

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Life after Death. Three Sermons by the REV. C. VOYSEY.

The Origin of Worship and the Genesis of Belief. By J. H. MITCHINER, F.R.A.S.*

Man in Search of His Soul. By GERALD MASSEY.†

Spiritual Dynamics. By JOHN M. M. MUNRO.‡

The Theosophist. January, 1887. §

In the opinion of Mr. Voysey "the two most prevalent grounds for the hope (of a life after death) which are alleged in Christendom to-day are the Christian Revelation, as it is called, and the phenomena of Spiritualism." I am not concerned to go into Mr. Voysey's treatment of the evidence contained in the Christian Revelation, especially that which affects the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Mr. Voysey is not a profound critic, and all that he says has been said more incisively and with much greater weight by more considerable critics who have preceded him. He openly flouts the idea of a future life as contained in the Christian Revelation, and avows that consideration of a life after death "does not occupy any large portion of my own thought." That confession may dispense me from concerning myself further with Mr. Voysey's opinions under this head. Nor should I trouble myself with him at all, were it not that he has something to say about Spiritualism. That brings him and his views within my scope. At the very outset Mr. Voysey makes an interesting admission. He has not treated the subject of the life to come, because, as he says, it does not interest him, though he admits that it is of interest to his people. He is, as I am aware, afraid of Spiritualism, and therefore has shirked it, though he frankly admits that it is a subject of great interest to those whom he addresses. He has not spoken on the future life,

"Because, as I am aware that this opinion [viz., that we can know nothing of the future] is greatly opposed to the opinions of some of my best friends within and without the Theistic Church, I do not wish needlessly to dwell on points of dispute any more than on party-political subjects, and I have not felt it my bounden duty to make any very strong or systematic attack upon what is known as 'Spiritualism.'"

We Spiritualists have had reason to know of late that Mr. Voysey does not over-estimate the interest of his flock in Spiritualism. I sadly fear that they will not find his treatment of the subject illuminative or instructive. The fact must be stated as gently as may be, it is useless to disguise it, Mr. Voysey knows nothing whatever about the subject with which he reluctantly deals. He is afraid of it; he regards it as a sort of dealing with the devil; he calls it

necromancy; he puts ghosts into the same category as "blue dogs," figments of a diseased or distorted imagination; he is, in short, as little sensible or sane in dealing with Spiritualism as he thinks we are in believing in it.

I do not consider it worth my while or at all instructive to my readers to take up space with any elaborate refutation of arguments, if I may dignify them by that name, which are included in one common condemnation, viz., that they all display ignorance of fact, and are evolved from a mind that has no real basis of knowledge of the subject of Spiritualism. I will cite a specimen. *Ex uno disce omnes.* Mr. Voysey thinks that we are all hallucinated. He would have a series of peep-holes round the room, and from these coigns of vantage he thinks people would see—nothing!

"Let the room in which Spiritualistic phenomena are to be manifested be surrounded with, say, twelve apertures which would enable twelve individuals to see everything which went on in the room without being seen themselves and without communication with each other. Each one of these twelve observers is to be locked up in a separate cell and not allowed to come out till he had written down his own faithful record of what he saw. Then, if all agreed in their reports, it would be next to impossible to doubt their accuracy and truthfulness. The proviso being always rigidly observed that they were beyond the reach of any mesmeric influence from the assembly during their secret observation, and absolutely separated from each other. If any spirits of the dead appeared under these conditions, then we should be able to answer our first question as to whether there be any truth or fact in the alleged communication with the dead."

It is characteristic of Mr. Voysey's ignorance of the literature of Spiritualism that he should think that the question of spirit-identity could be solved in the way that he suggests. It is one of the great problems of the future that will be solved in some more serious way than by the nervous observation of some frightened person gazing through a peep-hole. Mr. Voysey concludes that "Christianity and Spiritualism give no ground for hopes of a life after death." And with that cheerful and comprehensive creed I leave him for more serious matters of concern.

Mr. Mitchiner's paper, read before the Croydon Socratic Society, deals in an able manner with the "Origin of Worship and the Genesis of Belief." He prefixes to his dissertation a very striking motto from a book which might be better known than it is: a very impressive record of a religion little understood among us:—

"I have given thee thy Spirit. I have given thee thy Soul. I also have given thee thy physical house, that through it there may be ripened fruit when I send my harvesters to gather them unto me."—*Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead.*

In the course of his paper Mr. Mitchiner brings under the notice of his readers a book certainly meriting their attention, if they only can get at it. *Art Magic* is a very remarkable book in its way, and without going so far as to commit myself to its opinions, it certainly is one that a thoughtful and critical mind may study with advantage. (I may, perhaps, say parenthetically, that a copy of the book may be borrowed at the chambers of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and Mr. Redway has one for sale.) Mr. Mitchiner travels over familiar ground in a rapid and very

* Kegan Paul, 1, Paternoster-square. May be had at 16, Craven-street, W.C. Price One Shilling.

† Villa Bordighiera, New Southgate, London. Price One Shilling.

‡ Alex. Gardner, Paisley, and 12, Paternoster-row. Price Sixpence.

§ G. Redway, York-street, Covent Garden.

clear manner. Gerald Massey has elaborated what Mr. Mitchiner sketches. Solar-worship and sex-worship are much concerned in the evolution of our religious systems. The latter of these subjects is treated in the paper which I am commending to my readers, with much discretion, and the whole address is characterised by considerable literary power and directness of statement. It is, without doubt, a very useful and instructive essay on a somewhat recondite but important subject. One citation will show Mr. Mitchiner's method and style:—

"One, no longer amongst us bodily, whom you all knew, all respected, many loved, and whose untimely departure all deplored, once said to me, 'Your belief in a future life will not help you if there be no future life, any more than my non-belief will deprive me of a future life if there be one.' What-ever standpoint we may occupy on this subject, this statement, thank God, is true. If matter in all its forms be but the vehicle for the expression of spirit, the inheritance incorruptible for the developed conscious Ego is not dependent for attainment on the knowledge possessed of its existence, nor, happily, can an antagonistic or distorted mental attitude destroy those rights of heirship that spring from Divine kinship. Whether we accept, or whether we reject the fact—we are immortal parts of the immortal soul of the universe, and though we may wander far and suffer much, we can never be lost or perish out of His hand."

"*Man in search of his soul during fifty thousand years, and how he found it.*" It seems a long time, and some have not found it yet. Mr. Gerald Massey's erudite and interesting lecture may teach some of those who doubt, and quibble over old problems, the ways in which from earliest days man has searched for the immortal principle that is in him. There has been no age which, there is no record of a people who, have not believed in the existence in man of a soul that survives physical death. It is a natural instinct, as natural as a mother's love for her child. And it has been reserved for the advanced science of these later days to throw doubt on what has been a universal belief, as it has been reserved for the most spiritual of faiths to import into its creed a profession of belief in the resurrection of the body. "They have substituted a physical resurrection from the dead for a spiritual continuity such as was demonstrated in the mysteries of the men who knew," the Gnostics. Mr. Gerald Massey is, as all his readers are aware, very strongly anti-Christian. He has no belief in the claims of the Church, retrospective or present. He is a firm and unflinching Spiritualist, and he believes that "it is for Spiritualism to join hands with Science, enlarge the boundaries of knowledge, and found upon the facts in nature." "A new and more comprehensive and inclusive kind of Gnosticism, which shall be quite free and above board and open all round, is one of the crying wants of the age." It is, and it always has been. By his erudition, by his perfect outspokenness, by his pungent criticism, Mr. Gerald Massey is at any rate making it possible for us to form an opinion on matters which it has been too much the fashion to treat as finally settled, to regard as matters of pious belief not to be handled or touched under penalty of being dubbed irreverent.

Spiritual Dynamics is a short pamphlet, clear in matter and concise in style, which aims at showing that "the old faith in an over-ruling and ever-present Providence can be regained only by a view of the relation of God to His universe as being so close that between it and Him there is no room for a supernatural. . . . Miracles cannot be directly attacked (except on historical grounds) so long as our knowledge of Nature's secrets is limited as now." Mr. Munro expounds his thesis from the starting point of Professor Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, and his necessarily rapid sketch would bear expansion. Very roughly and briefly put, the scope of the argument is to set forth natural law as a resultant from the nature of matter and energy, and the mechanical continuity of nature

as the resultant of the conservation of matter and energy. This continuity is absolute, and interference with natural sequences by a self-determining will can be possible only through an act of creation or annihilation. To imagine a catastrophe or a miracle as used to originate any being or event is unphilosophical. The discussion on the origin of life, physical and spiritual, is full of interest. "Surely it is not impossible that God could have produced man, both body and soul, by the agency of natural law from earth through an evolutionary process. It is surely as noble to be made from something as from nothing." Yes, and after all the question is quite immaterial. Mr. Munro claims "that there is a spiritual substance which can exist, if not without matter, at least independently of any particular mass of matter. . . . This theory does not forbid, indeed it almost suggests, the idea that animals may have some sort of spiritual part within them." It will be seen that there is some bold speculation in this short pamphlet, but it is always reasonable and reverent.

The *Theosophist* (January, 1887) contains a long report of the doings in last year of the Theosophical Society, from which I gather that it flourishes and abounds, especially in India. At the eleventh convention held December 27-30, 1886, there were present 137 delegates from various branch societies, as against 89 at the previous convention. A new library and council hall, greatly admired, were opened by the President. It must have been a remarkable spectacle. The Hall was solemnly blessed by "Hindû, Parsî, Buddhist, and Mohammedan priests, mobeds, bhikkus, and maulvis." I am ashamed to say that I do not know what a "mobed, bhikku, or maulvi" is, but, assuming that the three gentlemen conferred on the Hall some form of benediction, I am open to contend that no hall was ever so blessed before. It does not seem as if the Society for Psychical Research had taken much by Mr. Hodgson's little trip. The fact is that man's interest in psychical matters is quite independent of mere phenomena, of conjuring, of allegations of imposture, or of theories of hallucination. It is concerned with something more interior. There must be vitality and energy in a society which has wrought the altruistic marvel of bringing together on one common platform these various religionists to bless an enterprise which has for its aim the elevation of mankind, and not, as usual, to curse one another.

"FORESHADOWINGS OF CHANGE IN EARTHLY CONDITIONS."

Communicated by MR. LAURENCE OLIPHANT.

"And coming events cast their shadows before."

As before some expected birth, faint stirrings or strong upheavals are felt in the expectant mother, so in our times, in the world's spirit-womb—in those depths where the great mysteries and essences of life-principles are wrapt away from the profaning ken of fleshly doings—are now felt great activities and convulsions; preparatory, as it would seem, to the breaking of its way through flesh, and becoming the joy of our earth made glad by this new birth!

Fresh discoveries are made by man: new physical conditions and great political changes are craved by him; increased powers are awarded him; nor can we logically doubt, when arguing presumptively from previous causes producing in a given time such and such effects, that we are not nearing as yet the end of the cycles of knowledge and change that will be man's final heritage. Rather should we judge that as yet we stand at the threshold only of the now opening door through which man will pass into unknown mansions stored and garnered with the manifold riches that are needed to fulfil his wants, and ultimate his own royal humanity.

No! for man the end can in no proper sense be near:

for man to live once is to live for ever : in change, in progress (man's God be praised ! in whose image the earth-man was made) : aspiring and yearning, loving, hoping and believing also ever—believing in no one faith of formulas and creeds, unless indeed in that one Christ-spoken creed, which, in its few all-containing words, fulfils all the law and the prophets. But in progress and in faith humanity lays hold of a new earth whose powers, unknown first, then rejected and denied, are growing akin to those of Heaven.

Religions, which were as the husk enveloping the good grain of truth, are too narrow and dried up longer now to imprison the ripened and outbursting food of life that man hungers for. God-bidden, man now seeks to free himself from, and to set himself above, those self-seeking doctrines, so long mis-called religions, which teach him, from fear of a Hell, to act so to win for himself a Heaven. Change ! great change in this also there is ! Now truth, lovely truth, for its own high delights alone, and for its bettering gifts to all mankind—the good of all as clearest duty, to be followed patiently and unswervingly without recompense needed to incite men thereto—this is now the new faith of humanity, and this added change in belief will be imperatively and irresistibly imposed upon man's improved impulses ; or to speak more nearly the great truth, man will have become more apt now to hearken to the God within him owing to change ever going on in himself. The God in man—that DAIMON with whom wise Socrates held high converse, who shielded him from harm, and guided him aright—that Divine Spirit that spake in Prophets and Kings and Sybils, in great men we revere and in teachers of men—yea ! and that speaks likewise in one and all of us (poor sons of clay, that the Divinity fashioned in His own high image) when we voluntarily turn from the wide and easy road that leadeth to self-satisfaction, to follow the stony and weary paths of self-denial, and seeking other's weal. And yet another change there is—the change of all changes in man—a change that is now in the throes and pangs of the birth-hour, the change to the full development of the Divine that is in all men, the complete attainment of that God-like nature to which the Creator had destined the created, made as he was, rich in a share of the every quality essential to the Godhead, the man as he was made like even unto God !

God is a spirit—and God is love. Man made in His image is therefore a spirit, and is also love. It is this God-like spirit in man—a pure spirit of love, on which long cycles of mere brute living have accreted a gross animal and carnal prison of low earthy tendencies ; it is this struggling, sore-suffering, but undying spark of God's nature in our changed and fallen natures that fresh changes in our common humanity are to bring to a new birth :—change even in the outward and visible fleshly covering thus inflicted, by our own doings, on our once fluid and spiritual bodies.

And let not Science sneer at such changes as though they were mere imaginings, as fantastic as they are impossible. Science, if it knows aught, knows at least how small is the fraction of the vast stores of knowledge that it is as yet possessed of. From gross darkness of utter ignorance, step by step, with slow and hesitating degrees, has it added one small advance to another, often in error, often doubting, denying to-day the truth ascertained to-morrow, but holding ever, as the keystone, faith in evolution and progress ; in progress positive, as regards the world of things and of men ; in progress relative, as regards its own patient searchings and questionings and findings. Science is the last who may dare speak the words of the Creator, when ruling and regulating His mighty works, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further," for Science must change her limits perpetually, must advance with advancing and improving man, or else drop behind, as a bare memory of

a state of things long gone by. For Science there is no point which men's minds may conceive, that may be discussed or discovered, of which she can venture to say, "This cannot be—this is impossible !" From the horrid struggle for existence, which was the limit of pre-historic man's aspirations and wants, when fighting for food and for his very life, he met unarmed the monsters then extant on the primeval earth, down to the ultra-civilised man of our own times, with his facile life of ease and indulgence, who reacts by miraculous prompting of the developing God-spirit within him, to aspirations, not for ease but for suffering, for a life, or for a death (if needs be) for his fellow men ; from the ignorant denial in Galileo's times of elementary cosmographic truth, down to the elaborate calculations of our own days, which accurately measure and tell of the winged flight of some particular star through those incommensurable depths that we call "the infinite" at the rate of 30,000,000 of miles per day—whirling thus as does also our planet, this small and poor earth of ours, around our equally whirling sun, whose attraction bears us along with him towards a new constellation *—for what dread purpose ? (who may tell ?)—the moon, our follower, sharing our fate, whirling round us the while, at the same fantastic rate—and other suns, with their million attendant stars, at the same time rushing noiselessly likewise, all towards an unknown part of infinite space and a veiled future of which no science can tell us aught ; from the first childish attempts to heal by charms and sorceries, by wild panaceas and superstitions, herb gatherings under the light of the full moon or on the blood-soaked grave of the murdered ; from early babblings of medicinal art, down to the daily discoveries now-a-days of curative science and its powerful drugs and appliances ; from the cruelties and torturings of man by man in the Dark Ages, down to his honest endeavours in these more spiritually enlightened times to allay all pain and suffering ; from the gropings of man's first searchings after self-knowledge, down to the latest discoveries made in his flesh, bone, nerves, brain and blood, as well as in his mind and spirit ; from such beginnings, but little removed from the animal world's capacities as to powers, and below it as to instincts, down to the precursive dawn of the man in God's image, who is the man of to-day, Science should have learned this one lesson at least, and that well and thoroughly, that, change and evolution being the law of the world, the word "impossible" is no word for her.

Why strain at a gnat, O Science ? The changes that have been seen, made, and proved are such as to authorise belief in still greater and better changes yet. Such changes we foresee, and are overshadowed by their near presence. Surely, when man is told that the spark of Divine essence smouldering within him, which has enabled him to rise to all present knowledge and moral improvement, is now developing, like a rich harvest within him, sunned by the great prototype's approving glance, watered by the sweet floods that feed and swell his growing spirit, he may not deem such change impossible. Why, by the power of the spirit's expansion, may not the outward husk be riven and dropped, whilst the true man, in God-like seeming, steps forth ; man the spirit, the man of God's earthly paradise, appears ?

Yesterday's changes in cells and formations become established as the habit and new form of to-day ; so Science herself teaches us. Her scalpel, for instance, has shown humanity that certain brain-regions are the seat of certain psychical emotions, and that certain forms of exaggerated cerebral excitement superinduce a new formation of the brain, transmissible in far-reaching generations, to the descendants of these possessors of abnormal formations. An unknown or unusual

* That of Hercules.

supplementary fold has, in some cases, we are told, been found coming from one lobe of the brain, which is abnormally thickened or weakened: this or that circumvolution is interrupted, whilst such and such regions are either raised or depressed: malformations or improvements in the material and outward framework, which enwraps the Divine in man, are therefore produced and producible to an astonishing degree by direct effort of the spirit within him. Change in this way also is man for ever undergoing.

Man's spirit, even in the remotest periods, notwithstanding the thick clouds of ignorance which hid from his knowledge its very existence, had been enabled to pulse its life-beats upon man's very elementary consciousness of those dark days. For we know that in all times those who lived the closest to this their holy fount of spiritual being, saw visions, dreamed dreams, scorned the flesh, its privations and martyrdom: that with them God spake, and His word of inspiration was transmitted by many a prophet and teacher, who retired to the wilderness and mountain as did Moses and John the Precursor, as did Buddha and our own Christ, He Who, by His incarnation, once more united in Himself the earthly man with the Spirit of God, which is Love. Men and women, later on, were burnt as witches because of this same spirit in them which transcended the then powers of humanity's general understanding; and yet these long ignored and persecuted forces, of healing, of electricity, of magnetism, of polarisation of fluids, capable of directing and controlling man's whole powers of body and mind, are now become acknowledged facts in hospitals, where medical science, long scornful, is now diligently experimenting upon them, trying, though but clumsily, to utilise these unknown and, in inexperienced hands, unquestionably very dangerous powers.

Wide will the echoes roll that tell of these great changes made, and of changes greater still that are to be granted, of powers mightier awarded to the new and more spiritually dominant man. Once his life was in and for his flesh. Man neither knew nor needed any duty of love towards his brother man. Hardly he knew whether in him there was aught beyond and superior to his fleshly garment; anything better than satisfaction given to that body, which he must needs feed, and clothe, and house, and give rest to. Now all is changed! the hitherto enchained God within him bursts His fetters and outward comes. Thanks to the long, slow, patient years of constant small strengthenings of the spirit, in triumphs achieved over fleshly greeds and brutal instincts, the flesh now yields obedience, doubtful, irregular, and strange, almost questioning obedience at first, but none the less change has come, and the beginning of the spirit-man's control over the carnal man is established. The Christ-like command has gone forth, "Love one another," and the flesh has answered the Master's voice, "Speak, Lord! for Thy servant heareth," and the Divine within answereth, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep." And hearing now, man, the new man, changed man, steps forth at God's command, casting aside the many luxuries of the worldly life, thrusting them on one side unheeding, or with a pang which but enhances the merit of willing self-sacrifice, and thus the Divine grows, at every one of its triumphs the fleshly prison is worn thinner—God be praised for change that is coming!

Give it complete! Break forth and shine on our half-enlightened and still groping world, Emmanuel, God with us! Change all in us, and in our frames, as in the world that yet resists the great law of love and brotherhood, and teach how best we each may be "our brother's keeper," casting from us once and for ever the Cain-like spirit of indolence, hatred and murder, which questioned this divinest of human duties.

By the spirit of love, which is ours in our hidden but holiest deeps; ours, by direct gift from our God, in Whose

Divine Image we should—and shall—in some blest and approaching time, both live and move and have our being: by that spirit we adjure you, brother men, strive yet, strive we all, for the best in each of us. Listen for the low, sweet promptings of the God that is closer and nearer to each and all of us than are our nearest and dearest friends or kin, for He and we are One.

O men! O spirits! great and small! who in a powerful or in a lesser degree have denied, totally or somewhat, only your lower impulses, giving willing scope only to your truest and noblest:—O kings amongst men who by your strivings have given food and life to the angel in you unawares, and who by thus doing have restrained the evil and developed the good of the universe:—O! all unknown but patient host of sufferers for the truth's dear sake, whose ignored agonies of battle made against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil have none the less done the great work, and have through much tribulation liberated the imprisoned Godhead within the man:—O saints, angels, and spirits who have fought against those that fought against us, sound loud the note of triumph now; the night is retreating, the daybreak is nigh, the change is now here! Change in our faiths enlarged, and in vain formularies that now we cast aside: change in vast powers that now are given, in knowledge of all kinds now taking wider and yet wider reaching sweeps; change and great change likewise in our fleshly tabernacle now wearing thin, for the God-force to win freely through, to let the God-made man, God's likeness here on earth—man the spirit—man all love—shine through the rent veil of the earthly tabernacle in glowing essence pure Divine. This change, likewise, is near!

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

At a Council meeting, held at No. 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, on February 8th, in connection with the scheme for Confederation of Spiritualists, the following were enrolled as Honorary Members or Corresponding Members respectively:—

HONORARY MEMBERS.

The Hon. ALEXANDER AKSAKOFF, St. Petersburg.
J. C. BUNDY, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.
Judge NELSON CROSS, 206, Broadway, New York, President of the American Spiritualist Alliance.
Rev. MOSES HULL, Des Moines, Iowa, U.S.A.
Cavalier SEBASTIAN FENZI, Florence, Italy.
Monsieur LEYMARIE, 5, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, Palais Royal, Paris.
The Baroness VON VAY, Gonobitz bei Potschach, Styria, Austria.

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS REPRESENTING SPIRITUALIST SOCIETIES.

ALGIERS.—Monsieur GREZLEZ, à Setif.
BARCELONA.—J. M. JERNOMDER.
Do. MIGUEL VIVES, TATROSA.
BERLIN.—Professor GRINDLER, Schmargendorf.
BUENOS AYRES.—Signor C. MARINO, Rue Uruguay, 610.
BELGIQUE.—OSCAR HENRIOT, Chenée, Liège.
JAMAICA.—JOSE MAYNER Y ROS, 89, East-street, Kingston.
PARIS.—H. DURVILLE, 5, Boulevard du Temple.
Do. G. DELAUNE, 39, Passage Choiseul.
Do. J. L. HERNHAULT, 183, Rue St. Denis.
SWITZERLAND.—ALPHONSE FREY, 11, Place du Lac, Genève.
Do. GUSTAV GRESSEL, Boulevard de la Capitaine, Chaux de Fonds.
SAN FRANCISCO.—J. C. GORE, 416, Geary-street.
TURIN.—NICEFORO FILALETE, 23, Via Bagnio.
VERA CRUZ.—ED. DE LAGRANGE, Calle de Bravos, 92.

Any errors in names or addresses should be signified at once.

W. STANTON MOSES, President.

MORELL THEOBALD, Hon. Secretary.

Offices: 16, Craven-street,
Charing Cross, London.

* * * Presidents of Foreign Spiritualist Societies who have not yet given in their adhesion to the scheme of Confederation (as set forth in "LIGHT," p. 454, October 9th, 1886), are invited to do so, with full name and address clearly written, and sent to the Hon. Secretary at the above address.

A DREAM.

The following dream is recounted by John Taylor, in *Records of My Life* (London: Edward Bull, Holles-street, 1832). John Taylor was the author of *Monsieur Tonson*, a popular humorous poem of that day, or somewhat earlier, and a well known member of literary and dramatic circles, from the time of Garrick to that of Kemble, with whom he was connected by marriage. The narrative came to him through intermediate sources, but he had confidence in his informant, and I know no reason why he or his informant should be regarded as untrustworthy. "Mr. Donaldson"—a well-known man in such circles—"told me," he says, "the following circumstance as a fact, in which he placed full confidence, on account of the character of the gentleman who related it. The latter was a particular friend of his, and a member of Parliament. In order to attend the House of Commons this gentleman had taken apartments in St. Anne's Churchyard, Westminster. On the evening when he took possession he was struck with something that appeared to him mysterious in the manner of the maid servant, who looked like a man disguised; and he felt a very unpleasant emotion. This feeling was strengthened by a similar deportment in the mistress of the house, who soon after entered the room and asked him if he wanted anything before he retired to rest. Disliking her manner he soon dismissed her, and went to bed, but the disagreeable impression made on his mind kept him long awake. At length, however, he fell asleep and dreamed that the corpse of a gentleman who had been murdered was deposited in the cellar of the house. This dream co-operating with his impressions precluded all hopes of renewed sleep, and it being the summer season he arose about five o'clock in the morning, took his hat, and resolved to quit a house of such alarm and terror. To his surprise, as he was leaving it he met the mistress in the entry, dressed, as if she had never gone to bed. She seemed much agitated, and inquired his reason for wishing to go out so early. He hesitated a moment, and then told her that he expected a friend who was to arrive by a stage in Bishopsgate-street, and was going to meet him. He was suffered to go out of the house, and when revived by the open air he felt, as he afterwards declared, as if relieved from impending destruction. He stated that in a few hours after he returned with a friend, to whom he had told his dream and the impression made on him by the maid and mistress; he however only laughed at him for his superstitious terrors, but on entering the house they found it deserted, and calling in a gentleman, who was accidentally passing, they all descended to the cellar, and actually found a corpse in the state which the gentleman's dream had represented."

A. A. W.

SELF-PROVING MESSAGES.

In "LIGHT" of February 12th there is a letter from Mr. F. W. H. Myers on the above subject. In that letter an appeal is made for "say twenty instances" where the message itself is a better proof of a power and knowledge beyond that which the medium possesses, than could be obtained from continued observation and watchfulness. Mr. Myers also asserts that the phenomenon of writing in closed slates words contained in books taken at random, has been reproduced by at least one conjurer.

The position which is thus taken up by Mr. Myers is one which has lately attracted my attention, and I regret that I cannot admit that any useful purpose would be reached by occupying the pages of "LIGHT" with detailed second-hand accounts of séances in which self-proving messages were given. My reasons for this conclusion are the following:—In "LIGHT" of October 16th, 1886, a multitude of witnesses have given exactly that evidence which Mr. Myers now demands afresh. Several of these witnesses speak of having had many séances with Mr. Eglinton, amounting to sixty or seventy in some cases. Consequently exactly that testimony which Mr. Myers

asks for is already in existence. How has this evidence been treated? Certain persons, who have not given any proof of either great intellectual powers or a capacity to sit as judges, have assumed that position, and have devoted their time, and occupied a whole issue of their *Journal*, in the picking to pieces of the words and sentences of the witnesses whose evidence they have examined. Not content with such attempts at criticism, they have allowed their imagination to supply their "facts," and have "supposed" that the witnesses probably omitted this, or "probably" the medium did that. Having thus built up an entirely imaginary case, they assert that the evidence is worthless, and that their profound intelligence has proved it to be so.

I fail to see why those many persons who, during twenty years and more, have carefully examined these phenomena, and have tested them in every way, are now to be brought up for examination before persons who have elected themselves as judges, but whose method of procedure proves them to be far from competent, even as investigators. To claim that the existence of a fact is to be decided by superficial verbal criticism of the written evidence of the witnesses, is at once a proof of the incompetency of those who have assumed the duty of judges in this matter.

Mr. Myers asserts that at least one conjurer can write in closed slates words contained in a certain line, on a certain page of a book taken at random. I find myself unable to understand or credit this statement, and I venture to ask Mr. Myers to give in detail when, how, and with whom this has occurred. The ridiculous imitations which I have so often seen, of spiritual phenomena, but which have been claimed as a "complete exposure," have taught me that it is a common attribute of the human mind to be excessively incredulous when ample evidence of a given fact is produced, but boundlessly credulous when the gravest caricature of this fact is put forward as evidence of its much desired non-existence.

THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLES

"INVESTIGATION OF RARE PHENOMENA."

"A SINGULAR STORY."

A singular and, apparently, well authenticated story comes to us from America. The other day a man named Nicholas Hageney, who lived alone in a house at Taylor's Creek, near Dent, in Ohio, committed suicide. It happened that it was the anniversary of the death of both his first and second wife; but beyond the fact of these women both expiring on the same day of the year this cannot be termed a coincidence, as the recollection of the fact probably inspired him with the idea of suicide upon that day. The curious part of the story is that on the same afternoon Hageney's daughter, who lives at Camp Washington, some distance away from Taylor's Creek, heard a knock at her door, and was surprised, on opening it, to find no one there. So surprised was she with the reality of the knock and at the fact of finding no one without, that she was much disturbed in her mind, and became so impressed with the idea that the warning was a supernatural one, and that something was wrong with her father, that she sent word to a cousin who lived near him to call and see if all was well. On the following day she learnt that her brother, who lives near Cheviot, had heard a knock at the door at the same hour at which she had heard it, and had also found no one without. So disturbed was she at the news that she sent another urgent message to her cousin who—accompanied by another man—went to Hageney's house, and obtaining no reply to their knocks, burst open the door, and found Hageney hanging by a rope from the rafters of the attic. He had apparently been dead about twenty-four hours, which would agree with the time at which his son and daughter were alarmed by the mysterious sounds. The story is certainly a singular one, and will take its place in the records of supernatural appearances.—*Evening Standard*, February 9th, 1887.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—The platform on the occasion of the next meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on March 10th, will be occupied by Mr. William Paice, M.A. He will discourse on a comprehensive subject, "Whence and Whither?" At the following meeting, on May 12th, the Rev. John Page Hopps will deliver an address on "The Old Testament Seers or Prophets."

THE LONDON OCCULT LODGE AND ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL INQUIRY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday next there will be no meeting in the morning. In the evening at seven there will be a Physical Séance, which will be free to those who attended on January 30th, on account of the partial failure on that occasion. Others will be admitted at the usual fee.—F. W. READ, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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Light:

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19th, 1887.

THE INVESTIGATION OF RARE PHENOMENA.

III.

The phenomenon of slate-writing takes its stand as a fact, in consequence of the intelligence and mysterious knowledge displayed in this writing, and not merely because every precaution has been taken to guard against trickery. All the trickery in the world will not enable a trickster to tell me what the third word is in the fourth line of the forty-first page of a book I take up at random. No trickster or conjurer can tell us where we last saw a friend about whom we are thinking, and what were the last words he spoke to us. No trickster or conjurer can tell us what was the private sign by which a friend who has departed this life used to communicate with us. Yet these things, and other similar things, have been accomplished by slate-writing and the like phenomena.

In the investigation of such phenomena, therefore, we must look to the *results*, and judge by these. To keep our attention occupied in watching details may be all very well, but it is after all only a childish method of proceeding. We go far beyond this and have a wider and more correct system of tests by which we can judge whether there is anything in this slate-writing other than a mere deception of the eyesight. To deceive the eyesight is not difficult when the hands are allowed to be moved rapidly. We can perform the three card trick, and even when watched by very close observers, can defeat their watchfulness, but no amount of skill in this sort of performance would enable us to accomplish such results as writing, between locked slates, the suit and number of a card thought of by a person who was not a confederate. A feeble or illogical mind, however, seeing the three card trick performed, would at once jump to the conclusion that giving accurately in writing between closed slates the name of a card thought of, was an exactly similar piece of conjuring.

Slate-writing, therefore, takes its stand as a fact, not because such watchfulness has been adopted as to prevent conjuring or trickery, but because the messages that are written, the handwriting of these messages, and the information that is given, are of such a character as all the trickery in the world could not even feebly imitate. When, then, we find that there are persons who, setting their slight experience against that of witnesses who have had far greater experience, and when these persons, ignoring all the results, claim that they, and they only, are competent observers, we are impressed with the conviction that inordinate preconceived dislike, or an inordinate trust in their own powers of *analysis*, are the two causes which induce them to trumpet

forth their conclusions as accurate and finite, whilst those arrived at by the hundreds who have had much greater opportunities of observation are utterly worthless.

Let us, however, examine the class of arguments used by a mind of the type to which we have referred. He says:—"You went to see the slate-writing, and you obtained in locked slates, which never left your possession, a message of some forty or fifty words, written in the handwriting of your father, who has been dead ten years. In this message reference was made to a family matter known only to you and your father, and you think this proves that slate-writing is not a conjuring trick. Well, I think differently. What you tell me proves to me that it is the most simple trick in the world, and I see how it was all done. Whilst I have been talking to you I have noticed that you winked on an average about five times a minute; and you committed an act which renders you quite incompetent as an observer, as you winked both eyes at once. Therefore all your evidence as an observer is worthless. It was whilst you were winking that this clever conjurer removed the slates from your hands without your being aware of it, substituted other slates in which he had prepared a message, and thus deceived you."

"But" (says the inquirer) "how about the exact handwriting and signature of my father?"

"All imagination on your part."

"But how about the private family matter referred to in the message?"

"Oh! the conjurer found this out somehow, and made use of it to deceive you. You are not at all aware what wonderful things can be done by conjuring. As, however, I now find how easily you are deceived, any further evidence on this matter from you must be ignored; and as I have proved also that your so-called medium is a trickster, he is never to be believed again."

This class of objection, varied in details, seems to be considered unanswerable by certain types of mind. If the message given on the slate and signed with the name of the father of the inquirer is not given in full, for the amusement of the critic, this omission is claimed as a proof that previous preparation could have been easily arranged, and that consequently accounts of long messages—written in answer to inquiries, which inquiries the visitor had written in such a manner as to render it impossible that the medium could know what was the question—are not to be assumed as good evidence.

When a witness testifies to any event which he has observed, he usually describes first the most prominent items. A day or two afterwards he may describe the same event, giving also details which he recalls, but which did not occur to him when his first testimony was given. If we were asked to describe a horse that we had seen, we might state it to be a chestnut horse, about fifteen hands two inches high; large girth, whitish mane and tail, small head and ears, and short legs. The second description might be the same, with the addition that the horse had a white spot on the forehead. Ah, says the sceptic, your second description has an addition not given in the first, therefore this proves that your imagination has supplied these details, and consequently I have grave doubts whether any horse was seen at all, as it is just as likely that you imagined the horse as that you imagined the white spot, which you knew nothing about when your first evidence was given. Then, again, on being cross-questioned, the observer states that the horse was walking past him when he first saw it, whereupon the critic at once claims this addition as a proof that no horse was seen, and that the observer must have come to his conclusion from "his conjectures becoming interwoven with his true remembrances beyond the possibility of disentanglement."

Such profound arguments—with which some of our readers have lately become familiar—are, of course, most convincing—at least to some classes of mind.

SEANCE WITH MR. EGLINTON.

NOTES OF A SEANCE WITH MR. W. EGLINTON, AT 6, CAMBRIDGE-TERRACE, REGENT'S PARK, ON FRIDAY, THE 14TH JANUARY, 1887, WRITTEN DOWN ON THE MORNING FOLLOWING.

Mr. Eglinton, who had never previously been at my house, arrived at 7.40 p.m., and was shown directly up to the drawing-room, on the first floor, where my wife, sister-in-law (Mrs. Sherard Kennedy), and I were awaiting him. Dinner being almost immediately afterwards announced, we went downstairs to the dining-room, there dined, and all returned together to the drawing-room. Coffee and a cigar occupied the time until 9.30 p.m., when I suggested that we should go downstairs to the dining-room, and hold the séance. Mr. Eglinton had not previously been told in which room we proposed to sit for this purpose. The dining-room is thirty-eight feet by fifteen feet, and twelve feet in height, with a large window at each end, east and west, and two doors on the side opposite the fire-places and opening into the hall passage. At Mr. Eglinton's request I closed the shutters across both windows, and locked both doors on the inside. He asked if I had a small table round which we could conveniently sit. I looked round and pointed to a small table with an octagonal pine-wood top, standing on a tripod leg. This, he said, would do, and, thereupon, I placed it in an empty space almost below what had been the dividing wall of the front and back dining-room (before I caused them to be thrown into one as they now are), and put a chair on each side of the table. Mr. Eglinton did not in any way interfere in the arrangements, or make any suggestion as to the position of the table and chairs beyond assenting when I asked him if they would do as I had placed them. At his request I put a pencil and a piece of note-paper upon the table, and we took our seats round it in the following positions:—Mr. Eglinton sat facing the door, my wife on his left hand, I opposite him, and Mrs. K. on his right hand. I had previously turned down the gas, and after sitting down blew out a candle which was just within my reach on the dinner table, and at Mr. Eglinton's request I put the box of matches in my pocket. We were then in total darkness.

Our hands rested upon the surface of the table, each holding his or her neighbour's left hand with her or his right hand, so as to form a continuous chain, and as the slab of the table was only twenty inches in diameter we were all close to one another. As soon as we had thus settled down in position I asked Mr. Eglinton if he wished us to converse or to keep silent. He replied that it was better not to concentrate the attention on the object desired, as the most favourable condition for him was one of pure "passivity," and that it was well to converse on indifferent subjects. Acting upon this advice we talked with one another on ordinary general topics, and continued to do so until the occurrence of the phenomena we subsequently witnessed. After having sat for about twenty minutes without anything having occurred, suddenly and *simultaneously* the hands, which I held in mine, of my wife and sister-in-law trembled and vibrated as though a galvanic shock were passing through them. I at once asked them why they shook, and whether they felt Mr. Eglinton's hands quivering in like fashion. They replied that the action was involuntary, and that Mr. Eglinton's hands were, like my own, unaffected.

This he confirmed, and I may here say once for all, that throughout the remainder of the séance until nearly the close I discussed the nature of the successive phenomena exhibited with Mr. Eglinton as they arose, that his remarks were calmly and rationally made without a trace of emotion or agitation, and that as I kept speaking to him, and he to me without a minute's break, within a couple of feet of each other, and face to face, I am convinced that he never moved away from the place where he had sat down at the table. My wife and sister-in-law assert positively that they never let go his hands throughout, but I am merely recording my own observations with, to the best of my knowledge, the strictest accuracy. The trembling or shock which I felt in the hands of each of my neighbours on right and left only lasted a few seconds, but was followed by similar sensations at intervals of a minute or so, but not occurring simultaneously in both my wife and her sister, as had the first. My wife appeared to be the more affected, and now and then audibly drew in her breath with a spasmodic shiver, on which I remonstrated with her. But she assured me that the action was wholly involuntary, and Mr. Eglinton said it was not

unusual. At this point Mr. Eglinton remarked that, as I had moved my head to one side, he observed that the light from the lamps in the hall passage was streaming through the keyhole behind me. I asked him whether I should rise and drop the lid over the keyhole. He replied that it was of no consequence, and as he spoke, my wife exclaimed, "See the light up there!" I saw nothing, and said, "Where?" when my sister-in-law said, "Oh, there, opposite me." (This was to the back of my wife, and could not, therefore, have been the light she saw.) I still failed to see either light, when a bright soft light floating somewhere above the overmantel in the front room attracted my attention. It was in appearance not unlike the shape, size, and colour of an electric incandescent lamp enclosed in a thick light blue ground glass—being more steady and fuller than either the flame of phosphorus or spirits of wine, which otherwise it nearly resembled. It passed slowly down an arc of some few degrees and then disappeared. As I directed notice to it, all the sitters stated that they saw it. It was followed by a quick shooting flame, like a small lightning flash, and by various stars of faint blue light appearing in various parts of the room together. At the same time a quick whirring rapping was heard in the table, followed by a rapid sharp-toned series of knocks, apparently in or on the wall high up behind Mr. Eglinton, these being immediately succeeded by a much fainter but quite distinct and equally-timed series of knocks, sounding at the far (east) end of the room, like an echo. I then felt the pencil pass over the backs of my hands, and on asking my sister whether she had done it, and hearing her reply "No," my wife exclaimed, "It is now on my left hand, now on my right." Then Mr. Eglinton said he felt it passing over his hands, then my sister the same; and lastly, I again felt it upon mine. Scarcely had I done so when the note-paper which had been placed upon the table sprang up into the air, and with a fluttering motion like a butterfly's, and quite visibly, passed over my sister's head and disappeared somewhere in the darkness. At the same time a sheet of foolscap which had been, without any purpose, left lying on the writing-table by the front (west) window, dropped with a rustle, and a visible transit over our heads, on to the table at which we were sitting. I next felt something solid *deposited* upon my head, and then let gently down between my hands as they rested upon the table. (No word more aptly describes the sensation I experienced in this and a subsequent phenomenon of a similar character than that I have given,—viz., "deposited." It was as though a soft air cushion were interposed between me and the object, and it was let down upon me with the weight of it thus upheld and prevented from sharply colliding with, or striking against, me.) Feeling the shape of it, and that a small key was inserted in a key-hole in it, I observed, "This must be the tea-caddy." As I said the words, it rose between my hands, and I heard my wife say, "It is resting upon my head." Immediately afterwards it descended and remained upon the table between my hands.

This was followed by the rumbling of a heavy piece of furniture, which sounded as though it were being rapidly rolled along upon castors. "What can that be?" said I. "There is so much crockery and glass about that there is sure to be a smash if any of the tables or heavy things are moved." "Don't be alarmed," remarked Mr. Eglinton; "there is not the least fear of any damage being done. If the clock on the mantelpiece were taken down and placed upon this table, it would be done without stopping the swing of the pendulum." The rumbling noise continued, and my sister ejaculated, "My chair is being twisted round." Almost at the same moment Mr. Eglinton said, "And mine is being taken from under me." "What are you doing, then?" asked I. "I am standing," he said, and immediately added, "Ah, another chair has been placed for me. I am sitting down in it, and it is an arm-chair." "Why," I remarked, "that must be the big arm-chair from near the fire-place." "No," he replied; "it came from the other side, and first struck my left leg." "It hit the back of my chair also," said my wife. (Afterwards I ascertained that at the commencement of the séance it had been in the far east corner of the room.)

"I see a form behind you, Mr. Macrae," next said Mr. Eglinton. "Can I see it if I turn round?" I inquired. "No," he answered, "I have what they call a clairvoyant vision, and can see some things you cannot see. Ah, now there are two forms behind Mrs. Kennedy. They are trying hard to manifest themselves to you." "Don't you see it, Charlie? I do. Now it is whispering in my ear," broke in my sister-in-law. I

leaned forward and looked my hardest, but failed to see anything but a glow of light, which gradually assumed to me a cone or pear shape, and for some seconds remained steadily in position by her left side, and then faded out. (My wife tells me that she saw a dark shadow emerge from behind my sister and gradually resolve itself into this faint moon-like luminosity, which, to her, sitting opposite to it, presented the appearance of two spheres or globes of light side by side, and each about the size of an ordinary dessert plate.)

We were now all speaking together, stating what each observed. At this juncture I was conscious of the feeling of a hand softly passing down my face, and stroking my beard. Both my wife and sister-in-law at the same moment exclaimed, but quietly and with no appearance of excitement or alarm, that they felt hands touching their heads and faces. I again distinctly felt what gave the sensation of a soft hand delicately passing over my features, and directly afterwards, as though the fingers of two hands were playing upon my knees, a quick gentle action as though in the act of tickling, but without communicating any sensation of tickling to me. At the same moment a heavy weight descended upon me, and without hurting me, or the least audible sound, jammed my arms close down upon the table, and there rested upon them. For the first time during the sitting Mr. Eglinton's voice became broken, and his speech apparently laboured and difficult. He almost gasped out, "The air is full of forms, they are surrounding us;" and my wife and sister together exclaimed, "He is rising in the air." Having read of this so-called "levitation," I was all on the alert. I grasped tightly the hands I held of my wife and sister, and said loudly, "Don't lose your heads, stick to me, and don't let go. Have you got hold of Eglinton?" "Yes," they replied. "What is happening?" I asked. "He is going higher. We are standing up, but still have hold of his hands." "Where are you, Eglinton?" I called out. His voice answered *from above*, "My legs are horizontally stretched out above you." I felt something, which may have been his feet. My sister-in-law says she distinctly felt his feet upon her arm. Directly afterwards I heard Mr. Eglinton, with a kind of sob, murmuring "Strike a light, please, Mr. Macrae." I unloosed my hands, and at once struck a match, and found one of the heavy dinner chairs lying across my arms. Lifting it, and putting it on the floor, I hastened round to Mr. Eglinton, who was lying back in the large armchair, in the place where he had been seated at the commencement of the séance, at the table opposite me. He was quite white and colourless, his face and hands were cold and moist, and he appeared much exhausted. I asked him whether I should give him a glass of wine. "No, thank you; just leave me to myself for a few minutes, and I shall be all right," he murmured. He was evidently physically exhausted, and I did as he wished, and proceeded to light the gas and take a survey of the surroundings. The big dinner-waggon of three shelves, on which stood three decanters, a glass jardiniere containing flowers standing on a polished mirror at the very edge of the top shelf, a lot of wine glasses, and four small glass vases holding flowers, and a large carved wooden owl, was standing between the chair on which I had been sitting and the dinner table, with its back towards the front (W.) window. There was only just room for it to pass between the back of the chair on which Mrs. Kennedy had been sitting and the dinner table, and if it had been wheeled straight out from the place against the wall behind Mr. Eglinton, in which it had been at the commencement of the séance, the back would have been turned the other way when it was left in the position in which it was found after the séance. How it had been thus removed without upsetting any of the things upon it I am quite unable to say. I can, however, assert that I believe it would have been almost impossible (certainly vastly improbable) for any man at large in the room to have moved it from where it had been to where it was found, in the total darkness, without running up against some of the other furniture and upsetting some or most of the articles upon it, even if such man had had an accurate knowledge of the position of the other articles of furniture, which it was scarcely possible that Mr. Eglinton could have acquired and retained. In saying this, I do not in any way mean to suggest that he was for a moment at large. I do not believe he was. My wife and sister both positively assert that they never lost hold of his hands, and I was continually conversing with him throughout, and heard his voice from the position in which he would thus have been, viz., directly opposite to, and within a couple of feet of, me. But I merely put the possible hypothesis,

and, for the reasons given, believe it to be demonstrably not the cause of the effect observed. The tea-caddy, which had, at the commencement of the séance, been upon the sideboard in the back room, was upon the table at which we had been sitting. There, also, were the pencil and the sheet of foolscap which had been on the writing-table in the far window in the front room; the note-paper, which had at first been upon the table at which we sat, was lying upon the dinner-table. These are the facts, stated with the utmost precision of which I am capable, of what was to me an entirely novel experience. I am wholly unable to form any opinion as to how they are produced. I am only certain that I had no hand in bringing them about; and I *believe* that they were not, and could not have been, produced by any of the other sitters. My wife and sister-in-law are, of course, out of the question, and I am as convinced as it is possible for a man to be, short of ocular demonstration to the contrary, and relying upon the evidence of my senses, and applying a rational and unbiassed judgment to the matter, that Mr. Eglinton did not produce them by any means within one's common experience of ordinary human physical power. That the facts occurred as I have stated them is as certain to me as that I am writing at this moment, and that I was under no hallucination or allusion as to their occurrence is just as certain. There was no excitement, agitation, or semi-trance upon the part of any of the sitters, and Mr. Eglinton and I especially discussed the phenomena, and conversed quite coolly and rationally throughout until the close of the sitting, when, as I have said, he was partly overcome.

(Signed) C. C. MACRAE.

One or two incidents in the foregoing description I have more personal experience of than my husband. I would first state that Mr. Eglinton held my hand in such a way that I felt *all* his fingers and thumb, also that, owing to the table being very small, and his leaning forward as soon as the phenomena commenced, his arm came into contact with mine, and remained there until he rose in the air.

Being next to Mr. Eglinton I saw what my husband could not, viz., that lights played about the lower part of Eglinton's body. Two, I specially noticed, before my attention was drawn to other phenomena.

One very brilliant but soft star-like light appeared just below his waist, and glowed there for some little time. Another came on the side next me, and ran down his leg, like a slow streak of lightning, disappearing at the ground.

Mr. Eglinton rose in the air gently and slowly, without the least weight being felt. I was only conscious of a slight strain from convulsively grasping his fingers for fear the circle should be broken. He did not seem to me to have, then, any power of holding my hand. His own remained passive. I rose to my full height, and held up my arm as high as I possibly could. He remained in the air, as far as I can judge, for a minute or two, and then descended, equally gently. I heard a slight thud as he touched his armchair again.

The chair that was lifted over our heads, and put in the midst and partially over my husband, was also on me. One of the legs rested on my lap, and the sharp edge of the seat pressed on my bare wrist, not exactly *hurting* it, but giving a disagreeable sensation of weight and sharpness.

When I rose to my feet, this wrist on my left was kept down to the table by the chair.

I am absolutely convinced that there was in the room with us a power or presence, superhuman in every respect, to whom the "darkness was as light," and in whose hands one felt absolutely powerless.

I would also state that at a slate writing-séance with Mr. Eglinton the day before, just as we were leaving off, I asked a question, and the answer written on the slate was:—

"I have no more power to continue now, but we will try to do all we can for you to-morrow evening.—ERNEST."

6, Cambridge-terrace, N.W.

CECILIA MACRAE.

January 16th.

I have little to add to Mr. Macrae's able and exact account of the séance on Friday, 14th, except my experience of the form which he described as "cone or pear-shaped," and my sister as moonlike and assuming the appearance of two spheres or globes of light. I heard a voice murmuring and whispering in my left ear; and saying, "Oh, don't you hear?" I turned round quickly and saw an indistinct white form, taller than my head, close behind me. I said to it, "Please touch me," and it at

once came closer, and I felt what was exactly like a human cheek, soft and smooth and warm, rub down mine gently and, as it seemed to me, lovingly. I exclaimed delightedly to the others, "Oh, can't you see it?" Then the form slowly floated round in front of me and faded into the darkness. They said they saw it when it came in front. It then looked to me like a white luminous globe, about the size of a head, with a projection in the outline, and surrounded by, and falling from it to the table, soft, airy, misty drapery.

I also wish to notice what appeared to me very wonderful. The note-paper lying on the table before us was quite invisible in the darkness, but when it fluttered up it became white, so that we distinctly saw it, and there was no ray of light or reflection to cause this. The lights also, though so beautifully bright, gave out no rays or surrounding light; they seemed cut out of the blackness.

When Mr. Eglington was in the air I was holding him firmly by the hand rather than he holding me, and though I was on tip-toe, and my arm stretched as far above my head as I could reach, and I felt his hand quivering, there was no weight at all. When he began to descend, his feet came across my right bare arm, and the heels of his shoes were distinctly felt by me scraping across my wrist. He then seemed to swing upwards, and directly gasped out, "Get a light," when we found him deposited in his armchair. I never let go of his hand the whole time of the séance, and beyond occasionally breathing hard, he was answering us and speaking naturally the whole time till he rose in the air. I especially noted this during the noises from the far ends of the room; and also when the heavy sideboard came past and directly behind me, he was calm and immovable, though his hand occasionally trembled with a shock which communicated itself to me, running all up one arm and down the other.

Walton House,

FLORENCE KENNEDY.

Lennox-gardens, S. W.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is better 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.]

Fantasies of the Living.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been reading with much interest the massive volumes in which Messrs. Myers, Gurney, and Podmore have embodied the results of their investigation into what they are pleased to call *Phantasms of the Living*. No praise, as it seems to me, can be too high to bestow upon the industry with which the compilation has been made. If the Society for Psychical Research should accomplish nothing else, this would always remain as a sufficient memorial of its usefulness. It is an immense storehouse of facts invaluable to the student of psychical phenomena.

To look such a gift-horse in the mouth may seem ungracious. And yet it is impossible for the single-minded seeker after truth not to wish that he might have been permitted to have the facts without the theorising. In that case the facts would have naturally arranged themselves into certain distinct groups, the relation of which to each other would have gradually become more clear, as the work of unprejudiced investigation should have thrown more light upon them. As it is, we are never suffered to regard them simply as they are, but as they may be twisted and wrested by a relentless process of intellectual torsion into exemplifications of a theory still in its infancy, and as despotically inclined as infants usually are. The very title of the work is the epigram of a prepossession. If words have not lost their meaning, and all medical science be not foolishness, then case after case recorded in these pages is a *Phantasm of the Dead*. But because this would not fit in with the telepathic theory, we are gravely informed that (for the purposes of this theory) life may be considered to continue for about twelve hours after death! One might at least have expected that, for a statement to the full as startling as any contained in the whole work, some medical authority would have been cited. But no; the portentous announcement is made as if it were the merest commonplace of experience. And then we are bidden to believe that the work is an honest attempt at investigation on a *scientific* basis!

Again, with respect to so-called clairvoyance, the most desperate and painful efforts are made throughout the work to bring all such cases under the category of transferred impressions. In other words, there is running through the book a

tone of persistent prejudice very far removed from the true scientific spirit. The impression intended to be left on the mind of the reader is not merely that the theory of telepathy is true—which in many cases is probable enough—but that any and every other theory in respect of these matters is false; and that, if there were any cases in which the utmost efforts of the energetic authors could not make the theory fit the facts,—why, that then there would no doubt be some mistake in the facts.

Now I am not generally supposed—at least by your readers—to err on the side of over-credulity. But knowing as I do that certain psychical phenomena are quite possible which telepathy absolutely fails to explain, I think it only right, in the interests of true science, to protest against an elaborate attempt to give this theory an undue preponderance. Three years ago, when I was in the habit of making experiments, I repeatedly gave unseen cards, carefully secured in envelopes, to subjects under mesmeric influence, and found that they could tell me what they were. Telepathy quite fails to explain this; and, that being so, I do not see why we should be asked to believe in telepathy as the only possible explanation of a variety of phenomena which, on the face of them, suggest some very different explanation. Knowing as I do "near clairvoyance" to be a fact, I am prepared to accept "far clairvoyance," if proved on sufficient evidence—which has not yet reached me—and I resent the unscientific arbitrariness which insists upon forcing telepathy upon me as the one and only explanation of psychical phenomena.

No doubt from time to time the cat is let out of the bag in a measure by the hints scattered throughout the two volumes that the average intelligence of the age is dead against "gaseous" and "vaporous" ghosts, but just ripe for telepathy. It may be so. The current belief of any age is of very little importance. It is pretty sure to be wrong. But it is a real misfortune when science, attempting to translate the instincts of one age into the knowledge of the next, wilfully chooses too narrow a formula. This is just what has been done by the ingenious patentees of telepathy. And as a consequence, their book, which necessarily marks an epoch in the history of psychical research, may have a cramping effect on future investigators; and some later century, seeing the broad basis of collected fact and the slender edifice of acknowledged truth, will have to lament over the poor victims of a too exiguous theory.—Faithfully yours,

Montagu House, Norwood.

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

Mesmeric Experiments at Cambridge.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The last *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research contains an account of certain mesmeric experiments carried on last month at Cambridge, through my instrumentality, by Messrs. Myers, Langley, Hodgson, and other members of the Society named. The bald and meagre narrative consists almost exclusively of a description of one experiment in thought-transference which the investigators, as it appears now, conceive to have been accomplished by a code of trickery concerted between my sensitive and myself. I will not ask you for the space that would be required to enable me to describe the experiment, the extravagant hypothesis of the Cambridge party, the circumstances under which they have been led into the blunder of supposing that they verified this hypothesis, and the detailed explanations which I am quite ready to give to any properly qualified audience. I will for the moment be content to point out the absurdity involved in the Cambridge accusation, in so far as my sensitive is supposed by my accusers to have been in what they are pleased to call "a light hypnotic trance," all the while she is alleged to have been co-operating with me in a common conjuring trick, to perform which she must have had her usual physical wits about her. I will add that the Cambridge professors verified this "light hypnotic trance" at their own discretion the whole time with needles, a galvanic battery, and *ammonia* placed under her nose. As proved by these tests my sensitive was really in a state of profound insensibility during the experiments referred to.

My object in writing to you is, first of all, to protest with indignation against the wholly false charge made against me with all the authority of the Society's *Journal*, on the basis of Mr. Hodgson's mere suspicion—as foolish, in view of the state of things just described, as it is groundless in reality. Secondly, to offer through you, if you will be good enough to assist the cause of justice, so cruelly outraged in my person by the Cambridge professors, to repeat the impugned experiments *ad infinitum*, under any variety of conditions, before any properly

qualified committee of gentlemen who may be willing to bear testimony to the truth, whatever they may find it to be. I shall be ready to accept any committee whom you may consider satisfactory, but I do hope that some four or five gentlemen of standing in connection with psychic inquiry and of weight in the world at large, may be ready to act in this matter and determine how far I am justly made the butt of the shameful misrepresentations put forward in the *S. P. R. Journal*.—I have the honour to be, sir, yours obediently,

H. D'AUQUIER.

"Matthew Jenkins."
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you allow me to suggest to "J. M. M.," the writer of the interesting account, "How I Investigated Spiritualism," &c., in "LIGHT" of this date, that it would be very important to ascertain if the parish registers of Lowestoft go back to the time of Queen Anne, and if any such name as "Matthew Jenkins" occurs among the births, marriages, or deaths there at that period. There is much probability that a tradesman of the place, at a time when migrations were less frequent than now, would have gone through one or other of the events requiring registration—birth, marriage, or death of his children, if any, would give an additional chance—though I believe that registrations were not very strictly enforced formerly.

Matthew Jenkins, fishmonger, Lowestoft, *tempore* Queen Anne, is such a refreshing change from the more imposing personages (other than relatives) who usually communicate, that one would not willingly neglect any chance of verification. I remember, indeed, having my hopes once similarly excited, and (I hope not similarly) disappointed, when I was sent to Kensal Green on a fool's errand by a "message," automatically written, giving details of name, and place, and date of burial. The writer of the message (who was certainly not hoaxing me) was somehow so convinced that it was a hoax that he would not make the inquiry himself. But I rather conceive that the origin of these inventions is more often akin to that of the realistic fictions of dream.—Your obedient servant,

February 12th.

C. C. M.

Hypnotic Schools of Paris and Nancy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of February 5th, I observe a letter from Mr. Omerin, discussing the points now at issue between the hypnotic schools of Nancy and Paris. It is only natural that such differences should arise in dealing with phenomena which are so little understood as those now occurring, and I agree with your correspondent in thinking that it is premature to formulate theories in regard to them. Thus, when Dr. Bernheim says that he is unable to confirm the distinct phases of lethargy, catalepsy, and somnambulism by personal observation, I account for it by the fact that he has not first formulated Dr. Charcot's theory that they can exist. I witnessed some experiments a few days ago at the Salpêtrière, conducted by Dr. Babinski on Charcot's theory, in which the three conditions were distinctly manifested.

In the lethargic condition the patient was absolutely unconscious of external surroundings, and could neither see, hear, nor feel. If a limb was lifted it fell helplessly, nor was verbal hypnotic suggestion possible, the patient being unable to receive it. When, therefore, Dr. Bernheim asserts "that in order to put a limb into a state of catalepsy, it is not necessary to open the eyes of the hypnotics as they do in the Salpêtrière; it suffices to lift the limb, hold it raised, and in case of necessity, declare that the hypnotic cannot lower it, and the limb remains in subjective catalepsy," he seems to ignore the fact that a condition of hypnotism may exist, be it called lethargy, or by any other name, in which the process he describes is not possible. The moment the eyes of the patient were opened her condition underwent a marked change. She was still apparently stone deaf, but developed a high degree of nervous sensitiveness. Her limbs remained in any position in which they were placed, but flexible, until the muscles were touched, when they stiffened. The paralysis with which one side of her body was afflicted was transferred to the other, by simply having the eye on the paralysed side opened, and closing the eye on the other. Reversing the process reversed the sensibility to pain. This was done several times; the consciousness of the patient to pin pricks depending upon which eye was open. Up to this point,

Dr. Babinski declared the patient to be insensible to hypnotic suggestion. To render her so, he had to throw her into the somnambulant state, by rubbing her forehead for a second. She now became open to suggestion. The whole condition changed at once, and many interesting experiments were made. After this another patient was introduced; the two were then thrown into a cataleptic condition, placed back to back with a screen between them, and the movements made by the one were repeated by the other without any hypnotic suggestion. My explanation of the difference which has arisen between Drs. Charcot and Bernheim is simply this, that they each have their theories, and the patient, being merely a reflection of those theories, acts according to Dr. Bernheim's theory when under his treatment, and under Dr. Charcot's when under his. Hypnotic suggestion does not need to be verbal, and the attitude of mind of the operator is responded to by the patient.

Any attempt at scientific classification of these forces by empirical observation, will prove utterly unsatisfactory. They will vary in their manifestation with every operator, and while I rejoice that they have at last forced themselves upon the notice of scientific men with a persistence which would not be denied, the latter will find that they have entered upon a region where they will be compelled to discard alike their old methods and prejudices, and admit the existence of an unseen world, and of the moral and physical forces which connect us with it.

Paris, February 9th.

LAURENCE OLIPHANT.

Have Animals Souls?
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have recently had some curious experiences, which I should like to narrate, in order to ascertain whether others of your readers have had experiences of a similar kind.

This evening, while talking to a friend (whose letter I enclose), I was startled by the form of a small white dog that passed along the floor in front of us. I was seated in a chair by the fire, and my friend was standing by the mantelpiece. It *disappeared* in the centre of the room. My friend looked down, and I asked him if he saw it. The door was shut, and we searched the room. No animal of any description was to be found.

The other night I woke and saw the appearance of a dog sitting by my bedside, on the carpet. As I looked at it, it looked up at me, and lay down, still looking up at me affectionately. I went to touch it, and it vanished!

The form was like that of a dog I had for twelve years, of the name of "Figaro." It died about a year before my late husband, to whom it was much attached.

My youngest girl, eight years old, lately formed an attachment to a large retriever which lived next door. The dog died, and three days after its death my little girl said she saw it as she got into bed. She was wide awake. She said that "it was standing by the window, that it looked at her, and then disappeared into the curtain."

Several years ago my husband brought with us from Australia a cockatoo. We kept it a few years, when my husband departed for the higher life. The bird pined after him. One night I awoke and saw it fly through my room and disappear in the window. I felt sure it had got loose, but could not see it. In the morning it was found dead in its cage, and the door shut. I always lock my door at night.

J. C.

I was present with Mrs. C. on the occasion referred to in her letter. We were sitting in the drawing-room, which was well lighted and presented a cheerful appearance. Suddenly I noticed a white form like a dog, and at the same moment Mrs. C. said: "Did you see that dog cross the room?" I replied in the affirmative, and immediately searched the room, but no animal was to be found. Mrs. C. then told me she recognised the "appearance" as that of a pet dog of hers, long since deceased. I have much pleasure in adding my testimony to the great and incontestable evidence in support of spiritual phenomena, and remain, yours faithfully,

Fairfield House, Folkestone.

W. B. LUMLEY.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE, Winchester Hall, 33, High-street, Peckham.—On Sunday last we were favoured with a good address by Mr. J. Humphries, on "God and Science." There was a large attendance. Next Sunday, at seven, Mr. J. A. Butcher, trance-speaker, will give an address, subject—"Spiritualism: Its Purposes."—W. E. LONG., Hon. Secretary, 9, Pasley-road, Walworth.

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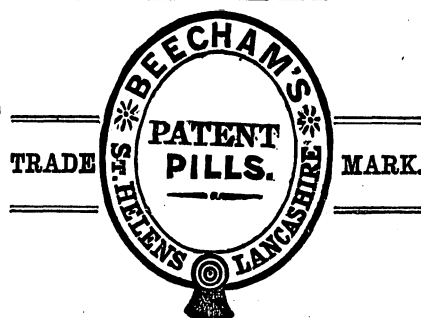
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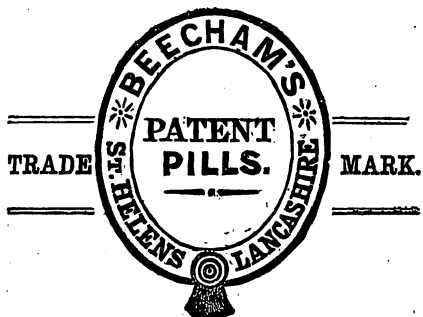
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