this life*. But an adept, who has during life centred his consciousness in the "transcendental subject," works under totally different conditions.

Swedenborg was a great seer, but he often writes vaguely, is unscientific, and, though an advanced mystic, was certainly an incoherent thinker. Why the fact that *he* (!) never supported Re-incarnation is an argument against its reality passes my comprehension. Kant, again, though a great philosopher, worked on purely speculative lines. Kant held that the God-Hypothesis was incapable of proof. I suppose Mr. Haughton would hardly follow him here! Not a worshipper of authority myself, I am indifferent to all assertions except those based on logical grounds. If Mr. Haughton, however, asks for "authority," Plato is as heavy as the sword of Brennus when cast into the Re-incarnationist scale.—Yours truly,

E. D. FAWCETT.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having, by my few remarks in "LIGHT" of November 27th, restarted the topic of Re-incarnation, and having read the several letters on the subject which have appeared in subsequent numbers, I feel impelled to add a few more words, giving the reasons which I entertain for totally disbelieving in the theory. I am very matter-of-fact and unimaginative, and therefore always prefer to found my belief on what are, to my mind, proved to be *facts*, rather than on theories, however plausible and enticing they may be, though that of Re-incarnation seems to me to be precisely the reverse. Since I became a Spiritualist, I have read a very large number of books on Spiritualism, many of them containing a variety of communications from spirits who have passed away from earth, and in none of these have I ever found it mentioned that the communicating spirit has lived more than one life. I should perhaps except Kardec's *Livre des Esprits*, the communications

in which (as I before remarked) seem to bear less evidence of authenticity than those of any other book I have read, coming as they do from a variety of unknown sources, and collected in a promiscuous manner by the compiler, Allan Kardec, who was not himself a medium.\*

I myself am privileged to hold very close communion with dear friends who have gone before me to the spirit land, and who have repeatedly given me undeniable proofs of their identity. My principal "guide"—whom I will call "V."—has given me a great deal of information about the life in the Spheres, and, if within his power, always answers such questions on transcendental matters as I put to him. Last September, wishing to know his opinion on this subject, I asked him one day what he thought of Re-incarnation, and received in writing the answer that he had never met with a spirit who had been re-incarnated, and that he did not believe there was such a thing as Re-incarnation. He has now been three years in spirit-life! Does it not seem extraordinary, too, that among the thousands of messages received through different mediums, such, for instance, as those in direct writing through Mr. Eglington, no spirit is ever described as being *missing*, which he must be if re-incarnated, nor have I ever read of such a case?

Your correspondent, "Lily," seems very earnestly to desire to convert others to what she considers a glorious belief; and if any are *happy* in the belief that they will have to live another or several more lives in this world of sin and sorrow, it is perhaps well they should continue in it. But one reason she gives for arguing in favour of Re-incarnation struck me with astonishment when I read it, being so utterly contrary to the views of Spiritualists generally concerning the next life. She says: "Picture to yourself the lowest type of bushman, and then say if the spirit of that man can possibly be fitted for immediate life as the angel with angels." No, indeed! Nor do I believe any human being living on the earth at the present time is fitted to become an "angel," or to live with angels, not even if he has passed through a thousand re-incarnations! I neither expect to become an "angel" when I die, nor at any future time; but I hope, as those I love have done, to enter into fresh spheres of work and progress, unretarded by the frailties of the mortal body, till, after perhaps ages have rolled by, I with them am received into the celestial spheres, which I am told no mortal (save, perhaps, One) has ever been pure enough to go to at once on leaving this earthly life.

I asked my guide once if he could tell me anything about angels, and he wrote simply that he had never seen an angel, but only occasionally spirits from the celestial spheres, who sometimes, he says, "visit our spheres and help us to progress." It is true that he speaks of my child, who has grown up in the spirit land, as having blossomed into an "angel" of beauty and love, and she herself, describing in artless language her entrance into spirit life, says "a bright angel took me by the hand," but these I look upon as mere figures of speech, such as we use on earth.

In another paragraph "Lily" writes, "Can an infant in its infancy be a Herschell or a Humboldt?" Certainly not *in its infancy*, but I see no more reason for doubting that the infant may possess the germs of talents, which suitable education and training may develop, till he becomes in adult life a celebrated scientist, than I do that there may be pleasant pastures in store for even the poor despised "bushman" when his spirit leaves the mortal body, and where he may so progress as to be fit for a higher and more refined state of existence. Believing, as I firmly do, in the doctrines inculcated by the Founder of the Christian faith (though I may not hold with all the dogmas engrafted on that faith by the priesthood in subsequent generations), it seems to me *just* possible that the lowly bushman *may* possess qualities perhaps more fitted to ensure him a home in some better world than this, than if he were to pass through several re-incarnations, and rise even to the intellectual elevation of (say) a Vogt or a Büchner; for the advance of civilisation and progress in intellectual attainments do not unfortunately always serve to foster those lowly virtues which we are told are precious in the sight of God, Who sees not as man does.

The most direct assertion of the remembrance of a prior existence I have come across in my readings was in a book I skimmed through recently, being communications through a trance medium in the *Banner of Light* circles. At one of these

\* And from the letter of your correspondent, E. E. Pearce, in "LIGHT," of December 18th, Kardec, since he entered the spirit-world, seems to have changed his views. I am likewise told that shortly after his death he made a similar communication through Mr. D. D. Home.

public séances, the subject of Re-incarnation was mooted, when a person in the assembly got up and said that he himself had no doubt whatever of the fact of Re-incarnation, for that *forty years ago* he knew a man who told him he distinctly remembered having lived a previous life! I read the account twice to convince myself that it was written seriously.

In concluding my remarks on the subject, I will only say that those persons who are sufficiently in love with this world to have no repugnance to the idea of living several more lives upon it may, surely, if they like, enjoy their belief in Re-incarnation; but that those to whom, like myself, the very idea of such a thing is as a hideous nightmare, need not, I think, have the slightest fear of ever being called upon to pass again through the trials and troubles of mortality; for no single case has ever been known of an incarnated spirit having been *proved* to have lived in another human form upon the earth, and I think we may rejoice in the belief that the better and purer the *one* life we live on earth may be, the more quickly shall we progress in another world when we shake off this mortal coil, till we reach finally the haven of eternal bliss in the celestial spheres.—Yours truly,

“V.”

[We have still in hand one or two important letters on Re-incarnation, for which we are unable to find room. These will appear next week, when the discussion on this subject must close for the present.—ED. “LIGHT.”]

#### Clairvoyant Visions.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—I have been frequently asked about my clairvoyant visions, and all that I could say was that they *always* come spontaneously, indeed when *least* expected, and with a naturalness of perspective and colouring and minuteness of detail, that, had I kept up my practical knowledge of art, I could easily have transferred them to canvas. But this last week I have on two occasions had opportunity of a little more scientific examination. Firstly, when playing my zither the other evening, just beneath two gas-burners, and when my mind was fully and *actively* otherwise occupied, suddenly between my eyes and the instrument appeared the corner of a street in some old German town, with picturesque houses and people coming and going in the usual way. Startled, then interested, I was obliged to give up playing, *as the vision totally obscured the strings*, and for three minutes (perhaps) refused to depart. (The zither came from Innsbruck; I wonder if the street I saw be in that town! I have never been there, but should recognise it again.) Secondly, this morning (I won't say the time), when dwelling woefully on the thought of getting up, my attention was suddenly diverted by a pretty bit of landscape in front of me (a bridge, with a town in the background, seen hazily through a mist, the lights looking “blurred” and “muggy”), and my next thought was of the material objects in the room before me. *About one-half the bed-rail and the washhand-stand behind were invisible, and yet my eyes were wide open.* Let me add that I find no difficulty whatever in keeping separate and apart this faculty from that of “imagination, or imaginative vision,” as Ruskin calls it; the two are totally different and quite distinct; neither does it at all interfere with my practical life in this world: it only gives me assurance of something beyond the range of the physical senses. I only wish I could share it with others, for it certainly is a joy and a blessing.

3, St. Thomas'-square, Hackney. CAROLINE CORNER.

#### Pears' Puzzle.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—The solution of this puzzle by no means “seems to be physically impossible”; on the contrary it is a very simple matter indeed, and I cannot for a moment understand any experienced Spiritualist regarding it as a colourable imitation of “the passage of matter through matter.”

The interlocking of the two pieces has been accomplished by cutting the piece of white wood the *exact* size of the aperture through which it had to be passed, and then steaming it, or as was the case in my reproduction of the puzzle (which I send you for inspection) by boiling. The white wood then swells; the mahogany does not do so to any appreciable extent. The pieces can be unlocked by a reverse process of compression of the white wood. You will, I think, see that my reproduction of the puzzle does not differ materially from the original, as sent out by Messrs. Pears.

I think it a pity that such palpably normal causes and effect should be held to show how Spiritualistic phenomena may be simulated. The simulation would be, as is usually the case, a very sorry one.—Yours truly,

F.

#### PROFESSOR NEWMAN'S “PALINODIA.”

Mr. Page Hopps shares the opinion I ventured to pronounce on Professor Newman's *Palinodia*. The following, from a review in the current number of the *Truthseeker*, deserves attention:—

We cannot help being surprised at finding Mr. Newman so crude on the subject of spirit-life. He says: “A soul which survives dissolution of the body *must* be either *dis-embodied* or *re-embodied*. There is no third possibility.” Is there not? What if a soul is itself a spiritual body adapted to a spiritual sphere, and perfectly at home in it when it gets there? We know—and science has caused us to know—that the unseen things are very real. We may almost say we know that the unseen is the sphere of first causes and ultimate consequences. At all events, that is a perfectly conceivable possibility: and, therefore, we are *not* shut up to the alternative of a “*dis-embodied*” or “*re-embodied*” soul. A third possibility, and a highly probable one, is the persistence of the soul into the unseen sphere to which, by its very nature, it belongs even now, when tabernacled in this “muddy vesture of decay” that doth “grossly close it in.”

Referring to Spiritualism, Mr. Newman is equally crude. He objects to it because “the power over matter ascribed by them [Spiritualists] to secret roving spirits would vitiate our material sciences fundamentally.” And what of that? we feel inclined to ask. What *are* our “material sciences”? They are only our present-day conclusions, with not one element of finality about them. It is the business of modern science to find out the truth, not to save certain orthodox scientific conclusions from being vitiated fundamentally. We have plenty to learn yet. Mr. Newman also objects to Spiritualism because, as he says, “to believe that God would allow unseen spirits to play tricks with us, would so alter my conception of Divine Rule that I cannot tell how much of practical religion I should be able to retain.” That argument from what God would “allow” is a common one, but it never seems to us to have much force in it. We find here that God allows many amazing things: and seeing that He allows no end of liars, swindlers, and tricksters to ply their trades on this side of the veil, we do not find it difficult to believe that He may allow a spirit to pretend to be Milton on the other side of it. What we cannot understand is that so seasoned a heretic as Mr. Newman should reject anything because it would “alter” his “conception of Divine Rule.” There may be nothing in the constitution of the universe to make his “conception of Divine Rule” a paramount and unalterable necessity.

THE *Salford Chronicle* gives a favourable report of Mrs. Hardinge Britten's lecture at Pendleton.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN will lecture twice in Morley Hall, Nottingham, on Sunday, January 16th.

GOSWELL HALL, 290, Goswell-road, E.C., is again to be opened for services on Sunday evening next.

THOSE of our readers who will send us cuttings from the Press bearing upon Spiritualistic matters will oblige us greatly.

OUR excellent contemporary, the *Golden Gate*, of December 18th, is double its usual size, and is full of interesting reading. There are also two *fac-similes* of slates containing writing in twelve different languages.

MR. W. EGLINTON leaves England on the 15th inst., for a prolonged absence. He will visit Munich, Vienna, Buda Pest, Warsaw, Moscow and Stockholm. We are requested by him to ask that all personal letters addressed to him during his absence may be marked “private.”

WE regret to have to announce the death of one of our subscribers, Deputy-Surgeon General Wolseley, a brother of Lord Wolseley. Intelligence was received in this country, on Sunday, that he had been killed on the previous day by a fall from his horse at Meerut, India.

THE Rev. T. Ashcroft's opposition to Spiritualism in provincial towns has been the means of benefiting the Bradford Hospital Fund to the extent of £5 17s. 3d., which sum the *Bradford Daily Telegraph* says was received from the Spiritualist Church, being the proceeds of a lecture delivered at the Mechanics' Institute by Mr. Schutt, of Keighley.

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W.D.R. (Gladstone, South Australia).—Your instructions shall have immediate attention.

W.G.—Your letter is inadmissible for the simple reason that you do not give us your name and address even in confidence.

J.B.T. and R.C.R.—We regret to be obliged to decline your contributions as we have more letters on the subject than we can find space for.

## 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 (38) 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.R.S.

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

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

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

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

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—“The writer” (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) “can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of so-called Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of anylegerdmain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a

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

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

## CONJURERS AND PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

## ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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