

# Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## CONTENTS.

Automatic Japanese Script .....	517	Jottings .....	525
Mahomedanism and Christianity .....	518	Inquiries and Explanations.....	526
Dissolving Views. By Mrs. A. J. Penny .....	518	What is Nirvana?.....	526
On Some Pseudo-Prophets .....	521	Slate-Writing in Italian .....	527
Hypnotism in Paris.....	521	Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden's "Final Truth".....	527
Signs of the Times .....	522	London Occult Society .....	527
Materialisation .....	523		

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The second number of *Strange Tracts*, edited by the Rev. J. Herbert Williams, M.A. (43, Cathcart-road, South Kensington, from whom the series may be procured\*), is concerned with automatic writing in Japanese characters. It is a curious story that the editor tells with much circumstantiality. I tell the tale as it is told to me. No theory is propounded to account for the facts, but the bulk of the pamphlet is practically a vindication of the *bona fides* of the unknown psychographer, and a discussion of the evidence for the reality of this automatic Japanese script. It is to be noted at the outset that the tenets of Spiritualism or Occultism in any form are repudiated in the writings themselves. This in itself is enough to make the case unique. We cannot, without more information than we yet possess, explain why the invisible operator should disavow the usual and ordinary explanations of his methods. The fact remains.

These writings in Japanese—if it is to be assumed that they are Japanese, for we are told that there is a hesitation among some experts in "pronouncing the language to be Japanese at all"—occur in some dozen places in books bearing date between 1855 and 1857. According to the account given by the writer, or in the MSS., whichever is taken, the writings proceeded in one of two ways. Either the hand moved automatically, and "there is a variety of hands none precisely like that of the writer, some very widely different from that and from each other, all more or less crabbed and cramped," or else the handwriting is the writer's own. In this case it is alleged that the words were heard by an interior sense, and so transcribed. Here comes in the evidence from style, which may be said to be unlike that of the writer. Finally, there is a third species of composition, finished essays being revised and prepared for publication. I may usefully state here that my own automatic writings bear a strong similarity to those given by the first of these processes. The hand moved automatically, independent of ordinary brain-processes, and the writings were of very great variety, none precisely like my own handwriting, and the subject-matter in a very large number of instances was quite apart from my own store of information. In my case two noteworthy points are clear. First, information outside of my conscious knowledge was conveyed to me. Second, this was given when my mind was actively occupied with other matters, and by an automatic movement of the hand over which I had no control. This seems to have been the case also with this unknown writer.

\* Price 10s. the complete series of ten.

The specimens of Japanese writing belong entirely to the automatic period, antecedent to May 14th, 1856, a date fixed as the commencement of the other method by the books themselves. Now the first effective English treaty with Japan was in 1858. Prior to that date it would be easy to reckon on the fingers of one hand the persons who could write Japanese and English. The writings are usually without date of year, but there are two dates fully given in 1856, and one in 1857; and, as the writings are consecutive, we have no difficulty in deciding that these strange writings were executed in those two years, and are antecedent to 1858. So much for the date. Whether these writings were, as claimed, automatic, or whether they were executed otherwise, their existence is equally a problem. And this difficulty is intensified by the consideration that the writer was resident in an obscure village in the Midlands, and was "not a scholar in any sense of the word, no literary student, not a graduate of any university, that he left school at sixteen, passed an ordinary domestic and business life, and was quite unknown in literature."

Furthermore, the writing at first was shaky and uncertain, "the pen often appearing to have wagged uncertainly, and, so to speak, to have been unable to get off at once." This is exactly what is traceable in my writings. When a spirit who had often written, and whom I knew, wrote a message the script was the familiar one known to me as his special handwriting. Once selected it never varied, and I could tell as certainly who was writing as I can tell the direction on a letter from a familiar correspondent. But when a fresh spirit began to write the hand fidgetted about for some longer or shorter time as though "unable to get off all at once." When the writing was executed it was usually shaky and uncertain, and a marked improvement was invariably found in subsequent efforts if repeated. It was so with this Japanese script. It became progressively better. If I may judge from what is stated in the pamphlet under notice, the case is on all fours with my own. I received, as evidence suited to my existent state of mind, information demonstrably external to my own knowledge, and was thereby convinced of the existence of an intelligence apart from a human brain. This writer received in these Japanese writings evidence of a character not dissimilar from mine, but conveyed in a different way. What is puzzling is that the invisible correspondent should have taken pains to disavow the obvious explanation of his methods. That is a point that I cannot discuss without more information.

It is right to add that the editor proffers under certain restrictions an examination of some of these writings. We shall probably be more qualified to pronounce on them when the series of ten tracts is complete. It is to be noted, however, that there is a doubt in some minds as to the character of the writing, and that circumstances inseparable from the case deter the editor from a full and explicit publication of names and details. That is quite inevitable. Such publication, if made at all, must be made

after the chief actors have passed from this scene, and when harm can no longer be done by indiscreet revelations. Meantime there is no difficulty in saying that the world is indebted to the editor for this publication that he is making. I regard the conclusions drawn from the facts as infinitely less important than the facts themselves. No matter what the unseen intelligence taught. We can accept or reject the teaching as we see fit. But the important thing is that from an independent source, and that not Spiritualist in theory, we have an exact confirmation of that which we Spiritualists are acquainted with in our own experience.

The *St. James's Gazette* is a sober and self-respecting paper. If the subjoined extract had been selected from the columns of its sensational rival I, for one, should not attach importance to it. But it is surely a sign of the times that such a paper should commit itself to words such as these:—

"Since it behoves us to face the truth in all things, and acknowledge it, why should so many worthy people seek to deny that the Mahomedan faith is extending rapidly in Africa and the East, that Christianity is spread at no such rate, and that amongst certain races of mankind the first-named creed does seem to make better men of its converts than the other? It is impossible for any capable and fair-minded man to doubt any of these things. It is unquestionably true, as Canon Taylor is blamed by many good people for believing, that in Africa, India, and over very large areas of the Eastern world Mahomedanism is making converts by thousands where Christianity hardly makes one. And not by any means for the first time do we hear that whereas the 'native' converted to Mahomedanism becomes almost invariably a nobler being—more sober, more trustworthy, more self-reliant and self-respecting—the native converted to Christianity often sinks into a deeper degradation than the missionary found him in. Witness to this effect has been given by Christian missionaries themselves, years and years ago; travellers innumerable have noted the difference; and it is only on the testimony of 'such as these that most of us believe that there are 'natives' at all. We haven't any better testimony, or any other."

The writer goes on to argue that attempts to convert the "heathen"—a generic term including the South Sea Savage with the Buddhist, the Mahomedan of India with the Hottentot—have been made in stupid ignorance..

"Hindûism stood in a general way for darkness and obscenity. The popular idea of Mahomedanism was a religion of lust and blood tempered by abstention from strong drink: an idea which lasted in such force down to very recent years that political capital of enormous volume could be made of it. For generations it never seems to have occurred to any mind that perhaps the best of all mission work in Buddhist and Mahomedan countries would be to help good men of truly serviceable and even exalted creeds to purify them—to purge them of the fungoid superstitions, the cruelties and the licentiousness which have grown upon them, and so leave them to work amongst the peoples whom they are perfectly capable of chastening and ennobling. No, they were all 'heathen' together, East Indians, Chinese, Africans, Pacific Islanders; and the best of their so-called religions was a mixture of grotesquerie and wickedness, from which there was only one way of redemption."

The writer's conclusion is that we have better work to do at home among the "heathen" of our courts and alleys. The words are sound in sense, and I repeat they are a striking sign of the times. The thought, says the *St. James's*, of a more real and pressing kind of mission-work among our own masses had hardly entered men's heads till lately.

"That there were thousands of degraded men and women amongst us, thousands in every city who were born and lived and died in the grossest ignorance and immorality, was of course well-known and acknowledged. But we were none of us 'heathen.' We were all of us Christians. The need of Christian missions lay not here, but on Greenland's icy mountains and Africa's torrid plains. The mistake has now been discovered, and in a large measure corrected. Our missions to the Hindoos, the Chinese, the Jews, and the Mahomedans of half the world still go on, but now there is a pretty general recognition of the fact that the heathenism of our own cities is as great as the heathenism of any of these peoples; and every year there is more and more of mission-work in British courts and alleys. At the same time we are learning that the ancient religions of

the East are not precisely what they were supposed to be for so long a period. It is seen, and it is acknowledged, that the worst of them is no real part of them, but excrement; that they are well capable of elevating and ennobling mankind, and are even doing that work very remarkably in the case of Mahomedanism in Africa; and that there is reason to doubt whether, supposing those faiths purified (which can be done and is being done), they are not better than others for the people amongst whom they have taken root."

And I may add that any attempt to reach these heathen masses must take cognisance of the fact that each of them has a body as well as a soul. Tracts and preachments will not feed a starving man; the most eloquent expositions of Christian doctrine will not give self-respect to a man who has been brought up in squalor and filth. It is through the avenue of the body that you must reach the soul. And there is where the average missionary will assuredly fail. He will preach when he ought to feed, and will bind on men burdens of faith that they will not bear.

### DISSOLVING VIEWS.

BY MRS. A. J. PENNY.

"Here, too, there is the stain of intellectual improbity, and it is, perhaps, all the more mischievous for being partly hidden under the mien of spiritual exaltation."—*J. Morley on Compromise*, p. 107.

A saying in Mr. Theobald's recently-published book that "in all search after truth it is not truth but the seeker that is on trial," seems to be verified by the attitude of a large class in society who, though too clear-sighted to denounce so-called Spiritualism as "all the work of evil spirits," yet hold their minds aloof from it—altogether, if possible, or, if forced to recognise the facts, meet them with a shifting line of conversational sympathy. With people who narrate wonderful incidents, fully proved, and by them entirely believed, wondering interest is expressed; but with those who speak of Spiritist phenomena either as incredible, or as what had better not be spoken of, an equally cordial assent is forthcoming. Speakers, in other matters sincere and able to know their own minds, seem on this momentous subject to exhaust their measure of concern by saying "It is a very difficult question!" and then letting it drop out of thought; and under the test of inquiry so languid and occasional this much seems to be clearly proved as to *them*, that they are too much taken up with the affairs of a tangible and visible world to have any thought to spare about life and beings beyond it, apart from what, for the sake of brevity, may be called Sunday thought, *i.e.*, intermittent returns of *dutiful* attention to a future state on which few of us are more inclined to dwell than Dame Quickly, before it becomes absolutely necessary. This disinclination is quite intelligible; and that will seize on knowledge sooner than the reasoning faculties we boast of, is well-known to all honest observers of human nature. It must also be admitted that even when we do believe spirits to be actively at work amongst us, thoughts of *unseen* existence are necessarily so few compared with habitual impressions from the seen that they are crowded out; while the confident denial of people who share that material life with us tends to justify our own doubts as to spirit action, and thus nascent perceptions, which no materialist can possibly share, are discredited and borne down.

But granting all this, the surprising and disappointing fact remains that when cumulative evidence of unseen agency—psychographical, for example—has at last brought a person frankly to admit that no human being in the flesh could have written on the slate, that no trick or delusion was possible, yet after fullest assent to this being a fact, beyond further doubt one day, we often find such a convert flinch from consequent and inevitable deductions on the next.

Irrefutable evidence has been reluctantly swallowed, but that to which it witnessed is virtually set aside. By some process of mind which I cannot follow, men and

women will allow that such and such things *must* have been done by invisible agents; but when asked to accept the conclusion that in these days the world of spirits has gained access to ours never known before, they shy as at a leap too vast and precipitate. They probably fear to compromise their dignity as reasonable beings; but it is just on that count that I accuse them of inconsistency. Have they not yet learned that to play fast and loose with one's convictions weakens the mind almost more than habitual neglect of carrying out its resolves? For the last tells on action, and in the long run on self-respect; the first on the inmost springs of action, and on all that justifies self-respect. If we are not true to our own belief, be that what it may, we soon come to thinking our mental verdicts of no importance, and leave our thoughts to veer to and fro in every current of opinion as freely as the weather-cock yields to the wind. It may be said in answer to this, that on some points any making up the mind would be premature, that judgment must be suspended. But for how long? Till sufficient data for fair judgment have been gained? In this case data are abundantly supplied by a number of witnesses beyond suspicion; and though the efforts of zealous piety and angry contempt, with measureless vulgarity of ridicule, have been for many years brought to bear upon this unwelcomed knowledge, yet the influential presence of close-by neighbours, whom religion and science combine to ignore, is every day more widely recognised, more firmly, and, therefore, more calmly believed in. That belief has become a force; it has modified thought in a large number of the best and strongest minds. No uncertain theory can do that.

If the cautious people who refuse to give conclusive assent justify their neutrality on the plea that they hesitate to commit themselves to admissions which they might have hereafter to recall, one would like to reply, "such apprehensions may deprive you of any settled belief, for time modifies all." But to modify is not to change; and on this point such change of mind as earnest attention when A speaks of it seriously, acquiescent modes of speech when B reprobates it as wicked, or C ridicules as absurd the idea of those we call dead speaking to us before we join them in the unknown life, surely betrays either great levity or great feebleness of mind. It is not a hypothesis which has no bearing on present life, such as many a stock theme of discussion; it is nothing less than the deeply concerning question, Does death leave the nature of man and woman unchanged, altering only its conditions? and can the so-called dead prove to us that they still think and feel as they did before their release from gross bodies?

But for experience one would have expected this to be an all absorbing inquiry; whereas prevailing disregard proves that few people have imagination enough to carry their thoughts into death, though death is the only certainty of this life's future. Swedenborg, who opened the way to our greater knowledge of the world of spirits, tells of just the same wonderful indifference, the same averseness to accepting his revelations. Had these been more generally believed, how much better prepared we should have been to understand those laws of spiritual life which are only now deciphered little by little, after years of vacillating attention to the eager and persevering effort of spirits to secure it! And how much corroboration of Biblical sayings would our clergy have gained from this abominated and despised mode of teaching had they acted on the injunctions so often read in the Bible, "Prove all things"; "Try the spirits"! They would do neither: they prejudged instead. Unless a revelation comes to the English priest in full canonicals, he makes sure that it is either false or detrimental. What was said a few years ago by a man of great insight with regard to their tone about divining arts, applies to Spiritualism also. "The clergy, by denouncing all these

arts, destroy faith in the spiritual world, and gradually rationalise themselves and their hearers till they become mere philosophers and moralists. Men who do not believe in a spirit of divination can never believe in the historic facts of Scripture."\* This is so true that at the present day Spiritists and Occultists seem to me the only people prepared for being efficient defenders of Christian faith. Without some knowledge of supersensuous nature, who can make head against the attacks of materialists or rationalists? Both impugn a large portion of Scripture, and religious teachers who try to buttress by old-fashioned argument, what are now called its weak points, falter and fail. A far deeper knowledge than that which divinity students are crammed with is required—a knowledge that makes us to see that only those who are ignorant of solid foundations talk of buttressing truths which are for all time. Take, as a common sample of shallow-minded criticism, the compassionate contempt of many a modern pietist for the sacrifices prescribed by the Mosaic law: all *they* can discern in them is cruelty and superstition; if they could but read what L. C. de St. Martin and F. Baader have to say on this head, they might begin to suspect that Moses, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, outswaw their own—not a little.

It is strange to me that religious people, who trace the workings of Divine Providence in all other events of life, can fail to recognise the same irresistible power in the steady increase of belief in the conscious fellowship and possible converse of spirits with mortals still in the flesh: a belief which has proved irrepressible, though the pulpit and the Press, society at large, and family authorities at home have done all that was possible to extinguish it. Only twenty-five years ago I was as incredulous, and as loath to have my incredulity overcome: the undignified inappropriateness of spirits' manifestation, their seeming buffoonery and caprice (for which, in my mind, no label or pigeon-hole was prepared), made me really loathe the subject of Spiritualism; and when facts became too strong they irritated, as all that confuses old landmarks of thought generally does. I can, therefore, well understand why it is so much disliked by strong and clear intellects, for at that time it seemed to me destructive of all ascertained laws of causation: it impressed me as a friend of mine was impressed by what she had heard of Mr. Theobald's book on *Spirit Workers at Home*. Previously not at all averse to believe in them "to a certain extent," she said, "If that book tries to make one believe that fires were lighted and kettles boiled without human agency, I don't want to read it! I cannot believe *that*; you see it is so upsetting!" Exactly so. But if our beliefs stand awry on a false ground is it not well to have them upset? Just the same apprehension weighed with me even twenty years ago: with a resentful sort of admission that the phenomena of Spiritism were often true, I objected that *if* they were, the old-established lines of metaphysics and psychology would be virtually superseded by an arbitrary interference with all mental laws. I was unable then to see that it is only a truth of wider bearing, or more absolute force, that can displace aspects of truth which become obsolete. For example, it was formerly considered a suspicious feature, of mediumistic communications that they so generally came through people quite unrelated, often unknown, to the invisible people who professed to give them; but now it is well understood that peculiar conditions—whether psychical or physical we do not yet know—are needed for such mediumship, and perfect passivity of mind also; affection or curiosity would disturb this, even were other essentials present.

With people who make the danger of Spiritism a reason for ignoring it as long as it is possible, and for denouncing it utterly when it is not, I have still *some*

\* James Smith's *The Coming Man*, Vol. I., p. 335.

sympathy, though I doubt either course being the wisest for neutralising danger. If it is dangerous—and can any honest observer deny that it is?—winking hard at it will do as little good as calling it altogether wicked. To examine facts, or carefully sifted evidence of facts, and then to point out wherein the danger lies, proves some adequate knowledge of the subject; this declaimers against Spiritism tell me they are proud to lack—and yet they expect their words to have any weight! After due examination they would find that it is a danger to which we are all now exposed, without any intentional risk; that it is no longer restricted to the séance room; for though, to use the words of Dr. Holcombe, “These gentlemen are closed against any conscious influxes from the spiritual into the natural, and have persuaded themselves that it is their duty to remain closed, *the spiritual is constantly pressing down for utterance.* . . . Spirits have come spontaneously, unsought, knocking and rapping at the door of the human mind for attention and communication. It is one result of an interior opening of the natural plane of the human mind peculiar to our age. The heavens and hells both ultimate themselves upon that plane, and the influxes must necessarily be both good and evil. The influxes from both spheres must enormously increase. In the incipiency of a tremendous and general movement, objections and judgments are alike premature. They will come whether we seek them or not: under the protection of a firm faith in the Divine Humanity we may study them with safety and profit.” Could those who believe their ignorance of spirit action safe form any idea of what influences from lower spheres are about to effect amongst us—and the terrible frequency of suicides might give them some hint as to this already—I am persuaded they would begin to wish for more acquaintance with those denizens of purer spheres who so surely advance to help us, and to resist insurgent malignity behind the veil. In a few years’ time I think we shall better understand those words of Isaiah’s: “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” (Chap. lix. ver. 19.) The Spirit of the Lord is a multiple spirit: He is the Lord of Hosts.

Short of such issues as this, we may well be grateful to Spiritism for bringing into currency truths never won before. If I was asked off-hand to name these, I should think this answer comprehensive and guarded enough: truths which have dislodged notions of post-mortem existence based on death-bed scenes and the imagery of hymns. I say hymns, because figures of speech which occur in our Bible now and then, are the staple ingredient of hymns, and these being in use when young and old are most impressionable dominate imagination, and form the common stock of “received ideas” as to the proximate future of deceased people; ideas which seem to me superstitious and not taught in the Bible, though mercifully allowed to prevail until our spiritual senses were more quickened and we could outsee the misleading theory that in parting from our present bodies we lose all objective life, and that the less we have of this (harps, crowns, and palm branches excepted), the purer and holier we shall be as spirits. If Swedenborg had done us no other service, he has a claim upon our gratitude for making us feel that the world of spirits is not a place full of plastic nothingnesses, a chaotic region of purposeless minds that we can slight or regard, utilise, agree with or resist as the fancy takes us, without any results, *as we think we can our own thoughts.* He shows that it is a world of order more fixed by Divine law than this which sin has convulsed. It is only in the gross atmosphere immediately surrounding the arena of human conflict that the rowdyism of insane and disorderly spirits is possible; and from that unhappy crowd like will ever be attracted by like, when those who are spiritually diseased frequent séances, and thus invite their fellow-

ship. Hence the fearful danger. Unless prepared by purifying self-discipline and prayer, to seek direct influx from spirits is virtually to open the foulest drains of spiritual wickedness.

But to dwell on this well-known danger is foreign to my present purpose. I am not wishing to urge anyone to approve of Spiritist experimenting, but to persuade them to face its results with common honesty and firmness of mind. Facts which people admit to have been proven retain all their weight, however natural it may be to flinch from their pressure and say, “But it is such a very unpleasant subject! and as Mrs. — or Dr. — says, so *very* unpractical: what possible good can come of it?” Let me explain by one instance among many what good I gain from it, though never having attended a séance or wishing or intending to do so. My sense of responsibility has greatly increased since I have learned how continual is our unconscious association with unseen companions; how unavoidable influx either from bad or good, sleeping or waking. That I *receive* this is not all, nor is the reaction of my mind on the minds of unseen associates attracted by my propensities, all, for I might say they are probably strong enough to take care of themselves, how can I help or hinder them? if Swedenborg had not taught the great law of influx, that it is *always* from the superior being, and never the reverse; in this sense that *seduction* may come from an inferior, never inflowing force. Hence, as multitudes of inferior, as well as superior, spirits surround us, it is clear that *as a spirit* my unconscious influence tells on weaker and more ignorant beings invisible, — on spirits making ascent, if drawn by the magnetism of an upwards seeking, upwards toiling human spirit. Is it no gain to be aware of this? What can stimulate a generous heart more effectually? We all spend some time apparently alone, with no seen fellow-creature, but not an hour or minute, as I have now learned, when patience, kindness, honesty, and goodwill, may not be helping the silent companions of our thought. “None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself,” in this sense as well as in that in which St. Paul used those words. This is only one of the winnings I have gained from careful study of a variety of books upon Spiritism; but if I had no other reason to thank God for the light which has crept into our intellects by the despised agencies of mediumship, I should bless and praise Him for it on this one count. It has, to use a very feminine comparison, broken through the firm, tight selvage of theological limits; it has at least made many thousands among us aware that our total ignorance of the *next* world (for there are many others beyond that) is due more to our own wilfully consecrated resolve to remain ignorant of it, than to its inaccessibility. When we are invited to learn [without wilful self-chosen efforts to snatch knowledge *not* offered], let this wretched structure of ignorance, aversion, and “divinity pride” be frayed out! A ragged edge of thought on which wider learning may be woven is better, though it may not yet be fashionable. Let us humbly learn that God does in every age offer to us new truth which lights up, but never can contradict, the old; and that the method is the same in our day as in that of St. Paul. “God *has* chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” When those who occupy the position of the wise and learned are sufficiently confounded, entrance may be won for enlarged wisdom and super-mundane wisdom.

It is said that the difference of the real and the spiritual to us is one of time. I say it is one of *perception* only; so it cannot depend on bodily death, which is an affair of time; but must depend upon some change in us not material. *We being the same* must still be bodily; death is only a change, not a ceasing of the bodily conditions. The material can cease to us only by a change in us which is not material. What a strange misconception to think that by a change merely material (such as we know death is), we can be delivered from matter. It needs a change much greater, deeper, truer than this to set us free from matter. —JAMES HINTON'S MS.

## ON SOME PSEUDO-PROPHETS.

While we cannot go the whole way with the *Daily Telegraph* in the subjoined comments on Zadkiel's Almanack, there is much common-sense in the denunciation of that credulous spirit which sets off one success in predicting weather against fifty failures.

"Why is such trust placed by average human nature in these penny peep-shows into futurity? The answer is simple: curiosity is the most easily gratified of all emotions; raising the veil of Isis was a dream of philosophers in the days of the Pharaohs. To hang upon signs and auguries, watch the flights of birds, or study their quivering sacrificed anatomies; to see visions and dream dreams; to enchant and incant; to play with spirits and ghosts, or fool with packs of playing cards; these are all samples of the unwholesome mysticism which, having no scientific basis, eternally 'makes for' absurdity. Wise men have lifted up their voices and protested against it. Philosophers and thinkers have collected cogent arguments wherewith to steady and balance wavering minds. The stern voice of science has been heard in rebuke, and the remorseless logic of agos has firmly protested. Duped, infatuated, dazed, humanity only sighs, and goes on foolishly seeking; and it needs an occasional rousing up. There is one fact that ought never to be lost sight of. It is perfectly formulated by John Stuart Mill, and is a valuable 'thought tonic' to have in one's mental medical chest. The law is that men are always more moved and influenced by a single affirmative and fulfilled prognostication or prophecy than by fifty unfulfilled scattered 'tips.' Mill quotes the example of farmers who will implicitly believe in an almanac which rightly prophesies, one day to be fine, or showery, or 'squally,' or with 'hail in places,' but who attach no conclusion whatever to the erroneous forecasts of all the other days of the year. The same idea was in the logical head of the ancient sage who looked on the votive tablets and dripping garments of the sailors saved from shipwreck hung up in the temple of the Powerful God of the Sea, and quietly asked, 'Where are the votive tablets and garments of those who prayed and were drowned?' So did Cicero, with clear 'dry' light, ask if all the warriors who fell in the battle of Cannæ were born under the same evil star, though he knew not of a similar line of reasoning applied to 'those on whom the Tower of Siloam fell'; and the philosophical end of it all is that fulfilled prophecies are remembered and recorded, while all the rest are allowed to slide into illogical oblivion. What really strikes the critic in the study of this prophetic rubbish is that the forecasts are so lugubrious. There is a fair chance, and open for some sprightly seer, who will drop the melancholy 'crop of accidents' and the 'deaths among the nobility,' and give us a joyous and cheery 'look ahead.' While the world laughs over its faithful 'annual,' with its smattering of melancholy occultism, it may look forward to some new and sensible prophet, who, in conjunction with the moon's phases, is prepared to give us sixpennyworth of hope."

The fact is people cannot prophesy weather, though everybody thinks he can. Not Zadkiel, not Raphael, not Old Moore, not even the great Scott. Nor can these dealers in human gullibility do more than give from a study of astrological indications anything better than a vague prediction. They do predict too much, these seers, and it would be very odd if they were not right sometimes.

Our contemporary notices what we also mentioned—the lugubrious character of these vaticinations. We also would fain have a prophet of hope, were it not that we remember that it is a characteristic of hope to "tell a flattering tale."

A RESIDENT in West Chelsea desires to hear of some Spiritualists in that district, or in South Kensington and Brompton, who are disposed to help him in his endeavour to pursue the investigation of Spiritualism. He is a Christian Spiritualist.

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## HYPNOTISM N PARIS.

(From the Correspondent of the *Standard*.)

Paris, October 29th.

The amphitheatre of the Charité Hospital was yesterday crowded with people who had been invited to witness the experiments of hypnotism made by Dr. Luys, member of the Academy of Medicine and doctor at the Salpêtrière. He commenced by saying that he would endeavour to make himself understood by every one, and that, as the truths he was about to expound were not generally accepted, he would produce proofs of what he stated. Dr. Luys then proceeded to explain the influence of the emotions. He spoke of the "canalisation of the regions of the nervous system," of the development of the sensitive aptitudes, and gave examples to demonstrate that we are all more or less victims of our emotions. At the theatre an actor can awaken in us an emotion which he himself often does not feel. He can make the public cry. According to Dr. Luys, we have in us two lives, the emotional life and the intellectual life. It is the conflict of these two forces which often renders it impossible to hypnotise certain persons.

Before introducing Mdlle. Esther, his subject, the doctor showed his auditors photographs illustrating the effects produced on her in his laboratory. By the aid of glass tubes, containing various substances, and hermetically sealed, he had made his subject pass through extraordinary phases of emotion, by simply placing the tubes one after the other on the nape of her neck. Under the action of the essence of thyme she assumed a look of great terror; under the influence of ten grammes of cognac she assumed the attitude of intoxication; when a tube containing fifty grammes of water was applied to her neck her eyebrows became knitted, her muscles contracted, and she had all the appearance of suffering from hydrophobia. A tube of morphia produced hallucinations, and two grammes of ipecacuanha intense nausea. These and other photographs produced a great sensation among those present in the amphitheatre. Before Dr. Luys went to fetch Mdlle. Esther, whom he was to lead into the hall in a state of unconsciousness, Mdlle. Gabrielle was presented; he had, three days previously, in making an injection of morphia in her arm, broken off the steel point of the instrument, which had remained sticking deep in the flesh. She was now hypnotised, and while in a state of lethargy, another medical man, Dr. Segond, made a deep incision in her arm, took out the piece of steel, and bandaged the wound. Dr. Luys then woke her up, and the patient seemed quite astonished to hear what had been done, for she had, she declared, felt nothing.

Mdlle. Esther was now brought forward. By the means of magnetic passes the doctor threw her from a state of lethargy into a cataleptic condition, and then into a state of lucid somnambulism. Dr. Luys placed a tube containing hashish on her neck, and she seemed instantly to feel the effect of the narcotic preparation. She assumed a natural air, and soon went straight towards Dr. Reclus, who was present, and proposed to perform the Mascotte with him. The doctor was rather annoyed by the preference shown him by Mdlle. Esther, so Dr. Luys diverted her attention from him to Dr. Segond, who consented to play the part of Pippo, while Mdlle. Esther took that of the Mascotte. He sat down beside her, whereupon she promptly kissed him. "Now sing," said Dr. Luys, holding the tube to her neck, and she began at once, stopping short when the tube was withdrawn. Dr. Luys then begged Dr. Reclus to place himself behind the young woman, and to put the tube on her neck, and then gradually take it away. Mdlle. Esther began again to sing, but in proportion as the tube was taken further and further from her, her voice became fainter and fainter till it died away entirely. She then fell, in a cataleptic condition, into the arms of the hospital assistants, who were behind her. Dr. Luys made other experiments upon Mdlle. Esther. By looking at her he made her follow with her eyes an imaginary bird in the air, and at last she thought she had caught it in her hands. Then, by making her look down, the doctor frightened her by making her imagine there was a serpent at her feet. The most remarkable display was when Dr. Luys placed a tube containing ten grammes of essence of thyme on Mdlle. Esther's neck. In a few moments her face became purple, her arms and hands stiff, and the neck swelled out in a most extraordinary manner. From thirty-one centimètres it grew, by the contraction on the muscles, to thirty-five. The suffering seemed to be intense, and when the tube was taken away, the patient was two minutes at least before returning to a state of lethargy. Other experiments were made, but I have mentioned the most striking. I draw no conclusions, but note the fact that Dr. Luys has for many years been studying hypnotism, and that no one can for a moment imagine there is anything like charlatanism in his experiments.

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## Light :

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

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5th, 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.

### SIGNS OF THE TIMES FROM ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW.

There are not wanting signs to show that the introduction into theology of a breadth and comprehensiveness of thought to which it has long been a stranger is creating a commotion in the straiter and Pharisaical sects. It is hard to repress laughter during the perusal of a book such as this of Mr. Pember's.\* It is an anachronism and an anomaly, as ill-adapted to the tone of modern thought as some antediluvian animal to the surroundings of modern life. The author is a verbal inspirationist: to him the Bible is of plenary authority; at least when interpreted by Mr. Pember. The devil is an all-sufficient *deus ex machina* for the confusion of all who do not see through Mr. Pember's peculiar spectacles. He has "the Prince of the Powers of the Air" on the brain, and sniffs Anti-Christ in all that makes for human progress. He is not weighted with any respect for science, and his capacious swallow gulps down all modern miracles without difficulty or discrimination. Starting from a fixed idea he finds everywhere evidence of the reign of Satan and the dominion of the devil.

It seems that as far back as 1876 the author published a smaller book, which was projected for the purpose of maintaining the literal exactness of the account of creation given in the first chapters of Genesis; and of proving that the characteristic features of the days of Noah were re-appearing in Christendom. Spiritualism presented itself to his mind as "an incipient revival of the last and greatest cause of corruption in the days of Noah," a strange account of the movement, we may venture to say. The book, in the author's opinion, hung fire till Spiritualism sold it—a benefit for which he ought to be grateful. Spiritualism made for itself a name and a fame, and then a thankless world remembered that Mr. Pember had prophesied that it would do so.

Meantime there had come those other occult bugbears, Eastern Theosophy, "a wave of kindred thought," and Esoteric Buddhism, to complete the threefold movement. The origin of these last is, he opines, from "descending angels who can be none other than those Nephilim which the Bible mentions as having already appeared twice on earth." The situation was solemn. Mr. Pember had to

rewrite his book to meet the crisis. The result is before us. The "three phases of thought of a more or less religious character that are rapidly overspreading every country of Christendom" are to be combatted, and Mr. Pember is the man for the hour that has come.

The body of the book need not detain us. It is obviously unprofitable to discuss ideas of the verbal inspiration of a translated Bible, or to argue with a man who considers the first chapter of Genesis to be "neither vision nor allegory, but plain history . . . a literal statement of facts"! We have no such working acquaintance with diabolic action as the author claims for himself, and can but smile at the complete possession that the theory has gained over him. The former belief (that in the literal interpretation of Scripture) leads him, for example, to mention as one characteristic of the "days of Noah" bearing on our own age "the rapid increase of the population": and to compare the Ark as a specimen of antediluvian industry with the Great Eastern! He does not explain, however, how even this prototype of the big ship that has been such a failure contained within it what, on literal interpretation of the record, it must have somehow found room for. The latter proclivity is especially apparent in the assumption which pervades all the chapters relating to Modern Spiritualism and kindred subjects.

The especial portion of the book which deals with Spiritualism is partly historical, consisting of evidence of the prevalence of such a belief drawn from the Bible and from history, and partly critical of what he calls "the modern outburst," which will culminate, he believes, in an open manifestation of Satanic power. This is the central idea of the whole treatment of the subject. Nothing short, it seems to our author, of the power of an omnipotent devil could have availed to make Spiritualism spread as it has done. The devil was surely in it. For the frank and full confession that is made in this work of the extent to which Spiritualism permeates modern literature and influences modern thought, our recognition is due; that the author attributes this unquestioned influence to the devil is a detail which does not interest us.

Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace's summary of the more important manifestations, physical and mental, of Modern Spiritualism (which Mr. Pember calls miraculous, by-the-way) are cited with bated breath. Materialisations are referred to "as specimens of what is now going on in many private families." (We wish they were "going on" more frequently.) The "entire forms" (it seems to Mr. Pember) "are simply material coverings manufactured for themselves by these *disembodied rebels*." (The devil again!) The author has, we suppose, selected from the published evidence of the teachings given by spirits that which best serves his purpose. The treatment of this branch of the subject differs in a marked degree from that of the objective facts. He is all eagerness in the one case to emphasise the reality of what we, as experienced Spiritualists, should accept only with reserve and discrimination. In the other case he quotes, usually from obscure sources, what will fit in with his diabolism.

The argument that has been used by some Spiritualists in answer to the prohibition of dealing with spirits: that, namely, which is grounded on the occurrences of the Mount of Transfiguration, leads Mr. Pember to tell us that Elijah had never died, and therefore was not in any way a spirit, or rather "an unclothed spirit," whatever that may mean. He must have been rather old at any rate. Moses, too, "in all probability was in the body. Or wherefore was his corpse wrested from Satan by the Archangel Michael"? Ah! why indeed? But, then, if he was a "corpse" it does not appear clear how Mr. Pember's argument is advanced. We decline to quote the suggestion made to explain all this stuff. We are not desirous of throwing any scornful contempt on any man's beliefs, and

\* *Earth's Earliest Ages and their Connection with Modern Spiritualism and Theosophy.* G. H. Pember, M.A. Hodder and Stoughton.

Mr. Pember's whole argument and illustration here are of a nature calculated to shock any thinking man.

Among many strange things that our author teaches us are these:—

1. Spiritualists are extremely anxious to destroy faith in the resurrection of the body . . . because it is fatally opposed to their fundamental principle, which requires that the *spirits of the departed should become angels immediately after death.*\*
2. Angels bring messages of God, infallible words, which must be received implicitly as absolute truth. (But how are we to know the angels? We thought they were all devils, Mr. Pember.)
3. "Two prominent features of the last apostacy were to be a forbidding to marry, and a command to abstain from meats—what kind we are not told." (These, it appears, are very characteristic of Spiritualism.) "Continnence is often taught among Spiritualists." (Yes, in all ways, and more frequently and successfully than in many sects known to our author.)

But we should weary our readers and cease to amuse by prolonged citations from a book which teems with absurdity. Mr. Herbert Noyes is the authority on "Matrimonial Relations"; "Oahspe" on Diet; and so on. A lamentable want of accurate acquaintance with the subject is shown throughout, and an amount of naïve, unconscious thick and thin prejudice which redeems the book from any imputation of conscious dishonesty. In some places it is offensive; but usually it is openly funny. The part where the author most conspicuously displays his inability to deal with his subject is where his theological crazes come in. Elsewhere he is sometimes ignorant, but not usually intolerant. As an instance of ignorance we may note that his book, which bears date 1887, gives as the most important organs of Spiritualism, *The Psychological Review* (dead!), "LIGHT," *The Medium*, *The Herald of Progress* (dead!), *The Spiritual Record* (dead!!!).

As an instance of prejudice and ill-temper we have only to turn to any part of the book that deals with religious beliefs that Mr. Pember does not share; and there are very few not made by himself that he *does* share. He is especially angry at the idea that a man has to bear the consequences of his own acts. He does not like that at all. He wants to shirk his own proper burden. "Sin, shrieks the familiar† of 'M.A. (Oxon.),' is remediable by repentance and atonement and reparation personally wrought out in pain and shame, not by coward cries for mercy, and by feigned assent to statements which ought to create a shudder." "Shrieks," quotha! That unruffled dignity; that impenetrable calm; that lofty spirit, high and lifted up above earth's petty, transient cares! Hands off, Mr. Pember! As the heaven is higher than the earth so are his thoughts and communings beyond your grasp. Widen your mind, throw over your cargo of theological rubbish, ancient without being venerable, and begin afresh. You have wandered far afield, and by your own showing are a theological Don Quixote tilting at windmills.

Don't waste life in doubts and fears; spend yourself on the work before you, well assured that the right performance of this hour's duties will be the best preparation for the hours or ages that follow it.—EMERSON.

WHEN we remember the enormous strength of the material, personal, and social interests which still bind clergymen, we can realise how much easier it is for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for these men, spiritually rich in their own estimation, to burst the innumerable wrappages in which they are mummified, see the light of a new day, and breathe the air of a new heaven.—W. H. HOLCOMBE.

\* Italics are ours.

† Elsewhere called "a communicating demon." *O si sic Omnes*, even with this Pharisee!

## MATERIALISATION.

The following account of a séance for form-manifestation presents evidence of a character of which we have far too little. Respecting the reporter, the editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, who errs, if at all, on the side of over criticism, writes thus:—

Mrs. Priest is a woman with extraordinary powers of observation, critical and painstaking in her study of psychical matters and more accurate than most observers in recording her experiences. She is one of the comparatively small number, whose brain accurately registers for future use all that comes within range of her vision or impresses either of her senses; hence she is a competent witness and her testimony as above given entitled to great weight.

We have thought it best on the whole to reproduce the narrative exactly as it stands, believing that it will be read in this country with interest by many under whose notice it would not otherwise fall.

### A Séance with Mrs. Cobb.

To the Editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

"Some Thoughts on Materialisation," by W. W. Bierce, in your issue of the 17th inst., is to my mind the most logical and most practical argument in favour of this phenomenon which has been given to your readers, and reminds me that my duty to the public is not fulfilled until an experience, which was to me a revelation, is given. I doubt if even 1,000 of your readers have ever heard of Mrs. Cobb, of Mantua, Ohio—a little town lying east of here about thirty-five miles. About a quarter of a mile from the N. Y., P. and O. depot in this little town, is the unassuming, unpretentious farm house in which dwell Mr. and Mrs. Cobb. Here upon a little farm they are content to dwell—to milk their cows and feed their pigs, and care for and enjoy an old horse; for in this atmosphere they have always dwelt, and the world with all its allurements has no charm to them. They are to be congratulated that the love of money has not gained an ascendancy in their hearts, which will be readily granted when I tell you that one can go there and have a good supper, bed and breakfast, and the séance, for the sum of one dollar and a quarter. The good housewife employs no help, neither does the husband; each fills the respective round of domestic duty without the aid of assistants, which in itself does away with the thought even of confederates.

Our party was made up of five congenial people, all of Cleveland, to which were added four others who were strangers to us, and who had come a longer distance than we, to witness the wonderful phenomena of spirit return as evidenced through the mediumship of Mrs. Cobb.

Arriving at Mantua Station at or about six p.m., we were met by the genial Mr. Cobb, and the ladies of the party were permitted to drive "old Kit" to the house, she knowing the way if we did not; the gentlemen walked there. Mrs. Cobb met us at the gate with as honest a face as ever smiled upon one—a typical farmer's wife—face and hands browned by the duties of her daily life; hair combed so smoothly back as to suggest the impossibility of her closing her eyes; dress as neat and unassuming as it could well be, being a plain black jersey and skirt, with the whitest of white aprons tied about her waist. She had tea ready when we arrived, for which we were quite in trim, and of which we partook heartily, and in good cheer. After tea, one of our party assisted in doing the tea work, and the setting of some bread for the next day's baking, during which time Mrs. Cobb was not out of our sight for one single moment. Having finished her duties she joined us in the little parlour in which is the cabinet, and which we had been examining carefully while she was absent, noting this, that it was composed of common planed lumber, having no floor, and a portable roof, which was drawn over the front about a foot for the purpose of giving air to the medium. In size it was about two feet four by three feet six, and only large enough for one mortal to sit in at once, there being absolutely no room to spare in width and only about two or three inches between one's feet and the door. The carpet underneath it was positively whole; there is not even a cellar underneath the room; the wall behind it was a solid, outside wall, which I even took the pains to examine upon the outside, where there was no evidence or sign of a door or break in the siding. The cabinet stood about six inches out from this

wall, and the audience could see it upon both sides during the time of the séance.

At or about eight o'clock, Mrs. Cobb having rested a few minutes upon the doorstep, suggested the forming of the circle. She rose and without leaving the room went into the cabinet, first removing her false teeth and a hair switch from her head and leaving them upon the table in the room. The circle or semi-circle formed in front of the cabinet and about four feet from it, myself and husband having what we considered a most desirable situation, being directly in front of the door of the cabinet, he being able to see on one side of the cabinet, and I the other. After the singing of a few hymns by which the harmony of the circle was made complete, and in about ten minutes after Mrs. Cobb had entered the cabinet, the door slowly opened and out stepped a female form clad in long flowing robes of white and fully two inches taller than the medium, and much more slender. The light was very good indeed; every feature was as plainly visible as could be made by the light of a kerosene lamp which was upon the wall directly opposite the door of the cabinet, behind which was the added force of a reflector, the light being very slightly lowered. Those who had seen her before exclaimed, "It is the lace maker," one of the medium's band, which was very soon verified. She bowed to all gracefully, and first approached the lady at my right, in whose lap lay a white pocket handkerchief. The spirit—for it could have been nothing else—spread out the handkerchief upon the lap of my friend and commenced with her fingers a motion not unlike the passes which a magnetic physician will make to manipulate away a headache. Instantly, beneath her delicate white fingers and upon the handkerchief, rose a white substance which looked like fleece, but which she took up in her fingers, shook out and revealed to us the most exquisite lace handkerchief. After all had examined it, she walking about the room to give it to each person for inspection, she returned to the lady in whose lap she had made it, and by a kind of patting motion resolved it all back again. She stepped to the door of the cabinet and looked at the medium as though anxious as to her condition, and leaving the cabinet door open as before where the medium was plainly visible to all of the circle, she continued her lace-making. She next went to my husband, on whose arm she commenced the same manipulations as over the handkerchief. Again the cloud of fleece formed beneath her dainty fingers, but this time it was black, being drawn from a dark substance. Upon shaking out this lace, she threw it over her own shoulders and walked about from one to another for its examination. It resembled in texture plain Brussels net, in size about a yard square.

In asking my husband if any sensation accompanied the weaving of this texture from his sleeve, he said that after the pile of seeming fleece was formed, and she attempted to withdraw it, with her fingers at least six inches above the sleeve, a sense of drawing of the sleeve attended it. This exhibition seemed very wonderful to us, but that which followed was still more so. She, the spirit, then walked to the end of the front row of sitters, and commenced the same manipulating movement with her fingers and hands in front of each person's knees, following along the entire row, the fleecy cloud growing larger as she wove from each one. Upon reaching the end of the row she shook out her latest production, and there in stripes was represented the pattern corresponding to the different material from which she drew her atoms of matter.

The dress which I had on was a figure of polka-dot in regular form, and this was represented by dots of thick lace in the thin body net in similar form; the ribbed stripes of the gentlemen's pants were also duplicated, as also a pattern lace from the front of one lady's dress. This piece of lace must have been at least five yards long and two yards wide. Then the crowning act of power was the manufacture of a duplicate to a lace lambrequin which hung over one of the windows of the room. She approached it slowly and bowed to us most graciously, and at once commenced the same weaving process, and in about thirty seconds she brought to us for examination the exact duplicate, both in texture and in pattern, of the lambrequin as it hung there. We felt of the article, and examined it critically, and to all appearance it was common Nottingham lace, and in all respects the same as its hanging counterpart. This done she found it necessary to leave us. She bowed and smiled to all, waving a graceful adieu, and stepping to the door of the cabinet, in which the medium was plainly visible during all this time, as well as at that moment,

she seemed to us to fall back upon the medium, and was, as it were, absorbed by the medium from crown to sole, right before our eyes. I have since described this part of the scene as of a cloud bursting upon a mountain peak. Mrs. Cobb loomed up through this shadow as it was thrown over her, and the cloud was no more, and although she seemed to us to throw herself back upon the medium with a force which would naturally have created by mortals quite a vibration and noise, there was not a breath of sound save the stifled exclamations of the onlookers.

Now, Mr. Editor, I wish I could tell you something more wonderful, but to me this receding and complete absorption of that which a moment before I had touched, and which both to sight and touch was as like to mortal as could be, was the crowning victory of the evening. Although there were as many as twenty more forms that came during the evening, none came out of the cabinet save this one. The aperture in the door was almost as wide as the door, possibly twenty inches wide and thirty inches long. Very soon after the disappearance of the "lace-maker," a young man having the appearance of being about twenty years old appeared at the aperture. He was very strong, and called for more light, at which the lamp was turned fully up. He belongs to the band of the medium also, and in conversing with us we noticed his pretty teeth, which we knew he could not have borrowed from his medium, she having left hers out in the room with us. This spirit, who was called Jimmy, seemed to be master of ceremonies on the inside of the cabinet, for he conversed freely with those who were making the effort to appear. The next to come after him was an old gentleman of fine physique, having perfectly white hair brushed back from his forehead, and a fine, short cut, white beard and moustache. His daughter sat next to my husband, and recognised him at once. She asked the privilege of going to the cabinet to converse with him, which was granted, and for fully five minutes she talked with him for whose appearance she had devoutly prayed the previous day. As she stood there, she told me that the medium was plainly visible, and she saw her father recede into the body of the medium as did the former spirit.

Next came to my husband his grandmother whom, though I had never seen, I recognised by the likeness to his mother. Then to the lady friend who sat next me came a spirit whose likeness I had seen in her home, and because of the resemblance I was the first to exclaim as to who it was.

Then to myself came my sister, who passed from earth two years ago, and from whom I had never heard directly till since coming here. Then came a spirit whom neither myself nor husband recognised, but who insisted by the motion of his head that he came to us. He was not able to speak to us, so that remained a mystery until after returning to Cleveland, when in a sitting with a medium he came, and spoke of coming to us there and not being recognised; the reason for which is, that he has allied himself to us by the law of attraction, and is one of the band surrounding us, and also one of its members whom we had never seen upon the earth plane, hence the impossibility of recognition.

I might continue this report *ad infinitum*, but there would be nothing gained. The séance was a complete and successful exhibition of the power of spirit over matter, and he who would doubt after seeing what we saw, would doubt his own existence.

But there is one other fact I must not fail to report, which is, that owing to the scarcity of beds, for there were nine in all to be accommodated, one of our party was obliged to sleep with Mrs. Cobb. Immediately upon coming out of the trance state in which she had been for two hours and a-half, the medium went to bed, and this friend with her; she, the medium, not leaving the room for any purpose but going from the cabinet directly to her room, there she undressed, and my friend took note of everything she had on, and not an article of superfluous clothing or paraphernalia was in any way concealed about her person. I mention this to complete the chain of evidence in her favour, for there are always plenty of people who desire to know all these minor points. Then, too, I would mention that Mrs. Cobb has given several séances in the homes of different people here with whom I have talked about her, and they tell me that by simply hanging a curtain across the corner of the room she has been able to produce all that was done when we saw her. Now, if this was not materialisation, will some one kindly tell me what it was?

MARY V. PRIEST.

EVERYTHING that is is double.—*Hermes Trismegistus.*

JOTTINGS.

The *Theosophist* (October) contains Mr. Sinnett's paper on "Buddha's Teaching." For the rest the magazine is ponderously heavy.

\* \* \*

Our contemporary says: "A perfect vocopher is not a person to be met with every day." We never saw one in our life. What is a vocopher? He is "a person skilled in the art of telling other people what calling they are best adapted for"; and also, it would seem, of inventing a new calling for himself.

\* \* \*

*Lucifer* (No. 2) contains a dedicatory poem by Gerald Massey, "The Lady of Light," full of go; and a letter from the same writer, which seems to be designed to reply to, or comment upon, some letters which appeared in this journal

\* \* \*

Mr. Gerald Massey seems to think that we are the exponents of Christian Spiritualism. He is mistaken. Another correspondent thinks we run risk of being anti-Christian. He is mistaken too. We advocate no extremes, and our correspondence shows that we are in that safest spot, *in medio*.

\* \* \*

An interesting article is one on "The Signs of the Times." The writer notes that the Occult in its various forms is "predominant in every kind of literature." "Serious, scientific, and political papers are full of earnest discussions on the subject. A St. Petersburg daily has a long *feuilleton* on the "Bearing of Hypnotic Suggestions upon Criminal Law."

\* \* \*

In this curious hypnotic phenomenon the writer discerns "a new and terrible danger to state and society." "Occultism and sorcery are in the air, with no true philosophical knowledge to guide the experimenters and thus check evil results. . . . Sign of the times! Close of a psychic cycle! The time for phenomena with or through mediums, whether professional or otherwise, is gone by. . . . Woe to the ignorant and unprepared, and those who listen to the sirens of materialistic science. For indeed many will be the unconscious crimes committed, and many will be the victims who will innocently suffer death at the hands of the righteous judges and too innocent jurymen, both alike ignorant of the fiendish power of 'suggestion.'"

\* \* \*

This is rather highly pitched, but it does seem to us that a note of warning is called for. The power of the hypnotiser over his subject is absolute, and it is easy to see how in the hands of a base and conscienceless person this terrible power may be, as it has already been, prostituted to evil ends. In France a recent enactment regulates hypnotism in public, and prohibits its use by unqualified persons. Public séances of hypnotism are forbidden, and they are strictly confined to medical *cliniques*, and laboratories. This is well: but when the power is known it is idle to expect that it will not be used by bad men to gain influence over weak women.

\* \* \*

In this connection we direct attention to a letter from the Paris correspondent of the *Standard*, which we reproduce in another column.

\* \* \*

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* gives its readers a very singular letter of the Ex-Empress of Mexico to the Duchess of Aosta, her daughter. The original was published in the *Revista Germanica* and other journals. In the course of the letter the unfortunate lady gives an account of her presentiments and forebodings. The letter is of the most touching character, pathetic to the last degree. She believed that she discerned for her daughter's husband, King Amadeo, the fate of her own husband, Maximilian.

\* \* \*

"Thou art aware" (she writes) "that I have lost my reason; and God loves thee so much that He grants me this hour of lucidity that I may speak to thee the truth. . . . An unhappy wife, made insane by grief, is reading thee thy fortune."

\* \* \*

The poor lady, when she found how her husband had been deceived, fell into a state in which her interior faculties seem to have been stimulated to a pitch of agony.

"Seated in an arm-chair, my spirit was seized with a nightmare that I would fain forget. I thought I saw many mounted dragoons running over the palpitating members of those un-

buried bodies, lacerating their upturned faces with the iron-shod hoofs of the horses. I seemed to see human flesh, and wolves and tigers were slaking their thirst in great pools, and those pools were not pools of water! I seemed to see the glaring eyes of the wild beasts as they turned their heads on all sides that no one should surprise them as they tore the flesh and crushed the bones of the victims. Like Fedra in Racine, I heard the crushing of those bones, and I saw blood dripping from dishevelled hair in the same manner as dripped the blood from Hector's beard in the frightful dream of *Aeneid*. Maximilian heard my anguish, he heard my sighs and called to me repeatedly, but could not awaken me from my agony. Then he arises, shakes me violently, almost with frenzy, and I am able to return from that dream. It was not a dream, Maria Victoria; I was in a world of horrible and strange ghouls.

"Would that I had died in that hour!"

\* \* \*

The ill-fated Emperor noticed her agitation, and inquired the cause. After some pressure she told him, and refused to be participator in the proposed crimes.

"I have seen signs in the heavens. I do not know what phantom it is that is pulling at the skirts of my garments. I have seen a vision of three headless men, and I know them all. They are the Emperor Maximilian, Generals Miramon and Mezia. Thou art in this world, my only love—the friend of my whole life, and I see thee lost! Do not say no! Thou art lost!"

"I know it."

"Then save thyself and save me, Maximilian. Let us flee from hence."

"I cannot."

"Thou art not an Emperor."

"What am I then?"

"There was here a party of outlaws; they had no captain; they needed one and brought thee. Thou art not the Emperor of Mexico; thou art the captain of a posse of assassins and thieves—thou the captain and I the abettor, and this must not be. If thou persistest in being sacrificed together with the 9,000 human beings that thou wilt have to immolate, my courage is not sufficient to witness the slaughter. I will dress myself in mourning and return to Europe. My spirit I leave with thee, but my body must go away."

"Dost thou say thou art going?"

"Yes. I am going; I am going to try, if it be possible, to save—a man."

\* \* \*

And so she left the only man she ever loved, and sailed broken-hearted for Europe. She tells the story of her arrival.

I arrived in Paris, hastened to the Tuileries, and said to the chief courtier:

"Inform the Emperor that the widow of Maximilian wishes to speak to him."

Ah! Maria, Napoleon received me like as a man of wood, as a statue of granite, as a machine of iron.

But I discerned a cross, and at its foot was a weeping woman—ay! more than a woman—a mother. That great hope was mine—that of the cross. I worshipped at that grand religious shrine; I blessed the anguish of Calvary, and longed to receive consolation from Jesus and from Mary.

I flew to Rome, and went to the Vatican. I pressed my lips to the feet of His Holiness, and on kissing his foot I saw again the "signs in the heavens." I saw again the vision of three headless bodies; I saw two hands crossed—hands that were dripping with blood like the hair of the victims; hands that were preparing two gibbets, and hands that spoke and said, "We are Monti and Tognetti."

I had no longer any hope—my faith was extinguished. I called to mind the memory of one man, and I lost my reason.

\* \* \*

When she left Mexico she told Maximilian that before he died he would confess that she had predicted truly and advised wisely. How sadly was this prophecy fulfilled.

I was taken to Vienna, but in Vienna there is much festivity and I came to this castle. I am here in the country. I live in silence, in solitude, and with a cherished memory.

A casket was brought to me here one day, containing the remains of the man I loved.

I opened it when no one was observing me. The right hand of my husband was closed as though it were a hand of bronze. I opened it and found it clasping a paper which read as follows:

"Carlota, thou didst prophecy rightly. The light that penetrates my abode is the last of sunshine that I shall ever see. I am preparing for death, kneeling before the Nazarene. Within a few hours I shall go to the place of my execution between a priest my executioner. Thou art not to blame; in this be comforted and pardon me. Remember me to my family and to my country. Good-bye, Carlota, the judgment of God awaits me. Since I have wrongly lived I desire to die rightly. My last prayer will be for thee. Who would have believed that I would come to this, my dearly beloved?"

## 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.]

## A Few Inquiries and Explanations.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Pray permit me to protest with indignant surprise against the impertinent calumny directed by Dr. Hübbe Schleiden in the course of his article in this day's "LIGHT," at the "foremost leaders" of the Theosophical movement, whoever may be included is that vague designation. What does he mean in saying that these "leaders" "act and live ethically on a lower level than the present standard of civilised society," and whom does he point to? The insult is so irrelevant and uncalled for that it is not without an element of comic absurdity, as though someone were to write to the *Times* and say "It is deplorable that the leaders of the London Spiritualists are in the habit of forging bank notes." But even if Dr. Hübbe Schleiden's common-sense and taste may be "on a lower level than the present standard of civilised society," still when he contrives to get circulation for a wholesale imputation of this kind in a public newspaper, he must at least be answered as sharply as his offence demands. Whom does he seek to vilify by his indefinite language, and what does he accuse them of? What does he know about the leaders of the Theosophical movement—living as he does in a remote corner of Europe, out of touch with the persons concerned? I may have reason to guess how, in his seclusion from all real knowledge of the movement, he may have followed certain false lights into one of the pitfalls that lurk in the pathway of the half-hearted occultist, but I will not theorise on this subject. I only suggest that if he does not promptly say whom he means to attack, what he charges them with, and who is his informant, then he stamps *himself* as indeed an "unscrupulous person," whose ethics are in the saddest possible state.

While writing, let me add a few words on a very different topic, Mr. Percy Wyndham's criticisms on "Indian Philosophy." Well-meaning but obscure exponents of Indian Philosophy often lead the most intelligent bystanders astray. A volume would be required to elucidate all the questions Mr. Wyndham raises; but let me put forward a few general propositions that may be worth his consideration.

"Indian Philosophy" is by the hypothesis exoteric thinking. Do not let us saddle the esoteric doctrine with everything written in Sanscrit. Dr. Hübbe Schleiden's essays stand, again, in an exoteric relation even to Indian Philosophy.

By the esoteric teaching embodied in the generally-accepted books of the Theosophical movement, personality is *not* extinguished at death, but, as far as all the affections and higher emotions of the earth-life are concerned, with its best companionships, survives and blossoms forth for vast periods in Heaven, or "Devachan."

The individuality which is relatively eternal, is, so to speak, the distillate of the successive personalities, the result of all their lessons and experiences released from the specific circumstance associated from time to time with such lessons and experiences.

This returns to re-incarnation on earth when all the emotional vibrations of its last personality are exhausted.

When its spiritual evolution has greatly advanced, it no longer requires the further lessons of reincarnation, and floats off into an immeasurably exalted condition of existence—a condition exceedingly difficult to understand, but immensely elevated in the scale of Nature; and to this state of inconceivable spiritual glory and beatitude, far above the personal bliss of the nearest Heaven or Devachan, the name of Nirvana has been given.

Concerning Nirvana terrible nonsense has been written by exoteric scholars; but the counsels of the Wise are that it can be attained by a short cut, by people good at climbing perpendicular rocks. But even short cuts, through human evolution, may be of a fairly considerable length. One of the delusions that young Indian students of Occultism are apt to suffer from is the belief, when they have just sighted the bottom of these rocks, that they are within one step from the top. It is like supposing at the Montanvert that you are all but on the summit of Mont Blanc.

A perfect philanthropist does *not* suffer (according to esoteric teaching, as I understand it) "in prospects of advancement." I should think two or three lives spent in perfect philanthropy on the physical plane an admirable preliminary training for undertaking the ascent of Nirvana. Two or three lives spent in thinking about Nirvana, by the fakir of Mr. Wyndham's hypothesis, might prove a preliminary training for the lives of philanthropy.

Theosophical Society,  
15, York-street, Covent Garden.  
October 29th.

A. P. SINNETT.

## What is Nirvana?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Many are puzzled to know exactly what is meant by Nirvana—that blessed haven of rest, that divine consummation of our being, that eternal Sabbath of the soul. They can scarcely believe that it is really equivalent to annihilation.

Yet let us consider how it is represented by those who are deeply versed in Oriental lore. I would go to Edwin Arnold, the author of that beautiful poem, *The Light of Asia*. In the eighth and last book he gives a summary of Buddhistic principles. Speaking of the good man who has surmounted all his trials and attained the goal, he thus describes his destiny:—

"He goes  
Unto NIRVANA. He is one with life,  
Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.  
The dew drop slips  
Into the shining sea."

That is to say, he loses all consciousness and individuality, and becomes one with the ALL, or Plenum, as Strauss called it. He is henceforth like a drop in the ocean.

Further on he says:—

"Seeking nothing, he gains all.  
Foregoing self, the Universe grows 'I.'  
If any teach NIRVANA is to cease,  
Say unto such they lie.  
If any teach NIRVANA is to live,  
Say unto such they err."

This is honest, and it is nothing more than the exact truth. Such life is no life at all—it is ceasing to exist. Or if you call it existence, it is the existence of a stone—stirless and aimless—of a particle of ether—of a drop in the infinite deep. It is an existence not worth having—and so Theosophists and Buddhists speak of the desire of life as "a craze." To be an unconscious part of THE ALL is utter extinction. No sooner has the disciple attained perfection than he ceases to be. Was it worth while to undergo all the troubles and tribulations of numberless reincarnations in order to fall into never-ending unconsciousness? For they who say Nirvana is to cease "they lie." Will anyone, who is not enamoured of Nothingness, tell me that this is not both a foolish and a base creed? According to this the Universe is a blunder altogether—"an execrable fact," as Schopenhauer calls it. Hence I applaud highly the outspoken utterance of your correspondent, Herr Zielesch, who, advertising to Dr. Schleiden's "impersonal" immortality—the individuality being entirely swallowed up by the "universal spirit"—says boldly, "I, for my part, don't care a farthing for that sort of immortality, and surely no sensible man does." Who will not say Amen to this?

Without the self-conscious Ego, differentiated from all others, there is neither charm, nor variety, nor even morality, and certainly no nobility in existence. It is not Life, but the negation of all Life. You may say it is better than Hell—so far I am willing to grant.

But I hold out not only for Personality but for Sexuality. As Milton writes—

"Which two great sexes animate the world."

He might have said the Universe, for there is a sex in souls and an exact and harmonious contrast between the two. Hence the variety and charm of life. There are psychical and moral reasons for its continuance hereafter, without taking account of any physical ones.

It is well to take note of the dolorous confession which Dr. HübbeSchleiden makes as to the "sad aspect," for so he calls it, "which the Theosophical movement presents at present, in consequence of the apparent shortcomings of some of its foremost leaders." I should not have dared to question the sublime heights of goodness and transcendental purity of the leaders of the Esoteric Propaganda, and yet admirer as he is of their philosophy he thinks it necessary to remind the leaders "that they ought not to act and to live ethically on a lower level than the present standard of civilised society." This is a

grave accusation indeed, which leads him to make the melancholy admission, "all those grand hopes which we placed on this revival of Esotericism have come to a miserable shipwreck." This is sad indeed, and deeply pains me, badly as I think of the doctrine. A belief in the approaching extinction of personality seems not likely to favour ethical improvement.

The doctrine of Nirvana is a strange and unnatural one, and yet, as coupled with a belief in the doctrine of numberless reincarnations, there is a logic about it too. The contemplation of this dreary series of reincarnations is enough to sicken any one of existence itself, and to make the spirit long for the end of it. Annihilation itself—for such it really is—is welcomed as a blessed deliverance.

Altogether, I may apply to Reincarnationists and Nirvanists what the poet Crabbe says of another class of religionists,

"Their Earth is crazy and their Heaven is base."

G. D. HAUGHTON.

Slate-writing in Italian.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having just read in "LIGHT," of October 22nd, "T. W.'s" comments upon "Mr. Wilson's Slate-writing in Italian, at Newcastle," allow me to say that I can not only thoroughly endorse them, but also think that no stronger proof could be given that the writer of the latter part of the second sentence, "a tutta la di lei cara famiglia," must have been an Italian scholar if not Italian by birth; as it is the peculiar mark of courtesy used by Italians in addressing those with whom they are not on the most intimate terms. And if it can be shown that Mr. Wilson is not an Italian scholar, then surely it is a proof that he was not the writer of the sentence, the mistakes in which had happily nothing to do with the idiom of the language, but were evidently due (as "T. W." says) to either illegible writing or careless transcribing.

I would like to add that I cannot quite agree with "T. W." in his translation of "Quanto siamo felici di avere un tempo così bello."

Undoubtedly "T. W." gives the *literal* translation, but in this instance I think the writer referred to the *seance* and not to the *weather*, and intended to say "How much pleased we are that the seance should be so satisfactory or successful."—Truly yours,

October 28th.

"LILY."

Final Truth:

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you allow me, as an ordinary reader and one of the uninitiated, to ask Dr. Hübbe Schleiden what he means by "final truth"? He tells us that "to get at final truth is principally, nay almost exclusively, a question of qualifications required for its conception." I suppose he means that we must have those qualifications, whatever they are, before we can hope to get at final truth. We must, for instance, have the qualification required for the conception that two and two make four before we can hope to get at the truth of that fact. But as we must also exercise our thinking power before we can rise to the truth that two and two make four, it would seem that that truth is not a final truth. The exercise of the thinking power is not necessary, Dr. Hübbe Schleiden informs us, for the conception of final truth. Indeed, books and teachers and autodidactic studies and intellectual advancement are all worse than useless. Of course, Dr. Hübbe Schleiden's letters are exceptions, for if not it would be difficult to tell why they were written.

"Thorough earnestness," says the doctor, "in living up to the truth found, is one and perhaps the principal one of the qualifications for the conception of final truth." This rather reminds one of what was said long ago, as to that which is popularly known as spiritual truth: "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine." And yet it cannot be the same teaching: for Dr. Hübbe Schleiden is evidently telling us something new.

"The one grand merit of the Theosophical movement," he goes on to say, "consists in divulging the *secret* of studying successfully esoteric truths"; and this "secret" is that "the attainment of wisdom and the conception of truth are never a question of intellectual knowledge, but a realisation of spiritual development." This again reminds one of what was said long ago, viz., that for the discerning of spiritual things a spiritual faculty is needed and that to the man without this faculty those things "are foolishness." Of course it must mean something

different, for Dr. Hübbe Schleiden and the Theosophists would never plagiarise from St. Paul.

"Thus only," continues the doctor, revealing to us, it would seem, more of the "secrets" of the Theosophical philosophy, "does intuitive power awake in man, and a pure ethical basis is undoubtedly the best and the only genuine ground upon which such a development of the human soul can unfold its delicious blossoms and ripen its eternal fruit." This is very grand, and if it were not one of the "secrets" divulged by Theosophy, I should say that this ripening of the soul's "eternal fruit" from a "pure ethical basis," whatever it really means, suggests at least a truth enunciated before, when men were informed that the Divine vision itself resulted from purity of heart.

I daresay these observations will only show that I do not understand Dr. Hübbe Schleiden's letter. Be it so. I can only say that I am anxious to understand it, and if he will only explain what he means by "final truth," my efforts to do so may be more successful.—Yours, &c.,

October 31st, 1887.

GEORGE HARPUR.

London Occult Society.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you could help us by inserting this letter in your next issue. We intend on December 18th to take the large hall at the Regent Hotel, capable of holding 500 persons, for a performance of my cantata, *The Worship of the Image*, subject taken from Dan., chap. iii. This performance will be for the benefit of the Occult Society. We ask for the help of all our musical friends in the singing. Any ladies or gentlemen who will assist us will oblige by applying by letter to my address before November 13th, when a day will be arranged for trying voices, &c., and a weekly practice organised. This cantata should be of peculiar interest to Spiritualists as, setting aside any question of its value as a musical work, it was composed under spirit influence. In my normal state I have very little ability for composition, though I have good theoretical knowledge. This work was written under the influence of several spirits, without any conscious effort of my own mind.

A. F. TINDALL, A. Mus. T.C.L.

30, Wyndham-street,  
Bryanston-square, W.

Advice Wanted.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—With your kind permission, would any of your readers kindly give their experience in the development of writing, automatic or otherwise? I see in "LIGHT" that Mr. Eglington sat three years.

I am told that I can become a writing medium and I sit one hour daily, but am obliged to sit alone. I should feel encouraged (perhaps others would also) by hearing of any having been developed by sitting alone.—Yours faithfully,

October 29th.

M.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[Several communications are necessarily deferred for want of space].

J. O. E.—Too vague to be of value.

C. S.—Thank you very much; but not quite suitable.

*The Phrenological Magazine* (November) reprints Dr. Eadon's article on "Memory" from "LIGHT," with due acknowledgment.

"FAITH is a living, and therefore a dying thing. It is not a stone cut to shape, insoluble, imperishable, and holding its ground because indigestible. It must grow and develop or disappear; and its growth must be by the accretion of kindred elements."—*Mozley*.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—An excellent paper by Mr. Goddard, of Penge, on "Spiritualism; What is It?" in the morning, and a stirring address on "Spirit Life" by the guides of Mr. J. A. Butcher, at the evening service, formed the day's programme. We are forming a library and should be thankful for any books or papers, old or new, which friends can spare us, and for which we would gladly pay postage.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

THE LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, REGENT HOTEL, 31 MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—Last Sunday Mr. Hopcroft's clairvoyance attracted a large audience. On Sunday evening next, at seven, Mr. Hocker will discourse on "The Healing Art." During the evening Mrs. Tindall will sing Gounod's *Nazareth*. Mr. Keightley, secretary of the Theosophical Society, will shortly deliver a lecture.—A. F. TINDALL, A. Mus. T.C.L., President, 30, Wyndham-street, W.

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

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: “1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical

contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force on 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 FRANCOISE.—“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,’ ‘somnialectic,’ ‘mediumic,’ and others not yet explained by science to be ‘impossible,’ is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

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.”