

# Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

### WEAK AND STRONG POINTS IN SPIRITUALISM. PART II.

Coming now to what Mr. Abbott considers to be weak points in the way of the advancement of Spiritualism, *i.e.*, not in the thing itself, but in the way of its general acceptance by the world, he first notices the vast number of mediums (in the United States) "who are alleged mediums for revenue only," *i.e.*, pretenders who cheat by fraudulent pretence of mediumship. This is an old question which has never caused much anxiety in this country, but which, I am told, is a very serious evil in the States. Respecting it I will only say that so long as the public wishes to be deceived, it will be deceived. So long as it expects the heavenly host, and especially its own friends, at a given hour every evening on the payment of a dollar or two, it will get something as silly as its own expectations. All the great ones will be brought up to tickle the poor creature's vanity, and to talk rubbish at his will. This is the residuum, not yet eliminated, which early bad methods of investigation left to us. It has to be faced and sternly denounced, not overtly or covertly apologised for. And this the more because, unless some professed mediums are slandered, nefarious practices flourish in America under cover of this much-abused mediumship. But let it not be forgotten that the so-called investigator is more to blame than the medium. A study of the common conditions of mediumship should always precede any experimental investigation in the circle. If the Seybert Commission had been properly constituted, and if it had made a theoretical study of the evidence before it rushed in to deal in hot haste with some mediums at least whom it was folly to deal with at all: if it had been patient instead of hasty, well-informed instead of ignorant, we should not have seen the Preliminary Report just issued.

The next point taken is the irregularity and uncertainty of the phenomena. That *must needs be* so long as we have to reckon with unseen intelligences of whom we have no real knowledge, acting by means with which we have only an empirical acquaintance. We come back again here to the necessity for more patient study, and less ubiquitous desire in season and out of season to convert people to our own beliefs. No doubt when A witnesses certain things, and tells of them to B, who fails altogether to verify A's experience, a distinct injury is done to both parties. A intensifies B's scepticism, B suspects A's "mental make-up" as cranky and unsound. Perhaps if A had selected the right B it might have been otherwise; for not every

B can get what every A gets. But seeing that this "discerning of the spirit" of his B is not in the power of every A, would it not be better for the A to leave the B alone till he himself knows more of his subject; or at least to wait till B knocks before he throws the door open? A long experience leads me to say that much harm is done by indiscriminate proselytising; and especially by recounting to the absolutely inexperienced marvels that his mental stomach cannot digest.

I am not impressed by the next point, which I hardly recognise as any special obstacle to the spread of Spiritualism. Men of learning and science differ about it. They do; and they differ about many other things. Dr. Tyndall differs from Dr. Charlton Bastian on the question of spontaneous generation. The orthodox men of science have differed from their more advanced brethren in every age of the world, from the days when they refused to look through Galileo's telescope to these latter days when they first hailed Mr. Crookes as a Daniel come to judgment when he equipped himself for the investigation of Spiritualism. "Now we shall get at the truth," they cried—and turned to rend him, when, instead of cursing, he blessed it; instead of dealing with it as the manner of some is, he patiently investigated and boldly affirmed the truth of what he found. No doubt these feeble minds, "slight unmeritable men, fit to be sent on errands," who swallow what they are told to swallow by that particular man of science on whom they pin their faith, are perturbed by this difference of opinion. I have never been able to see the difference between such and the people who accept their doom to all eternity from the lips of their pet preacher. There will be to the end of time people who are afraid to think for themselves: as there will be people who are consoled by "that blessed word Mesopotamia," and terrified by the roll of the "pulpit drum ecclesiastic." It cannot be helped: they cannot be cured, and may easily be endured. No doubt also there are those who regard the fact that a biologist, a surgeon, a geologist, an archæologist, and a chemist cannot agree as to the reality of certain phenomena (which perhaps only one of them has found time to investigate) as a serious impediment to the making up of their own minds. But that is vastly unimportant. It is a waste of time, valuable time which might profitably be spent in extending our own knowledge, to take any pains for their conversion.

In the next weak point I see more reason. Almost every new discovery has in its time been put down either to spirits, or to the arch-spirit of evil, the devil. And when men, even now, are brought in relation to a subject so little known as this confessedly is, it may well be that they may attribute, at times, to the intervention of external agents that which has a subjective origin within themselves. The study of the brain functions has received a tremendous impetus within recent years. The study of hypnotism and automatism in France and in this country has been in the highest degree fruitful. We may anticipate with hope the researches of the coming years in this direction. He will

be the wise man who will steer a level course between two opposing dangers. There are Spiritualists so heroic as to put every unexplainable occurrence down to spirits, and who bring discredit on their cause by claims that are obviously and openly not maintainable, and there are Spiritualists so palpably gullible as to work to the same end. This is Scylla on the one side. On the other hand lies the Charybdis into which those are likely to fall who, having a theory, which is good so far as it goes, strain it in such a way as to force it to cover what all who are not in love with it can see that it will not cover. These are the victims of a dominant idea: and as a result they will give no fair treatment to the claims of the moderate Spiritualist, whom they will never persuade to oust from their plane of action those spirits whom he knows to be the chief factor in all that has made him what he is. There may be, probably there are, subsidiary causes, even in himself (for is he not a spirit too?) but they are interesting rather than very highly important.

#### A CHAPTER FROM AN UNPUBLISHED BOOK.

[We have received the subjoined communication from Mr. James Curtis, of Ballarat. Mr. Curtis is of English birth, a native of Fordinbridge, Hants, but has been settled in Australia for many years. He is an active worker in the cause of Spiritualism.]

"The issue of 'LIGHT,' of October 6th, 1886, containing evidence for the reality of psychography, did not come directly under my notice till within the past fortnight. After perusing the large amount of evidence given in favour of the genuineness of spirit manifestation, I bethought me that further testimony of spirits writing on slates might not be unacceptable to the English people at home as coming from your antipodes. In 1883, I was for two or three months disabled, and almost confined to my house, when I gathered around me piles of manuscripts of Spiritualistic literature, which had accumulated from time to time, and wrote, or rather compiled, a book for the press. My work is entitled *Rustlings in the Golden City from Over the Great Sea (of Death)*. Ballarat, whence issued so many millions of gold, in this part of the world is frequently termed the 'Golden City,' or the 'Golden Metropolis'; and as I intended my book for publication by Trübner, in London, the allusion to the 'Great Sea' between England and Australia, and the 'Great Sea (of Death)' is easily apprehended. When I had my volume completed, and had quite recovered from my indisposition, I received a request from a high spirit, with whom I was in communication, that I would not, or not yet, publish my book. This in no way referred to the present short chapter, which I offer to you for publication in 'LIGHT,' but to Chapter XII., which is a long one, and contains reports of about half-a-dozen sittings with a clairvoyant and trance medium, with whom I have had over 100 sésances alone. The medium's mediumistic powers were not confined to clairvoyance and trance, but included such phases as raps, which occurred at every sitting, and I have calculated that sometimes not less than a thousand distinct loud spirit raps have been heard at a single séance; spirit lights, large lights which moved about the room in all directions and conveyed intelligence; touches by materialised spirit hands; occasionally the independent spirit voice, &c. In trance, it was very wonderful how spirits, my own immediate friends and relatives, and also ancient spirits who seemed as leaders in the high spheres of spirit-life, could fluently talk to me, and in such magnificent language; but it was during clairvoyance that my medium was most remarkable. I have read, I think, most of the best books that have been published in the English language on Modern Spiritualism, but I have

met with no clairvoyant of the same class with powers so high as this lady medium. On return to consciousness she knows nothing whatever of what has been spoken or enacted during the trance period. Clairvoyance with her is a sort of semi-trance, or very light entrancement, during which she can, after release, often remember much that has occurred. I will describe the process. The medium and I sit together, at three in the afternoon, a small oblong table between us; she lays her hands on the table, when I place my right hand on her left, and my left on her right, and after quietly waiting awhile either trance or clairvoyance generally ensues. Clairvoyance occurred only when we could command our best conditions, and the atmosphere was clear and bright. The better the conditions, both atmospherically and otherwise, the lighter the entrancement necessary, and the grander the results. One of the spirit-guides was always then ready to conduct her to the spirit-spheres, and sometimes to worlds other than ours, when she would describe to me, in her own language, what she saw and heard, and felt. Sometimes her spirit-guide led her into the midst of the very lowest places of darkened, abject spirit-life, to 'spirits in prison,' and the light we were enabled to carry assisted many to rise out of their miserable abodes to commence a new life in a higher sphere. Every spirit-sphere to perhaps the highest that mortal can visit has been reached, and incidents in it have been clairvoyantly described. In the clairvoyant's numerous flights through space to spirit-spheres she sometimes passed millions of stars and planets, some of immense magnitudes, to which she compared our earth as 'a drop in the ocean.' Some of these giant worlds' inhabitants with their surroundings have been described to me, the races being colossal and of higher standard, mentally, morally, and physically, than earth's peoples; but everywhere, as here, the physical system was subject to change and mortality. I will quote a short paragraph from the last chapter in my book. 'Circumstances and conditions permitting' (notwithstanding all I have said, the medium and I never sat under the best conditions that could, under other circumstances, have been obtained, as surrounding noises, and unavoidable liability to interruption, &c., always acted prejudicially to the very best results being had), 'I could, I feel assured, with this travelling clairvoyant, under the direction of her powerful spirit-guides, visit and examine and give an intelligent account of any of the millions of worlds or planets material, and spheres spiritual, in a large part of the universe, from a human or earthly point of view, and thus enrich all science, all history, and all religion.' I am not going to try to explain how my clairvoyant could sit in a small room with myself and tell me what is being said and done millions of miles distant; but I have proved the accuracy of her powers of seeing and hearing what took place at the moment of their occurrence at a distance of 700 miles. And if the description and exact words of three people conversing in a small sitting-room, strangers to both of us, at the above-named distance of 700 miles, could be repeated to me, as they were, then I see but little more difficulty in my clairvoyant describing what is being enacted at distances of 7,000,000 of miles from the earth. I have deemed it expedient to give this explanatory matter regarding Chapter XII., which I am requested not yet to publish. The chapter below may seem perhaps, a little incongruous, but it must be remembered that it is taken without alteration from an unpublished book of thirteen chapters. The fourth chapter contains a report of Mr. Slade's sitting with an investigating circle in Ballarat. I trust your readers will find this literary production a not uninteresting sort of corroborative evidence of Mr. Eglinton's medial powers of communication with those who have 'gone over' to the spirit world.—I am, dear sir, yours,

"Ballarat.

"JAMES CURTIS.

"June 8th, 1887.

A Chapter from an Unpublished Book by James Curtis, Ballarat, Australia.

SITTINGS WITH MR. SLADE.

"Facts are more useful when they contradict than when they support received theories."—SIR HUMPHREY DAVY.

"A newly-discovered fact may overthrow the opinion of a lifetime. One little truth, one single ray of light, may remove the folly of years."

I had many "sittings" with Mr. Slade: perhaps a dozen alone, and four or five with one, two, or three others present.

At both his visits to Ballarat he stayed at Lester's Hotel. He brought no apparatus with him; slates and pencils he purchased at the nearest stationer's shop. He borrowed from me a small mahogany table, which I bought in London in 1862, the Kensington Exhibition year. It (the table) had a hanging flap on each side of a centre board; and when the flaps were raised a surface of about three feet six inches square was formed. It moved easily on castors, and had a small drawer at one end, fitting under the centre board.

Proximately on the delivery of the table at the hotel I placed it in the centre of the drawing-room floor, and Mr. Slade immediately sat with me for the purpose of communing with the spirit-world. The large city clock in the vicinity seemed looking with its broad face directly through the windows down upon us; its hands, both perpendicularly pointing to the sky, marked the hour of noon, which was verified by the chimes of four quarters and the booming of twelve sonorous peals.

Slade's hands and mine were flat on the table. We had been sitting thus but a few minutes, leisurely chatting, when a hand came up between my arms, apparently from my knees, and moved about over the table directly before my face, and then passed back again in the direction whence it came. This hand was as visible, as distinct, as defined, as clear to me as any object could be in the broad daylight moving at distances varying from twelve to thirty inches from my steadily gazing organs of sight. Moreover, it was the hand of one whom I knew. I recognised it the moment it appeared to me, although such an exhibition was antecedently unthought of. It was the exact form of the hand of one whom I had known, who died in Southampton more than thirty years ago, and which I had seen thousands of times.

I now believe that the spirit-owner "materialised" this mark of identity—this copy of her hand—for the purpose of inducing me to overcome the remains of my scepticism regarding a future life, and of thoroughly confirming me in the belief and knowledge that those who are gone from us are not dead but still retain their individuality, or personality, and might under favourable circumstances still hold converse with, and exhibit their identity to, the denizens of earth.

No doubt I had up to this time many tests which would be regarded by most as more than sufficient proofs of the reality of the spirit-world; but, as I have already said, my one desire was for exact truth at all hazards, and I was still intently watchful and guarded lest I should deceive myself or be in any way deceived. It was really difficult to give up notions, some of which had had many years', or a life-time's, growth, in favour of new ideas, even although presented in the shape of pleasing palpable facts.

We continued this sitting, when other hands, both large and small, appeared momentarily above the table; and several times at subsequent sittings I saw the hand of my friend exactly as I knew it "long, long ago."

We got a little slate-writing. Other manifestations of power were shown, such as raising the table in the air, and moving chairs, other than those we sat on, in various parts of the room, all without visible contact. My watch, at this séance, and one subsequently, was taken from my waistcoat pocket and dangled about in the air in all directions before me, and finally gently laid on the table.

At subsequent sittings I obtained on slates more messages purporting to come from those whom I had known in earth-life, the language generally couched in affectionate and loving terms; and although I had many slatefuls of communications, I will only refer to one other message that was written to me.

I think it was about the fifth or sixth séance which I had with Mr. Slade, in Ballarat, when I took two large Faber's school slates; the medium placed a grain of pencil between them and then held them in his right hand thumb and fingers on my shoulder close to my ear. I heard the writing progress line after line from the top to the bottom. On one of the slates was

written a long message which bore the signature of one who was very dear to me.

\* \* \* \* \*

At one of our séances, whilst some slate-writing was being performed, Slade remarked: "I see the name of the writer in large letters, on your coat sleeve." He read the letters of the name, which were the same as the signature proved to be on the grapholite. After this our conversation turned on Foster, the medium, and the blood-like writing on bare arms, &c. Mr. Slade said: "Perhaps writing will come on your bare arm as well as on your coat sleeve. I should like to see." Immediately, I took off my coat and tucked up my shirt-sleeve high above the elbow joint; but after watching for some length of time he said he could perceive no trace of letters. The day being warm, my arm remained bare during the remainder of this sitting. At this, and every other séance, I felt hands about my knees. I placed my arm under the table for the purpose of trying whether I might be touched on the bare limb. The result to me was marvellous; for almost immediately I felt a soft warm hand clasp my wrist, and then pass up and down my arm in a soothing and caressing manner, at times grasping firmly around the muscles, and, perhaps, performing all that a naked hand could caressingly do on a bare arm. I mentally requested to be pinched, which desire was at once complied with. I again silently wished to be pinched hard in two or three places so that I would carry the marks for some time imprinted on my arm. This, too, was also carried into effect, and during the next three or four days I was enabled to show these marks to my friends. I also desired that my arm should be squeezed with sufficient pressure to retain awhile the imprint of the acting hand and fingers. The force of a tight grip was at once realised; but, on examination, only the print of the fingers could be seen, and these also disappeared after a short time. This kind of communion continued about a quarter of an hour, and it must be borne in mind that Mr. Slade's hands with my right, were on the table, whilst my other hand and arm, furthest from Mr. Slade, were under the table.

At another sitting, a very large materialised spirit took hold of mine and also left its impress on my wrist by deep indentations of large nails of the first, second, and third fingers. The evidence of these marks of favour, though rather severe, I carried several days, and was pleased to show them to many persons.

Often, incidentally, I "dropped in" at Slade's hotel for a little chat. He said he never saw me enter his room without being accompanied by a spirit. From the description he gave I had no difficulty in recognising who it was. Mr. Slade was clairvoyant, and saw the same spirit moving about the room generally during my presence there, and expressed his astonishment that I could not see the spirit of my friend also.

A lady took part in a séance with Mr. Slade and myself. Many manifestations of power occurred, all of which it is not necessary to describe, as the account would be similar in many respects to what I have already written; but several spirit-hands appeared over the table, and the lady got messages in slate-writing from her own friends. She held her slates in her own hand, independently of both Mr. Slade and myself, and obtained one slateful, in our own language, and another in what appeared to me to be an ancient tongue which none of us knew anything of, but I observed that it was carefully and well written.

Another lady, about eighteen years of age, wished me to accompany her to a séance with Mr. Slade. We trudged off, carrying two new slates which had just been selected from a stationer's shop. Many of the usual phenomena took place. In a minute or two after we were seated the medium put a question to the visitants from the spheres as to whether any would write for the young lady. In the language of raps "Yes" was given in reply. In a short time there was written on her own slate, held by Slade on her shoulder, a full page bearing a message from, and signed by, her old schoolmistress who had been in spirit-land four or five years. This writing was effaced with a sponge. She now regrets that she did not either copy the message or carry away the slate with the writing on it. Immediately after the foregoing, the same slate was again filled with writing in a like manner on her shoulder, and contained three messages: the first in German, the second in English, and the third in French. This slate has been kept and photographs taken of the writing. Soon after the writing was completed, as she was quietly sitting, she was suddenly levitated, or lifted in mid-air, in the chair on which she was seated. She rose with

the chair a foot or more from the floor, and both remained thus some time suspended in the air without visible support. This seemed rather wonderful. I had placed the chairs and table in position myself immediately before we all sat down!

After we left the hotel drawing-room, I asked her what she thought of it all. She said it was most extraordinary, and she could not understand it; but she felt sure of the absence of all trickery. It was the first time she had witnessed Spiritual manifestations; and I believe she has never had another opportunity of witnessing any from that time to this.

Mr. Slade told me that he rarely sat for materialisations of full forms. His usual custom was to sit for slate-writing, when, sometimes, at intervals, materialised hands and other phenomena occurred, such as have already been referred to. His objections to sit for this kind of evidence of manifest appearance of spirits in full bodily form were, firstly, that he did not like to do so since it took away too much of his vitality, and left him for a while very weak; and, secondly, he preferred all to be done in the fullest light. However, he consented to sit with me in semi-darkness to try what could be got. Altogether, we sat four times for "materialisations," with varying success. Three of these sittings were held in Ballarat and one in Melbourne.

Our first experiment, or rather trial, took place one evening at Lester's Hotel. I placed the table about four or five feet from the west wall of the room. He sat at the end of the table furthest from the wall, whilst I took my position on the north side. The gas light was toned down, not so much but that every object in the room could be distinctly seen. Our hands were placed one over another in a single pile. We sat very still about ten minutes when I observed something between myself and the wall. When my attention was first drawn towards it, it was about the size and colour of a gentleman's high-crowned whitish-grey felt hat. This, cloud-like in appearance, rapidly grew till it reached the full size of a female form. The apparition formed, approached, and glided on to the top of the table. I could distinctly see the feet and arms, the full dress, and all the form except the face, which seemed to be covered with a veil. The dress appeared to me the most beautiful I ever beheld; it was of bright sheeny silvery grey, or greyish shining white. The drapery was perfect and the form graceful. The materialised spirit moved, glided, and even stamped on the table and shook it considerably. I could hear, too, the rustling of the dress both before and after she glided on to the table. The form then dissolved and faded from my sight. We continued very still a further space of about a quarter of an hour, when I once more observed a similar cloud of magnetism gather as before. I write "magnetism" because I do not know what other term to give the cloud-like whitish-grey vapour that was forming so close to me, and I have heard others so name this kind of whitish cloud so often seen in Spiritualist circles. This cloud enlarged till the full form appeared in elegant dress as before, and as I have attempted to describe. The form again glided on to the table, and bent her beautiful figure in three graceful bows before me, each bending deliberate and low, the head coming within five or six inches of my face. The dress rustled at each movement. The face was veiled as before. It then disappeared, gradually melting away like the first materialisation.

No other form appeared, although we sat awhile longer; but a spirit hand found its way into my inside breast coat pocket and drew from thence a letter and shook and rattled it before my face, and then gently dropped it on the table. I had but this one letter in my pocket, but the hand again glided in and moved about at the full depth of the pocket as if in search of something more, when it rested and dissolved in the aperture of my coat. Our séance here ended.

At subsequent sittings with this gentleman I saw several materialised spirit heads and faces. Twice I thought I recognised the features, but they were a little too quick in fading away for me to pronounce on the likeness with certainty: the bust was complete in both cases, with belt around the waist in which was fastened a bunch of small roses. Immediately after these last-named two materialisations the medium became entranced, and the control spoke to me, very earnestly, in eloquent language, of the spirit-world, and how those interested in me would endeavour to impress good and beautiful thoughts on my mind, &c. He (the control) said my dear friend had tried hard to materialise herself and appear to me, but had partially failed owing to the medium's restlessness and excessive nervousness. The control then referred to events that had

taken place more than thirty years ago, of the knowledge of which I had considered myself the sole custodian.

This and other addresses which I have listened to through the medium were all of such an earnest and impressive character that the effects will, I suppose, always remain in my mind. None, I am sure, could have heard as I heard without being the better for the hearing.

The medium observed to me, at our last sitting together, that he believed more phenomena had been obtained in my presence, through him, than had been got in the presence of any other individual at his sésances, considering the number of sittings. He attributed the cause of this to my quiet watchfulness and unobtrusive non-interference with the manifestations, and to my rarely asking questions at sésances, but receiving whatever form of spirit communion the people from the other world chose to present to me.

If Mr. Slade should ever scan this, his memory will no doubt recur to me and to the various phenomena with which I was favoured; and I now publicly thank him for his uniform kindness, and for all the communications I have had through his mediumship from those "loved and lost,"\* from whom, but a brief period in the past, I never anticipated ever hearing "two words"\* spoken to me on this side of the grave.

### THE PREJUDICES OF THE "ENLIGHTENED" WITH REGARD TO THOSE OF THE SUPERSTITIOUS.

From *The Prejudices of Mankind*, by Baron Hellenbach.

TRANSLATED BY "V."

Contents — PUBLIC OPINION—SUPERSTITION—THE NUMBER THIRTEEN—FRIDAY—DAY AND NIGHT—THE KIBITZ—ALCHEMISTS—ASTROLOGERS—MAGICIANS.

(Continued from page 369.)

Now, as to the assumption that metals can be analysed, this idea of the alchemists must not be condemned as altogether wrong. In the first place, it is a striking fact that nine-tenths of the elements nearly coincide with metals, which last have a striking resemblance in their qualities, while the chemical particles might yet be very dissimilar, and belong to the non-metallic elements. The family resemblance between metals is unmistakable, says Professor Schmieder, and, therefore, something in common amongst them must be recognised. In the second place, matters described more correctly as elementary, on account of their fluidity, must be distinguished; simple elements are always very difficult to describe and define, and are in great need of combination—metals, however, are the most solid and dense bodies known, and therefore according to all probability are not simple. In the third place the electro-chemical theory of chemists has already decided that the heavier metals must be recognised as hydrates. And in the fourth place, the spectral analysis has discovered a certain affinity in several kinds of metals.

We see that science as usual, through its self-conceit and careless way of arriving at conclusions, is guilty of a grave error in declaring alchemists only fit to be laughed at, and metals to be simple and incapable of being resolved into their separate elements. Instead of saying, "Up to the present time we have not succeeded in analysing metals," science says, "I cannot analyse these metals, therefore they are not analysable."

The fact that we can produce aluminium from clay and quicksilver from vermilion, justifies the assertions of alchemists that there is a powder from which metals may be formed. Sixteen parts sulphur and a hundred parts quicksilver produce a red powder called vermilion, from which I can again extract the quicksilver, so it cannot be looked upon as an altogether unjustifiable idea for alchemists to have believed in the possibility of such powders or tinctures, and ascribed to sulphur the colouring matter of one of the metals. If we could, in fact, produce mixtures which are either yellow, golden, white, or silvery, it would evidently only be a question of experience if and when the peculiar lesser elements of the metals would be found. Every worker in gold and chemist will allow that gold itself of equal standard and without perceptible alloy has a different colour and cohesion, which fact speaks against its being a simple metal.

Therefore the entire question rests upon the decision whether

\* The quoted words, "loved and lost," and "two words," have reference to a quotation, in the preface, from Mons. E. Renan: "If we could but once a year exchange two words with our loved and lost, death would be no longer death."

such transmutations really ever have taken place, and whether such so-called adepts have ever existed. Let us first enter upon the question of the existence of the supposed adepts.

In this domain, as in all other branches of knowledge and discovery, it is quite within the bounds of comprehension that impostors and swindlers should have been found, who preyed upon the superstition and credulity of their contemporaries; of these we are not speaking. Of the others we must make a distinction between the gilders and those who produced mixtures resembling gold and silver from certain transmutations. Even these must be divided into two essentially different classes, those of whom it was asserted that they were in possession of the tincture, and those who were able to produce it, and who therefore were veritable adepts, of whom, according to Professor Schmieder, only five have ever been known to exist: Setonius, Philaetha, Wagnereck, Laskaris, and Sehfeld. However exhaustive a knowledge of the history of alchemy, Schmieder may possess, this fact is not proved by his writings; for allowing that they have fabricated considerable quantities of the tincture, this circumstance may be explained by the fact that the whole of their lives they had secured the renown of being real adepts. The facts which he brings forward are solely limited to accounts of the projection of metals by means of a powder, but do not extend to the fabrication of the latter. Still this is a secondary matter. It suffices for us to prove that gold has been produced from lead or quicksilver; impossible this certainly is not; has it, however been proved to have been done?

The only answer to be given to this question is, "that if historical data are considered sufficient to prove without doubt the fact of Wallenstein's murder in Eger, then that of the projection of gold is historically proved even more conclusively." The reader must judge for himself, though I am able to give but a small portion of the evidence, and this only in the form of extracts, showing that a great number of highly estimable men of science vouch for the fact. I commence by saying that almost every one who had succeeded in obtaining the result, or who had been able to bring over their contemporaries to their opinion, had the vanity to give themselves out as adepts, a presumption they atoned for generally by the rack and sometimes even by death.

It is narrated by Alexander Setonius (Seton?), a Scot, that on the 13th of March, 1602, at the house of a certain Hansen, in Holland, he transmuted a piece of lead into gold. A year later, Johann Wolfgang Dienheim, of Freiburg, received from the same Setonius a powder, by means of which he himself transmuted lead into gold; this he himself relates circumstantially. The next traces are found in Strasburg, when a certain Güstenhöfer received from Setonius the same thing; he, however, gave himself out for an adept, and thus attracted the attention of the Emperor Rudolph II., who desired him to be looked after and examined. The town councillor of Strasburg sent three of his associates, whose names I could likewise give, who inquired into the matter, and before whom on three occasions Güstenhöfer professed to perform the transmutation; indeed, while one of them brought a piece of lead he produced the powder and himself superintended the melting process. After repeated commands from the Emperor he was taken into custody, and confessed that he was not an adept, and that he possessed no more of the powder; this, however, did not help him, and he was kept a prisoner.

After this Setonius performed transmutations in Frankfort-on-Maine, then in Cologne with apothecaries and workers in gold, afterwards in Crossen in the presence of the Elector, and finally in Dresden, where the Elector Christian showed his gratitude by putting him to the rack, which proceeding he repeated till the physicians declared he could outlive no more. The experiment was then made of treating him with kindness, but nothing was to be got out of him. He bribed his keeper, Sendivogius, with hopes, who carried him off to Krakau, and Setonius, recovering from his pains on the journey, gave up to the latter what he had hitherto kept concealed, and Sendivogius likewise effected transmutations as far as the means reached. All this is related in detail, as well as the sources from whence the narrative is derived, by Schmieder and many others, who give the proportions used in the transmuted metals. Sendivog, Seton's heir, then transmuted before the Emperor Rudolph, was imprisoned, then set free and went to the Archduke Frederick of Wurtemberg, who also caused him to be imprisoned and all his clothes taken from him. At last he was liberated, and hanged by order of Müllenfels; as he had no more of the tincture he was adjudged to be a swindler.

We go still further. There were witnesses, among whom was Richelieu, in whose presence a certain Dubois effected transmutations, and when he asserted that he was unable to make the tincture he was let go. Would the Cardinal have done this if he had not previously obtained conviction? In England, in the time of James a certain Butler was put in prison because the gold which he had produced was held to be false, and he proved that it was genuine; he escaped. We will pass over a whole number of other cases, because the following accounts are very striking.

In the year 1648, the Emperor Ferdinand III. was presented by a certain Richthausen with a grain of red powder, with which the Oberbergmeister, Graf Russ, who was summoned for this purpose, performed the transmutation in the presence of the Emperor, and indeed converted three pounds of quicksilver into two and a-half pounds of gold, which circumstance corresponded with the tinctures of Helmont and Philaethes. The Emperor was so delighted that he created Richthausen, Baron Chaos, and installed him in Chemnitz. He caused a gold coin to be struck out of this gold, which bore the inscription: *Divina metamorphosis an. MDCXLVIII in presentia sac. Caes. Majes. Ferdinandi Tertii*. On the reverse side stood: *Raris haec at hominibus est ars, ita raro in lucem prodit. Laudeter Deus in aeternum, qui partem suae infinitae potentiae nobis suis abjectissimus creaturis communicat*. This colossal medal was still in existence in the time of Leopold I. In the year 1650 a second transmutation was effected with lead by another person, in the Emperor's presence, and a coin likewise struck as a token, with the inscription: *Aurea progenies plumbo prognata parente*. The above-mentioned Chaos possessed some more of the tincture, with which he performed a transmutation before the Elector of Mayence, Johann Philipp.

At the beginning of the previous century traces are found of Laskaris, who presented a great number of persons with the tincture, among whom probably was Caetano, who often performed the process of transmutation at various courts, particularly at that of Berlin; and as he either could not or would not do this often enough, he was brought to trial and hanged. Finally, with regard to the celebrated Sehfeld, the fact of his tinctures was so firmly acknowledged in and round about Vienna, that even a Maria Theresa did not hesitate to try to draw his secret from him by force, and when he remained steadfast, had him sent to Temesvar. The Emperor Francis learnt the facts of the case from the commandant of the fortress, and collected information about it in Vienna which was of so convincing a nature that he was instigated by his wife to set Sehfeld at liberty. He was confided to two trustworthy officers, in whose presence he performed some transmutations. The chemist Heinrich Gottlob Justi inquired particularly into these proceedings, and gave an account of them in the second volume of his writings on chemistry. We find traces of Sehfeld later on in Amsterdam, and a particularly well authenticated case is recorded in Halle. Sehfeld gave some of the tincture to a certain Reussing, an apothecary, and fled, frightened by the recollection of his Vienna experiences; the transmutation was afterwards performed in such a manner that Schmieder declares it to be the most important proof on record of the truth of alchemy.

All these are only a small portion of the evidence given by history of the process of transmutation having been accomplished. I, therefore, put the question whether history does or does not furnish proofs in support of a fact which in itself is not impossible, but on the contrary has a high degree of probability (that, namely, of the non-simplicity of metals), and which can, therefore, only be substantiated by experience? I ask, are we justified from a scientific as well as from a historical standpoint in asserting the transmutation of metals to be nothing but a superstition?

If those in power had not been so grasping and devoid of sense, and if science had been less wedded to preconceived opinions, who knows if alchemy might not have been proved to exist, at least in this respect? This would be a great source of embarrassment to society as it is at present constituted, and perhaps it is better that the art, as it appears, is a lost one.

If it were a fact beyond doubt that metals are simple or elementary matters, then transmutation might with certainty be asserted to be an impossibility; as long, however, as this fact is not proved, and indeed that the reverse is not improbable, the knowledge of the transmutation of metals is only a question of time and accident. It would indeed be necessary to devote much thought and experiment to the subject, but this is forbidden by the prestige of science! This scientific prestige goes so far, that a physician of Maria Theresa had a great number of old and probably valuable manuscripts on the subject burnt, not from religious fanaticism, like Omar, but simply from the idea, "What I know and understand nothing about can be worth nothing!"

Certainly anyone may, if he likes, reject the testimony of thousands, even if among them are persons distinguished by their position and learning; he may equally ignore any judicial acts—but such a person must then deny the authority of all historical proofs and the validity of history altogether.

(To be continued.)

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16, CRAVEN STREET,  
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*Light* :

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

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20th, 1887.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editors. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable.

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE SEYBERT COMMISSION.

Mr. Henry Seybert, our readers are aware, bequeathed to the University of Philadelphia, U.S.A., a sum of sixty thousand dollars for the purpose of founding a Chair of Philosophy, adding to his gift this condition, that the University should appoint a Commission to investigate "all systems of Morals, Religion, or Philosophy which assume to represent the truth, and particularly Modern Spiritualism." It is greatly to be regretted that the governing body of the University did not refuse to accept such a bequest, weighted, as it was, with an utterly impossible condition. "All systems of Morals, Religion, and Philosophy," any reasonable man must be aware, cannot be investigated by any Commission that any university can appoint. If discretion were allowed—and we do not gather that any relaxation of the stringent terms of the bequest was permitted—it would have seemed desirable to modify the conditions until they assumed somewhat of the character of our own Hibbert Trust. A Chair of Philosophy might then have been founded with a handsome endowment which would have encouraged experts in Comparative Religion, such as Professor Max Müller, of Oxford, in various systems of Philosophy, and in kindred and cognate subjects to give the world the benefit of their researches. The chief and by far the most important part of Mr. Seybert's intentions having been thus complied with, there would have remained opportunity and leisure for experimental psychical research. There would have been no need for hurry, no necessity for "men whose days are already filled with duties which cannot be laid aside, and who are able, therefore, to devote but a small portion of their time to these matters" to hurry on "such fragmentary reports" as they found themselves compelled to issue in this present "preliminary" utterance.

It is against this initial action of the Commission that our first exception must be taken. They should have established a Seybert Chair with a view to an exposition and elucidation of existing systems of Philosophy and Religion on the lines already indicated by us. And when, in due course, they reached the wide subject of Mr. Seybert's own belief, to which he directed their special attention, they would be enabled, still pursuing the same exhaustive logical method, to give to the world a *résumé* of existing evidence as found in the literature of the subject, and to supplement evidence of that character by the result of their own experimental investigations. For sufficient time would

then have elapsed to permit of even busy men giving time enough to the research to admit of its being thorough. There would be no need in such a case for apologies for want of time, no reason for "fragmentary reports." We should have been spared the undignified spectacle of a body of eminent men of science and letters scouring the country in search of such "facts" as already suspected professional operators might be able to furnish, and conducting what it pleased them to call an "investigation" in a spirit which, in spite of their express disclaimer, we must hold to be characterised by considerable "levity," not to say an indecorous disposition to banter and chaff.

What the Report speaks of as the "incalculable labour" of sifting the evidence of "merely half-a-dozen" out of our numerous records of fact was put aside, and the Commission determined to "form its conclusions solely on its own observations." For guide, philosopher, and friend they were under the tutelage and guidance of the late Mr. Thos. R. Hazard. We mean no disrespect to the memory of a man whose earnestness was beyond doubt, whatever opinion we may hold of his discretion, when we say that this choice was unfortunate. Mr. Hazard is described in the Report as "an uncompromising Spiritualist." He was; and his enthusiasm was more than once very uncomfortably compromising to the cause that he elected to defend. So much it is necessary to say; we would not willingly add a single word that could be construed into any the slightest disrespect to one who has passed beyond the sphere of criticism. He was not the best adviser that the inexperienced Seybert Commission could have had.

No good purpose would be served by a minute dissection of the Report and its various appendices. We do not hesitate to admit at once that it presents to an uninstructed reader a miserable picture of delusion, chicanery, and fraud. The motives that animate the investigators stand out in effective contrast to the tricks and subterfuges with which they were met. If we could lose sight of the fact that the issues involved are serious, and that some of the noblest and tenderest feelings of our common human nature are implicated, we could enjoy a hearty laugh with Dr. Furness, whose sense of humour led him 'to play some pranks in his quest of knowledge which a more refined and chastened taste might find out of place. But then we know of another Spiritualism than that which, alas! is all that Dr. Furness has found, and we are not concerned to complain that he pokes fun at that wretched parody which he so humorously describes.

For detailed criticism of one branch of the Report and its appendices—that which deals with the alleged insanity of Zöllner—we refer our readers to Mr. C. C. Massey's exhaustive and most damaging criticism published in our last issue. His "Open Letter to Dr. Fullerton" deals with that which immediately concerns himself in a way that would be, perhaps, too minute and particular in noticing what is avowedly a "preliminary" and "fragmentary" report. It may suffice to refer those of our readers, if any, who may be exercised by the Seybert Commission's Report, to this specimen of destructive criticism on one of its many allegations.

We notice with some pleasure, though without any very marked expectation of what may result from the pursuance of bad methods of investigation, that the Commission proposes to continue its quest "with minds as sincerely and honestly open, as heretofore, to conviction." Since this is so, we presume to offer a few words of advice founded upon large experience. The investigation of these obscure phenomena is beset with difficulty, and any instructions that can be given are derived from a knowledge which is to a great extent empirical. But we know that prolonged and patient experiment with a properly constituted circle is a *sine quâ non*. We know that all does not depend on the medium, but that a circle must be

formed and varied from time to time experimentally, until the proper constituent elements are secured. What those elements may be we cannot tell the Seybert Commission. They must discover that for themselves. Let them make a study in the literature of Spiritualism of the varied characteristics of mediumship before they proceed to personal experiment. And when they have done this, and perhaps when they have realised how easy it is so to conduct an investigation of this nature as to arrive at negative results, they will be in a better position to devote intelligent and patient care to a study which can be profitably conducted in no other way.

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**"THE BETTER WAY."**

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We have received two numbers of *The Better Way*, a Cincinnati journal devoted to the exposition of Spiritualism. It is issued under the editorship of L. Barney, by the "Way Publishing Company," of which M. G. Youmans is president. It has risen, we believe, on the ashes of two now extinct periodicals, *Light in the West* and *The Spiritual Offering*. It is a large broadsheet of eight pages, and forty-eight columns, of the character that our American friends prefer, not unlike in appearance to the *Banner of Light* and the *Golden Gate*. The subscription is 2dol. a year, and the business department is on strict cash terms. We believe that the Way Company is financially strong, and we wish their venture every success. From one of the early numbers of our new contemporary we extract the subjoined account of a remarkable dream:—

A lady who is a resident of the interior of Pennsylvania was travelling in Europe, and while staying in London, she dreamed one night that she was visiting prominent points of interest in that city in regular tourist fashion. But wherever she went she was met by a peculiar-looking man who invariably asked her the same question: "Are you ready?" Go where she would or do what she liked, in every scene in her dream she met the same man, and he always asked this ever-recurring question. She was considerably impressed by this dream, and remarked to the lady to whom she related it that she should never forget the face of the man who had so persistently appeared before her. Time went on. She returned to the United States, and went to pay a visit to one of the large cities, stopping at one of the most noted hotels in the place. She was lodged on one of the upper floors, and went down to breakfast in the morning after her arrival. At the conclusion of the repast she went to the elevator and entered it, with the purpose of returning to her room. She was the only person in the elevator, and the man in charge of it, before starting it, turned to her with the question, "Are you ready?" Struck by these words she looked at the man and instantly recognised the hero of her singular dream. She was seized at once with a vague and causeless terror, and cried "Let me out!—you must let me out!" The elevator being already in motion no release was possible till she reached the first floor. She hurried out of it and closed the door; the man started it to descend, and instantly the elevator and its unfortunate guide fell with a crash to the cellar. The poor man was instantly killed, and the strange dream had probably saved the dreamer from a similar fate.

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**COLONEL AND MRS. BUNDY.**

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We have received the following complimentary note:—

1862

1887

Mr. and Mrs. Jno. C. Bundy request the pleasure of your company Friday evening, August nineteenth, at eight o'clock.

557, North State-street, Chicago.

It is unfortunately incompatible with existing conditions of time and space that we should be present bodily to offer our congratulations to Colonel and Mrs. Bundy on their silver wedding. But in spirit we shall greet them, and we avail ourselves of this opportunity of offering our cordial good wishes.

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MR. REDWAY announces the first number of *Lucifer: A Theosophical Monthly*, edited by Madame Blavatsky and Miss Mabel Collins (Mrs. Kenningale Cook).

**THE SEYBERT PHILADELPHIA COMMISSION, THE ENGLISH PRESS AND THE SPIRITS.**

Whilst I believe it is the custom all over the civilised world to try every case by a full and fair consideration of both sides of the question, the dealings of the Press in respect to Modern Spiritualism have, with very few exceptions, been the exact reverse of this rule, for whilst the columns of every paper have been and still are hospitably open to every form of abuse or vilification that can be heaped on this movement or its adherents, few and far between are the opportunities ever granted to Spiritualists to defend themselves or their cause through the same channel. It is in conformity, then, with this "spirit of the age," that I ask permission to add my view of the case to the comments you have already published from two of the American spiritual papers on the Seybert bequest to the Pennsylvania University.

I need hardly point to the tone of unwonted jubilation with which the English papers are regaling their readers concerning what they call the "downfall," "the death," "the utter ruin," &c., &c., &c., of "the thing," with any number of odious adjectives added, called "Spiritualism." A certain Mr. Moncure Conway, once a "reverend" now a materialistic writer of the most pronounced type, threatens the English people, in the *Manchester Guardian*, with a terrible irruption, for he says:—

"You need not be surprised if a number of mediumistic avatars appear in England about this time. During the last three years there has been going on, *without the knowledge of the Spiritualists themselves* (?), a scientific detection of their frauds, which leaves few eminent mediums with reputation enough to remain even among their most infatuated customers."

Astonishing as these few false paragraphs are, they are significant, as pointing to the fact how desperate has become the antagonism both of Materialists and Pietists in their attempts to stamp out Spiritualism, when the unfavourable verdict of ten men, whose very existence beyond their own limited circle was unknown until now, is to destroy a cause which numbers its millions of adherents all over the world, includes every grade of society from the monarch to the peasant, and bases all its claims to belief on well proven facts, and world-wide proofs of supermundane power. Setting aside the monstrous assumption that these hitherto unknown ten men could prove themselves to be modern Samsons, and with the same respectable weapon as that used by the Bible worthy, slay their millions, may not we (the Spiritualists) ourselves learn a few useful lessons from the story of the Seybert Commission *fiasco*? First I would point to the absurdity of endeavouring to place any power that has a spirit-world for its originator and sustainer in the hands, or at the mercy of, any associative bodies, whose vested interests are opposed to the acknowledgment of a power they can neither understand nor control. The servile spirit of the age has impelled many of the Spiritualists to labour heart and soul to hook their world-wide cause on to the chariot wheels of some petty associative body. In every instance, but one, these attempts have been pitiful failures. Investigations which should have been conducted on psychological lines have been marred by the application of physical formulæ, and the subtle magnetic force of the investigators, which should—it would seem—ever be negative to the spirit power, has been rendered so positive by the arbitrary will, ignorance, and assumption of the inquirers, as utterly to neutralise the very means required to effect manifestations.

The one exception to the blundering methods of so-called associative investigations occurred with the "London Dialectical Society," before whom I had the honour of being the first Spiritualist examined concerning the best *modus operandi* to be pursued, when a committee of that society were formed to investigate Spiritualism. On p. 109 of the society's published report will be found an extended account of the evening's proceeding in which I took part, and the address in which I tendered to the council assembled, the best advice our blind ignorance and merely experimental experience in occult forces would enable me to suggest. I insisted that any investigations carried on, "as a body," would fail: urged that they should break up into sub-committees, hold circles in their own homes, &c., &c., &c., and abstain from all attempts at intercommunion with each other for at least three months. Having laid down such methods of conducting circles as our previous experiences warranted, I promised them the inevitable results which they not only obtained, but generously and candidly published to the world, namely, an array of occult phenomena,

for which no human agency could account, and no intervention of fraud was admissible. Here, then, is the *one* affirmative case, which, being successful when conducted upon orderly methods, nullifies all the worth of a score of failures organised upon such lines as were certain to ensure failure. But there are many more lessons to be learned from this Philadelphia *fiasco* than space would permit me to enumerate. Those to which, however, I would draw the most earnest attention of every true Spiritualist are, first, the monstrous wrong they inflict upon their cause when they attempt to tolerate or condone fraud in any shape. That the Professors might have been moved by all that spirit of "hatred, contempt and prejudice" of which Mr. Hazard has complained no one can question who has carefully studied the *Banner of Light's* report and learned who and what they were, and what were their published utterances on the subject of Spiritualism. But, on the other hand, a large proportion of the Spiritualists know that Hudson Tuttle's opinion that Mr. Hazard was the most ill-judged and incapable counsel the Commission could have had, is emphatically true, as some, at least, of the persons Mr. Hazard selected to demonstrate spiritual phenomena to the Commission have been notoriously exposed, and proved to be frauds by Spiritualists themselves. When this question of fraud came up some time ago in this very journal, I then contended, and still repeat, that in the *early* days of this great spiritual movement the best mediums, such as Mr. D. D. Home, the Davenportes, Conklin, Redman, the Fox Sisters, Mrs. Maud Lord, the Sisters Lord, and other really genuine mediums, never refused to comply with any test conditions demanded, and never considered themselves "degraded," as the phrase now goes, by being examined or tested in any direction. Thus, at the Harvard University investigation, although the "hatred and contempt" of the examining Professors may have, and did neutralise and prevent phenomena, *it did not contrive fraud*; and the more seriously this matter is considered, the more the truly candid thinker will come to the conclusion that those who are blind enough or interested enough to excuse and extenuate fraud are the worst enemies Spiritualism has to contend with. I know Spiritualism is true. I know it requires no shams or pretences to prove it. It has traversed the world by aid of no mortal power. It has made wider conquests in an incredibly short space of time than other faiths have in centuries.

Forty years ago there was not (as such) a Spiritualist in the world, now there are millions in every country of civilisation. And what has achieved this mighty revolution in human opinion? Why, the well-proven and well-attested *facts* of Spiritualism. For the ultimate triumph and permanent maintenance of this cause, then, I have no more doubt or fear than I have that the heavens will fall. Besides, when in my far and wide travels around and about the world I search out where Spiritualism came from, I find it is not *à priori* from the spirit circle. The spirit circle and invocatory processes are wholly secondary to the true origin of the movement, and only grew out of it. The movement itself has come from a spontaneous, unlooked-for, and often unwelcome outpouring of the spirits, and it was only when spirits had *compelled* belief, and by a direct and irresistible awakening of gifts, powers, and phenomena, established the facts of their presence and ministry, that they themselves devised the methods of the spirit circle, as a means of unfolding mediumistic power and assisting investigation.

In writing my last work, *Nineteenth Century Miracles*, I was charged by the spirit friends with whom I have conversed ever since I can remember to select chiefly records of those spontaneous outpourings, in preference to accounts of phenomena derived from invocatory processes. I have done so; and collected hundreds of cases attested by names in full,—by witnesses of mark all over the world, and, though the record only touches this century, it offers proof enough to show that all the Professors of the wide world, with all their "hatred and contempt," can neither put it down, arrest its progress, or blot out its waymarks. Meantime, since the spirit circle and public mediums, both of which might be, and ought to be, such invaluable aids in promoting investigation, are liable to be marred by human interference, and those who cry so loudly for "protection to our mediums" forget or omit to protect the investigators, I put entire faith in the assertion of my spirit friends, which is, that the Philadelphia Professors and the late kind-hearted, well-meaning, but ill-judging Thomas Hazard, have been, all unconsciously to themselves, the instruments of promoting candid research, whilst any failures that *did* occur

with the genuine mediums are silent but certain rebukes to the authority worshippers, and a warning that schools, churches, and colleges have not brought in Spiritualism, and will neither be permitted to absorb it, or cramp its grand spiritual unfoldments with their narrow human enactments. Not until every individual stone is hewn and polished, fair and square, will the temple of the Divine humanity go up. Work, therefore, Spiritualists, while it is yet *your* day. Have no fear for your mighty cause. The power that was strong enough to introduce and establish it, is strong enough to maintain it. Fear only yourselves and your own shortcomings. To the Spiritualists it may be said, in all kindness, but still with solemn emphasis, "noiseless and unseen, but swift and sure, are the footsteps of the retributive angel on the track of the deceiver."

To the Philadelphia ten, Mr. Moncure Conway, and others of that ilk, who are going out like a Greek hero of old, to defy the lightnings—it may equally truthfully be said—Do your worst, gentlemen! We can but thank you for doing our scavengers' work. Our motto is, "The truth against the world"; and with truth and the spirit-world on our side, why need we fear aught that man can do against us?

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

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#### THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death! The stars go down  
To rise upon some fairer shore,  
And bright in Heaven's jewelled crown  
They shine for evermore.

There is no death! The leaves may fall,  
The flowers may fade and pass away,  
They only wait thro' wintry hours  
The coming of the May.

There is no death! An angel form  
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread—  
He bears our best beloved away,  
And then we call them—dead.

He leaves our hearts all desolate—  
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers.  
Transported into bliss, they now  
Adorn immortal bowers.

But ever near us, though unseen,  
The dear immortal spirits tread;  
For all the boundless universe  
Is life—There are no dead!

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GRATIS.—A correspondent has sent a large parcel of sundry copies of "LIGHT" and *Medium and Daybreak*, to our office, 16, Craven-street, Strand, for gratuitous distribution.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Savage gave some very practical advice to Spiritualists, a good number being present. In the evening, Mr. J. Veitch delivered a discourse on Immortality, which was of a very instructive character.—W. E. LONG, 9, Pasley-road, Walworth.

*The Truthseeker*, a monthly review, edited by John Page Hopps, contains original lectures, essays, and reviews, on subjects of present and permanent interest. Threepence. By post, from the publishers or editor, 3s. 6d. a year; two copies, 6s. a year, post free. Published by Williams and Norgate, 14, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, London; and 20, South Frederick-street, Edinburgh. All booksellers. During the year 1887 there will appear a new work by the editor, entitled: "Thus saith the Lord": an unconventional inquiry into the origin, structure, contents, and authority of the Old Testament. (Seven lectures.) *The Truthseeker* for June contains a study by the editor, on "The Resurrection of Jesus."

MR. GERALD MASSEY.—The First Lord of the Treasury has been credited with, and censured for, offering Mr. Gerald Massey the small sum of £30 per annum from the Civil List. This is an injustice founded on a mistake. Mr. Massey has been in receipt of £70 per annum for the last twenty-three years, and the £30 granted this year ought to have been described as "additional," his pension at present being £100 per annum. But the amount granted is not munificent, or quite worthy of the representation made. Amongst the memorialists who united on common literary grounds to ask for an increase were:—Matthew Arnold, Robert Browning, Herbert Spencer, Professor Tyndall, William Crookes, Alexander Bain, Sir J. E. Millais, Holman Hunt, Sir Henry Thompson, Henry Irving, the Bishops of London and Derry, the Marquises of Lorne and Ripon, the Lords Brabazon, Herschell, Carnarvon, Ccleridge, Dunraven, Lytton, Manners, and Wolseyley.

SOULS are, according to Thales, the motive forces of the universe.—DIOGENES LAERTIUS.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is desirable that letters to the Editor should be signed by the writers. In any case name and address must be confidentially given. It is essential that letters should not occupy more than half a column of space, as a rule. Letters extending over more than a column are likely to be delayed. In exceptional cases correspondents are urgently requested to be as brief as is consistent with clearness.]

"Weed Growths of the Mind."  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Surely it is as well to look at questions on all sides. On the subject of "Women's Rights," Paul is always quoted by men, including "M.D."

Dr. Wahu, in his recent work, *Le Spiritisme dans l'Antiquité et dans les Temps Modernes* (Paris, 1885), points out that Moses when he gave the Law to the Israelites, though he copied a great deal from the Brahminical books which he had studied in the Egyptian Temples as one of the "initiated," entirely altered the position of woman in her relation to man, placing her in an altogether inferior position, whereas in the Vedas she takes her place beside man. The Hindu Genesis also lays the first fall on to the disobedience of man, the Jewish Genesis on to that of the woman. Paul, as a Jew, naturally wrote according to the ideas and prejudices of his nation.

But, surely, at the present day when Spiritualism has shed its light on the world, other considerations are given us. If, as Spiritualists and the followers of most religions believe, a spirit is sent on this earth to work out its further development, what can it signify whether that task is done in the body of a man or that of a woman? Still more does the idea of Re-incarnation do away with the difficulty, since it teaches that anyone who has failed in the work of self-improvement and has abused his power in any way, that spirit must be re-incarnated so as to suffer what it has made others suffer. If, for instance, a man has so done, his spirit would in all probability be re-incarnated as a woman.

These thoughts, one might hope, should do away with the mutual jealousies and apprehensions of both sexes.

Y.

A Remonstrance.  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In common with many, I have been gratified by the improvement in both matter and manner made in "LIGHT" under the present management, and it is with a view to get further reform that I offer the following suggestion:—

This is, that you would institute a severer control over the selection of your printed correspondence, and one that will exclude from your pages any letter which, by reason of its shallowness, flippancy, or pertness, is calculated to be offensive to serious students and derogatory to the cause you represent. As recent examples of the class of letters thus characteristic I would cite those contained in your issues of July 23rd and 30th, and headed respectively "Weed Growths of the Mind" and "Weed Growths of Mysticism," and signed respectively "M.D." and "Occultist"; for, in addition to the ignorance displayed in them of the true mysticism and occultism, and the lack of intelligence with which their writers have read the book they chiefly stigmatise, they pass a gross affront upon a moiety of the human race, the feminine portion, and take up in regard to woman a retrograde position altogether inconsistent with the doctrine of social evolution as necessarily held by Spiritualists.

As my sole object in writing is to promote the exclusion from "LIGHT" of letters similarly calculated to offend, I shall not go into detailed criticism, nor am I concerned with the vindication of the book aimed at. That the writers of the book have made no reply may well be accounted for on the grounds stated in Mr. Coleman's letter in "LIGHT" for August 6th. They decline to pay any attention to criticisms and ridicule, which are not of sufficient importance to warrant their taking notice of them.—With kind regards, I remain,

Marseilles.

August 10th, 1887.

ULTOR.

[Our correspondent's letter finds insertion on the same ground as other letters which express in temperate and inoffensive terms opinions with which we may, or may not, agree. Our columns are open to all such expressions of opinion dealing with subjects that come within the scope of this journal. We do not propose to exclude any letters because they convey an estimate of a work, or propound an opinion, different from that held by ourselves, or by some of our readers. To do so would be to incur a charge of partiality and unfairness.—ED.]

## The Seybert Commission.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In my "Open Letter" to Prof. George S. Fullerton, published in the supplement to "LIGHT" last week, I showed with what absolute disregard of the first and most familiar principles of evidence the myth of Zöllner's "insanity" is supported by those who would thus evade the consideration of his testimony. My criticism was addressed only to this particular part of the Report of the Commission, and I had not gone over the rest of it with sufficient attention to qualify me to comment upon it. Nor have I yet, with the exception of one case, about which, as it closely resembled one of the things I frequently witnessed at the Eddy's, in 1875 (described also in Chapter XIII. of Colonel Olcott's *People from the Other World*), I felt a particular curiosity. Now, though I have never myself cited the evidence for this "phenomenon" as entirely satisfactory, I wished to see whether the Seybert Commission treated evidence, in matters within their own observation, with the same looseness as is manifest in the notes and remarks about Zöllner. The case in question will be found at p. 82 *et seq.* of the Appendix to the Preliminary Report, and concerns manifestations behind a curtain, when the medium, Mr. Pierre L. O. Keeler, was sitting in front of it, his two hands supposed to be clasping the wrist and forearm of a lady on his right, both sitters being concealed up to the neck by another curtain fastened over them. It may be taken that everything that was done could have been done by Mr. Keeler's right hand, were that free.\* The hypothesis of the Commission must be given, with their description of the test, in their own words:—"As a proof that the hand" (seen, &c., behind the curtain) "is spiritual and not that of the medium, the latter requests one of the visitors to sit beside him on his right, and also to be covered to the chin with the same black muslin under which all the medium, except his head, is concealed. The visitor's bare left forearm is grasped by the medium, as he says, with both his hands, and this pressure of the medium's two hands on the visitor's arm is never relaxed, as the visitor readily testifies. The proof seems, therefore, conclusive that the hand which plays the instrument behind the screen is not the medium's, and hence must be a materialised spirit." (I pause here to point out the complete ignorance this remark betrays of the hypothesis of duplication, which I believe to be as well verified as anything in this subject, and to account for a large proportion of the physical phenomena, as well as for a not inconsiderable proportion of the apparent trickery.) "The trick is simple and highly deceptive, as anyone can prove for himself by requesting a blindfolded friend to bare the left arm to the elbow, then let the experimenter grasp this bared left arm, near the wrist, with the third and fourth fingers of his left hand, closing them around it tightly, and, as he does so, asking the owner of the arm to note that this is his left hand; then let the experimenter, without relaxing his hold, stretch the remaining fingers and thumb up the arm as far as he can, and while clasping it with his thumb and forefinger, remark that this second pressure comes from his other hand. The conviction is complete in the mind of the blindfolded friend that he feels the grasp of two hands, whereas only the left hand of the experimenter has grasped his arm, and the right hand is free to beat a drum or play a zither. After this test, which is patent to all, we can dismiss the theory of a spiritual origin of the hand behind Mr. Keeler's screen," &c. (pp. 23-4). And we are referred to the Appendix for details.

Now, to begin with, how are we to deal with people who appeal to their own notes of an investigation in support of an hypothesis, one of the most important data of which is negatived by those very notes? The "blindfolded friend" does not see whether his arm has ever been grasped at all by the experimenter. But here, in the Appendix, we are told (italics mine): "Before this last curtain was fastened over them, the medium placed both his hands upon the forearm and wrist of Miss Irvin, the sleeve being pulled up for the purpose," &c. Then, when Mrs. Gillespie took Miss Irvin's place, we are told, "hands and curtain were arranged as before"—thus in view of everybody. So that Keeler had not only, as the hypothesis supposes, to produce an original impression of touch upon Mrs. Gillespie, but also to remove his right hand altogether, and either to shift, or remove and replace higher up, the pressure of the thumb and first and second fingers of the left hand, without her

\* It was otherwise with Horatio Eddy's manifestations of this kind. See Colonel Olcott's account, with special reference to this point.

receiving any indication, from the sense of touch, of these changes. Moreover, we are told nothing of the *relative* position of the two hands on the arm, originally, but it may be inferred that the left held the part of the arm nearest the wrist. - Now for the hypothesis of the Commission to be at all applicable, the grip of the left hand must have been from above, so that the thumb and first and second fingers could be moved up the arm, to take the place of the removed right hand. But this should have been a fact of *observation*, there being no other reason for assuming an upper grip than that the supposed trick required it. For the hypothesis to be worth anything, it must either have accorded with the already ascertained facts, or the experiment should have been repeated to see if the facts really did accord with it. If these gentlemen of the Seybert Commission claim to be scientific observers, they should be aware of this; and yet we have not one word to show that they made this particular observation, or saw the necessity for making it. They appear to have thought that if the trick suggested was practicable in any position of the hands, that was enough, without showing that the conditions of its success *in fact* existed. We know that the right hand took the lady's arm with an under grip, but even this fact the investigators seem not to have observed for themselves—though it was in their view—but to have learnt it first from Mrs. Gillespie, for they say, "Mrs. Gillespie declared" it. It must be inferred that they did not observe the other positions before they constructed an hypothesis available only for certain possible positions. It is remarkable that we have no account of Mrs. Gillespie's sensations as bearing on the supposition that Keeler removed his right hand, substituting the thumb and two fingers of his left. Mrs. Gillespie is not allowed to speak for herself in any detail on the really important points, though the investigators think it "specially worthy of note" that she stated that she lost touch of Keeler's right arm, which she had at first felt under her own left arm—a perfectly insignificant piece of evidence when we consider how naturally a raised arm soon droops from fatigue. It is otherwise, however, if we can read an obscure sentence as meaning that Mrs. Gillespie told the medium at the time that she could not feel his arm, for in that case, if the arm was there, he would naturally have raised it against her's to satisfy her. But what she is represented as having said to the medium is so mixed up with what she evidently only said to the investigators afterwards that we cannot tell where one ends and the other begins, an instance of confused reporting which is itself not without significance.

It only remains to be noticed that as at the close of the séance the right hand had, of course, to be found in position on Mrs. Gillespie's arm, Keeler would have to repeat the process of substitution, again without any observation on the lady's part. It is apparently with some obscure sense of these difficulties that the Commission make the violent suggestion that the sensibility of the forearm had been destroyed by the strong pressure above the wrist! But Mrs. Gillespie's opinion on this point seems not to have been asked.

Mediums have sometimes as much to fear from bad observers as impostors from good ones. For genuine manifestations, except when powerful, very commonly present points of superficial resemblance to surreptitious action by the medium; an investigator of the least intelligence and scepticism is certain to take note of these circumstances, and is usually carried off his feet by them, to the loss of all faculty for observing the facts which tell the other way. Ignorance of the fact of partial duplication of the medium in many of the physical phenomena, and of the necessary consequences of this fact in producing suspicious appearances, of course misleads by presenting a false alternative to the mind, and Spiritualists, I submit, are largely responsible for the unjust prejudice to which mediums are thus exposed, by their failure to explicitly recognise and explain to the public a phenomenon which too many of them still wilfully misinterpret in favour of spirit-agency. Of course I do not pretend to speak confidently of the above case; but it seems probable on the whole that there was an extra-organic duplication of the medium's right arm and hand, in which case it was to be expected that nothing would be done which could not be done by the normal right hand and arm, if free. However, my object in this letter is not theoretical, but critical; not to advance considerations which are new to any one, but to expose the violation of principles of evidence and observation which should be familiar to all.—  
Your obedient servant,

C. C. MASSEY.

Mr. Hodgson.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I cannot help very greatly regretting the publication of the paragraph quoted from an American paper on p. 366 of your present issue. It is calculated to revive a tone and spirit which should be universally deprecated. More than this, it contains several assertions which are generally known to be absolutely incorrect. Mr. Hodgson is not and never has been an *employé* of the London Society for Psychical Research. The society did not send him to India, and they have certainly not sent him to America. If I were an American Spiritualist, and especially if I were a "medium," I should consider nothing more damaging than the concluding sentence of the paragraph in question, or a more puerile confession of weakness.—Yours faithfully,

London, August 15th, 1887.

A STUDENT.

"The Ticking of a Clock."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Have you or your correspondents had any experiences relating to manifestations like the ticking of a clock?

Are there any intelligences to your knowledge who have tried communication under this form, and has any result been arrived at?

After repeated experiences in our family, I consulted privately with those who were known to be very mediumistic, and I found that in two houses, amongst members of two different families, but who had kept the fact quite private until I asked, the same particular form of manifestation was experienced, so that, perhaps, if pretty usual, there may be others who have proceeded further in their investigations, and would explain if they found any mode of procedure has answered for obtaining a clue to what the intelligences were trying to effect by means of these particular sounds.—Yours truly,

H.

Whole-World Soul Communion.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Enclosed is an article from *The World's Advance Thought*, which I shall feel extremely obliged if you will kindly publish. It so entirely expresses what I have so long felt to be an urgent need amongst us, that I have on several occasions been on the eve of writing a letter on the subject for the pages of "LIGHT." This article is, however, so comprehensively expressed that I gladly substitute it for anything from my own pen, and should you approve the purpose for which it is written, in the appeal for an half-hour's universal and simultaneous prayer on August 30th at 3.49 by Greenwich time, for greater spiritual light, I trust you will give it a prominent place in your columns, in time to allow of its being freely circulated ere the 30th arrives.

I firmly believe that if we Spiritualists will from our hearts and souls offer up this simultaneous prayer, a blessing will follow in a spiritual outpour, such as will exceed in power anything the world has yet witnessed.—Very truly yours,

"LITV."

"By means and through channels that may be depended upon, we know that the call for a Whole-World Soul Communion is being hopefully considered and will be earnestly responded to in all the great nations. Let the American response be general and earnest; and especially here in Salem, our home city, let all classes, casting prejudices to the winds, and with hearts and souls filled with harmony and love, devote the appointed half-hour to thoughts of sympathy for all mankind and silent prayer and soulful aspiration for more spiritual light.

"Remember the date: August 30th, 1887, between 12 and half-past 12 m., solar time at Salem, in the State of Oregon, U.S.A. (corresponding to 3.49 a.m. Greenwich time).

"No rational objection, religious or scientific, can be urged against participating in this Silent Soul Communion. Surely no one of humane impulses or religious nature would think or say aught against devoting thirty minutes to sending forth thoughts of love and sympathy for fellow-beings everywhere, and invoking angels and mortals for love and sympathy in return. Do not the great body of Christians avow belief in 'the communion of the saints'? Scientists and Materialists, including those classed as infidels to all religious faiths, must view this proposed Communion as an intelligent and practical step towards solving or further explaining 'mind-reading'—the reality of which mental power is now generally conceded, even by the most sceptical. If thoughts are transferable, or transmissible, without the interposition of spoken words, or other symbols, a distance of a few city blocks, why may they not be transferred or transmitted

across a continent, or around the world? And are not thoughts *action-motors*? Then what intelligent and philosophical mind would hesitate to join in an united effort to scatter far and wide golden thoughts of peace and love, to fall and root, like seeds in prepared soil, in such other souls as may be ready to receive them?

"Those for whom it is impracticable to sit in seclusion, or with congenial spirits, at the time appointed, can take part in the Communion while attending to business matters, using will-power to prevent their thoughts from being distracted or diverted from the main object; but it is best, for many reasons, that the participants, solitary or in harmonious groups, should retire for Communion to a quiet room, or retreat of some kind, where the surroundings are favourable to concentration of thought and the evolution of soul forces. It would also be well, if practicable, before the Communion begins, to sing a hymn for harmonisation. Bear in mind that forces may be evolved, though no outward sign be given, more powerful than electric bolts! Be wary and faithful on the side of the good and the true! Self must be entirely lost sight of, so each soul can 'mingle with the universe' and give itself up to universal love. Material considerations must be entirely driven from the mind, and self-aid only invoked as part of the blessings that shall be conferred upon all alike; enemies must be forgotten, or, better still, forgiven; external manifestations of spiritual power, which too often attract downward instead of upward, must have no place in Communionists' minds; but an outpouring of such gifts and powers of the spirit as may illuminate souls and disseminate the light of spiritual truth among all the nations should be most earnestly invoked.

"We believe that through this World's Soul Communion, by strictly observing the prescribed conditions, spirits of great wisdom and power will make their presence felt to the consciousness of multitudes, that the light will penetrate many dark places in all lands, and the evidences of immortality will reach and give joy to sad and desolate hearts who now mourn dear ones as lost to them for ever."—*The World's Advance Thought.*

#### The Philosophy of Occultism. To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Fawcett is incorrigible, and continues to show an utter inability to understand not only my own position but also my criticisms on his. But though I can no longer hope to remove this inability, it is a duty I owe, both to myself and to those of your readers who have done us the honour of following our discussion, to record a protest against the irrelevance of his manifold misapprehensions.

In the first place, as to the "objective reality" of the world, Mr. Fawcett brings home to me a show of inconsistency by quoting my remarks out of their context. When I said that there was no objective reality outside consciousness, I was referring to the fact that "the real world" was, primarily, and whatever else it was, an *ideal* world, and I added that this fact was controversially as unimportant as it was undeniable, and accepted by all philosophers. If Mr. Fawcett questions this, I must remind him that, of his chief authorities, Von Hartmann certainly admits it, and that Spencer's necessity of "transfiguring" his realism is likewise an admission of its truth. But, in any case, I made no controversial capital out of a concession I thought Mr. Fawcett had had the good sense to make, and confessed that the real difficulty was as to what besides this the "real world" represented. This question may be answered in several antagonistic ways. The subjective idealists (if there are, or ever have been, any seriously such), whom Mr. Fawcett refutes so irrelevantly, say it represents *nothing* else. Mr. Fawcett and I agree that it *does* represent something besides, but differ as to what it is. I hold that a single Divine spirit is sufficient, whereas he requires half-a-dozen Unknowables, Parabrahms, Mulaprakritis, &c. Kant and Spencer agree that the problem is "ultra vires" of the human mind, and that the question of the nature of the "Noumenon" or "Unknowable" should not be raised. Hence, if Spencer is to be hurled at one's head, I must beg leave to point out that he is as antagonistic to Mr. Fawcett's position as to mine, and that his practice of quoting him along with Von Hartmann, Saukar, and other *metaphysicians* indicates a serious confusion of thought. Spencer's cardinal doctrine of the "Unknowable" is a denial of the possibility of metaphysics and of our ability to assert anything as to the ultimate nature of things. Now, even though Mr. Fawcett may have been as unconscious of it as the man who had been unknowingly talking prose, metaphysics is what we have been talking all the time, and hence there is a slight absurdity in Mr. Fawcett's imagining himself a disciple of Spencer's. But this absurdity rises to a sublime pitch when, as he sometimes does (*e.g.*, p. 327 l. 33), he proceeds to talk in the same breath of the unknowableness of his Absolute, and to give de-

tails about the personal (or impersonal?) habits of Parabrahm. If "Parabrahm is unknowable," how, in the name of his Karma, does Mr. Fawcett know it is "absolute consciousness," or anything else about it?

Having said thus much by way of answer to Mr. Fawcett's misleading discussions of doctrines I do not hold, I must comment on his method of dealing with those I do. He is habitually "all of a tremble" when he meets them, and beseeches us to "consider the consequences and the inferences" (pp. 260, 372). But the funny thing is that nothing terrible ever happens, and that his threats of exposure always evaporate into a mysterious aposiopesis. As to my suggestion of the limitation of the Divine power as the direction in which to see a solution of the problem of evil, misery, or imperfection, it is quite possible that Mr. Fawcett is right in thinking it unsatisfactory. In that case I shall be satisfied that it is *no better* than his own view and all other systems. But at all events I should like to suggest that anyone disposed to seek a solution of the origin of evil in a limited deity is scarcely likely to be so foolish as to regard the limiting existences (whether matter, or, as I should say, spirits) as themselves creations of the power they limit. This view, in short, amounts to an assertion that the conceptions of a deity and of an ultimate nature of things cannot be resolved into each other.

As to Mr. Fawcett's suggestion of an unfairly unsympathetic attitude towards theosophy and occultism generally, I should have thought that the fact of my taking such trouble to point out its insufficiency is a proof that I have tried it and found it wanting. Moreover, it is especially on a perusal of the book to which Mr. Fawcett refers me, Mr. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, that I base the objections I have enunciated. But, though neither he nor Mr. Fawcett satisfied me, I think the latter forms an exaggerated estimate of the valuelessness of his voluminous expositions of the "law of Karma" when he "does not think that anything can be added to Mr. Sinnett's lucid exposition of the origin of evil."

Lastly I should regret that the omission of a negative by a printer's error should have distorted the sense of a passage in my last letter (p. 343, l. 17 from bottom). It should be that "the idea of evolution was not inconsistent with my idealism."—Yours faithfully,  
B. A.

#### Alleged Trickery of Mediums. To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I cannot refrain from sending you an extract from a letter which I lately received from my friend, Mr. C. C. Massey, on the subject of Eglinton's alleged trickery in the case of Mr. Lewis, as described in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, and Slade's alleged fraud, as described by the Seybert Commissioners—because Mr. Massey's observations (*though, of course, not prepared for publication*) appear to me very striking and well put. He says:—

"So long as inquirers insist on approaching the subject merely from the outside, without seeing that a whole, and to most people new, *psychology* is involved in it, so long will the investigation be fatally prejudiced by the apparent trickery of mediums. The suggestion that psychology *must* be involved in such appearances seems to occur to no one from the extraordinary contrast between the, for the most part, childish character of these 'tricks,' and the facility with which they are detected, and the extraordinary evidence given by many presumably sane and fairly careful observers of phenomena with those same mediums. Which of us, for instance, would not have noticed the acts of Eglinton described by Lewis, and the acts of Slade described by the Seybert Commissioners? How the objections conflict also! The 'privilege of failure,' sneeringly adverted to by the Sidgwick-Hodgson class of critics, is abandoned just when it is most indispensable, in favour of tricks which a fairly intelligent and observant child must detect, and that with observers known (as in the case of the Seybert people) to be keenly on the look-out for deceptions! The Hegelian logic runs through nature, and never shall we advance in knowledge of nature if we will abide in apparent contradictions, simply making one fact nullify another, instead of seeking their reconciliation in a higher, or more 'inward' principle. What an utterly stupid and unprofitable thing is a *fact* until it is interpreted by an idea!"

I really cannot occupy myself with Mr. Hodgson's obliging speculations about Mr. Massey and myself having done what we say we did not, and omitted to do what we say we did, but I must content myself with referring anyone interested in the matter to Mr. Massey's reply in the *Journal*. There must be some limit to the desirableness of replying to such observations.

—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,  
Colne Cottage, Cromer, Norfolk.

RODEN NOEL.

August 11th, 1887.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- T. W.—No room this week.  
R. H.—Necessarily deferred.  
P. H. S.—Thanks for the "Literary Curiosity" which you have kindly sent us. But we do not think that we can deal with the subject in the pages of "LIGHT."

## TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; \*Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., some time President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; \*Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; \*Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; \*Dr. Ashburner \*Mr. Rutter; \*Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

\*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of *Transcendental Physics*, &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; \*Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and \*Butlerof, of Petersburg; \*Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; M. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Sir R. Burton; \*Professor Cassal, LL.D.; \*Lord Brougham; \*Lord Lytton; \*Lord Lyndhurst; \*Archbishop Whately; \*Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; \*W. M. Thackeray; \*Nassau Senior; \*George Thompson; \*W. Howitt; \*Serjeant Cox; \*Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c. &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; \*Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness Von Vay; \*W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; \*Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; \*Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; \*Epes Sargent; \*Baron du Potet; \*Count A. de Gasparin; \*Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; \*H. S. H. Prince Emile, of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Pavre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of \*Russia and \*France; Presidents \*Thiers and \*Lincoln, &c., &c.

## WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—“I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. . . . In short, the testimony has been so abundant and consentaneous, 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.

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.

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 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 clouded skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism.”—*Preface by Lord Brougham to "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: “1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 1. 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.”

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 to deny their existence.”

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,’ ‘sommnambule,’ ‘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 biassed 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 every thing 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.”

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

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—“The writer” (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) “can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of so-called Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as, for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of any legerdemain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience, of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a mere narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil.”—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

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

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