

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

In the life of D. D. Home occurs a remark which throws some light on the French variety of Spiritualism:—

"Alexander Dumas relates how at Polonstrava a spirit entered into a table. In his fantastic narrative the table is no longer a table: it has become an intelligence itself, instead of being merely the means of communication between our intelligence and another. In this confusion of things material with things spiritual Dumas was a type of his nation. . . . The French mind was seldom able to separate the spirits from the chairs and tables. In the pages of one of the many writers who have charged their own aberrations on the world of spirits, Count Theobald Walsh, we even find tables, footstools, and baskets animated at his bidding with the various passions of humanity, and representing anger, gluttony, pride, &c."

I once saw a footstool rush at me across the room, impelled by I know not what force, but it never occurred to me to suppose that an angry spirit had taken up its abode within it, and a gluttonous dining-table suggests ideas that I do not desire to encourage. There is no doubt that much of the neo-philosophical system which passes current on the Continent has been evolved from the minds of men who have first constructed their system and then have sought for a confirmation of it from a presumed spirit. It is not, therefore, necessarily devoid of a spiritual source, for spirits inspire the minds of men, but it is not easy to dissociate it from a mundane origin.

Writing of Sir Edwin Arnold's new volume *Lotus and Jewel*, which it links with Alfred Austin's *Prince Lucifer*, the *Times* has this criticism:—

"The characteristics of the best poetry of our time seem to be thoughtfulness and ambition. It soars towards transcendental research, it strives towards solutions of inscrutable problems, it deals with the minds and actions of men as moulded and influenced by the complicated conditions of their existence."

It is well to have this independent testimony to the influence which the seeking after communion with the unseen world, the patient self-analysis, the probing of the causes of psychical phenomena that is wholly due to Spiritualism, produce. Not alone, as I have often pointed out, in our best fiction, but in poetry, in the current thought of the age as it variously expresses itself, we trace with no difficulty the dominant note of the generation. It is an impressive comment on a text that bears illustration from science as well as from literature. Spirit is winning all along the line. Spiritualism has now more to fear from its friends than from its enemies.

A parable from Sir Edwin Arnold's fine poem. The Lord Buddha condescends to convert a Nautch girl (embodiment of the sensuous side of the Eastern religion) from

her lower love by his almighty power. She breathes out her soul to her lover, and sinks to sleep in his arms, but when she wakes

"Clasped to her heart

A festering corpse tainted the air: its bones
Ridged the shrunk flesh: the putrid inward part
Blotched it with green and purple: cold as stones
Glared its glazed orbs: all the fair grace was fled
Like gold fruit mouldered, or a lily's crown
Withering to foulness."

By side of this, true love is thus described:—

"Love can bring

Gladness from grief, high hope from death and slaughter,
Light out of darkness, good from everything."

A valued correspondent sends me this:—

"A Mrs. B., in Paraguay, was staying with her daughter, who was ill, and does not believe her thoughts were at all in England at the time. One night she awoke very cold and shivering, though the heat in the room was 82, and saw a Mr. H. standing dressed in evening clothes. He said, 'Oh, I want you. Tommy worries me so—I am dying and he keeps on telling me to cheer up and not give way—and I know I am dying.'

"Mrs. B. related her reason for believing her friend had passed away to her daughter next morning. The next night the same thing occurred, and at Geneva, for the third time, she saw Mr. H. quite distinctly. On landing she was not at all surprised to hear that Mr. H. had passed away at the time she saw him in Paraguay. On calling on his widow she was told that he talked of her, and said he was so hot, the window must be opened, and stated that he was in a foreign country, and could not understand the language they spoke. In vain his wife assured him he was at home and in England, and that it was very cold, and those around him supposed he was delirious."

The *Daily Chronicle* has published one of the stock articles that every now and then crop up. Somebody has devoted ten minutes to Spiritualism, and has written a column out of the profundity of his acquaintance with the subject. Thus are mysteries solved; thus is the public enlightened in the pages of the penny Press. The writer commences his diatribe, "It appears to be impossible for anyone to dabble for any length of time in the mystic arts without having his mind seriously affected thereby." The writer generalises from a single instance, a common logical fallacy. Because his ten minutes has proved fatal to his mental faculties it does not follow that more evenly-balanced minds cannot resist the strain. I am led to notice this very foolish article only by the fact that some correspondents, whom I should wish to oblige, have asked me to do so. But the space at my command is too small and too valuable to be applied to an analysis and refutation of this school-child nonsense. Once on a time Dr. Lyttleton Winslow published a pamphlet more than sufficiently noticed at the time, in which he asserted that Spiritualism was responsible for sending many of its votaries to lunatic asylums. He drew on his head a calm but very crushing rejoinder from Dr. Eugene Crowell, of Brooklyn, and since then he has not been heard of—except in connection with certain legal proceedings and Mrs. Weldon.

The *Two Worlds* prints two specimens of twenty-four letters that the editor has received on the subject of

organisation and conference among Spiritualists. I have pleasure in reproducing one of the letters, written by a representative provincial Spiritualist:—

“To the Editor of ‘The Two Worlds.’

“It is with feelings of pleasure that I have read the Prize Essay, likewise your editorial comments upon the same. I am glad to find from your remarks that the same high tone and lofty sentiments pervade the other unpublished essays. I hail it as a ‘Sign of the Times’ in our movement, and I sincerely hope it is the harbinger of the brighter day for Spiritualism, when intelligence, linked with judicial organisation, will be found more to the fore in our movement than it has hitherto been.

“I am glad to be able to re-echo your sentiments about a National Conference of Spiritualists, for I believe the time—nay, the very hour—has arrived when the Spiritualists of our land should be found in closer and more brotherly unity for mutual education and defence, as well as for better propagation of our glorious truths.

“The necessity for an Annual Movable Conference is daily proclaiming itself in our midst. It would be in many ways beneficial to the numerous societies which are now working too much apart from each other to receive any mutual benefit from their isolation; whilst it would be a move in the right direction, and a blessing to the various societies and the cause. As an humble spiritual worker I can bear testimony to the fact, that over and over again do the local leaders of our societies (and all honour to them, for they do a noble work), in their desire to be on the right track in their work, frequently ask about how the friends in other districts conduct the society and manage their meetings.

“We Spiritualists want to understand each other better; we have been relying too much upon local or individual efforts. Our disunion, our local isolation, and our ‘broken ranks’ have furnished the strongest weapons of our foes within, and the enemies of progress without. I would advocate not only an Annual National Movable Conference of Spiritualists, but occasional District or County Conferences also, where short essays may be read, bearing upon better organisation, the better cultivation of ‘spiritual gifts,’ self-education, the education of the spiritual mediums, &c.

“Too much of this has been left in the past for the spirits disembodied rather than the earthly embodied spirits. Have we not sufficient intelligence in our midst, sufficient manhood and self-reliance to do this, without electing a ‘Pope,’ ‘Dictator,’ or a ‘Bishop’? Away with this craven fear of ‘Pope,’ Bishop, or ‘professionalism,’ usurping our liberties and dethroning our manhood. These had their birth in ignorance, and can only live in the midst of mental darkness. We claim to have the light which sets men free; then surely we can meet in conference, can organise and educate ourselves in order the more effectually to proclaim our ‘Gospel of Progress,’ and thus carry on our warfare against bigotry, dogma, and superstition, without ourselves formulating a creed or worshipping the superstitious. If, then, we would have the world see and know our grand ‘accumulation of facts’ in relation to our spiritual friends, if ‘unity and fraternity’ and the ‘brotherhood’ of man are to become something more to us than mere empty phrases, but the burning living watchwords leading us on to a nobler future, then must we organise our forces, and daily apply the lessons to our own intellectual and spiritual unfoldment.

“Preston.

“JAMES SWINDLEHURST.”

The concert in aid of the funds of the Home for Sick and Crippled Children, so long maintained by Margaret, Lady Sandhurst, and Mrs. Duncan, takes place on Friday, June 8th, at Prince’s Hall, at three o’clock. The list of performers promises a real musical treat. Among others of note, Madame Antoinette Sterling’s name appears, and Mrs. Bancroft has promised to recite. Tickets (5s. and 2s. 6d.) are to be had at Mitchell’s, 33, Old Bond-street, W.

If it were in my power to influence any in favour of this most deserving work I would gladly do so. It has been carried on, I know, at the cost of great personal sacrifice, and we Spiritualists need some outlet for that which is the savour of spiritual life, without which it runs risk of becoming corrupt. Of all beneficent work, that which should most surely appeal to human sympathy is the palliation of pain in helpless children; the possible rescue of an innocent life from cruel suffering.

“We talk complacently of the decay of Buddhism. But what have we to say of the decline of Christianity? And yet this last is infinitely more striking and more tragic, inasmuch as it affects a more important section of mankind.”—Robert Elsmere.

ON ORGANISATION.

There are many indications among Spiritualists of a desire for organisation, and yet the most thoughtful among us recognise that, in its attempt, there are ponderous if not insuperable difficulties. The “First Prize Essay,” given in full in the *Two Worlds* of May 4th, on *the best means of advancing Spiritualism in Great Britain*, advocates, as its first prescription, organisation; but when it proceeds to set forth a plan of work, failure is writ large between the lines. Take the very first in the routine of work—“weekly meetings (once or more) for public worship and the exposition of spiritual truths.” Add to it the fourth—“Lyceums should by all means be started so as to bring up the young in the principles of Spiritualism and prevent their tender budding susceptibilities from being crushed and crippled by orthodox tenets. Above all things do not omit a Lyceum.”

These two points raise the whole question as to what shall be the *basis* of organisation.

Many Spiritualists of the greatest depth of thought, and of the purest character among us, would at once say—it has been often said—Spiritualism is *not* religion; and to attempt to make it such would ostracize positively the most religious minds and the choicest leaven from our midst. This was referred to by the present writer in the issues of March 17th, and March 31st at some length, contending for the purely scientific basis as the union of Spiritualists, commingled as it must be with *emotion* as distinct from religious feelings.

To place public worship as an agreed basis would be good, if you can define the objects of worship, but in endeavouring to do so we could never supply the place now occupied by Church life. And you may proceed to establish lyceums and teach “tender budding susceptibilities” when among ourselves we have agreed what to teach! Some may say, and truly, we learn ourselves in the act of teaching. Yes, but our pupils may have to unlearn much if we rush too hastily upon *terra incognita*.

“M.A. (Oxon.),” in his Notes of May 26th, is among the advocates for organisation, and with more promise of success. He bases it upon a “careful recording of facts and a study of the philosophy that underlies them.” Precisely so; and then follows naturally what element of religious life, and what *only* can be brought into the binding cords of union, viz.: “that we should recognise the *bearing* of our knowledge and belief on our own lives, and translate experience into *terms of ethics*.” (The italics are mine.) It may be very easy for some of our good friends to kick violently against *imagined* traces which are not necessarily a part of Church life; and to quote and decry dogmas which modern thought and modern worship have both outgrown—as is done in the *Rostrum* of the *Two Worlds* of May 25th, by Mr. G. Walrond, in an otherwise admirable discourse on “Immortality Demonstrated”—but some of us still believe in the evolution of religion from the Churches, and we are not disposed to leave such a glorious inheritance of organised goodness and work for a new scheme not as yet organised.

All this points to the conclusion that if Spiritualists are to organise it must be on the simplest basis, which can include *all* creeds, and it seems to me to point to the very simple one, viz., a belief in the fact of communion between this life and that beyond the veil. As Mr. Walrond tersely puts it: “The truths of Spiritualism are built on natural realities, and its philosophy is founded on facts.” “Freethought and toleration” is its motto. Exactly; and let toleration be extended to all religious creeds, even such as are now slowly but surely dissolving before the light of science, and of religious life itself. How, then, with all the difficulties hinted at in this short paper, and others which grow out of them, is the desired organisation to be accomplished?

The first *desideratum* is a Conference, which should be a

free and easy one, to which we should all come and talk—not make speeches—over what we want. The first Conference would probably result in little more than an interchange of ideas. Who is to organise this meeting? and who to pay its expenses? And *what* expenses are to be borne by the Conference Committee? If the London Spiritualist Alliance would take it up, that, as the most central representative body, would possess better means than a provincial society, and it could probably command the necessary *lucre*. Possibly one of its autumn conversaciones might be extended so as to become a first informal conference, and inaugurate good spiritual work for the next season; and at their next *conversazione* in June, when Mrs. Hardinge Britten is to address them, she might bring a message of brotherhood and encouragement from the “true and tender North.” Will the London Spiritualist Alliance take it up? VEGA.

BURIED TREASURES.

By MRS. A. J. PENNY.

(Continued from page 245.)

LOOKING-GLASSES.

When Franz Baader says, “Jede Wille bringt seine Vision, mit dieser seine Lust und List damit,” (*Every will brings its own seeing and with this its pleasure and its craft*), one’s first thought is that the seeing is an arrangement of that will’s cunning, made to secure its pleasure. Indirectly it is so, but not consciously. We often say with impatient surprise, “I cannot make him or her see so and so!”—glaringly evident to the speaker. In very many cases no human power could alter the mental perception of another; because the constant interaction of the reflex images in the mirror of the mind, and the spirit which has *immassed* them there, precludes the sight of actual facts as involuntarily as the breath of a person shut up in a small glass house would obscure the passage of light and obstruct the captive’s vision. We are all prisoners within the magic circle of our own unconscious spells. The will has created images that suit its desire, and the images have corroborated the will.*

The momentary fury of irritation which will flare up in a narrow or despotic mind when its prejudices are controverted is solely due to this. No one likes to have his own special looking-glass shaken, or its plane confused by images foreign to those usually there. Hence the instinctive reserve of Englishmen: their fixity of opinion makes them impatient of every subversive thought. Nor can any imported ideas alter the proportions of our own. How often do we come from an audience with the inner thoughts of another—say, of a very conceited, very proud, or very melancholy friend—feeling as if we had been in contact with a mind partially deranged! Conceit has been in such comical disagreement with outside verdicts, pride so bewilderingly blind, and dejection so wholly out of keeping with the cause alleged, and yet so intense and immovable. We wonder; but if our secret chambers of imagery had been inspected probably there would be quite as much to startle on some other line; and I think we should all guard more carefully against foolish wishes and vain or angry thoughts, if we knew how surely, when habitually allowed, they “compact themselves into the substance of the phantasy.”† Whoever has long entertained one of these befooling fixed ideas must know not only their tormenting force but their fascination: for as Swedenborg so profoundly observed, “The objects flowed from the representations and not the representations from the objects.”‡ The slave of habit feels the truth of that, and still remains a slave.

It is in perceiving how very much we all make the world we see that deepest disquiet arises as to the reality of anything. Amiel felt this when writing in his *Journal Intime* (Vol. I., p. 67): “We produce our own spiritual world, our monsters, our chimeras, and our angels; that which ferments within us we make objective. All is a marvel for the poet, all divine for the saint; all is great for the hero; all mean, ugly, and bad for the

base and sordid soul. The bad man creates a Pandemonium around him; the artist an Olympus; the elect a Paradise, which only each can see. We are all visionaries, and what we see in things is our own souls.”

Undeniable; but it is the appropriation of what in the abstract really is, and not—chimeras excepted!—what does not exist. All those states of being are real in the soul, and with each we can so identify ourselves that we shall be cognisant of no others. This is the tremendous prerogative of man: his will, desire, and imagination bring into animate existence all that corresponds to their quest and, by intensifying their magic influence, blind him to any other. This has been neatly exemplified in a recent publication:—

“The other evening I looked up and saw over me a black sky. I supposed that the stars were hid. But I was standing under an electric light. When I had walked on and looked up again, the stars came out. There is a man who is living under the light of his own science and it is honest white light. But in it he loses sight of the whole heavens. He needs to go further on in his life to widen the circle of his experience.” . . . “He needs to step out from under his own blinding light in order that he may gain faith’s larger vision.”*

We do all step out from under one light to another as time goes on; yet each generally blinds us in some degree; and our visions change as from time to time our looking-glasses become clearer or more dim and more warped by distorting modes of thought. Necessarily, too, imagination hungers for new delights; and phantasies—a more ephemeral brood by far—shift from year to year. We all prove in turn that “the universe is an infinite series of planes; each of which is a false bottom; and when we think our feet are planted now at last on adamant, the slide is drawn out from under us.”† How sharply and suddenly sometimes! and what a heart-sickening process it is!

Sooner or later every looking-glass, which reflects this world’s images only, must break, and of the time inevitable when this befalls Boehme has such words that he must be quoted again:—

“Outward Reason supposeth when the outward eyes seeth a thing, *that is all*, there is no other seeing more; indeed, it is bad enough when the poor soul borroweth the outward looking-glass, and must make shift to help itself only with that; but where will its seeing be when the outward looking-glass breaketh; wherewith will it then see? . . . It can see no other where. Therefore it often cometh to pass that when the poor captive soul descrieth itself in the inward root, and thinketh what will follow when the outward looking-glass breaketh, that it is horribly terrified and casteth the body into anguish and doubting. For it can nowhere discover where its eternal rest should be; but it findeth that it is in itself in mere unquietness, moreover in darkness; and hath the outward looking-glass only as it were borrowed.”‡

He calls it borrowed because it was not that for which man was born; he was imagined by God into existence in the world of Light, and brought himself by his own imaginations into a nature which—until eternal light is generated in its soulish fire—is wrath and darkness. Nor can the soul of man embody itself in any lasting substance till it brings its *desire* into light, and *wills* to be reborn.

“In which world now it uniteth itself and giveth up itself, from the same it *getteth substance in its imagination*,”§ and “out of the light the *right* or true substantiality exists, for it is a fulfilling or satiating of the will.”||

I wish every reader of this paper could have access to the context of the words just quoted from Boehme’s *Six Points*. It is too long to give here, but at par. 38 a solution is offered to the all-concerning problem, how with debased desires and a perverted will is any soul to lift itself to higher imaginings? and that must not be omitted. It can

“often not know itself; it becometh oftentimes overwhelmed with the fierce wrath of evil and malignity; so that it is as if it were quite perished; and it were also perished if the *Looking-glass of the Deity* did not stand presented to it, wherein the spirit of the poor captive soul may draw breath and recover itself, and generate therein again. For, in the looking-glass of the light world standeth the incarnation of Jesus Christ presented to the soul’s spirit; and the Word that became man, standeth in the *sound*, and is stirring;¶ the soul’s spirit can *therein* draw breath or recover itself and new generate itself, else it were often past help.”

* Newman Smyth’s *Christian Faith and Forces*.

† Emerson’s *The Preacher*.

‡ *Fifth Point*, chap. 7, pars. 21, 22, 23. § *Ibid.*, par. 29.

|| First of *Forty Questions*, par. 278.

(The reason of this may be better apprehended when the genealogy of water—principle of all corporeity—is remembered. From fire comes light, air from light, water from air; and from the quality of the fuel of the fire from which light proceeds depends the quality of resultant substance. There was profound spiritual *fact*, not only a figure of it given to us by The Light of the World when He offered the waters of everlasting life to the soul of man. Till that Light is kindled *there* its thirst is never quenched.)

¶ That sentence, “standeth in the *sound* and is stirring,” is one of the insoluble little lumps of meaningless emphasis which seems to darken the whole context. It admits of very instructive explanation, which I hope to produce in a following attempt.

* This is no new truth of course; long since well-worded by Fichte, “*Solltest du anders sehen so müsstest du erst anders werden*.” (If you would see things differently you must first become different yourself.) But this is one of the facts so habitually disguised in self-conscious life, that it needs to be repeated to every rising generation afresh.

† *Election*, chap. 5, par. 25.

‡ *Spiritual Diary*, Vol. III., par. 3672.

It is here that the wisdom of the Father of spirits comes into very striking contrast with the unwisdom of His child—in the modern thinker who declares an historic Christ to be too limited a conception for operative influence on the whole race. For when our philosophers cease to deny the possibility of Divine incarnation (Eastern Theosophy having lamed *that* cavil), they still question the probability of such an event on these two counts; first, that under such narrow limits of time and place a creaturely manifestation of God must be inefficacious, and, secondly, superfluous, because, teaching being the main thing for amendment of a fallen race, a higher standard of ethics was all that was needed for its uplift. It is their assumption; but no teaching and no abstract ideal of virtue has ever told on human imagination with any constraining force. The life of the Saviour did—His enemies themselves being witnesses. It does still, as everyone knows who has become a “new creature,” who has won to a spiritual life which has joy, hope, and ambition quite independent of all that death ends. In the chaotic confusions of a self-pleasing heart, the shadows of happiness which flutter past, and the ever-broken and ever-renewed images of pleasure that occupy for a while and sooner or later mortify—all produce weariness, often ending in despair. In such states a soul truly does *not* know itself; at one time it feels somewhat good, at another hard as iron, almost diabolical; and to give it an imagination of what it ought to be and could be, and must be if it is to find rest, is a boon of unspeakable worth. Because an ideal of this sort is as essential to re-birth as some little point is for fluids to crystallise around if they are to form themselves into right angles. From Jacob’s days and onwards, an image which strongly seizes on the imagination always causes an attempt in some measure to reproduce it, as surely as an echo gives back sound and still water the outlines of a figure raised above it. Till Jesus came to mankind in the flesh there was no picture of Divine love and tenderness in the human imagination. He brought that, as well as the *undivided* tinctures of fire and light, into the soul of our race. Who will dare to say that these two saving gifts were, as regards Time, simultaneously bestowed? When we talk of tincturing material things we often refer to a very slow process, and I suppose that the human soul began to be thus tinctured when Eve received the promise of victorious seed. When the Christ came (“*in His creature*,” says Boehme, “*He is a man*”) we must believe that the transmuting process had gone far enough for the *basis* of regenerative life to be evolved: the *substance* brought by the Holy One was then ready for the light of the risen sun of righteousness to quicken into organic existence. This light permeating one’s life from within, as it ever does, intensified the prenatal throes of eternal life, and in that anguish man was born again. Suffering inevitable, if supreme bliss is to be known, for there must be a solution of all an evil will has framed into the “substance of its phantasy” before the image of God, Christ *in us*, can begin to renew itself in the soul. With his usual accuracy of similitudes, Boehme represents this when saying that a soul which imagines according to the dark world’s property

“loseth God’s looking-glass: it becometh filled with dark, fierce wrath; as a man mixeth water with earth, and then the sun cannot shine in it, and that very water loseth the sun’s looking-glass, and the water must again sink down from the earth, else it never becometh a looking-glass of the sun any more, but is captivated in the fierce, wrathful earth. Thus it goeth also with the human life; while it imagineth after or according to God’s Spirit, so it conceiveth or receiveth God’s power and light, and apprehendeth God; but when it imagineth after or according to earthliness and the dark world’s property, then it receiveth the essence of the earthliness and dark world, and filleth itself with the same. And then is the life’s looking-glass shut up in darkness, and loseth the looking-glass of the Deity, and must be born anew.”*

Now when the crisis of true conversion comes—be it slow or sudden—a leaping-up of spiritual light seems to shatter the compressed rubbish of our vain desires, and to purify the soul’s vision from the foul dust of earthly-mindedness; but the *will* to convert must precede contrition, and the will to forsake sin is not always at our command: hence the mercy of a body, the soul’s outward looking-glass; on this the weakest will can exercise some control; it can forbid itself both word and deed, and so doing, little by little it gathers strength, and the imagination is purified; and as its turbid products subside, the example of the Holy One of God can shine in it once more. Then we begin to be able to fix thought upon that example by “such a strong importunate imagination of faith”† that the soul “bringeth its magnetic hunger into God’s love”; the soul then

attracteth Divine substance, namely, the essential wisdom of God.”*

That I may make more clear the difference in effect between this process and that of any amount of philosophical thought or ethical belief, I will cite the other greatest seer on record, who, never having read any of Boehme’s works, exactly agrees with him in many vital points.

“The love which is of the will cannot be raised in the same manner as the wisdom which is of the understanding. The love which is of the will is raised only by shunning evils as sins, and then by all the goods of charity, which are uses, which the man therefore accomplishes from the Lord. Therefore if the love which is of the will is not raised at the same time, the wisdom which is of the understanding, however it may have ascended, *still relapses to its love*.”†

This is precisely what happens to those deluded pietists whose religion is notional and not a life; and I fear we must one and all know, that our devoutest feelings have wings, used often as swiftly and suddenly as those of birds quitting a branch, and our mundane feelings all the close persistency of earth-worms, which never leave *their* line of action. Human nature is now averted from God, cleaving to the dust. “In God’s holiness it cannot take hold; for the will was sent off from that; therefore there must now be a *similitude* wherein the imagination of the human nature may take hold.”‡ Now Jesus Christ is that similitude.

ZÖLLNER’S MEDIUMISTIC EXPERIMENTS.

Extracts from the Diary of GUSTAV THEODOR FECHNER, late Professor in Vienna, died November 19th, 1887. I

(TRANSLATED FROM *Sphinx*, BY “V.”)

Leipzig, November 23rd, 1887 (eight days after Professor Frederic Zollner had begun his experiments with Slade).—It is true, we could not conceive how even the most expert conjurer could perform most of the phenomena which took place in Slade’s presence, under our very eyes and close to us. But still there are conjurers who, even under similar conditions, perform feats which we can just as little comprehend, and this circumstance will always cause doubts as to the genuineness of Slade’s productions. We conversed about numerous instances of this kind.

For instance, with regard to the feat of strength exhibited by raising myself, together with the chair on which I sat, from the ground, many performances of this kind by jugglers appear equally incredible. . . . And it may seem matter for suspicion that before this experiment, Slade made me change places with B., for B. is half as heavy again as I am. The possibility was likewise suggested that Slade might have accomplished the lifting by using his hand from above and a push from his knee from beneath the chair. It was difficult, however, to imagine this to be possible, as he sat next me, and the push from beneath must have been exactly in the middle of the chair, otherwise the chair would have tilted over. Exact observation in this instance was not possible, partly because the lifting took place unexpectedly, and partly because in this experiment we were sitting with our hands joined, so near to the table that we could not see Slade’s knees, which we could do, though with some inconvenience, during the other experiments.

Then the trivial matter of the spirit-writings may likewise appear suggestive of suspicion, though this is quite in accordance with the Spiritual theory, according to which it is not, as a rule, spirits of high position who take part in these performances. Yet even the most intellectual man might, after a long time, restrict himself to commonplaces, if day after day albums were laid before him for him to write in, and this is similar to what the spirits have to do at Slade’s daily sittings. If Slade himself did the writing, in the case of those which took place above the table (for instance, in the double slate), it could only be done with inconceivable rapidity and unseen by those looking on, at the moment when he introduced the morsel of pencil and shut the slates. We are equally at a loss to find any conceivable explanation of the moving of the bedstead or the breaking of the canopy.

December 14th. . . . Generally we found the phenomena increased in power from *séance* to *séance*, as though the spirits became gradually more expert in producing their mani-

* *Microcosmus*, par. 6.

† Swedenborg’s *Divine Love and Wisdom*, par. 259.

‡ Boehme’s *Treatise on Baptism*, chap. 2, par. 33.

* *Fourth Point*, chap. 6, pars. 25, 26, 27.

† *Mysterium Magnum*, chap. 23, par. 32.

festations in the presence of the assembled circle. Some of the séances took place in the full daylight. . . .

But allowing, or rather supposing, that the phenomena which we witnessed were not due to deception, the question must still be asked whether they were produced by the operation of spirits from the other world. And if not, then from what source? They must be due to intelligent beings, or the so-called spirit-writing would not have been sensible; and if it did not originate with the spirits of the mortals present, I really do not know who they could be but those of the departed.

Besides which, Spiritualists attach great importance to the facts of Spiritualism as proving the immortality of the soul; and, indeed, they appear to me to justify the views I hold as to the other world, according to which spirits constantly surround us and influence us without our knowledge. But this intercourse between our world and the spiritual one is so misunderstood in ordinary life that as long as this state of things exists phenomena like the Spiritualistic cannot take place. Why not, however, if the conditions are altered? Those who are called mediums are always in an abnormal state. I compare the state of the spirit-world, both on this side and on the other, which I look upon as proceeding from one universal spirit, with that of ideas and the recollections that arise out of them in our minds. The connection between the world of ideas and that of memory in our minds, is now regulated in a normal manner, and is known to be subject to physiological laws; but with persons subject to hallucinations or delusions, these laws cease to have effect, and with abnormal phenomena abnormal movements may easily occur. If there be really a spiritual intercourse between this world and the other, the possibility of which I cannot deny, I should look upon him from whose development no sign was to be expected either for this side or the other, simply as crazy. And I should likewise believe that the communications which in this wise come to us from the other world, since they have, so to speak, to come through the organisation of the medium, will always be influenced by his way of thinking and speaking, or by the ideas of those with whom he is in contact, and in many cases will represent little else. The following circumstance renders it necessary to take this into consideration, if the fact of such intercourse is to be maintained.

Very often spirits are questioned in mediumistic circles concerning the other world in which they live, and apparently genuine answers are given. But the information received from different sources is sometimes simply silly, or it represents views already current in this world, and which may either consciously or unconsciously be implanted in the medium's mind. They contradict one another frequently, and are not to be argued about simply because they originate from such fluctuating sources on this side. All of them cannot be true at the same time, and therefore we are naturally mistrustful with regard to spiritual manifestations as coming from the other world. Still, here and there we find accounts of spiritual knowledge or clear vision which cannot be explained by anything within the mind of the medium.

These are thoughts which may be of importance if the facts of Spiritualism are genuine; but I think myself that we ought to argue against their being so as long as possible, though we should not overstep the bounds of scepticism. In any case the inquiries, as the result of which many persons assert that the facts are not genuine—while most people do so without making any inquiries whatever—seem to me much more superficial and incomplete than those by means of which men of exact science, such as Wallace, Crookes, Varley, and others, have convinced themselves that they are genuine, and I confess that these authorities have great weight with me.

I wonder rather that the views of the other world, which I have made public in my essay on *Life after Death*, and more fully in the third part of my *Zend-Avesta*, have met with scarcely any attention in Spiritualistic circles, in spite of their resemblance to the views held by Spiritualists and agreement with Spiritualistic facts; not that I have any desire to contribute to their literature.*

January, 1878.—Naturally, here in Leipzig there is a great deal of talk about Slade's séances, and I have been much importuned to tell about them and to say what my opinion about the matter is. If I relate what I have witnessed, no one without having been present will readily believe in the Spiritualistic marvels which have been produced at these séances; many even

would not believe them who had only been present at one or another of them. The phenomena are too utterly opposed to all our preconceived opinions, and the universal objection brought forward over and over again is that "with conjurers likewise one sees much which seems equally incredible and which is yet successfully performed. Why should it be anything else in this instance? Slade is only one of the most expert of conjurers. Bellachini's evidence goes for nothing; one crow will not pick out another crow's eyes, and another conjurer (Hermann) has discovered a way of producing Slade's spirit-writing by natural methods." That he did it, however, under the same conditions as Slade I must own I have never heard.

Now, as I must confess myself vanquished by the facts I have witnessed, I should answer as follows, if I allowed myself to give a reply:—

"The observations by means of which exact inquirers have convinced themselves of the genuineness of Spiritualistic marvels differ from those they would give to the performances of conjurers in the following particulars: the observer is able in his own room to watch the medium, and is quite close to him; the latter has no opportunity to make any preparations for his performances; he has no apparatus of his own with which to operate, and no accomplices; and, above all, we notice particularly, those manifestations in which it is impossible for the medium to use his hands or his feet, because they take place at a distance from him—such, I mean, as the movement of objects beyond his reach, and we do not speak of occurrences to which any suspicion can attach, but of those which are beyond suspicion, such as the experiment of tying knots in an endless cord; while the opponent of Spiritualism always takes the opposite course, that is, because some of the manifestations are undoubtedly open to suspicion, he questions the genuineness of others where the same grounds for suspicion do not exist.

"I wish to point out that if it be permissible to suspect Slade, as a professional medium and a stranger, on all sorts of grounds to be a conjurer, there is no foundation for suspicion in the case of others, such as young female mediums known to us, and in whose presence manifestations take place, if not exactly similar to those of Slade, yet equally wonderful. If anyone, however, after all the precautions which have been devised and made use of, still says 'I believe it is nothing but conjuring,' that is his own affair, and he simply asserts that it is impossible to prove that conjuring cannot do everything.

"If, as usually happens, all this goes in at one ear and out at the other, I only say, 'I don't ask you to believe me, it is your own affair; the facts are there, and everyone fights against believing them as long as they can; no one who now is convinced by them, ever acted differently to begin with. All I maintain is, that no one has the right to express a decisive opinion on the matter, who has neither taken part in séances at which facts of an overwhelming nature have occurred, nor followed the literature written on this subject, and has thereby convinced himself *what precautions have been taken, by what sort of men in their observation of these facts, and especially what kind of material they had to experiment with.*'

"The expressed opinion that all may be due to conjuring on the part of those who have nothing to bring forward, except their opinion, can have no weight with those who have been compelled, through the evidence of facts alone, at last to give way and to avow themselves believers."

"OPINIONS which flatter the vanity and are in harmony with accustomed modes of thought are accepted; strange truths are often regarded with astonishment and driven away from the door. Men are often afraid of that which they do not know, and not knowing the truth they are afraid to receive it. They ask new truths for their passports, and if they do not bear the stamp of some fashionable authority they are looked upon as illegitimate children, and are not permitted to grow."—F. HARTMANN.

THE PAIN OF A NEW IDEA.—"In all customary societies bigotry is the ruling principle. In rude places to this day anyone who says anything new is looked on with suspicion, and is persecuted by opinion if not injured by penalty. One of the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of a new idea. It is, as common people say, so 'upsetting,' it makes you think that after all, your favourite notions may be wrong, your firmest belief ill-founded; it is certain that till now there was no place allotted in your mind to the new and startling inhabitant, and now that it has conquered an entrance, you do not at once see which of your old ideas it will turn out, with which of them it can be reconciled, and with which it is at essential enmity. Naturally, therefore, common men hate a new idea, and are disposed more or less to ill-treat the original man who brings it."—W. BAGEHOT's *Physics and Politics*, p. 164.

* In his later work, *Die Tagesansicht*, Professor Fechner has really expressed himself as an advocate of Spiritualism.—ED. SPHINX.

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Light :

EDITED BY "M.A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, JUNE 2nd, 1888.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor. 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.

MARIE WILTON'S SPIRITUALISM.

In the recently published *Bancroft Memoirs*, Mrs. Bancroft tells a pretty story of an early experience at Bristol. She was playing Juliet, "a pale, thin, delicate-looking child," far too young for the part. But she had genius, and as she left the theatre with her father, a gentleman introduced himself as Captain——, with some words of commendation, "There is a great career before you." The Captain fell in love with the child Juliet, and Marie Wilton fell in love with the Captain. One night a note came: "Good-bye. I love you, little one. I wonder if we shall ever meet again." The child handed the note to her mother, and announced her intention of seeing the Captain and avowing her love. Naturally the mother objected to this very frank proceeding, but, unfortunately, his Irish address was known to Miss Wilton, and she gushed at him by post. She would marry no one else. The Captain rejoined that he loved her, but, sad to say, had no money. Would she reflect? She did, and love grew fonder. Then the Captain capitulated. Marie was to run away and precipitate herself into her admirer's arms. "When I was alone in my little bedroom I fell on my knees and prayed to God to help and guide me, and to give me some warning in my dreams . . . I cried myself to sleep: no warning came . . . Half-past eight was the post hour. I heard the postman's knock. I jumped out of bed, and as I crossed the room to open the door, a voice, as if in great haste, said quickly, 'Don't go.'"

The letter contained the final instructions, money, and so forth. The reply, returning the money, was "I have changed my mind." A few weeks later the Captain's marriage was in the papers. Still later, while acting at the Strand Theatre, Miss Wilton was in Regent-street pensively contemplating the Carrara Marble Works. As she turned away there was the Captain, reproachful but married. She told him of her warning voice. He opined that the advice given was good, "for we should have been very poor." But, he added, "I am now a widower. I wonder if my little Juliet loves me still." She did, but thought it wiser to put him off. "You will soon forget me." "Never, till I am under one of these," pointing to the headstones in the window.

He sailed for India, having wrung from Mrs. Wilton a reluctant consent that he should correspond with her daughter. Six months passed and every mail brought the expected letter. At last no letter came, and mail after

mail passed with no message. Again Miss Wilton was in Regent-street. "As I approached the Carrara Marble Works I hurried to the place with a kind of superstitious feeling—having met him so strangely there before, I should, perhaps, as strangely meet him there again. I stopped at the old spot, waited, looked about—no, not there! Ah! I remember I was looking in at the window when he came: I will do so again, and then I saw a large white headstone with these words:—

"SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
CAPTAIN ——

WHO DIED SUDDENLY AT KURRACHEE,
&c., &c."

One more unconscious medium added to the list.

MR. LAURENCE OLIPHANT'S NEW WORK.

We are able to announce the publication of Mr. Laurence Oliphant's important work. It is entitled *Scientific Religion; or, Higher Possibilities of Life and Practice through the Operation of Natural Forces*. It runs to 473 pp., demy 8vo., costs 16s., and is published for the Author by Blackwood. We have before us a synopsis of its contents, which are of the most varied and interesting nature. It is, as we understand, an expression and development of the scheme which found a brief exposition in *Sympneumata*. Not the least interesting part will be the Author's account of his own psychical experiences; his comments on the Paris experiments in Hypnotism, and on the American Faith-healing, and kindred forms of exercise of will-power. Mr. Laurence Oliphant tells us, what people are slowly awakening to see, that Christ's Christianity is a very different thing from the modern Nineteenth-century variety of His religion. He has much to say of the religion of the future, and of inspiration from the world of spirit as underlying it. Naturally, we hear a good deal of the position of woman; for Mr. Oliphant's perceptions are sensitive, and this, perhaps, is the subject of this very complex age that will distinguish and differentiate it when its story comes to be written by some as yet unborn historian. We make no pretence of giving any idea of the scope of Mr. Oliphant's many-sided book. We only lift a corner of the veil. Hereafter it will be our duty to make some attempt to estimate its worth and importance.

THE MATERIALISATION SEANCE

PAINTED BY MR. W. FARRAN LITTLER.

Before taking action it is necessary to know what demand there will be for engravings. It is proposed to have two qualities (artists' proofs at two guineas, and others at one) if a sufficient number is subscribed for. About sixty subscriptions will be needed.

INDEX TO THE "SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER.

Mr. Charles Blackburn has presented to the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance an index to the *Spiritualist* newspaper. It has been compiled by Miss Kate and Miss Edith Cook, sisters to Mrs. Elgie Corner (Florence Cook). The book is sumptuously printed, and will be of value to students. Mr. Blackburn generously offers to present a copy of the index to anyone who purchases a set of the *Spiritualist* journal, some of which still remain on hand in the possession of the late publisher. Mr. E. W. Allen, Ave Maria-lane, will give any particulars. The full set of the *Spiritualist* numbers twenty volumes.

"LET us look calmly and philosophically at the problem of existence—not seizing it under the shadow of theological traditions, not turning our backs upon one half of it, and with greed and over-selfish concern devouring the other half with some Elysium or Heaven as a goal. Let us rather look at it with nineteenth century courage—the courage to investigate, and to learn the truth at any cost."—*The Platonist*.

UNITY OF RELIGIONS,

No. III.

[It is especially requested, by the writer of these short papers, that those who may chance to peruse them will do so with an open New Testament; for their purpose is far more to draw attention to the mine of spiritual and occult worth to be "discerned spiritually" in those inspired writings, than to exert any other influence.]

Leaving the history of the Personal influence and work on earth of Jesus Christ, when *in the flesh*, let us pass on to a consideration of the pledges of His continuing Presence, and to the formation of His Spiritual Kingdom.

Two pledges (or let us look upon them as such for the present) Jesus Christ left with His Church.

Two commands—simple ones truly—but to be fulfilled by His followers. (1) Baptism (S. Matt. xxviii. 19-20); (2) Breaking of bread and taking of wine (S. Luke xxii. 19-20).

And these two acts of *obedience* the Church believes will (if faithfully performed) bring the followers of Christ into *very special communion* with His Spirit while yet on earth.

These two institutions are, as it were, the landmarks of the Christian Church; small and simple in their external presentation, but significant as a means of uniting the members of an external Church; and in the eyes of those who enter with St. Paul into their inner meaning, and into the spiritual conception of a *mystical oneness with Christ*, far more powerful in their esoteric influence upon human life, as a means of communion with the Highest.

Again, I will quote from *Turning Points in General Church History* :—

"St. Paul alludes in 1 Cor. x. to the veneration in which the two Sacraments were held by the primitive Christians, and warns them not to trust in these great privileges for salvation, unless they continue faithful to their profession and their grace."

The unity of the Church is plainly set forth: "There is one Body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all." (Eph. iv. 4, 5.)

The internal bond of this unity is a spiritual unity, in the mystical body of Christ.

Christ Himself teaches it:

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me."

"I am the Vine, ye are the branches." (St. John xv. 5.)

St. Paul compares it to the oneness of a human being: "He is the Head of the Body, the Church." (Col. i. 18.)

"As the human body is one and has many members, and all the members of that body, being many, are one: so also is Christ (the mystical Christ). For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body." (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

And, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "For we being many, are one bread, and one body; and we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. x. 16, 17.)

Could any more complete setting forth of the exoteric and esoteric union between Christ and His Kingdom have been conceived of? And could this same conception have been exemplified in any fuller and more comprehensive manner?

Thus Jesus Christ is recognised and received as the "Head of the Body," the "Centre of the Churches' Unity."

Jesus Christ asked the disciples on the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

They answered Him, showing many differences of opinion. (St. Matt. xvi. 14.)

He then asked: "But whom say ye that I am?"

And Simon Peter's answer was:—

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (St. Matt. xvi. 16.)

Jesus answered, "On this rock" (the rock of Peter's understanding, and *confessing of His Divinity*) "I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." (St. Matt. xvi. 18.)

Here, the "two things are joined together by Christ"; the "confession of His Divinity and His Church, the one founded on the other."

And what are the facts concerning the life and death of Jesus Christ which justify this *confession and claim of His Divinity*?

Why does St. Paul claim for Him a "name which is above every name"?

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and of things in earth, and things under the earth."

"And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 8-11.)

These are the facts—

- (1) A miraculous Incarnation.
- (2) Miraculous Powers.
- (3) A Perfect Life.
- (4) A claim to be the Son of God.
- (5) The institution of two mystical ceremonies to proclaim and sustain a unitary system.
- (6) A cruel Death.
- (7) A miraculous Resurrection.
- (8) Miraculous Appearances.
- (9) A miraculous Ascension.
- (10) A miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit anointing a Priesthood, as witnesses to the existence of a Church or Kingdom, against which it was promised that the gates of Hell should not prevail.

Here, then, we have *in their fulness* (Col. i. 26-27), and combined with a Perfect Life, and a claim of Divinity, a manifestation of all the powers which those who have dipped into the inner recesses of the mysteries, *know* to exist.

In the life of Jesus *all these powers centred* (Col. ii. 9), and were made manifest to the world.

In Him were "hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (St. Matt. xxviii. 18.)

The mystery which hath been hid from all ages and generations was verily and indeed "made manifest" in Him.

Agnostics—who are blind to any inward sense whereby they may perceive spiritual things, and who refuse to recognise the presence amongst us to-day, of the tangible external evidence of their existence—may deny this Jesus Christ, His powers, His claim, and His Divinity; but, can we, who have proof both from within and from without, say that He is nothing to us?

Can we read earnestly and honestly the writings of St. Paul, and cast them from us as meaningless and worthless; or if not, how shall we interpret such passages as the following:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 11.)

"Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the traditions of man, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. ii. 8.)

"For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. ii. 9.)

"And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all Principality and Power." (Col. ii. 10.)

And again, the Epistles of St. John: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." (1 St. John iv. 2.)

And, "every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that

spirit of Anti-christ, where of ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world." (1 St. John, iv. 3.)

I might, of course, continue to quote innumerable texts from St. Paul, St. John, and the writers of the other Gospels and Epistles, which would further emphasise this great truth of the *Divinity of Jesus Christ*, and of the *supernatural basis of His religion*; but a higher course is to beg all who may chance to peruse these few words, to give in future their attention (with earnest aspiration for enlightenment from the Highest source) to a study of the New Testament, which, when flooded with the light that is now being daily revealed, through Spiritualism, Theosophy, and other channels, and received into the inner being of one who has been striving in *actual life* to do the will of the Highest, can supply to such an one a "reason for the hope that is in him," and laws wherewith to curb that reason into harmony with the Divine rule of God's universe.

Hence, on the side of the Philosophies, I crave for an acceptance, in its fullest sense, of this Jesus Christ; and (in acknowledgment of His Divinity, and of the supernatural origin of the Kingdom which He left on earth to grow and expand, with Himself as its spiritual and only Monarch), for the performance, in a sincere spirit, of the two simple mystical rites, which He instituted, in expression of our membership with Him, and which, if conceived of in the most exalted manner, need in *no way* detract from the true Catholic character of the largest-minded Philosophy.

DUM SPIRO SPERO.

COLONEL OLCOTT ON "M.A. (OXON'S)" "VISIONS."

I have to thank my friend Colonel Olcott, always genial, gentle, and kind, for a notice of my *Visions*.* In view of the importance of seeing ourselves as others see us, and in the direction of union and harmony, I trust I may be pardoned for reproducing his estimate of my pamphlet. I have not permitted myself to cut out his too kind words respecting myself.

"M.A. (OXON.)."

"Among the authors who have produced the large body of Spiritualistic literature in our times, a few stand conspicuous for scholarship, intellectual and literary capacity, and thorough conscientiousness. Of these, the author of the pamphlet under notice occupies a very prominent place. Those who know him most intimately most respect and love him. Whatever he says he believes, and may be taken as the literal expression of his thought and experience. No man in modern Spiritualism is more able to comprehend its facts or more ready to enlarge and correct his opinions. Since I first enjoyed his acquaintance, he has modified his views to some extent, and been steadily growing towards the light—or what we of the Orient think the light. *Visions* is the record of his psychic experiences on three days—the 4th, 5th, and 6th—of September, 1877. Though a seer for many years, and the recorder of a series of very noble and striking teachings from superior non-mundane sources, he had never until then been brought into relations with 'spiritual beings who profess never to have been incarnate in this world.' He styles them, in conventional Christian parlance, 'angels,' and as 'angel' means a messenger, we make no objection to its use. The Christian angel is a being with wings of feathers, a crude concept due to the misconception of the old painters and writers as to the methods by which spiritual beings, disincarnate man included, move about in the supramundane spheres. Our teaching-angel, or messenger, is a divine person who has attained through many evolutions on various earths the enfranchisement of his knowledge from the illusions of physical intelligence; in short, a Manu, a Chohan, a Rishi, a Mahatma. The divine being who instructed 'M.A. (Oxon.)' during these recorded experiences he knew under the very appropriate name 'Harmony.' To him it seemed a female spirit, shining with a glorious light,

a 'golden circlet in her hair, and with a cincture of blue.' His intuition told him that these appearances were symbolic of the purity, love, and wisdom, ensouled in the character of his visitant. It also taught him that the apparent sex was not actual, for he asks another intelligence who acted as a sort of intermediary or sub-instructor, 'Why "she"? Is the angel feminine?' And was answered, 'No. You said "she," and the feminine best suits the tender grace and purity of one who has not been in rude contact with your earth.' There is in fact no sex in the spirit enfranchised, nor sexual feeling; the entity is androgyne, because perfect: the compensation of halves is complete. The seer asks as regards 'Harmony,' 'Has she passed through any form of incarnation?' The answer is: 'Oh, yes: but not on your earth. I may not say more.' If he had, he would perhaps have prematurely disclosed in 1877, to an unprepared "medium," the facts as to these teaching visitants from other planets and the law of karmic evolution.

"Our author received his instruction with respect to the post-mortem condition of man through the agency of clairvoyant visions. Seeming to go out of the body, and to be endowed with transcendental faculties, he, under the guardianship of the angel, was made to see typical landscapes, buildings, cities, and personages. Some dead acquaintances and friends he recognised, and was astonished to see them surrounded with the creations of their own diseased or healthy fancies: they had made to themselves just such residences, costumes, and other objects as were most consonant with their moral, intellectual, and spiritual states before disincarnation. This fact is very clearly and attractively presented to the reader. 'M.A. (Oxon.)' asks: 'In fact, then, a spirit makes its surroundings; and that is the meaning of the assertion so often made that we are building our house in spirit-land now?' The reply is: 'Yes, just so. You are making your character, and according to your character will be your home and its surroundings. That is inevitable. All gravitate to their own place.' This is orthodox Oriental doctrine. The summer land of the Spiritualist is our *kama loca*, and its pictures and experiences of our own previous fashioning. In the course of my psychical researches I was once so fortunate as to be for a short time in literary collaboration with a noble English scholar who died several generations ago. He worked in a vast subjective library in 'his castle in Spain,' without a thought of rising higher towards *Samadhi*, but with all his vast intellectual power bent upon the pursuit of the philosophical study to which his earth-life had been devoted. No matter how I learnt this; the illustration is pertinent. The pamphlet in question gives an amusing description of the useless hypocrisy and actual self-deception of false spirits in *kama loca*: they think they deceive others, yet their acts belie their words. 'They spend their time in the most foolish and futile attempts to deceive each other. All can recognise the hypocrisy in others, though they do not see how patent it is in themselves.' How like our world of fashion! the book shows that there is no coercion of enlightened and progressed spirits over the ignorant and unprogressed. It teaches the actual law of karma as understood in India. 'Spirits rise by knowledge and by love.' Knowledge comes with experience, and experience destroys illusions and fosters growth and evolution. We cannot hasten the time save by affording the means: 'The motive-spring must come from the receptive mind. We could not teach you if you had no desire to learn. So, the gradual elevation of the spirit from one state to another depends altogether upon its own desire.' That is sound philosophy. Will any Hindû, upon reading the above sketch of the teachings that are being given to the foremost Spiritualist of the day, gainsay the prophecy that the general acceptance of Aryan philosophy by Western thinkers is a result of the immediate future? Let them read this sixpenny pamphlet and then answer. H. S. O."

"MANY urge that we have no recollection, no glimpse of a past existence. What glimpse have we of the future? Is not the chapter of life sealed as inviolably at the close as at the beginning. Life is a sealed book, except the present chapter. All the world believes that there are chapters to come. Why not chapters gone?"—*The Platonist*.

"No good can come of forcing opinion or agreement prematurely. A generation, nay more, may have to spend itself in mere waiting and preparing for those new leaders and those new forms of corporate action which any great revolution of opinion, such as that we are now living through, has always produced in the past and will, we are justified in believing, produce again. But the hour and the men will come, and 'they also serve who only stand and wait.'"—*Robert Elsmere*.

* *Visions*. By "M.A. (Oxon.)," Honorary Corresponding Member of the American Spiritualist Alliance, the Société Magnétique de France, &c., &c.

JOTTINGS.

We are told of a very successful healing medium, at Freiburg, in Baden. This is Baron Henry von Langsdorff, who has already acquired a considerable reputation. He seems able to divine by holding the hand of a patient, whether he can give permanent relief or, as in some cases, whether a temporary alleviation of pain is all that he can effect. His psychical power is by no means confined to this phase.

Lotus. By the author of *A New Marguerite*: a Psychological Romance. (Redway.) A fierce and passionate book, which illustrates once more the hold that our subject has on the popular imagination. To be read.

It seems that M. Perrotin, of the Nice Observatory, has his telescopic eye on Mars, the red and baleful planet. He has "brought a powerful glass to bear" upon this malefic star, and has discovered that "it is not only inhabited by men, but by most skilful engineers who put M. Lesseps in a back seat." Now if a poor Spiritualist had said that, what are the chances of his sleeping in an asylum within a week?

By the way, a very good shot. The astronomers of the flying island of Laputa told Captain Lemuel Gulliver that Mars had "two satellites, one of which revolved in about ten hours." That is, perhaps, the best shot ever fired from the imagination of a "fictionist"—as the latest American slang has it. Deimos and Phobos, Mars' two moons, revolve, the one in about thirty hours, the other in about ten. Was Swift a medium?

Dr. Hartmann's sumptuous work, with its twenty-four large sheets of symbols, hand-coloured, and its beautiful paper and type, is a real pleasure to the eye. The introduction gives us as much information about the Rosicrucians as is to be had. There is also a glossary which students will value. For the rest, there is an allegory, a parable, and a treatise on the philosopher's stone. And yet, after grappling with this elaborate volume, it is disappointing to find that the permanent impression is entirely one of the beauty of form in the book. We are no wiser.

The Theosophical Publishing Society issues its sixth number containing an article on the vexed subject of Re-incarnation. Another paper is on "Esoteric Buddhism"; a third on "The Religions of Japan"; and there is a fourth with an unpronounceable name which we decline to grapple with.

Mr. Morse has entered on his tenth consecutive and last month's work at the Metropolitan Temple, San Francisco. Since July last he has spoken there with complete acceptance and with profit to those who listened to his addresses. Forcible, clear, direct, and instructive—that is the verdict.

The Path, edited by W. Q. Judge, the second number of the third volume, is more than usually good. Articles to read are "Theosophy in Tennyson," "The Tide of Life," and "Conversations on Occultism."

From a recent number we extract an inspirational poem by our contributor, "Nizida." The poem was given to the writer partly by clairaudient sense, partly by inspiration. Those of our readers who are accustomed to receive impressions by any of the means adopted by spirits to influence sensitive minds, will understand that the poem is not of the common sort.

Dr. Gustav Bloede has passed to the higher life. He was a well-known contributor to Spiritualist journals. He was an ardent apostle of freedom, and was exiled from his native land in consequence. A kindly man of marked ability.

The *Theosophist* (Madras) sends out its 104th number under the editorship (*pro tem.*) of Colonel Olcott. "The Pre-existence of the Soul" from the *Platonist*, by Howard Carter, is an illuminative article, whether one agrees or not with the statements in it. So is the essay on "Renunciation"—"the great law of earthly existence." We reproduce a short article from the paper in another column; also Colonel Olcott's estimate of "M. A. (Oxon.'s) Visions." The editorial presence of Colonel Olcott is distinctly felt. He is a "live editor."

The *Platonist* (Osceola, Missouri, U.S.A.) reproduces our

article *In Memoriam* of Dr. Anna Kingsford. We have a widespread audience.

The two articles in the *Platonist* on "Dreams" and "Pre-existence" are of real value. Also of interest is "Druidism and Popular Welsh Occultism."

We see that the Spiritualists of California are preparing for their annual camp-meeting from June 3rd to July 1st. The directors have secured as speakers Mrs. R. S. Lillie, Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. Colville, and other well-known persons.

What a pity that our climate—if one may so term the fag-ends of weather that reach England—precludes such meetings here. We want to get at one another more. Read Mr. Swindlehurst's letter in "Notes by the Way."

This is what the California Spiritualists have in view:—

"The objects of this association, as set forth in its Constitution, are to encourage Spiritual, Moral, Intellectual and Social growth; to bring the rapidly increasing numbers who are welcoming and accepting the truths of Spiritualism into closer communion and sympathy."

Yet another novel dealing with the occult. Few novels issue from the press now without some trace of this prevalent subject of thought. *A Woman's Face*, by Florence Warden (Ward and Downey), is a tale of mystery and mesmerism, with some very risky situations very vivaciously described.

The Touch-and-go young man of the *Echo* is still "unsatisfied as to Spiritualism" in spite of a perusal, which it would be absurd to take seriously, of D. D. Home's life. He cannot make out how the man lived, if he did not trade on his gift. He thinks Mr. Browning, Sir David Brewster, and Mr. Milner Gibson must suffer in repute if we are to believe Madame Home's account of her husband. And finally he relieves his feelings by setting the spirit of Home at the spirits of these eminent men with a view, as far as we can see, of getting up a free fight in what some call the Summer Land. Touch-and-go with a vengeance.

Is it fancy or does the American Press begin to pay attention to the more striking phenomena of Spiritualism as our English papers do? The *Cincinnati Enquirer* gives an account of one Mrs. J. W. Porter, who, before an audience of 300 people, and under the eyes of a very sceptical committee, played with fire in a way that defied that proverbially devouring element. The account is certainly remarkable enough.

There were on the stage two kerosene lamps. Mrs. Porter (in the chaste language of the reporter, with which we must not tamper)

"Handled the red-hot lamp chimneys, passed her hands and arms slowly over the flames of the lamps, and finally took the hand of her little daughter and held that limb over the blaze for quite a while, the child evincing no sign of discomfort. She passed scarfs, black and white paper, a celluloid collar, and other articles of a perishable nature through the devouring flames, which did not devour worth a cent, and brought the articles out all right without a singe or a bruise, amid the claps of the audience and the smiles of the committee. She filled a dish with alcohol and lighted it, and, talking Sanscrit at a high rate, basked her tender wrists and rotund arms in the red-hot flames, and showed up without a scar or even a pimple. The committee told the audience it was wonderful. One of them said that her arms showed an excitation of 78deg. and 98deg.—quite an irregularity—before the test commenced. It must not be forgotten that Mrs. Porter during her experiments held a lamp-chimney, in which an inch and a half flame flared almost to the top, against her cheek for fully two minutes without singeing a hair."

W. Emmette Coleman, in the *Carrier Dove* (San Francisco) has an article full of sound suggestions for the improvement of this world of ours:—

"The Spiritual Philosophy propounds a new gospel, declaring this world a heaven here and now, to be utilised in every possible way; that, if not in heaven in this world, you will not be in heaven in any other, heaven being a condition of mind,—harmony, peace, content; that we are born into this world to live in it as long as possible, for the cultivation and evolution of our spiritual natures, previous to our birth into the next interior state of existence, the Second Sphere; that this world is a glorious world, a paradise of beauty, in which we are ever surrounded with blessings, for us to utilise them; that the only way to prepare ourselves for the deeper joys and purer harmonies of the next existence, is the full enjoyment of the present one, in purity of heart, singleness of purpose, and buoyancy of spirit; that, instead of occupying our minds with thoughts of another world to the exclusion of this, we should know and realise that the best preparation for the other life is to live the best possible life here, making the best possible use of this world."

EASTERN AND WESTERN SCIENCE.

It is, of course, known that a chief object in founding the Theosophical Society was to effect, in the interest of the race, a union of ideas and reciprocity of work between the scientific men of the East and West. Their field is identical, though the workers are delving after facts at its opposite sides. Something in this direction has been done already, and much more is coming. The president's attention was recently arrested by the reported discovery, by the French hypnotists, of a certain sensitive spot (*Zone Érogène*) on the human body which, in hypnotic somnambulists, would, upon pressure, provoke very astonishing physical phenomena. As he was aware that this secret had been known in India certainly as early as the time of Sri Sankaracharya, he, with some difficulty, procured a copy in Tamil of a certain ancient Sanskrit work, and sent it with an explanatory letter to the eminent Professor Charcot, of the Institute of France, Director of La Salpêtrière. It may offend Dr. Sircar, of Calcutta, and similar Hindu reformers (!) to learn that Dr. Charcot acknowledges with the warmest thanks the value of the information sent him: he calls it a veritable treasure trove (*une vraie trouvaille*). Clearly there is something more than "trash" in Sanskrit books, all Indian graduates notwithstanding. Dr. Charcot is the acknowledged leader in contemporary Western Neuro-pathological science; yet he—begging Dr. Sircar's pardon—calls these "marvellous documents," and offers in return his "most grateful and devoted acknowledgments." He will at once "take measures to make them known" to the Western world of science. He bespeaks Colonel Olcott's help in farther researches, and very kindly offers to reciprocate in every possible way in case any new verifications are wanted in France. Colonel Olcott has undertaken to collect for him another class of facts, highly important at this particular juncture. A special commission has recently been organised, under the chairmanship of Professor Charcot, and by order of the Institute of France, to verify the alleged discoveries of Drs. Bourru, Burôt and Luys as to the existence of special auras (*tejas*) in vegetables and minerals, as distinct in each as the magnetic influence, or aura, in the loadstone. Our readers will recollect the fact which has, moreover, been described at some length in that useful pamphlet "Psychometry and Thought-transference." Now, in India it is a very common thing for native physicians, both Hindu and Mussulman, to cure diseases by simply binding upon the arm, neck, or other part of the body, certain roots, leaves, or nuts of healing plants and trees. Though ignorant graduates deny, yet, all the same, the Kabirajis and hakims cure. What would be highly prized by the French Commission would be a list of the substances so employed externally, and of the diseases thus curable. Will the lovers of science among our Asiatic readers and brethren assist in proving the scientific knowledge of ancient sages and authors? Or do they indolently leave all the trouble to foreigners? A doctor at Lahore cures enlarged spleen by tying a certain root on the opposite side of the body: what is *its* botanical name? In Madras, jaundice is cured by tying upon the right arm the root of the *Kodexéli*! what is *its* botanical name? Whooping cough in children is said to be cured by similarly applying a nut, *Punga*: What is *its* name? And will such learned brothers as Dr. Jaswantraï Bhojapatra, of the Punjab, communicate the facts within their observation? If it is so extremely important to Western scientists to find their independent discoveries corroborated by the Hindu Sastras, is it not even more important to Hindus to find that they can find in their old Scriptures a deep well of scientific truth?—*The Theosophist*.

"I was instructed that with every man there are two angelic spirits at his head, by whom the Lord protects man, whose office it is to moderate and control the evil spirits who approach him, besides various other things pertaining to a man's truth and good. Those spoken of just above were, I think, of this sort. There are, moreover, spirits who think that they are themselves the man,—one, two, or three—who are subjects of the world of spirits, upon whom their influence acts. These spirits are changed according to the general changes in the state of man, and are controlled by angelic spirits, of whom they are entirely ignorant. Angelic spirits, without reflection, know no other-wise than that they are themselves the man, but the interior man, in whose interior thoughts they act—thoughts which do not fall within the consciousness of the man himself. But where reflection is given they know that they are angelic spirits. As to a change of these—whether others succeed in turn—instruction is not given."—SWEDENBORG'S *Spiritual Diary*, Vol. III., par. 3525.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The "Daily Chronicle" on Spiritualism.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I beg to enclose cutting from *Daily Chronicle* of to-day's date, containing an article headed "Mysticism and Madness," although it will doubtless be brought under your notice from other sources.

I trust someone better qualified than myself will reply to the article in the crushing manner its semi-sarcastic tone merits, the writer obviously wishing, if possible, to deny all Spiritualistic belief.

I am quite a recent convert to Spiritualism, but certainly fail to see that "no good whatever can come of dabbling in the mystical" if it leads to an assured *knowledge* of a life hereafter instead of at best a sincere *belief*.

The followers of Spiritualism can well afford to laugh at the sneers on "weak-kneed and emotional women who make up the army of believers" so long as the *soirées* of the Spiritualist Alliance are attended by as large and influential a company as was present in St. James's Hall last week.

The writer of the article appears to think that Spiritualists have not the courage of their opinions, and are ashamed to acknowledge their belief, as he alludes to a "good deal being carried on *sub rosâ*," whereas the number of ably-conducted papers and periodicals dealing with the subject, containing many records of phenomena testified to in the most open manner, repudiate such a ridiculous assumption as that the rapidly increasing numbers of believers fear publicity.

The writer strikes at what seems to me (and doubtless to many others, both believers and sceptics) the weak point of contemporary Spiritualism, paid mediums; and the frequent *exposés* that have taken place of the fraudulent practices of many of these persons, I feel sure, are the greatest deterrent to an enlarged acceptance of our views; but I have little doubt an intelligent following of the excellent and unassuming "Advice to Inquirers" given in "LIGHT," by "M.A. (Oxon.)," will soon prove to earnest investigators that this powerful objection is removed when it is found that a medium exists among their own relatives or immediate friends who will not present what the writer of the article appears to think is the usual outward appearance of mediums: "weary limbs, a crafty, and suspicious look in their eyes," &c., but is yet able to produce, or rather control, some psychical phenomena not explainable by imposture, coincidence, or mistake.

At least Spiritualists may claim to be as "solicitous over the living" as the well-intentioned people who leave tracts on the seats of railway carriages and omnibuses, in the hope that some sinner may by their perusal be brought to a *belief* in a Divine immortality, and Spiritualism offers *proof* thereof.

If "the moral to be drawn is that Spiritualism, or any other 'ism with a supernatural twist, is a thing to be avoided, there being nothing to be gained but much to be lost by investigating it," then does the same objection apply to all religious inquiry, for there have been and are more unhappy victims of madness induced by religious mania than can be laid to the account of Spiritualism.

That any fellow creature should suffer so terrible an affliction as the loss of his reason from any excessive mental strain must be a matter of sincere regret to every right thinking man whatever may be his belief, but so long as mysticism is a basis of religion (and it is difficult to know what creed could exist without it) so long will "mysticism and madness" apply equally to all forms of belief, orthodox or otherwise, and it is manifestly unjust to consider insanity as a usual and special attribute of Spiritualism.—I am, sir, obediently yours,

2, Sydenham-terrace,
Croydon.

GEORGE E. HOLLOWAY.

May 22nd, 1888.

[The article is of the usual flippant and foolish character. We have made some remarks on it elsewhere.—ED.]

A Theory of Human Life.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am much obliged to Mr. Houghton for criticising what I have written, for by being enabled to look at things through other people's eyes, one may correct one's own views. But in this case it would have been much better had Mr. Houghton waited and read the whole paper, for he appears not to have understood what he has read; at least, what he appears to think it means is not at all what I mean.

To begin with, he appears to accuse me of being "enamoured of logic." Perhaps that is a weakness of mine; still not a great fault, I should suppose. Then he thinks I ought to separate the theory of the universe from the theory of human life; but I cannot, the apparent two are one. A man's life is made up of his thinkings and his experiences, but these thinkings and experiences are his universe. No other is possible to him.

Mr. Houghton is not pleased with my definition, not only of matter, but of *spirit*. He thinks there ought to be two. Well, I tried to make two, but I could not; for when reduced to the most general form they coalesced. Now I shall feel extremely obliged to Mr. Houghton if he will give me two distinct definitions of matter and spirit; not in the loose inconsequent language of sentiment; but in precise logical form. The body of his letter is full of loose remarks about what matter can do and what matter cannot do, just as if Mr. Houghton knew but would not tell, in logical form at least. As an example, he says that a river feels no remorse. That is a wise remark; but it would be equally wise to say that a river does not sneeze or take snuff.

Then Mr. Houghton says there are more universes than one—two, at least. The dictionaries tell us that universe means the general system of things. Now there cannot be two general systems of things. One must be a particular case of the other, which is the general, for the general system includes all others. But, worse still, he says, there is "the visible or physical, and the invisible or spiritual universe." Well, that means that hydrogen is spirit, and all other gases are spirit; and in fact all matter can be rendered invisible, sufficient heat being applied. Of course Mr. Houghton does not mean that by his two universes; but then what does he mean? Two universes involves a contradiction. Better coin a word, and instead of saying the universe, say the duoverse.

Then Mr. Houghton asks, how does motion arise and what initiates motion? I answer, it does not arise, and is not initiated. It simply is and always was. Motion is as indestructible as matter; in fact without motion matter is not conceivable. Take away motion and matter vanishes. But he says mind originates motion. Out of what? Not out of nothing because from nothingness nothing comes. To state that nothing can become something is a self-contradiction; therefore if mind communicates motion to matter, it must be from pre-existing motion in mind; consequently mind is a something that has motion; but that is just the definition of matter—a something that moves. He says also that mind alone possesses force. Well I cannot measure the force of mind in foot-pounds, but I can that of matter; that is very simple—multiply the mass of the moving body into the square of its velocity, and that will give the force of that moving body. Mr. Houghton says that is only force in the most superficial sense because Balfour Stewart says so. Now I should like to know what force is in the internal sense or in fact in any other sense but this. Balfour Stewart did not know any other; at least if he did he never gave a definition of it.

Somehow or other I do not appear to have hit upon the right method of treating this matter to satisfy Mr. Houghton. Still I do not doubt that we both believe that Spiritualism is a branch of science, and, therefore, ought to be approached by scientific methods; but he appears to object, and impatiently says what he surely cannot mean. This is a pity because it does not help us to penetrate the mystery. Let us be sure of our facts, and let us reason calmly upon them. This is not an 'ism or dogma but a research into the nature of the existence of man.

J. B. THOMPSON.

A Spirit Poem.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Are we to understand that that *exquisite* poem, signed A. M. H. W., was written not by hands in the flesh, nor thought out by a human brain? Pray tell us something about it in the next number of "LIGHT." If in very deed and truth, poetry, such as this, comes from the Beyond, amazement can only become speechless.—Yours truly,

G. H.

[Automatically written, *i.e.*, by the hand of the medium, but without the conscious thought of her brain: inspired, as is claimed, by the departed spirit of the lady whose initials are appended to the poem. We quite agree with your opinion of its merits, and entertain no doubt as to its authenticity.—ED.]

"THE SINGING SILENCES."

By NIZIDA.

Rapt in rare dreams one morn I lay
Upon the threshold of the day;
My body, in soft languid sleep,
Releas'd my soul, whose wings might sweep
Through Fancy's bright realm, far and wide.

At length before mine eyes did glide
A vision of a stately Rose.
Within its ruby vesture close
A dew-drop lay; ere long it broke.
At once a sound of music woke,
And shuddered through the petals red;
And, wafted wide, afar it sped.
Then in my ear the words below
Were whispered, as I wakened slow.

O Rose, sweet Rose!

Sublime repose

Is thine, self-pois'd in still content:
But Love thy stillness doth resent.
Within the fragrant silence of thy breast
He sends a drop of aqueous light,
Red-blushing, like thy bosom ruby-drest
And, yielding to a fond delight,
It melteth, for thy love, away.

E'en as its crystal curves evaporate
Harmonious sounds reverberate,
And shiver in their echo-play
Amidst thy waxen petal walls,
Concav'd, to bear the incense-freight
Of thy sweet breath. Soft echo calls
To echo, as they die away,
Slow swooning in sweet ecstasy;
Whilst perfumed sounds thy bosom sway
Harmonious—saith my fantasy.

Within life's seeming silence dwell,
Soft, mystic sounds, whose whisp'rings swell
Upon the soul's attentive ear,
Out-breathing music, far and near.

—From *The Path*.

BOOKS, &c., RECEIVED.

[No mention under the above heading precludes or promises further notice or more extended review; the announcements are intended to acknowledge receipt of the book, and to roughly indicate its size, scope, and aim.]

From Hamilton, Adams and Co., "*Infoldings and Unfoldings of the Divine Genius in Nature and Man*." Dr. John Pulsford. Second edition. 108 pages. (A religious work of much beauty and keen insight: very incisive in expression, and wholly reverent.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[WE cannot give the name and address of any contributor. These are communicated to us in confidence. But we are willing to forward letters that are accompanied by stamps, and to leave our contributors to reveal their identity if they please.]

"AN OBSERVER."—Your communication is necessarily deferred till next week.

MADAME DE STEIGER.—No room this week; shall appear in our next issue.

J. C. S.—Many thanks. We have had a man from Goupil's. All depends on the demand and number of subscribers. We are obliged by your kind offer of help.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday morning last Mr. A. Major opened the debate in the affirmative, "That the spread of Spiritualism is evil in its effect;" the negative position being taken by Mr. J. Veitch, and ably maintained. In the evening Mrs. Yeeles gave a good address and clairvoyant descriptions, which were much appreciated by a large audience.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec., 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

THE LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, 73, BAKER-STREET (CLOSE TO THE BAZAAR).—On Sunday next at seven o'clock a lecture will be delivered entitled, "Immortality from an Oriental Point of View," by a gentleman who has had many years' experience in Eastern Occultism. This being the concluding lecture of the session and one of great interest, we hope to see a good attendance. At the concert advertised in another column to take place on June 7th, it is expected that several vocalists well-known in the cause will give their services.—A. F. TINDALL, 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 Psychical or Spiritualistic.

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

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

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

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

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. R. 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 O. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

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

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

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, Homœopathy, 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.”