

# 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.)"

Professor Elliott Coues, whose important address to the Western Society for Psychical Research is reproduced *in extenso* in the present number of "LIGHT," has, like Mr. Laurence Oliphant, a good deal to say of the position of women. Three things, he regards in this topsy-turvy age, as "signs of the times." Fresh from the International Congress of Women at Washington, he thinks their agitation for equal rights with men a burning question—"big with fate: a very pregnancy of the times overshadowed by a mighty spirit." Their fixity of will-power, keenness of purpose, and determination are forces which the world will have to reckon with. Such forces, all down the stream of history, have been the factors in the hard solid facts in human progress of which we hardly take note till they have done their work. The woman's rights movement in America was born conterminously with Modern Spiritualism, and it has acquired a weight there which will surely tell. God speed it, say I. I cannot conceive that the influence of good women in our public affairs should be anything but purifying and beneficent. Whether the time of preliminary seething, when the heaven is at work, will be good for them is another matter.

The next sign is Spiritualism. And when Professor Coues comes to deal with it, he commands my respect and admiration. I take off my hat to the fearless independence, the splendid courage, which prompted a man of high scientific repute and dignity, holding in the Smithsonian Institution—the equivalent in America of our Royal Institution—a position of emolument, to stand up and avow himself in the face of science and the world as he did. His unshrinking boldness, his keen ability, and not less his masterly analysis of a subject beset on all sides with difficulty, show him to be the right man in the right place as a leader of psychical investigation. He is made of the stuff that men who make an impression on earnest thought are made of. He will guide with caution and lead with energy in days of great difficulty when we do not want a mere *poseur*, and when a leader's work is something more than mere Boulangism. It is not the first time that Professor Coues has given us a taste of this quality of independence in him.\* I will quote a specimen of his independent words, if only to emphasise them. But the whole address is one to be pondered. I know nothing that has recently come under my eyes more worthy and more valuable. And this I say without a thought of whether I do or do not see eye to eye with him in every-

thing. He has set an example which I have long held up to myself of taking a broad and comprehensive view of a vast subject, and of abandoning shibboleths and cant phrases. We are sorely in want of a practical realisation of the home-truth that none of us knows everything and that none of us has a monopoly of truth. We can afford to listen to any teacher who will tell us what he himself has learned.

"Upon the answer we give to Spiritualism more depends for better or for worse than perhaps upon any other problem which we are now called upon to solve. . . . It is a great social and moral—I almost said a national—question. . . . It is not here and there, it is everywhere. Its advocates, real and nominal, tacit or avowed, have passed into the millions in the United States. If the Spiritualists should band together and pull together as a political party, they could turn either way the scale of a closely contested campaign. Their cause would be a stronger one at least than any of the other collateral issues in the struggle between our two leading political parties." That is the estimate of a very acute observer in America. I do not doubt that it is accurate. Here in England very much the same estimate might be made. "*If the Spiritualists should band together*"—a tremendous *if*—they would be a power in the land. Two things alike here and there Spiritualism most urgently needs. It wants purification, and it wants organisation. Purification from fads and frauds, and a cohesive alliance of its sane and sincere elements. A sinking of surface differences, and a patient study of common points of general agreement. I see little difference between my friend Elliott Coues's Theosophy and my Spiritualism—very little indeed. The Theosophist is, perhaps, disposed to minimise the action of disembodied spirit, which the Spiritualist is, perhaps, disposed to lay too much exclusive stress on. Well, let us agree that disembodied spirit does not do *everything*, and also that it does not do *nothing*. And then let us go on with our studies at the same desk.

The most significant part of Professor Coues's address, where all is important and provocative of thought, is that portion in which he avows himself and his beliefs. "My audience has the right to ask me what I think, or know, or believe, and I will not stand convicted of evading that point." Having explained that his whole life training had been that of a careful scientific observer, a man whose business it had been to watch phenomena and to estimate exactly their bearings, relations, and importance, he went on to claim for himself that in this particular matter he was quite free from prejudice. "If I have a soul, that is all right; if I have not, that is also all right and proper. I was not consulted on coming into existence, and my private taste or wishes are quite foreign to the question." And then comes a passage which I have had in my mind as I write. I will quote it:—

"Will you have now the opinion of such a person as I have described, who for about ten years has studied, watched, and followed the phenomena of so-called Spiritualism, and who speaks

\* See *A Woman in the Case*, an address to the National Medical College, at Washington, March 16th, 1887.



from personal experience with almost every one of them? Then let me tell you that I know that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are true, substantially as alleged. 'Substantially true as alleged'—that is a broad statement for any man to make, and I make it fearlessly, of knowledge in the premisses. It is a tremendous admission to come from such a man as I have described myself to be, if he have any regard for his reputation as a scientist. It is almost scientific suicide; and when the news reaches the venerable Smithsonian Institution where I live, the wits will be asking if the remains of my reputation are to follow by express and have a decent funeral. But I had rather be right than in a wrong majority. Let me not be misunderstood, however, and hereafter misquoted as saying that everything in Spiritualism is true, or that all the instances of the alleged phenomena are genuine; far from that! When I say that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are substantially true as alleged, I mean each one of the several different kinds or classes of physical manifestations, can and, as a fact, does occur."

That is what I have characterised as the fearless utterance of a brave man who means what he says, and says what he means. All honour to him!

Professor Coues's cycles are curious. I have met them before; in Kenealy, was it? He mentions four of 600 years: the epoch of the Lord Buddha shedding "its gentle, patient ray" on the world: the epoch of Jesus Christ shedding its no less gentle and still more far-reaching beam: the epoch of Mahomet at the date of the Hegira: and of Genghis Khan, "the embodiment of brute force." All these were separated, one from other, by this gap of 600 years. And since the year of Genghis Khan was A.D. 1222, we have not any difficulty in reckoning that we are now in the very midst of another crisis. Six hundred years have sped, and we are "in a kind of consummation or fruition of great social, intellectual, and moral forces." The times are big with fate. No such forces can be liberated and set in action without disturbance. We are not to expect peace till the leaven has leavened the whole lump. Being emphatically a man of peace I take leave to say that I do not want any peace till the message of God has been heard in this age. There is such a thing as the peaceful and unruffled surface of a stagnant pool. And there is also the troubling of the waters by the Angel. Like a great and inscrutable man, who once guided the destinies of England, "I am on the side of the Angels." But it is not England only that is concerned.

Having enumerated three "signs of the times"—the Woman Question and Spiritualism I have mentioned—Dr. Coues introduced the third by turning sharply round on his audience—members of the Western Society for Psychical Research, and asking them the pregnant question—"Gentlemen of the Western Society for Psychical Research, these things are true; what are you going to do about them?" "To face fearlessly, to answer honestly, to settle them if possible, would seem to be the peculiar province of psychical research." It is: unquestionably it is. But they must be more fortunate in America than we have been in England if they can get that "honest settlement" which Professor Coues desiderates. Not for a moment do I hint that our Psychical Society has dealt unfairly with its facts from its own point of view. Conspicuous integrity of action is a characteristic of its doings. None the less—much as its leaders have done in embroidery and elaboration of fringe—they have hitherto failed to grasp the central facts, and to deal with them comprehensively or even adequately.

I wonder how it came to be that Professor Coues should have been asked to illuminate the Society for Psychical Research of Western America. Do I not seem to remember that he was appointed by the Theosophical Society to look after them critically, and generally to act as shepherd to the psychically lost sheep? And I thought they did not like it. How come they then to invite him to feed them? However it came to pass they could not have

asked a better or more distinguished man. Who is this outspoken person? He is M.D. and Ph.D. (honorary) of the Columbian University of Washington: and is attached to the Smithsonian Institution in such capacity as that in which once upon a time Professor Tyndall loftily ornamented the Royal Institution. He is Fellow or Corresponding Member of various learned societies, American and European. His chief fame is as an expert in Ornithology, a subject on which he has published a dozen or more important works, and on which he is recognised throughout the world as an authority of the first rank. He is by no means confined to Ornithology, having written also on Biology, and having acted as one of the editors of the *United States Bulletin of the Geological Survey* for many years. His monographs and minor papers on scientific subjects are numbered by many hundreds. He is still in the forties, and has a great future before him. We too have great expectations from him.

## UNITY OF RELIGIONS.

### No. IV.

[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.]

The Anglican branch of the Catholic Church of Christ does not *bind* men down more than to require of them a full exercise of these two rites; it is, in no sense, the keeper of men's consciences; it requires that those who call themselves Christians, should be baptised (St. Matt. xxviii. 19); should ratify or confirm their baptismal promises (Acts viii. 15-17), and that they should fulfil the simple command of Jesus Christ, to all who desired to be His followers, and "do this," *i.e.*, eat bread, and take wine, in remembrance of Him. (St. Luke xxii. 19.)

Have not Spiritualists their "conditions"; occultists their "ceremonies," which, if regarded externally, appear to mean little or nothing; yet are considered as a necessary and reasonable part of their code?

Why not then strive to flood these "rites" of the Church of Christ with light;—to make them live again, by imbuing them with the spiritual reality of Spiritualism; the esoteric mysticism of Theosophy; and so link ourselves, and our loftiest ideals of life, to that Jesus Christ who was both Spiritualist and Mystic in the highest sense, and to His kingdom, which stands upon the rock of supernaturalism, which rock is in truth that of the recognised Divinity of its Founder. For, "to us, there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him." (1 Cor. viii. 6.)

Having, in some small measure perhaps, drawn attention to a possible concession on the part of the faiths and theories external to the Church of Christ, we may now turn to a possible expansion of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which, were it fully recognised and allowed its sway within the body of His Church, might result in providing the common meeting-ground, so much to be desired.

Let it be remembered here that a promise was made by Jesus Christ, "and behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye here in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." (St. Luke xxiv. 49.)

This promise was made by Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, to the Church—the body of followers, who had repented, and been baptised, and who should continue in the Apostles' doctrine, and in their fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers. (Acts ii. 42.)

Many times had He given His disciples to understand that His mission *would not cease*, when He passed from



amongst them. He had said, "The Holy Spirit shall abide with you for ever" (St. John xiv. 16); "shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance" (St. John xiv. 26); "shall testify of me" (St. John xv. 26); "shall guide you into all truth" (St. John xvi. 13); "shall show you things to come" (St. John xvi. 13). This promise was fulfilled, very literally on the Day of Pentecost, and is, I believe, being further fulfilled every day in our midst.

I will here quote from Mr. Cutt's book:—"The Christian Church was supernaturally begun in the upper chamber at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost.

"The Lord had prepared it a body in the hundred and twenty who were gathered together there, awaiting the fulfilment of Christ's promise of the Comforter.

"And, as the Holy Spirit breathed into Adam's body the breath of life, and he became a living soul, so the same Holy Spirit came with the sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and filled all the house where they were sitting, and tongues of flame lighted on each one of them who sat there; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and the Church, the company of believers, called by Christ, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the 'one body and one Spirit,' began its life, against which the 'gates' of hell should not prevail."

That the promise of the Holy Spirit included the promise that the *obedient* followers of Jesus Christ, should in their lives, and by their acts, *manifest* this power, is set forth in these words, and in others, which often occur:—

"Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go unto my Father." (St. John xiv. 12.)

"These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." (St. Mark xvi. 17-18.)

The unlimited extension of these promises is foretold in the following words, which words, it will be seen, are prefaced by a call to repentance, baptism, and a confession of Jesus Christ:—

"Repent and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

"For the promise is unto you, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts ii. 38, 39.)

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles we read of the power of the Holy Spirit being manifested in "signs and wonders," wrought by the disciples.

In so many instances did this power make itself manifest amongst them, that it will take too much space to quote the occasions.

A study of the Acts of the Apostles, with the helpful light of modern revelation, must serve to strengthen the belief of the reader in this revelation of the Holy Spirit of God; and of its union with the Spirit of that Jesus, Who, by the same Divine power, wrought His miracles while on earth *in the flesh*.

Your correspondent says:—"The modern notion that the prophetic office has ceased is quite foreign to any teaching given by the Apostles," and that "Despise not prophecyings" is as much a command as "Prove all things." Before closing I must add a few words on this score.

I am of opinion that the *expansion* of the Church of Christ, by its *more faithful* recognition, of the promised "gifts" of His Holy Spirit, is (on the side of the Kingdom of Christ) the necessary step towards a true union of all whose ears His Gospel has reached, in common bonds of Catholic unity! It would seem that upon these points the Church has grown lukewarm, and that human weak-

ness is about to be supplemented by Divine strength. The need has arisen for a revelation, and that revelation is ours. The revelation which was given 1800 years ago was—Jesus Christ. The revelation which is being given now is—Jesus Christ, still further manifesting Himself to us, through His Kingdom or Church on Earth, by the power and living presence of His Divine Spirit. In the days of old He needed the co-operation of a reciprocal Faith. To-day He requires the same Faith, and all His "signs" shall live again within His Kingdom. (1 Cor. xii.)

In regarding the present day's condition of religious and philosophical thought, there would seem to be every reason why one should, at this present time, expect a more *materialised* revelation of power from on High.

*World-seekers* have reached a carelessness of scoffing indifference, and have lost (excepting where bound by the chains of a fashionable conventionality) all but the grasp of a mere external religion; many, we are sure, live by the motto, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

*Truth-seekers* have travelled from honest doubt to despairing negation as to the *raison d'être*, nature, and destiny of the human spirit; they have lost Christ and so have no hold on the realities of existence.

And those *faithful adherents* to what they know of revelation are, amid the pressing influences of an external world of turmoil and confusion, relative to belief, and moral and religious law, and conflicting views concerning the possible reconciliation of science and religion, growing faint, weary, and lukewarm, and in some instances losing all faith in the promises of God, which once seemed so enduring and precious to them.

Just as in the age immediately preceding the Christian era the Greek philosophers were seeking to undermine any belief in the old inspired writings, so in these days are thoughtful men growing weary of their old faiths, and as Secularists, Atheists, Agnostics, Nihilists, &c., &c., everywhere endeavouring in the name of truth to sow the seeds of a scepticism which (were there no extra proof at hand) would shake to its very foundations any spiritual structure striving to stand firm upon a basis of pure human reason, as applied to natural things and exclusive of revelation.

Historical tradition and natural evidence, applied to the revelation of the past alone, cannot supply a sound rational basis for what is distinctly supernatural. Both are too far off, too indirectly communicated. But, thank God! we have more than this nowadays to rely upon. Into our very midst, and pressing for acceptance on all sides, *has been sent* a spiritual revelation, a supernatural touch from the unseen world.

Mankind are in these days (as they were in the past) waiting for a revelation; for something to convince them of hidden truths—of inward reality—and in these days, as in those, has been sent (as an answer to such supreme need) a perceptible manifestation of spiritual power.

This power does not impress the world-seeking community by reason of their absorption in the prevailing material interests of this world, and their deadness to the things of the spirit.

It cannot reach those who are seeking a *physical* basis for supernatural truths, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

It cannot enter the narrow mind of those who cling to the verbal and literal rendering of truth alone; for the "letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. iii. 6.)

But it can and does penetrate into the hearts and souls—aye, into the very inmost recesses of the being—of those who are seeking to grow in spirit, who are self-sacrificing as to the pleasures of this life, unprejudiced and charitable in a search for truth, resolute in their adherence to righteousness, and reverent in their consideration of the greatness of the universe, and of the infinite smallness of



one single human soul in it; and it may become the vital breath of those "magnificently obedient" souls who, under the law of Christ's external Church, are in their very lives striving from day to day to act out the life of their crucified Lord and Master.

It may be that after all these last have found the "more excellent way"; yet we, who have not attained to its peace and heavenly joy, may surely use the "helps" to progress that are held out for us!

Since St. Paul expressly writes: "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19), "Despise not prophecyings" (1 Thess. v. 20), "Covet earnestly the best gifts" (1 Cor. xii. 31), which "gifts," in a previous part of the chapter, he enumerates as those which we know were conferred by Jesus upon His Apostles (1 Cor. xii. 4-11), i.e., "wisdom," "knowledge," "faith," "healing," "working of miracles," "prophecy," "discerning of spirits," "divers kinds of tongues," "the interpretation of tongues";—since St. Paul expressly writes of these, and since we have the promise of the Scriptures, that they are to be the heritage of "all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts ii. 38, 39), it would seem that all His professed followers, and more especially His appointed Priesthood, should possess these powers as a "sign" of their Heavenly calling, and by reason of their faith. (Gal. iii. 14.) Might not the exercise of a more vigorous and living faith result in a renewal of these "gifts," it may be with redoubled force and efficacy—*within* the Church of Christ, where it would appear that they ought to be exercised in full sway; and where, under the Divine protection of a loyal *obedience* to the commands of Jesus Christ, and to the eternal laws which He left for His Kingdom, they might be exercised with absolute safety?

We all, at least those amongst us who have had any real personal experiences, know too well the terrors and calamities that may connect themselves with a wrong or ignorant practice of "mediumistic" or "occult" powers. Do we, even the most experienced of us, know *any* means of insuring *absolute* safety from the mental, moral, and spiritual harm which may accrue therefrom? To *lead a perfect life* would seem to be the only safeguard, and this we cannot do. Until we can, would it not be wise for us to trust in the power and in the promises made by Jesus Christ *Who did this very thing*, to obey the simple eternal law of His Kingdom on earth, and to seek Him, *the Highest*, in a Holy Communion with His Spirit, which is "with us always even unto the end of the world"; with us in a sense *real*, not visionary; in such a sense as Spiritualists and Theosophists should be able, better than others, to comprehend.

Let Spiritualists, then, receive this Spirit of Jesus Christ as their one guide, and seek communion with Him.

Let Theosophists bend their human wills in acknowledgment of Him—the Perfect Manifestation of the Perfect One—if to none other in the universe. Let them claim Him as their Master of Masters.

And, in *obedience*, let both seal their acknowledgment, by the performance of the two simple mystical rites which He instituted.

DUM SPIRO SPERO.

"It is granted me to know from much experience that they who have lived 1,700, 2,000, 3,000 to 4,000 years before, as in the time of the Lord, and 1,000 and 2,000 before His time, when they are restored to the state of their former life are quite similar to themselves, so that nothing at all is wanting or is missing; as well, also, as regards the mind, manners, yea all in the life which they had possessed in the world; also as regards the gait, for it was given me to converse with them very long, and at many times, during months and years, so that I know for certain that they were the same. Hence we may know that man loses nothing of those things which he possessed in the life of the body except the body alone, and such as are entirely proper to the body. But when they are remitted into the heavenly state, then it is different with them, and then they are ignorant of those things which are merely corporeal."—SWEDENBORG'S *Spiritual Diary*, Vol. II., par. 2584.

## CREATION BY THE WORD.

BY MRS. A. J. PENNY.

"Of what the word is in its power and sound, of that the *mysterium magnum* is a substance; it is the eternal substantial Word of God."—*Boehme on Election*, chap. 8, par. 61.

"But now the human mind resteth not satisfied with this; it inquires after *Nature*, out of that out of which this world is become generated and All created."—*Boehme's Treatise on the Incarnation*, Part ii., chap. 2, par. 30.

When a learned friend of Boehme's asked him, "How and in what place the soul's seat in man is?" he answered that the soul "is a thing that is without ground, and yet seeketh and maketh ground in itself . . . it goeth forth out of itself and seeketh forward, where then it *maketh* one looking-glass after another till it find the first again, viz., the unsearchable limit."\* He thus gave to the habitual illusions of life a far deeper origin than the senses; and possibly metaphysicians might have got a little beyond their intricate tangle of objective and subjective perception, had they accepted as revelation what Reason alone could never teach, that the soul creates its own objective world; and that thus, in the deeper sense, subject and object are one. This, of course, can only be said unreservedly of a collective soul,—of the soul of man as a whole, emerging fractionally during Time in a World, which the unknown entity, the World Soul, has projected by its imagination and which every soul of human kind shares, and *sees* into, as a consequence of having at a former epoch imagined itself into the circle of its enchantments, and desired to submit to its spells (I give here what has been gathered from Boehme): for obviously we do not each form the world we are born into, we only form our perception of it, and so far it is true of everyone that "*the surroundings of the spirit are the result of its own state.*" Many years ago it used to perplex me when reading Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell*† how it could be that the scene around every spirit alters as it alters; for one naturally thought—but what happened then to other spirits if on a sudden proximate objects vanished? I suppose the key to that puzzle is his affirmation that in the world of spirits there is *place* but no *distance*; and failing to help thought into any clearness by such an abstraction, I persuade myself that from the unfailing law of likeness of mind drawing all spirits into societies in that world, there may be such a consensus of imaginations as would keep surroundings in accordance.

This, however, is a side issue, only touched upon because I wished to notice that one great underlying illusion must frame the life of every inhabitant of our world, where externals are *not* plastic to internal or spiritual change. Even in this world I have often been struck with the singular agreement of the vegetable products of different regions with their human natives. Take for one very good instance, the shape of blossom in the *Dielythia Spectabilis* (Fortune's Fumitory) found first in China by Mr. Fortune, with its exact resemblance to the pagoda style of Chinese architecture; for another the Japanese water lily, which so startlingly recalls the dragon-like outlines of common Japanese art. With this unauthorised theory in my mind it was pleasant to come across this saying of Mr. W. Oxley's: "The surroundings in all worlds and states of existence are always the outbirths or representations of that which is within the organisms of the beings who inhabit them."

As the editor of "LIGHT" has lately observed, delusions and illusions are not two names for the same thing. The first misleads, puts the mind on the wrong track where there is a right one; the second makes that objective which does not actually exist. The worth of these *illusions* must be considered in another paper; their origin and inevitability are the points aimed at in this.

In trying to offer some sort of answer to the question, *how* does the soul which is without ground, i.e., an *abyss*, yet seek and make ground for itself, one must go some little way round to reach the mark, and patient, close attention must be supplied by the reader. For here the pathway of thought is necessarily obscure, and reader and writer must each take a share in the

\* *Forty Questions*, Question 11, par. 1.

[“The things which are without the angels assume an appearance according to those which are within them.” P. 156.]

† “The exterior things which surround angels correspond to their interiors.” P. 173.]

† See also *Angelic Wisdom Concerning Divine Love and Wisdom*, Part iv., par. 322.



toils of exploration.\* The Bible words, "He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created," are read year after year without, I venture to say, any least guess of their full meaning. They are naturally taken as a simple assertion of God's omnipotence, as an equivalent to the human authority which secures the "go, and he goeth, do this, and he doeth it," style of obedience. No such meaning of arbitrary power as this remains in the thought of any one long taught by Boehme. He makes us understand that sound has a constructive effect; that it creates forms in what is virtually a plenum of potential spiritual life; and this from the highest supernal regions of the infinite ether to our grosser air, derived from it by very long descent. We can help ourselves to imagine this by remembering that the musical notes of any stringed instrument can, at a certain distance, form shapes in sand spread on a quite smooth surface. Now the undifferentiated efflux of Deity—the Wisdom—was and is to the outgoing will of God, *i.e.*, the Word, what the sand is to the vibrations of air caused by musical sound. It is "the one only substance out of which all things are": the atmosphere surrounding Swedenborg's great spiritual Sun, which, by graduated derivation, originates all inferior atmospheres, wherein the creaturely word continues to extend existences to the lowest ultimate of life. It is, I suppose, identical with what the instructors of the Baroness von Vay call "God's substantial expression—primeval light"; of which they further say: "Primeval light is just as omnipresent as God, but as God is everywhere present spiritually and unchangeable, so is primeval light in transformations; and as God is infinite, so is His light infinitely expanded. Thus He is not only ever present in relation to all that is in being, by His will and His love, but substantially also through all the transmutations and consolidations of primeval light."†

It is in this sense that Boehme speaks of "the substantial power of the great love of God, out of which all things have received their motion and possibility . . . an eternal habitation of the working love of God: a ray or beam of the omnipotent Spirit."‡ And "the spirit of the world, together with the configurations or stars of its science, and with the subtle body of the fire, the water, the air, and with all its fixedness of the earth, and whatsoever is therein contained, all this now is the outspoken life and substance out of the inward eternal mystery, *viz.*, out of the inward substantial word of God, which eternal word of God in the inward ground dwelleth and worketh in the holy power, and with the beginning of this world hath, through the inward mystery, outspoken itself into an outward mystery; and out of that is the whole creation of the outward world proceeded."§ [N.B.—By the beginning of this world Boehme did *not* mean the beginning described in Genesis.]

Though modern expositions of Eastern Theosophy are all I know of it, even that smattering of knowledge convinces me that Boehme's wisdom is identical with the *Mulaprakriti* of Buddhistic lore and its *Prakriti* with what he calls "the outward mysterium of the formed word" out of which "the whole creation of the outward world proceeded,"|| in contradistinction to "the inward eternal mystery," a distinction most important to bear in mind, involving nothing less than the difference of individuality and personality (as I suppose), for when speaking of the influence of the spirit of the world, through the stars, on man, as to temperament and character, he is careful to tell of influences far earlier than these; thus "the inward property or disposition of the soul lieth now in the first created configuration of the stars, in the eternal commencing ground, that is not co-imaged or framed together in the outward bestial constellation or configuration of the stars."¶

\* Those who are so fortunate as to have St. Martin's *L'Homme Miniere* either in the original or in translation will find it worth while to read from p. 81 in the first, and 89 in the English copy onward, on this same theme.

† *Geist, Kraft, Stoff*, chap. 1, p. 4.

‡ *Explanation of the Table of the Three Principles*, par. 29.

[The same connection between creative sound and vibration of light is beautifully touched upon by Mr. Oxley's angel teachers: "The Father God works everything under the form of light; and the form of sound working under the form of light is one of the great Divine activities."—*Angelic Revelations*, Vol. I., p. 62.]

§ *Election*, chap. 8, pars. 70 and 71.

|| *Election*, chap. 8, par. 72.

¶ *Ibid.*, par. 121. If any one would carefully read the *Sixth of Boehme's Epistles*, the second and fourth chapters of his treatise on *Election*, and, if that rarest of his works can be got, his treatise on *Divine Vision*, I believe the process of creation, and all the series of involutions necessarily preceding the evolutions of nature, would become so far apprehensible that such a reader could never commit the gross blunder of crediting

In section 3 of *Light on the Path*\* the same distinction is drawn as to the "unmanifested and undifferentiated condition technically called *Mulaprakriti*," "root matter or principle, and its particles in the latent germ have had no beginning and will have no end. . . . Secondly, the manifested and differentiated condition which is not eternal, since its manifestation has had a beginning and will have an end. It is in this second condition that *Prakriti* forms the material cause of the universe and man." It is in this lower plane of Divine efflux that the human will has its creative fiat; and not *only* the human will; for Boehme shows convincingly that the creation we see is all due to the *life* proceeding from the God of Gods, manifested, perverted, or in some way or other deeply disguised by the will of *all* creatures themselves *naturing*, coming to be, while forming external existences "re-outspeaking" their own self-life. Only thus is the marvel of good and evil combined made at all intelligible. "It is herein rightly understood, how the *inward* spiritual ground of *all* substances, originally ariseth from the divine power, and how all *bodies* of the visible or palpable substance, originally ariseth from the *desire* of nature."†

Accepting, unreservedly, the dogma of one of the keenest thinkers of recent times that "the material universe is a body of spirits,"‡ and Boehme's that "the magnetical attraction is the beginning of nature,"§ we may begin to perceive *how* the fiat of the human soul—the desire "in the fiery essence of the soul figureth an image for the soul according to its imagination in the will."|| Not unlike the method we must all have noticed among our embodied associates. A strong will attracts weaker wills to its own line of thought and action, as irresistibly as a strong current of air draws in its undetermined eddies. Let us admit that all spirits have something we can only describe as properties, and then "these properties constellate themselves now also into a figure, after their kind, wherewith the soul figureth itself either into an image or disposition of an angel or of a devil."¶

"We affirm," said one of Mr. Oxley's invisible teachers, "that no atom that hath commenced the outward journey to ultimate itself upon your earth, ever travels alone, but always meets with an innumerable number of atoms who attach themselves to the atoms thus coming forth, and by this action that atom becomes so condensed as to be able to enter upon the physical body. In the physical state you yourselves can bear testimony that even in that state there are always a certain number of atoms who attach themselves to a certain individual form of life, and this is only a symbol upon your earth of that which has transpired within; for when the angels speak of the numbers which form or compose the one, we speak of all the atoms it hath drawn to itself, for it could no more remove itself from the atoms that have been thus attracted to it than could an individual remove the material sun which shines in your outer universe."\*\* Thus do these same authorities (whom I am persuaded the incoming generation will receive as such) explain the fact now increasingly recognised that "the human organism is a collection of spirits drawn together by the Divine Spirit."††

Now the outspoken ray of Divine light, sent forth by the will of the Supreme Unity, is—through however many mediate—that attractive, magnetic, divine spirit is man—the higher self, as I suppose, about which we read so much at present.

I please myself with an additional guess of my own, that the more or less of magnetic force in this central ray, this dominant constructive ego, is the cause of strong or weak constitutions, which have been a puzzle to me for tens of years, because the strongest are often found in connection with weakest health. Doctors might be able to tell us, if their attention could be drawn to such a theory, whether with good and strong constitutions, great firmness of purpose and persistency of will are not normally combined. Such wills have force both to attract and bind a host of weaker wills into glad subordination, and may yet be adverse to common physical well-being.

(To be continued.)

the High and Holy One with the creation of our world as we see it. As wisely might we complain of our sun's light making the clumsy shadows which so roughly correspond to objects around us. The sunlight does indeed make possible their projection, but the dense medium through which it shines and the impossibility of translucence where it is resisted—not the sun—causes all the dark shadows on our earth.

\* By Mabel Collins. † *Divine Vision*, chap. 1, par. 44.

[Will no one use twenty pounds, or less, in having a reprint made of this small but priceless valuable treatise? one of the most rare of all Boehme's writings.]

‡ James Hinton. § *Election*, chap. 2, par. 41.

|| Appendix to *Forty Questions*, par. 29.

¶ *Election*, chap. 8, par. 125.

\*\* *Angelic Revelations*, Vol. III., p. 337 (unpublished).

†† *Ibid.*, p. 325.



### A FORTHCOMING BOOK AND ITS AUTHOR.

We are indebted to the *St. James's Gazette* for the following remarkable notice of a very remarkable man. The fact of its appearance in such a journal is in itself noteworthy.

A book is announced as on the eve of publication which will interest all to whom things which are wonderful and out-of-the-way specially commend themselves. To give an account of this work is for the moment impossible, for the reason that it is scarcely yet out of the printer's hands; but it will be found neither more nor less than the announcement of a new religion—one, however, which the reader may be comforted to know is closely interwoven with Christianity. But, suspending the consideration of the new revelation (as it claims to be), we may be permitted, perhaps, to recall a figure still more remarkable, once very well known in London society as well as in the societies of many other places all over the world: the author of the work in question. To say "once well known" seems to indicate a falling-off in the immediate acquaintance of the world with one of the most notable men of the time. But this can scarcely be said to be the case; for Mr. Laurence Oliphant is an object of interest in all circles which have ever received him, as well as in the wider world which knows him only as the author of *Piccadilly* and other works of the same kind: brilliant criticisms of society, strangely mingled with mystical utterances, the meaning of which may now be studied in the book which is to contain the burden of his varied and remarkable existence.

There is nothing, we hope, intrusive or impertinent in indicating briefly the lines of this very unusual life. Mr. Oliphant has himself done so, so far as its open-air and adventurous portions are concerned, in various books of incident and travel, and especially in the papers called *Moss from a Rolling Stone*. From that charming volume it may be seen that for a considerable period of years, wherever there was commotion or disturbance in the world, Mr. Oliphant somehow managed to be in the heat of it. Beginning by thrilling encounters with elephants and tigers in Ceylon when he was only a boy, he swept over the globe, generally in mischief, with a tendency to the rebellious side, but often in diplomacy with all the state of an imperial mission to steady his adventurous instincts. We cannot but think that he liked the filibusters in the Far West, and that legitimate and authorised filibuster Garibaldi, better than his position in the suites of the various Excellencies whose achievements he has recorded. But these were all confusions of a youth certainly not wasted, but put to the fullest use. A graver period opened upon him when he settled in London as member for the Stirling Burghs; where his familiar family name and the reputation he had already acquired gained him at once a seat. He was thus, while still early in life, placed in the most advantageous position a man of great and acknowledged ability, popularity, and acquaintance with the world could desire. There was scarcely a house in England where he would not have been received as an honoured guest and with open arms. No elevation, no advancement was impossible to the keen wit, the brilliant faculty, the large acquaintance with the world, which he brought into a delighted society always pleased with the original and the entertaining; and he was not a man of whom it could be doubted that he had an ever-lively and responsive enjoyment in the excitement of social life.

All at once this brilliant, much-courted, and ever-welcome personage disappeared from the place where he had seemed to be so completely on the top of the wave of good fortune and ambition. Up to this time his literary powers had been comparatively little known. He had written a good deal anonymously, no doubt—as most men in his position do; and he had published a book about Lord Elgin's mission to China and an account of a journey to Nepaul which was in its way a kind of romance. But in the height of his popularity in London another kind of chance-weapon had come to his hand. The acute and daring assault upon the fashionable world, quite uncompromising in its identification of social vices, to which he gave the name of *Piccadilly* came upon the world with a shock. The fun that mingled with its sarcasm, the laugh in it that rang as true as if it had no bitter meaning, the perception finer than all sarcasm of goodness and truth which no social vice ever overcomes wholly, gave extraordinary force to this attack. And there was something underneath which gave a tantalising interest, a sensation of the mysterious and incomprehensible. The wild, witty, half-mad hero of Mr. Oliphant's romance had

met, in the course of his adventures, with a prophet whose revelations had changed to him the character of all things. What he said of this stranger without a name stimulated the interest, the excitement of the reader; but explanation or description he gave none. And then, while *Piccadilly* was still talked about, the author disappeared—leaving behind him that position from which everything might have been hoped, all the caresses and delights of the present and all the brilliant promises of the future: disappeared altogether.

Where had this man of the world, this rising diplomat, this brilliant satirist, gone? To a rural solitude in America; to the life of a farm-labourer; to the bosom of a small strange eccentric religious community, collected together "to live the life" under the absolute control of an obscure person whose followers believed him to be supernaturally gifted. The doctrines of this little community have remained till now unknown. Whether they were all in existence at the time of Mr. Oliphant's disappearance, or whether they have since developed into the elaborate system which is about to be published to the world, we are unable to tell. At this earlier period all that the neophyte seemed to know was that he had to "live the life"—the life, so far as the profane could understand, of primitive Christianity in the midst of a brotherhood where all was held in common—where everything individual in the shape of property or of predilections was given up. The leader of this devoted band exacted from his disciples a long probation and complete obedience, withdrawing them from all the natural surroundings of their position in order that they might prove the sincerity of the impulse which had brought them under his sway. In obedience to this requirement, Laurence Oliphant, in the heyday of his reputation, was changed suddenly into a farm-labourer: a bad one, we have ourselves heard him say; not skilful at his new work, encountering mischances such as discouraged the enthusiasm of the social reformers in the *Monks of Thelema*, but with no such easy retreat as was possible to these fictitious martyrs. Few reasonable people will approve such a renunciation, but at least it would be difficult to give a greater proof of sincerity and faith.

Mr. Oliphant's career since has been a romance in many ways: but space fails us to enter into all the vicissitudes of the record. After a year or two of the drudgery and sordid labour which was his probation, he returned to the world as an emissary of the new faith; accompanying, however, his missionary work with all kinds of secular occupations carried out with the energy and shrewdness of an excellent man of business, and full of the adventure which was congenial to his nature. In the course of this wandering yet always brilliant career, it was his rare and beautiful fortune to meet with a lady of whom it is difficult to speak in terms that will not seem exaggerated to those who had not the good fortune to know her: a creature all charm, all genius, all brightness—a delicate enthusiast to whom his message of self-devotion and renunciation was as the secret of her being suddenly revealed in the midst of the unsatisfactoriness of life. The bond of marriage between these two remarkable persons involved little of what is ordinarily supposed to make the happiness of life. They were both dedicated to the mysterious work of their prophet, and long separations and distant travels fell to the lot of each. What the circumstances were, or whether it was a light of common-sense in these disciples which turned them against the spiritual autocracy of Mr. Harris, it is difficult to tell. However that may be, they emancipated themselves from his sway; but they did not abandon the mystic creed which he had taught, and which now began to develop more and more in their hands. After many vicissitudes, they at length set forth together to Syria; where at the foot of Mount Carmel, in the little town of Haifa, they found at last a home, and passed two or three years of tranquil life shaped more according to the common fashion than had yet been their lot. But this period was of short duration. It was passed in a sort of mission among the Jews (immigrants from all parts of the world, whom it is one of Laurence Oliphant's many schemes to settle in the Holy Land) and in the evolution of the religious system to which we have referred above. Between them the husband and wife composed a preliminary volume; which, however, was too mystical and difficult to reach most minds. Neither of them, it seems, could execute this work alone. They both attempted it separately in vain. It was only when together, one writing, the other aiding with close continuous thought, that expression could be given to the mystic doctrines of the new



faith. But even then the work was too obscure in expression for the ordinary human understanding. Not till after the event did what was wanted become apparent; which would seem to have been that one of them, the inspiring influence, should first enter within the veil.

Mrs. Laurence Oliphant died in the spring of 1886, leaving this world the poorer for a most beautiful and clear spirit, as we should say. But her husband, after the momentary downfall of hope and strength conveyed by such a blow, regarded it differently. To their faith, death becomes almost too trifling an event. For a little while Nature held him and grief; preventing the radiant communications with which she (we are speaking of what Mr. Oliphant believes) awaited the reawakening of his life. But that moment of reunion soon came, and not only comfort but all manner of great and expanding thoughts filled his mind. The inspiring influence of the woman became an emancipated spirit was now complete. But, when he sat down in his house at Haifa to write, something prevented his utterance. His mind was full, but he could find no means of expression. An impulse seized him to leave that house at the foot of the hill, and go up the mountain to the little summer cottage, built as a refuge from the heat, in which she had died. He carried his materials high up into those solitudes, and shut himself up in the sacred room from which her spirit had ascended. And then the words came in a flood, and he wrote down almost without pause what was revealed to him.

This reads like a romance or an allegory; but to the consciousness of the chief actor it is neither. It is the simple narrative—the latter part repeated from his lips—of incidents which took place a little while ago to the assured and certain belief of one of the most shrewd and intelligent of men. To us the story, and the theories that grow out of it, are wild and strange beyond expression; but yet it is the story of a man of the world, for whose accomplishments and acquirements in the ordinary meaning of the words, and for whose sound sense and keen perceptions in ordinary matters, a hundred witnesses may be had. At all events, the circumstances under which the book has been produced are curious enough to warrant the telling of them.

#### SUDDEN DEATH.

Shrink not at sudden death, it is the call  
Electric to the Father's higher court;  
The call that brings no warning, muffled drum,  
And gathering blackness, marshalling to fear,  
But flies straight as an eagle, swift as joy,  
E'en at the very hint of God's great Will  
To His revered and nearer Presence; there  
To be received above as we have done.  
No creeping fears assail the souls so called,  
No tortures bodily long months endured,  
Batter the mind, nor shake the reason's seat  
Of those who pass thus swiftly to their Lord;  
But in full day of life and strength they reach  
The portal of great Death, and e'er they know  
Death to be Death, behold! they are passed in.

EFFIE JOHNSON.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD. — Sunday, June 10th. — Morning at eleven, Mr. Hawkins, healing séance; Mr. Goddard, senior, clairvoyance. Evening at seven, Mr. Robert James Lee will give an address; subject, "Spiritualism: Its Claims and Possibilities."—J.T.

HYDE PARK.—An open-air meeting was held, near the Serpentine, on Sunday afternoon last, at 3.30. Messrs. Veitch and Rodger, as announced, addressed a respectable audience, who listened with attention. A meeting will be held at the same time and place next Sunday afternoon. Spiritualists are invited to attend, and bring what Spiritual literature they can spare for free distribution among the audience.—L.R.

VICTORIA PARK.—Mr. Emms, a veteran Spiritualist, who for several years has been conducting open-air services, delivered an address in Victoria Park last Sunday morning, to a very large audience, who listened attentively, "On the Ethics of Spiritualism." At the close there was considerable discussion, and it was announced that Mr. Rodger would speak on the same subject at the same place next Sunday morning, at 11 a.m. It is hoped that friends will attend to support him.—L. R.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last the debate at the morning meeting was opened by Mr. J. Veitch, on the proposition "That the Phenomena of Spiritualism are only to be explained by the Spiritual Hypothesis." Mr. A. Major replied in the negative. In the evening Mr. Rodger delivered an able address, Mrs. Wilkinson giving clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Yeeles will speak on Sunday next at eleven and seven.—W. E. LONG.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### Unity of Religions.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR, — I have at present seen only the first of the papers bearing the above title, and it may, therefore, seem scarcely fair on my part to make any criticism of the author's remarks until she has proceeded a little further, but she must forgive me for saying that she has started on wrong ground, and if she builds her theories upon it, she will find that they will not hold good.

She is, however, upon old and well-known ground when she quotes "Y. Z.'s" words referring to the fact that very much of the knowledge now being given through Spiritualism and Theosophy is already in the Bible. No true Spiritualist or Theosophist ever professed to give anything absolutely new to the world. All that has ever been written lately from either side has been written before. They are merely bringing old truths to the front again, and at a time when people are more *en masse* ready for it.

All students of mystical subjects know perfectly well that the Bibles of the earth are all full of the same esoteric truth, and that it can only be spiritually discerned. Theosophy, and Spiritualism in its highest form, have been and are special means of leading men's minds to this esoteric doctrine. All students come to this initiatory truth very early on the road, and when it is first perceived, the fact is so apparent that it strikes the mind as if it were a revelation, not to oneself alone, but to the world.

"Dum Spiro Spero," however, will, I think, learn later on that the path is a more lonely one than she now thinks and that her idea of Centralisation is but a dream.

It is true that there is a longing for a Centre, and the outward manifestation of that idea is at present the establishment of the heads of the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches, the Pope and the Queen; and yet men are not satisfied, nor will they ever be if they seek for a Centre outside and on the material plane. It will never be the settled Centre to all, for there is one Centre for each person, the only Centre, and when found there is eternal satisfaction; but this Centre is not one of the senses, neither is it appointed by man.

It is exactly because people seek for an outside Centre, and a Centralisation for their respective creeds on earth, that they will never find it!

It is most useful for people to strive after organisation, but that is a different matter, and is an affair of forms and unity of purpose. It need not be spiritual. The moment the question of forms comes into a spiritual movement, the material element enters also, and with it at once those of disunion. If "Theosophy is ever setting up its little popes," Theosophists are properly reaping the reward of finding their "little popes" fallible. But Theosophists preach especially against popes, and are not aware that they have set any up.

If any persons have ever been foolish enough to imagine any human being more than mortal, it is their error, and they must reap the consequences of having their foolish hopes "wrecked." "Dum Spiro Spero" says truly in the concluding paragraph that all things have inherent within themselves the germs of constitutional decay—to exist for time, and not for eternity. Why and how, then, can she ever expect to find an unchangeable Centre on earth? That is, if she means, as I gather, some outside church and form of religion.

It is a good thing to have such for those who require and seek for it, but it will be the old question over again; people will never all agree to exactly the same thing; it never has been done and never will. The wisest plan is for all to agree to differ on these matters. The efforts of some who seek after Centralisation will only emphasise the differences of those who do not.

The very interesting and valuable papers by "Nizida," lately finished in "LIGHT," will surely furnish one of the many reasons why, until man is *master of himself*, all such efforts as desired by "Dum Spiro Spero" will be futile.

"Nizida" points out some of the many Mysteries or hidden things that surround us; and especially, in the last admirable paper on "Elementals," how people are influenced by unseen factors, and what a world of knowledge is still required before anyone is duly qualified to become a teacher and centre of religious knowledge.

By religious knowledge, I mean knowledge of the mysteries. Upon the system of perfect ethics taught by Jesus, one would think there could be no two opinions. But there has always been



wrangling in all churches even upon these plain questions ; how much more then upon subjects spoken about by Jesus, all relating to the *mysteries of faith*, when the teachers ought still to have been students. It would be a grand thing if we could all agree to, and practise, this perfect ethical code. The world would soon be a paradise under its beneficent rule, and the evil influences of "Elementals" would cease, because we should cease to generate them, and they would as phantasms fade.

There was a remarkable story in *Temple Bar* for December, 1887, called "By One, Two, and Three." This we will assume is fiction. Nevertheless the fiction may well be based on fact. The fact that man has terrible powers for evil, evil scarcely surmised or imagined yet, for it is spiritual evil, as well as magnificent powers for good—as yet also so little understood—is taught by Occultists and Mystics, and Jesus in his teachings gave simple but perfect directions for man to raise himself to the plane of spirit power that would protect him against the evil caused by sin.

His teaching on these subjects agrees with Theosophy and the higher Spiritualism, because any true teaching taught by either can but have the one foundation, the enunciation of the eternal law, as overriding the lesser laws. Man has been too absorbed with the impossible task of harmonising all these lesser laws, instead of looking to the eternal law which it was the special mission of Jesus to declare.

I daresay many of the readers of "LIGHT" have heard of the movement in America called "Christian Science." It is a very remarkable one, and will well repay a study. Its main idea is somewhat of what I have just been saying—that the teaching of Christ was to bring man out of the jurisdiction of the mortal laws under which he lives to the understanding of the eternal law overriding all. It is a system of most beautiful and excellent metaphysics—the teaching of the Neoplatonic and Idealistic philosophers, and I think it would be difficult to contradict this philosophy as a theory. The objection, however, is that it is a theory ; a theory no doubt that all the great 'ones' of the earth have proved and practised. But a grand theory is within the imagination of many people, and many people can have glorious intellectual conceptions of things ; but nevertheless this is somewhat different from an executive knowledge of a thing. An intellectual concept is an idea, and an idea, as Plato and the Christian Scientists say, is already a power. Yes, it is ; but useless if the conceiver of that idea does not know how to wield it.

This is the knowledge of adeptship, and there is no royal road to it. The Christian Scientists, and notably Mr. Evans in his work *Healing by Faith*, a most excellent and enlightening book, say there is, and they certainly have the merit of pointing it out in a clearer and more concise manner than any mystic teachers have ever done before ; still I cannot but think that they may mistake *desire* for *power*, and an imaginative acquaintance with a subject for an executive one.

For instance, many people can have imaginative acquaintance with the art of music, and a great desire and intellectual conception of it, yet nevertheless they practically lack the one thing needful to express this, and that is the executive. So it may be with Christian science. Many may have studied a most perfect system of metaphysics and spiritual science, the fault being not in the thing taught, but in the method of teaching it, and students, therefore, being led to think that the great "work" of the alchemist, and all the most recondite mysteries of the Rosicrucians, Hermetists, Therapeutæ, and others is, after all, but a simple thing.

It may be that the last gate is a very small one, and it may be imagined, but it seems to me that there is some misunderstanding somewhere, and that this mystery of mysteries is not quite so easily solved.

It is, however, a grand movement, and one which, if it spreads much to England, will exercise a most powerful influence, for its special office is to show men the grand Centre, by doing away with all Centralisation !

It tells us nothing, however, of the hidden side of nature as revealed in papers such as "Nizida's," and without the illumination of some doctrines such as those taught by the Theosophists and others, as Karma and Re-incarnation, its metaphysics, complete with these, would be otherwise untenable in many ways.

Miss Frances Lord has been lecturing on "Christian Science," after having studied it in America ; but I should imagine that, as she has the advantage of an understanding of Spiritualistic phenomena and Theosophic and Hermetic

doctrine, besides being a student of Boehme, Swedenborg, and all mystic writers *who reveal Christ*, her teaching must be much more full and complete than much of the Christian Science taught in America.

In any case, it is both a religion and a philosophy, which is worthy of the gravest attention. It puts all sacred questions upon an incomparably higher platform, and it opens a vista for the happiness of mankind that is beautiful. It professes to lift the veil for all who choose to seek. Hitherto, the knowledge has been difficult of access, and the teachers have been few. Now, it seems, at least, that this is no longer the case, and the mysteries are to be so no longer. Still, teaching and understanding are two different matters, and though these mysteries were proclaimed from the house-tops, it may still be that some cannot hear.—Faithfully yours,

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.

#### An Evil World.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—“Only in this sense,” that is of an atonement, “that which occasioned the incarnation of Deity . . . only in this sense it is presumed that evil can have been *ordained*,” writes one of your correspondents in your number for May 26th. It is a worthy and dutiful idea ; and if humanity was alone God's work on this planet, your correspondent's problem might well be entertained and accepted, if not substantiated. But does “that which occasioned the incarnation of Deity” extend to *animals*, and hinder evil from having been “ordained” in their case ? Only in this sense, if it can be proved, it is presumed, can we *deny* that evil has been “ordained” for *them*. We cannot, if we would, put our fellow creatures, the brute beasts, out of court in this matter, who suffer with us, and by us, and for us. Look at the horse ! But, as they are irresponsible beings, and yet so grievously subject to evils, an atonement for them could only be justly an atonement *by anticipation*, on the ground of their evolution into humanity. Ought we Spiritualists to think only of ourselves ? only of getting out of our own difficulties, and denying that evil is ordained, when so manifestly not only we, but “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain” ? And the generality of men do not give “endless years” of compensation to the beasts for all that they have suffered here, so often by responsible man's cruelty, who is to be so beneficently recuperated himself hereafter.

Certainly the brute beasts are not answerable for their creation ; yet, see, in addition to the woes they have to suffer by design or accident or by man, how many pains and penalties they bring upon *each other* by their own natures. Can any picture of evil passions (which must have been *ordained*, since they are irresponsible and did not bring them on themselves) be painted more forcibly than that which we behold among animals, in a farmyard, for instance ? What cruelties one to the other ! What hatreds ! What jealousies ! How the horned beast with the most vicious temper and the most pointed natural instruments of torture, lords it over the humble ones ! hooking them without mercy, until some assuagement of the misery of the humble ones accrues by man mediocrally stepping in and putting a button on their ensiform adornments, used, as they are, as capriciously as unmercifully. See the sharp spurs that adorn brave chancicleer, and how unmercifully does he use them ! See the hatreds and the jealousies among the rest of them, I mean the partlets of his troop. An Italian captain, who ascended the Fly river in New Guinea, tells a tale of the cruelties of certain insects of the same race towards each other too horrible to repeat.

I have come to the conclusion, and so has another Spiritualist of long standing, whose name, if given, would fill every Spiritualist with feelings of respect, that this is an evil planet ; and that, whether we stand on its surface or hover above it, at any rate within a certain distance of it, better would it have been for us never to have been born, and many other living creatures likewise, unless there be something better for them and us elsewhere. But I have firm faith in other and higher *localities* both for us and for them, for their souls as well as for our souls, in an infinite Universe teeming all through with life, good, we believe, as well as bad. Here the *strongest* wins, not necessarily the best. But this must be abnormal, if good exists, which we believe, for the apothegm, “The *strongest* wins,” is against the law of morality and right.

It is wonderful what *modern* Spiritualism has taught us. We have learned that the same bickerings go on in the fluidic life of



this planet, that we have on *terra firma*; surely this must be evil ordained. Your pages told us lately of one spirit saying of another, "He treats me like a boy." A spirit used to come to the late Mr. Frank Horne, when he first became a public medium, when he was quite a boy, and long before cabinets and their evils began. This spirit coming with the direct voice of a "swell," called himself Henry VIII. He was a very interesting spirit and played his part admirably as a repentant spirit who had been a king, whatever he really was; but John King drove him right away and took his place. He is also a repentant spirit; and in this case the strongest won, who was in this case also, I believe, the fittest likewise. Mr. Cooper tells us in *Seven Months with the Davenports* that Katey King, who appeared to be, generally speaking, an amiable spirit on the whole, with plenty of idiosyncrasy apart from her mediums, once said, in a foreign town noted, as a rule, for its lack of religion: "Here comes a nasty spirit, I must get out of its way," and, at the same time, a bolster was thrown across the room. So, too, as regards the actions of beings in fluidic life on humanity. There seem to be no better angels of this planet to protect even a baby from obsession. Poor little Ferdy Jencken, at three years old, used to kick and cry at his obsessions, which I have good reason to believe the prayers of his mother which reached the throne of God at length averted. And, as has been shown before, the chief hunting ground of spirits for physical mediums, to astonish the world, have been among youths and maidens from nine to eighteen years of age, with no noble angels to hinder them!

AN OBSERVER.

#### A Theory of Human Life.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have got from Mr. Thompson exactly the sort of reply which I expected. I knew right well that I should get no answer to the problems suggested, no, nor even an attempt to grapple with them. All I get is a few feeble flippancies, which leave my arguments wholly untouched.

I am much amused to observe his notion of "spirit." It is that of a gas—he says, "that finer matter, usually called spirit, which thinks and reasons; for motion exists; therefore a substance that moves." He gratuitously endows this "finer matter" with a soul, and with the whole assemblage of spiritual properties which constitute our wondrous being:—thus with Reason—Conscience—Will—Egoism or Personality: with Taste—Fancy—Poetry, and Romance—above all with the faculties of Worship and Adoration. Now it would puzzle him to explain how the finest matter in the Universe—be it hydrogen gas, ether—or any other still subtler entity—can of itself possess these exalted qualities or endowments any more than grosser matter, say flesh, bone, or a lump of granite. As Berkeley well said, "Nothing is like a thought but a thought." Mind has no parallel but itself.

This "finer matter" Professor Clifford called "mind-stuff"—about as gratuitous an assumption as was ever framed. This term was invented to exclude the idea of God. But there is nothing in it—it is only a phrase. Mr. Thompson seeks to prop it up by adding "motion." But of this he can give no account. He says, "Motion exists." But the question is, "How came it to exist?" He replies that it had no origin, and no cause, that it exists of necessity. But to urge "necessity" is a mere confession of ignorance. Motion is there, and it must be so. I demand, Whence comes Life? Whence comes Thought? Whence comes Motion? And I know that I shall get no answer.

We are on a firm and immovable basis when we say that Like only generates Like, and that our finite spirits could only be derived from a Spirit—infinite, holy, incomprehensible—and not from matter, no matter however fine. Away then with that foolish conception of "mind-stuff."

There is another difficulty with regard to motion self-eternal and which had no beginning. How are we to account for the present stage of the world's progress? We are only as yet at the dawn of progress. This involves the idea of Time. It is certain that the Solar System did not always exist, but that it had a beginning in time. The universe presents the idea of successive creations. Self-existent motion with no beginning as the origin of all things is incompatible with this idea of what we may call recent creations, but is quite compatible with the idea of a personal and intelligent Framer of the Universe, the Father of Spirits. True it is we here plunge into the unfathomable depths of Ontology, into the Mystery of Mysteries, which we can neither explain nor define, nor trace, nor conceive. We are content to worship and adore.

There is one point more which I wish to mention—that is, Mr. Thompson's notion that the universe is illimitable. This I admit, in my sense and persuasion that there is a Spiritual and Unseen Universe, but not in his sense that there is nothing besides matter, and that matter is illimitable. Now science maintains that the physical or visible universe is limited, or in other words, that at any given moment there exists a certain number of worlds and no more. That the ponderable universe is limited is with some emphasis declared by astronomy. We cannot otherwise account for the distinct limit which is placed to the size of the stars. An eminent man of science states, "It is a familiar theorem in optics that if stars in unlimited numbers sent us their radiations, we should have 200,000 times as much light and heat as we actually receive."

Let me conclude with an eminently instructive passage from an article of Mr. Romanes in the June number of the *Contemporary Review*. He has hitherto always posed as an out-and-out Darwinian, but how much wiser he is now than his teacher appears from the following words:—

"Whether these wonderful mechanisms, so innumerable in organic nature, are to be attributed to survival of the fittest, or to other and hitherto unsuggested principles of a natural order, the question still and equally remains open whether behind such causes of a physical kind there may not be a *causa causans* of a psychical kind. For it may very well be that unless they were themselves ordained by a Disposing Mind, these physical causes could neither have come into existence, nor afterwards have conspired to produce an orderly Cosmos. All that is done by the theory of natural selection, or by any other possible theory of a scientific kind, is to suggest with more or less of probability a *modus operandi*, but who, or what it may be, that is ultimately concerned in the energizing of the process, is a question which natural science can never be in a position to answer. All, therefore, that is done by Science, when at each successive stage of her progress, she furnishes natural explanations of phenomena, is to throw back the question of Design from the facts immediately observed to the causes subsequently discovered. And then the question must be left by Science to be taken up by Philosophy."

Mr. Thompson will do well to attend to these words. He has mistaken proximate causes for the ultimate and real causes. He must go further afield in search of the *causa causans*, or the *causa causarum*.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

#### Organisation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Organisation is again prominently in the foreground. What does one expect to gain by the organisation of such a heterogeneous body of persons as that which is characterised by a knowledge of the possibility of communicating with intelligent entities, external to ourselves? The only common point among us is that one fact of spirit-communion. Spirits inspiring different circles have different views; some are learned, loving, and wise, but perhaps the great majority of those beings now communicating with man through mediums lack one or more of the whole of those characteristics. Hence the differences in the messages sent in different places. Again, the nature of the sitters modifies the information given; some are further advanced along the road of truth than others, and to them, consequently, more advanced knowledge can be given. But who is going to say to his neighbour, "What our spirits tell us is right, we know the truth, and as your information does not agree with ours yours must be wrong"? The information given is so various, ambiguous, and uncertain that one cannot found any organisation based on tenets. The only way it appears to me to be possible to carry on the work is by our own self-improvement. We must educate and train ourselves. Each one must be his own trainer. We may get hints and help in enlargement of our views by friction with others; but moral development is the one thing needful. Intellect and morality must be advanced as far as possible. Wisdom and virtue, truth and love, must be assiduously cultivated by every individual. When this is done we shall all have arrived at a point at which further truth will be given us, further encouragement and help will be sent, and then there will be less disagreement in our spirit communications, because the religious sense which hardly exists on earth yet, will be able to develope, and there will be no need of organising.

Extend our literature, encourage and tender help wisely to all who desire to know, assist the development of private family circles, and establish Spiritualistic schools and colleges where mediums may be developed under the best of conditions, to return to their homes, after due probation, to spread truths and enlightenment among the members of their families. We want no parsons, but we do want one or more developed mediums in every family. This is the only kind of organisation that seems to me either useful or practicable.

Every man and woman in the future must find out truth for his or her self. It is the duty of Spiritualists and others to see that they have plenty of Spiritual food in the shape of literature, and plenty of good example in the persons of those who profess to hold our views.—Yours faithfully,

1st. M.B. (Lond.)

[Very good; but nothing that our correspondent writes goes to disprove the practical value of organisation. What is universally good and serviceable outside of our ranks cannot but be good for us if we can get it.—ED.]



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## Light:

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 9th, 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.

### PURITANISM AND MYSTICISM.

It is sometimes well to try and estimate the amount of evil that has been accomplished by any given religious or social movement. There has been great glorification of the Puritan wave that passed over England in the seventeenth century, as there has been equal jubilation over the Reformation of a hundred years previous. But if the evil wrought by that Puritanic revolution could be properly traced out, perhaps it would be found to be accountable for much, very much, of the misery and spiritual death of the present day.

One of the most striking of the recent developments of Puritanism is the cheap religious newspaper, and this is an instructive and profitable field wherein at times to explore. In a recent number of the *Christian Commonwealth*, for instance, we find an article entitled "Bread and Wine," which exemplifies somewhat strikingly the hypothesis that has been suggested. The writer of this article begins by referring to a life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, which has recently appeared in Germany, and this is how he proceeds:—

"Suffering taught him to pray. He now turned again more resolutely to mysticism; and no longer to Greek mysticism, but to that of the seventeenth century, as harmonising with the pessimism which now possessed him. According to Plotinus, the Creation was the result of Divine radiance; according to Jacob Boehme, of Divine discord. A single point in this passage is luminous with significance. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was a typical soul. His genius was exceptional, but his emotional life was like that of countless earnest but perplexed spirits. He had the same indefinable hunger and thirst after some higher and greater good than self or earth can give, which is experienced by all but the under-souled representatives of mean frivolity. And to slake this intense longing he roamed to many a source and many a fount."

This mysticism is abhorrent to the dwellers in the *Christian Commonwealth*, and to show that abhorrence the new reredos in St. Paul's is dragged in and a sermon is preached on the subject:—

"Let us for a moment test the difficulty which is just now uppermost in the Church of England. It has been stirred up by the City Ritualists, who have provided a Popish exhibition at St. Paul's in the shape of the gorgeous reredos. At the basis of this trouble is the great misunderstanding as to a Christian ordinance. That beautiful ordinance was foreshadowed when Melchizedek gave bread and wine to Abraham. The Founder of the Kingdom of God built this institution called the Lord's Supper into the very ground-work of that kingdom. But

fundamentals are always distinguished for their simplicity. The Lord's Supper is probably the most essentially simple thing in the whole of the Christian system. Yet it has been made the pretext for inventing a hopeless\* mass of superstitions, and of these superstitions the churches seem unable to get rid. What need is there to weave mystic dogmas about the words 'This is My body,' 'This is My blood'? These utterances were the announcement of a great and glorious change. Hitherto the flesh of a lamb had been in type the body of the Redeemer, and the blood of the lamb had been in type His blood. Henceforth there would be not foreshadowing types but memorial tokens of the great sacrifice. The bread of daily life and the common beverage furnished by the wine were chosen as these tokens, and what the flesh and blood of the lamb had been in type, the bread and wine became in symbol, when once the antitypical offering had been consummated, and no more altar sacrifices could be rightly offered. How sweet is 'the simplicity that is in Christ' as illustrated by this Supper! How gross is the mysticism which has made the Lord's word impossible of any sensible interpretation!"

Yes! In the dark shadow of this cold so-called religion all mystic beauty is sacrificed, and the deep symbolism of the corner-stone of Christian ceremonial is to be lost by making of it little more than a periodic meal. What wonder then that a reaction has set in against the dogmatic assertions of this irreligious system, and that the ropes which Puritanic action has woven to scale high heaven are found to be the veriest ropes of sand?

As another illustration of the same idea, an extract from the *Pall Mall Gazette* is edifying in its way. The travelling commissioner of that pious journal, after looking in at Berlin, appears to have gone on to St. Petersburg, where he was fortunate enough to get a place in St. Isaac's Cathedral on the Russian Easter Day, and this is what that commissioner says:—

"What followed I cannot even attempt to describe. I am no adept at ecclesiastical ceremonies. Even the sober ritual of the Anglican Church has ever been repugnant to my Puritan instincts; the Roman ritual I have never seen. I am more at home in a Quaker's meeting-house than in a stately Cathedral. The service was, therefore, to me utterly unintelligible."

Of course it was "utterly unintelligible"; had it been intelligible, had the mystery of the Cross ever had any meaning to this roving commissioner, his Puritan instincts might have been saved three years ago from pouring out the flood of impurity which has stayed the progress of morality for fifty years.

π.

### THE GODS IN PROXIMITY TO MEN.

All over antiquity, all over the East, and over other parts of the world, which preserve more or less nearly their ancient condition, there are two classes of religious teachers—one the priests, the inheritors of past accredited inspiration; the other the prophet, the possessor of a present inspiration. Curtius describes the distinction well in relation to the condition of Greece with which history first presents us. The Mantic art is an institution totally different from the priesthood. It is based on the belief that the gods are in constant proximity to men, and in their government of the world, which comprehends everything both great and small, will not disdain to manifest their will; nay, it seems necessary that whenever any hitch has arisen in the moral system of the world, this should also manifest itself by some sign in the world of nature, if only mortals are able to understand and avail themselves of these Divine hints. For this a special capacity is requisite; not a capacity which can be learnt like a human art or science, but rather a peculiar state of grace in the case of single individuals and single families whose ears and eyes are opened to the Divine revelations and who participate more largely than the rest of mankind in the Divine spirit.—W. BAGEHOT'S *Physics and Politics*, p. 172.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. W. FAWCETT.—Much obliged, but we hope to have the book carefully noticed, and it will be premature to print extracts now, though we may use them hereafter. The book is so important that we are anxious not to spoil the review.

\* Why "hopeless"?—ED.



## THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

*From the Standpoint of a Scientist.*

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN CHICAGO, APRIL 26TH, AT THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WESTERN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, BY PROFESSOR ELLIOTT COUES.

FROM THE *Religio Philosophical Journal*.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—Responding to the flattering invitation of the Western Society for Psychical Research, I have come from afar to address you to-night on a subject that has the most vivid interest possible for every one. I congratulate myself that mine is the privilege of speaking to this cultured and thoughtful audience, assembled in earnest to hear what poor words may do even scanty justice to the “Signs of the Times” in which you and I take living part. I wish to speak, not as the special advocate of this or that school of thought; nor as iconoclast of any established belief, neither as Spiritualist, nor as Theosophist, nor as one wedded to any doctrine, but simply as one thinking human being may address another when confident that his theme concerns them both alike. I should be guilty of intellectual recreancy did I fail to speak as I truly think; and I beg for my thoughts the same kindly and sympathetic hearing that I would give to yours were our places reversed. I would not that this lecture-room should resound with words alone; there is another atmosphere about us than the air we breathe, a subtle element to stir, that the “ear back of the ear” may catch its rhythmical pulsation and be moved in close accord.

## The Woman Question.

And first among the “Signs of the Times,” the “Woman Question.” That might, indeed, be not only first, but also last, and all the time, whose full significance we shall see before I have done. And second, Spiritualism, well named the “Mainstay of Religion and the Despair of Science.” And third, Psychical Research, to which we turn wistfully for light upon the deeper problems of life. There is needed no Theosophy to discern in these three things a trinity of forces that seem to need but some undiscovered fulcrum on which to turn the world. These are the “Signs of the Times” we shall question to-night, whether they be only surface-ripples to pass with the passing winds, or whether, indeed, such tremors portend a violent upheaval of ground considered secure. No alarmist I, who have faced the facts too many years for that! But history will fail to repeat itself, and that failure would mean that eternal cycles of time should swerve from an appointed course; that human progress should be, not an orderly unfolding of man’s destiny, but a spasmodic struggle against fate; history will fail us, I repeat, if men now living in this very day do not witness, on the turn of the century, greater changes than any of us know as yet, do not experience during their own lives, the full cumulative effect of spiritual and material forces which have silently been in operation for the past 600 years. That is the law, the law of Karma, escape from which the world has never known.

The progress of evolution or development is never in one straight line, uninterrupted; it is revolutionary; it is cyclical; it returns upon itself like a spiral coiling higher and higher; and every completed turn of the coils is marked by changes that seem almost like catastrophe if viewed alone, but which seem harmonious and necessary when viewed in the full light of all that has gone before; nay, which also enfold a prophecy for those whose mind’s eye is thrown upon that which is to come. For the causes of yesterday are the effects of to-day, and these the causes of to-morrow in turn; and the law remains whether it be days or years or centuries taken into account. It is the cycle of 600 years that I first call to your attention to account for what goes on to-day, and not a merely political cycle of that length; not a round-up of human history only, but a far deeper and more necessary turning point, a very astronomical period in the life of our planet. It is hard to realise this, to bring it home to our thoughts and feelings, that now is one of these turning points; yet this is historically true, for revolutions—by some called revelations—have not failed to recur for 2,400 years at least, at intervals of 600 years, and at each one of these the figure of some one man has stood for the visible embodiment and very incarnation of the spirit of his time, the index of mighty issues of the fulness of time.

## The Cycle of 600 Years.

There are those students of mystical lore, especially among the strange beings who call themselves Rosicrucians, who attempt to trace the naroses or cycles of 600 years much further back; but I will be content to mention but four, each in the briefest word:—In the year 1222 one of the greatest conquerors the world has ever seen was at the height of his glory; the great Mongolian chieftain, styled the perfect warrior, had overrun the Eastern Continent and established his rule, from what is now Turkey to far Cathay, sole monarch by right of might over millions of men left living witnesses of a million slain. The night of the dark ages brooded over Europe, while the heel of the conqueror stamped on the neck of Asia. Five years later Genghis Khan, personification of brute force, was mouldering dust, and conjunctions of planets in the skies, those strange portents from heaven to earth, attested the turn of the cycle from whose initial point the spirit of light was to struggle with Europe for such ascendancy as we behold to-day, and take 600 years to reach her zenith.

Who or what before Genghis Khan? In the year 622—600 years before exactly—the founder of Moslem was forty years old when occurred the Hegira and the initial impulse of one of the ten great religions of the world; and millions of men have gone to the mountain or the mountain has come to them under the banner of Mahomet, whose coffin has hung in the air ever since for millions of believers, the while that like countless throngs have crossed the thread of Alsirah to the Paradise of the Blest. Unwind now the coil yet another 600 years; and need my Christian friends be told that the Star of Bethlehem had risen; the wise men had worshipped; the shadow of the Cross was imminent on Calvary, and the light kindled in the hearts of men, to slumber never so long, was to flash athwart a world with growing splendour.

Uncoil the thread once more; yet one other turn of the Wheel of Life that spins its web for 600 years, and if there be a Buddhist here to-night, let him think that then it was that his Lord Buddha brought the Light of Asia that should burn through the ages till one-third of the human race should have caught its gentle, patient ray. Verily hath the spirit been left without a witness never; that spirit, omnipotent for weal or woe, is not for a day, but for ever, with great incarnate avatars or messengers that speak to races and nations and epochs, with lesser angels or demons, as the case may be, that speak to us every one, every day and hour, if so be it we can hear the voice of the silence within the heart.

And this is 1888. No more than a lifetime of one man is the finishing of the last 600 year cycle from 1222. My friends, now do you wonder that the times are critical? Not that we need expect the Millennium or prepare our ascension robes to-night, for the mills of the gods can be trusted to grind on awhile yet; but we may recognise in what I have said some reason for the strange and otherwise scarcely explicable thing of the crisis which confronts us. I discern in it a kind of consummation or fruition of great social, intellectual, and moral forces, which have long stealthily been at work, and a glance at some recent steps we have taken will best show where we stand.

## The International Congress of Women.

For example, the Woman Question. I have just come from Washington and from the most deeply significant spectacle it has ever been my lot to witness. I mean, of course, the International Congress of Women. It was magnificent! With scarcely a metaphor I may say this movement is big with fate; a very pregnancy of the times overshadowed by a mighty spirit! My heart was sad as I sat in that vast throng and heard the burning words of appeal for rights; for rights only, not privileges or favours; for the right to be heard; for the equal rights of both sexes; for the abolition of odious discriminations against the weaker by the stronger; for the right of equal education; for the right to take part in social reforms; for the right to promote social purity and temperance and every virtue; for the right to earn a living; for the right of political enfranchisement; for the right to the pursuit of happiness in her own way. My heart was sad, I say, when the thought came over me of what injury and insult the brave leaders of the movement, and through them every woman in the land, had suffered for the forty years of their wandering in the wilderness of their arrogance and the ignorance of my own sex, before so much as a sight of the Promised Land was theirs in the shape of even a respectful hearing. But then came the



glad revulsion of feeling ; that is done with, and we are all so far ahead. And as I listened I could not help pondering about that strange thing which some of us know as psychic force or spiritual power, and it seemed to me then, if never before, a reality.

Think for a moment of these things : concentration of will-power ; fixed, firm, if you will grim, determination of the great women who have led their cause for a lifetime. Think of the fixity of purpose ; of singleness of aim ; disinterested benevolence ; of unselfish endeavour ; of ardent aspiration ; of fervid appeal ; of personal example ; of the contagion of enthusiasm ; of unflagging courage ; and think you, my friends, such forces can be set in operation and be futile ? No ! a thousand times no ! These are real forces, powers, principles, living and operative, and the law of gravitation is not a more fixed fact in nature than that such forces are the effectual and necessary causes of concrete results—hard solid facts in human progress, not less substantial and enduring than the granite of which we rear material edifices. Such forces cannot ferment without leavening the lump, and the abundant leaven of the last convention can be no more disputed than explained away. It is a grand result that we see to-day ; it is all abroad ; it is in the air ; the birds are carrying the news ; the flowers are nodding the secret to one another, that woman's rights are secure in America. Only ten years ago, such a convention would have been greeted with jeers and sneers from the lords of creation ; a little further back, had it been attempted, the women might have been mobbed as the anti-slavery heroes were before that cursed blot was wiped from the shield of the nation ; a little further back it would simply have been impossible, for women were still sleeping in chains like those the Africans wore, visibly wore amongst us ; and what does this movement mean to us all, not only to the women most concerned but to their worser halves ? I will tell you : It is another declaration of independence. It means freedom, the watch-word of every true American ; liberty, dear to every man's heart—to woman's not less dear ; independence of thought to the uttermost ; freedom of speech to the bounds of propriety ; liberty of action to the verge of enforcing even another's equal rights—and these are priceless boons, without which man has not his manhood's heritage.

My friends, the Woman Question, as it is called, has yet a deeper significance than appears upon the surface. The "surface indications," as they say in mining regions where we dig in the bowels of the earth for hidden treasures, are the substantial benefits to accrue to women and hence to society from the triumph of their cause ; but viewed from my standpoint, which you know is that of a psychic researcher, it is a problem in a psychic science which has worked out its own solution ; and that this problem is involved in a still broader one I can easily show. That broader problem is no other than Spiritualism.

Was it not the fortieth anniversary of the Woman's Rights Movement that was celebrated the other day in Washington ? What now was the year when the first faint raps at Rochester rapped out the message from a passing to a coming generation ? They are twins, I may say, almost, these two great pulsations of the soul-life of the nation. And as they grew side by side, the one never knocked louder at the gates of Congress than the other has knocked at the door of the understanding of millions of Americans, begging to be heard if not entertained. Upon the answer we give to Spiritualism more depends, for better or worse, than, perhaps, upon any other problem which we are now called upon to solve. It will not down, and why should it ? It has come to stay, and why should it not ? It is no new thing ; indeed the newness is in our rawness, not in it ; for Spiritualism has been in the world since when man, being a spirit, became possessed of a body ; but that phase of it which we commonly call "American Spiritualism," and which is now a great social and moral—almost said a national—question, has grown up within the memory of some of us here to-night. It is not here and there, it is everywhere. Its advocates, real or nominal, tacit or avowed, have passed from the thousands into the millions in the United States. If the Spiritualists should band together and pull together as a political party, they might not elect a President, but they could turn either way the scale of a closely contested campaign. Their cause would be a stronger one at least than any of the other collateral issues in the struggle between our two leading political parties.

But just as the Woman Question has suffered most from the apathy or indifference of women themselves as a body, so the progress of Spiritualism toward any material goal or substantial

worldly reward has suffered most from difference of opinion and ever fluctuating shades of belief in its own ranks. Moreover, since every question of Spiritualism cuts literally deep into a man's soul—deeper than fame, or wealth, or power, or any temporal advantage, because it is not only for now but for ever to his view, so does Spiritualism kindle and foster every passion, every emotion, excite every perturbation of the soul that is possible ; on the one hand, as he may be upturned to the loftiest aspirations, the purest sentiments, the keenest vision of the soul, so may he be bent down to the most groveling aims, the coarsest vice, the obscuration of the soul, the loss of will-power, judgment, and conscience. Both such extremes are witnessed daily, and, indeed, it is a giant of terrible, overmastering potency whom he invokes who dares "try the spirits, whether they be true or false ; a genius more formidable than ever Aladdin rubbed out of his lamp springs into existence when man trims the lamp of life to spiritual fire.

The ordinary degree of oscillation of men in their everyday business or pleasure is a narrow sweep of the balance of fate in comparison with the extent and intensity of vibration of him who dares stretch forth his hand to stir the veil of Isis ! Small wonder, then, that Spiritualism may prove a blessing or a curse ; no wonder that its extremes are so far from the ordinary experiences of men ; no wonder that its phenomena are at once the mainstay of religion and the despair of science ; and still less is it in any way remarkable, either that Spiritualists should differ so widely regarding their phenomena, or that busy men of every day should ignore or decry them as foolishness. But the question cannot be ruled out of court, nor can the court adjourn ; for the human court of appeal in all such matters is always in session, and the case perpetually recurs. How, then, shall the case be decided ?

#### Evidence of the Truth of Spiritualism.

Let us hear some evidence : Is it or is it not a fact that the action of gravitation is sometimes overcome by some superior opposing force, so that things which ought to stay down go up instead ? The answer of Spiritualism is, "Yes, that is a fact."

Is it a fact that numberless other mechanical effects and physical movements result from the manifest operation of a force that is neither mechanical nor physical, nor vital, nor mental in any sense known to or recognised by the orthodox science of our day—a force whose origin or source, and whose means of manifestation, are alike ignored by science ? And Spiritualism answers : "Yes, that is a fact, as well attested as any natural phenomenon to be found in ordinary text books of the schools."

Is it a fact that this strange, mysterious force, of awful significance and most potent consequences, exhibits intelligence, volition, purpose, and all the other attributes of mind as distinguished from matter ? Does it act, in short, as if it had a will of its own, knew what it was about, and show the quality of consciousness ? And Spiritualism says emphatically : "Yes, that is a fact : it does just that."

So far, my friends, though we have gone pretty far, we are still on tolerably safe and easily conceivable grounds, because we have only established that that mysterious force is identical with the force of our own minds. It is the same force I use to stand my body here and hold this paper and speak—a conscious exertion of will-power intelligently directed to a certain set of actions, by the control which my mind has over my body. But the next two questions we shall put to Spiritualism, if answered in the affirmative, land us upon the shore of the Great Unknown.

1. Is it a fact that this mental force which Spiritualism recognises can and does act without any known means of communication between mind and matter ; that is to say, without any physical body ? And Spiritualism answers : "Yes, it does so act, and therefore is not only a mental but a spiritual force." It is just as if I, standing here without any visible body, should be able to make this table move by a code of signals and answer for Spiritualism "Yes."

2. Since this force can answer questions, what does this force proclaim itself to be when asked, "What are you ?" The answer usually is : "I am a disembodied spirit who still lives since my body died, and I am able to communicate with you who are still embodied." This is the pivotal point of Spiritualism. This is the answer, said to be reiterated steadily thousands of times, in reply to the old, old question, "If a man die, shall he live again ?" Faith, indeed, has whispered to hope through-



out the ages that a man shall live again who has died to the world. But here and now comes Spiritualism offering to replace that faith with knowledge, to prove that hope by its own fruition; and I can conceive now no more momentous a question than this: Is it true, or is it false?

Thus far, I have been representing fairly what Spiritualism claims; but it is not fair for me to be only a mouthpiece of another's thoughts. My audience has the right to demand of me what I, too, think or know or believe, else there would be no use of my being here to-night; and I will not stand convicted of evading that point, not even if everything I say were to be proven wrong to-morrow.

#### The Opinions of a Scientist.

Now, my whole training in life has been that of a scientist, accustomed to cool, critical, sceptical, yet unbiased looking at every question that comes up, scrutinising all things to the best of my mental ability, submitting all statements to the test of verification by actual experiment. I hold my mind open on all sides ready to receive and entertain any thought that may seek to gain lodging there. I have no preconceptions respecting what is naturally possible or impossible. To my mind nothing I can conceive of is theoretically impossible, outside of mathematics; and on a deepest view one thing is about as likely or unlikely as another, because one unfathomable mystery underlies every phenomenon in nature. It is to me no more unlikely that a man's soul should live after his body, than that it should not; no more remarkable that he should have a soul than that he should not have one. I only want to know, you know, and in my character of a scientist I am bound to be perfectly indifferent to the result of that knowing. If I have a soul, that is all right; if not, that is also all right and proper. I was not consulted on coming into existence, and my private taste or wishes in such a contingency are quite foreign to the question. Furthermore, I neither believe nor disbelieve on the authority of the Bible or any other authority whatsoever, save the supreme arbitration of such reason and observation as I can bring to bear on any question. Sentiment is foreign to all such investigation. Religion is something aside from investigation, since it rests on faith in the evidence of things unseen, not on knowledge of things seen. Likewise I have no regard for consistency as a jewel, if by that we mean that we must stick to our opinions whether or no. I would reverse every opinion I ever formed or could form, on proof of its wrongness, and be consistent with nothing but the laws of mind applied to the laws of evidence; for these intellectual laws are immutable in the human constitution.

Will you have now the opinion of such a person as I have described, who for about ten years has studied, watched, and followed the phenomena of so-called Spiritualism, and who speaks from personal experience with almost every one of them? Then let me tell you I know that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are true, substantially as alleged. "Substantially true as alleged"—that is a broad statement for any man to make, and I make it fearlessly, of knowledge in the premises. It is a tremendous admission to come from such a man as I have described myself to be, if he have any regard for his reputation as a scientist. It is almost scientific suicide; and when the news reaches the venerable Smithsonian Institution where I live, the wits will be asking if the remains of my reputation are to follow by express and have a decent funeral. But I had rather be right than in a wrong majority. Let me not be misunderstood, however, and hereafter misquoted as saying that everything in Spiritualism is true, or that all the instances of the alleged phenomena are genuine; far from that! When I say that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are substantially true as alleged, I mean each one of the several different kinds or classes of physical manifestations, can and as a fact does occur. Granted that most public exhibitions, particularly of that strangest of phenomena, materialisation, are fraudulent, knowingly, wilfully, and shamefully intended to deceive; granted that most of the rest are obscure, perplexing, and unsatisfactory, or unsuited to any investigation, though not intentionally fictitious; granted that yet others are illusory or delusive, and wholly misinterpreted; with all these admissions, and all these grave omissions for lack of evidence or through erroneous conclusions, yet the residuum not thus set aside is a vast array of natural phenomena which cannot be explained away—cannot be set aside, and have not yet been explained to the satisfaction of science or of average everyday common-sense. We do not know, in fine, what these phenomena mean, unless, indeed—a tremendous admission again!—*they mean what they say!*

#### Phenomenal Spiritualism.

It would take me too far over an almost boundless field to traverse each one of the phenomena of Spiritualism, and repeat: This is a fact; that is a fact; the other is a fact. I presume upon the acquaintance of my audience with the general drift of the Spiritualists' statements of facts as such, and were I to draw upon the experiences of a Theosophist I might even add to the already sufficiently startling array of phenomena which I know to be true. But I must pass on to the next and most obvious questions. These things being true, what are you going to do about it? What are you going to do with them? What use shall be made of them? How shall they affect our thoughts and lives; and how shall they be brought into the current of ordinary human affairs, and be invested with a practical, not merely theoretical, a vital, not merely speculative interest, and be made subservient to human welfare and progress? There should be a niche in the Temple of Science for many a truth that now begs for a place; there should be room in every human breast for truth, even new truth; or else there is something wrong with science and with sentiment, and the times are out of joint indeed.

To face fearlessly, to answer honestly, to settle if possible, these questions, would seem to be the peculiar province of psychic research; and if such a thing as psychic science be possible, I have no fear for the result of the investigations now conducted in many cities besides Chicago, by men who are honest, who are intelligent, and who are not afraid to follow the truth as it seems to them, wherever it may lead. You see I am true to my own cloth. I have faith in science if in nothing else, and I am just the one to call most loudly for scientific methods to be applied to all subjects of human investigation. If Spiritualism or Theosophy is leading me a wild-goose chase over a treacherous morass in the wake of a will o' the wisp, I want to catch that ignis fatuus, and hold it up and show that it is not the soul of my departed friend as I supposed, but a quantity of carburetted hydrogen which shines in the dark; or more likely a good solid fleshy medium in spirit robes of luminous paint.

We are all liable to be mistaken; we have all been deceived more than once; we are all equally interested to be set right and not deceived again; and human nature is mighty prone to the marvellous and takes most kindly to the so-called supernatural. It is also an old saying that people like to be humbugged; they want to believe so much that they are willing to believe almost anything and be saved the trouble of thinking for themselves. What wonder, then, human nature being what it is, that nothing is too palpably absurd or untrue to find believers. What wonder then, that persons be found to minister to that want for greedy gain, and prey upon the weak, the ignorant, the incredulous! What wonder then, that Spiritualism continues to be shrouded in its own mystery and also encrusted with every folly and every frailty to which human nature can stoop, till we are tempted to turn aside with a sigh, or, perhaps, a shrug and say: Well, it may be true, but I will have nothing to do with it. I cannot tell you, my friends, how often that thought has come to me, during my long haunting of spiritual circles as if I were a ghost myself instead of one trying the spirits, when my mind failed me to explain what I saw, when my heart sickened at the shams I witnessed, at the shameful impositions practised upon the most sacred and holy emotions of the human breast, until I was tempted to exclaim, "Is this the pursuit of truth?" Then it is like fishing for "the pearl of great price" in the gutter. But as I said in the beginning, if Spiritualism stirs the lowest and worst part of a man's make-up, so does it also reach and move his very highest and best, playing upon the gamut of his feelings, equally potent to evoke harmony or discord, as the strings of the mind are swept by the unseen hand. That is a thrilling touch, indeed, which attunes the faith of the learned divine to Diviner music still; which pitches the erudition of the scientist to a higher key still; which awakens the man of business to other thoughts than those of the store or office; which kindles the enthusiasm of the fanatic to heroism or martyrdom; which fans the flame of every evil passion to a glare of self-destruction; which unsettles the weak mind, and may provoke insanity; yet the touch of the spirit hand has done all this, and seldom fails to bring out and up and intensify all that there is of a man, for good or evil. Truly it is no light thing! and what is to teach us to handle it, with safety at least, if not with advantage? What, but knowing more about it? and to teach us is the purpose and the object of psychic research, in whose name we meet to-night.



## Safe Ground for Psychical Research.

Gentlemen of the Western Society for Psychical Research, will you think me presumptuous if I try to point out some safe ground on which you may stand in this maze of doubt, and some lines along which your researches may profitably be pushed? Assuming, as I have said, that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are substantially true as alleged, how will you proceed to deal with them, and what shall you decide respecting them? For I need not tell you, it is one thing to establish a fact, and quite another thing to explain that fact. Granted, for example, that a table will rise and hang suspended in the air, what holds it up? There is no hope that such an event, any more than the opposite fact that the table stays down usually, can be fully explained; for I suppose the action of gravitation to be as utterly inexplicable a phenomenon as any other in the universe. But just as it is considered a fair and reasonable explanation of the table's staying down to say that it does so because it is an ascertained natural truth that matter attracts matter directly as its mass and inversely as the square of the distance according to what is called the "law of gravitation," which is only a statement of an observed relation of cause and effect; so I say it would be a fair and reasonable explanation of the table's rising, if you had a law of levitation to which to refer the fact and bring it under any known category of cause and effect. Now I can hold up any weight not too heavy for me, by means of my muscles, but the muscular force is only the means or medium of the exercise of the real power which lifts the weight. The real reason why the weight is lifted is in the will-power which is generated or liberated when I make the mental determination to lift the weight; and any mechanical device by which that will-power can be rendered more effective is, as it were, but an extension of the muscular mechanism of my body. So, also, any extra mental stimulus which may cause the muscles to contract more strongly, and enable me to lift more, is but a side issue to the general fact of the action of mind upon matter. This is the ultimate explanation possible to the science of our day, this action of mind on matter by the means of appropriate vital or mechanical devices. But you will not have failed to discover in this simple and trite illustration, the fact that the ultimate force here acting is not physical or mechanical, but mental or spiritual, and instantly we are confronted with an actual existing force which can counteract to some extent the force of gravitation.

If you will agree with me for the moment to regard this mental force as the exact opposite of material force, and if you have found that material force obeys the law of gravitation, have you not on the instant discovered a principle that may be called a law of levitation? A weight chooses to stay down, so to speak; I choose that it shall stay up: which course the weight follows is entirely a question of which is the stronger of two opposing forces. And let me assure you, gentlemen, that if you clearly see and closely grasp this pivotal idea, so easy to illustrate when stripped of all details—this idea of the oppositeness of mental and material forces—all the rest of your inquiries are simply of ways and means by which the two act in opposing each other. It is the old, old question of opposites, in which our individual lives and apparently the very life of the universe, are involved; of action and reaction, attraction and repulsion in the physical world; of light and darkness; of good and evil; of Ormuzd and Ahriman; of God and the Devil; the very existence of one implying the necessity that the other also exist.

## Experiments with a Table.

Now continue my simple illustration respecting whether the table shall stay down or go up. The materialistic scientist will tell you that it must stay down unless some stronger mechanical force sends it up. But we have just agreed that when a man lifts it, the mechanical muscular force is only the means, not the real cause, of its rising, that cause being the will-power of the man who lifts it. The Theosophist will tell you that theoretically it is possible to will the table to rise so that it shall rise without being touched, which would be the result of a spiritual power acting without any known mechanical or vital means of communicating that power. And the Spiritualist I am sure will tell you that the table often rises by spiritual power that is not embodied in any physical organism. Which of these three statements of fact shall you find to be true? Are the last two statements verifiable? Everybody, of course, knows and admits the first, the mechanical movements of matter, and their fair explanation is ordinary text-book science. But is there any sense,

any truth, and possibility of being true, in either of the other two assertions, Theosophical and Spiritual, which I have quoted, namely, that matter may be moved by will-power without any known means of applying that power? Everything else, gentlemen of the Society, starts from and hangs upon some initial point like this. As William Crookes used to put it, when he was learning the a, b, c of psychic research, science does not ask you to move mountains; science asks you to move a thousandth of a grain of matter to a distance of a thousandth of an inch by any other than a mechanical force, and you shall have crossed your Rubicon between the known and the unknown—you shall have set psychic research firmly on its legs on "the solid ground of nature to which trusts the mind that builds for aye"—you shall have securely founded the whole edifice of Psychic Science, against which neither the dictum of physical science nor the dogma of spiritual authority shall ever prevail.

Pardon me if I seem to dwell on so very rudimentary a subject for psychic research. But if you would not have your body of doctrine like a rope in the air, beginning nowhere and ending in nothing, and a rope, too, of sand to fall in your eyes and blind you at a touch of orthodox science, you should settle this point of the possibility of moving matter without material contact first. Do not begin by quoting Scripture or abusing the Bible; do not lean up against any scientific authority, nor throw any scientific authority overboard; do not be religious about it, or sentimental, or hopeful, or fearful; simply be scientific, rational, sceptical, acutely alive in your physical senses and mental processes, to find out whether it is so or not. You may expect the ghost of your dead friend to come and move the table for you; you may sit and contemplate your navel and say "Aum" to the table in hopes it will answer "tatsat"; you may project your astral body into it, if you can, but in any event, by whatever means, first satisfy yourself that matter may be moved without material contact. Gentlemen, the whole case is yours if you can clearly make out this point. There is nothing that the most advanced Spiritualist or Theosophist claims that may not flow logically, scientifically, necessarily, from this initial movement.

Any psychic scientist will tell you that such motion has been demonstrated and established times without number. I tell you the same thing. I know it to be a fact. But do not accept it on my say so, or any one's else, prove it for yourselves; submit it to the test of your own experimentation, and subject it to verification by your own observations. Then you will know it; otherwise you only believe it; and this difference between knowing and believing is just the difference between the science you seek, and the assertions of which we have all had an elegant sufficiency. Moreover, in so doing, you are cultivating the scientific frame and habit of the mind; and that scientific attitude, poised upon a sincere desire to know, and turning upon the spirit of the love of truth, is the one indispensable instrument in the laboratory of the Psychic Researcher.

But now I see the chances challenging me to disclose—since I have said matter can and does move without material contact—how such an experiment can be tried—how my assertion can be put to the test. Every experiment requires proper instruments properly working under proper conditions. The chemist must have his laboratory; the electrician his battery; the photographer his camera and chemicals, and so forth. What laboratory, and how stocked, does the psychist require for his experiments? Let me tell you a little story about this:—

Once at a session of the National Academy of Sciences, I listened to a distinguished scientist, Professor S. Weir Mitchell, of Philadelphia, who read a paper upon the effect of changes of the weather upon pain. You all know, of course, how rheumatic people suffer in certain weathers; how persons who carry relics of the war in the shape of bullets in their bodies are almost barometers to forecast the weather, so acutely sensitive do they become to meteorological influences. Well, I remember admiring how Professor M. introduced his subject by speaking of the difficulty he had in finding suitable instruments for his investigation; for it was not a material barometer or thermometer, or rain-gauge, or weathercock he needed—he had all those—he wanted an instrument that could *feel pain* and have sagacity enough to describe it accurately, and say just how much it hurt him when the wind changed. The man—his patient—was his instrument; the sick-room was his laboratory; the weather was his conditions of operation; and the rest was simply a matter of recording carefully what pain was felt or not felt when the weather was so and so. Could anything be simpler?



## The One Thing Indispensable.

And so I can assure you, gentlemen of the Psychical Society, your only indispensable apparatus is a suitable human organism; your only necessary conditions, a little patience, close and careful observation. Persons by whose means—that is to say in whose presence—occur the phenomena of the movement of matter without physical contact, or its increase or diminution of weight without apparently any assignable cause, are not rare. They are in fact so numerous as to form a recognised class in every community; I refer, of course, to those commonly called mediums. And that strange action of the human organism by means of which one or more of the phenomena commonly called mediumistic or Spiritualistic are manifested may moreover be cultivated in almost any person. The rudiments at least of such faculties are so common, that I doubt if any dozen persons in my audience, taken at random, were to train themselves together for a few weeks, one or more of the dozen would not be able to demonstrate the fact upon which I am now dwelling. The practical difficulty is quite another—it takes time, and time, they say, is money, and money is a terrible tyrant in these busy eager days, when few can afford “to loaf and invite their souls” to make a table turn. “Loaf and invite their souls,” did I say? I wonder how many of us have reflected how literally that thing may be accomplished. To the psychic scientist it is so exactly true and possible, that I am speaking within bounds when I say, that if a dozen persons will have the patience to form a circle, and keep it unbroken, several nights a week for a month, and do nothing whatever but sit still around a table for an hour or two, the chances are a dozen to one that before the next moon they will have unknowingly, unintentionally, and unexpectedly demonstrated the fact upon which I dwell. They will, in short, have successfully performed that experiment in psychic science which proves all the rest possible; they will have rolled away the stone from the tomb in which have been buried the hopes of thousands in our matter-muddled generation.

But now to pass on to the next stage of psychic research, and I pray your patience while I speak very carefully. Suppose it to have been proven that matter has moved without material contact, what or who has been the mover? What the means of the motion? Shall we fling up our hands and turn up our eyes, and believe that Genghis Khan, or Mahomet, or Washington, or John Brown, or any other ghost has been good enough to manifest his presence by making the table tip or rap out the letters of his name? I do not deny the possibility. I deny no possibility outside of mathematics, but I should say that theory was so extremely improbable, and involved such violent assumptions, and was so remote from usual experiences, that I should wish to exhaust the possibility of almost any other theory you might start to account for the fact, before being driven to such an explanation. Nor would I agree without proof that even some Mahatmic adept had shot out from Thibet a ray of his majesty to upset a table. I should prefer to exhaust the capacity of the four walls of the room in which the experiment succeeded before seeking further. And I do not think it would be a violent assumption to connect the movements of the table in some way with the persons who might be present, supposing, of course, all to be acting in good faith, and taking the necessary precautions to be sure of that fact, that not just for fun even some one was relieving the monotony of the occasion with a little muscular exercise; supposing, in fine, the conditions were strictly those called “test,” I should like to see, first, if the absence of any one of the dozen made any difference. Suppose it did not make any difference if A was not there, if B, C, and so on were absent, till at length there should be left but one person besides myself, and the table moved as before. Supposing further that the table would not budge for me alone, then the experiment would be reduced to its simplest terms: a piece of inanimate wood, a medium, a spectator in other words, a psychic researcher conducting an experiment; his instrument of research, a medium; the result, motion of inanimate matter. And I think the researcher should first be bound to conclude that some influence proceeding from his apparatus did effect the stated result. In point of fact, such an experiment has been successfully accomplished thousands of times, and it is not necessary nor scientifically legitimate to invoke the spirits of the dead to account for the facts, until we have shown it to be impossible that the spirit of the living person should have produced the result, albeit by some means of which we may be ignorant.

For many such physical manifestations which I might cite, a Theosophist who claims that the embodied spirit may do them, seems to strike at a simpler possible solution than would a Spiritualist who should presume that only disembodied spirits can act thus. Mind, I am not saying as yet which of the two explanations is the true one, or denying that either may be true according to circumstances, or affirming that neither can be true. I am simply exercising due scientific caution in first testing the most probable theory, namely, that the live person present is the more likely operator than the dead person absent—whether the medium do it consciously and intentionally or not—before trying the least probable theory. You will agree with me, I am sure, that this is only the due and reasonable prudence which psychic research demands in order that its decisions shall have either scientific value or public acceptance. So we are brought to the next stage of our inquiry; for, in the hypothetical case we are following out we have proved that the movement of the table depends upon the presence of our medium. It is here that we are confronted with the real problem, the very crux of the problem I am laying before you. The whole question of animal magnetism leaps to the front. Do not be afraid, ladies and gentlemen, of the name of the thing, portentous though that name be, almost self-suggestive of that dreadful thing, that “dweller on the threshold” of which we hear our Theosophic friends speak with bated breaths. I am not going to let the animal loose, or even show him to you; but I am going to describe him a little. It is not exactly on the threshold of your psychic research that you will encounter the creature, for you passed the threshold safely when the table first tipped; but you have entered the place where animal magnetism must be met, and intellectually collared and tamed and trained and made your servant, not your master, or else one or two things will happen. You will either abandon further research and retire discomfited from your pursuit with little to show for wasted time—or you will perish in the attempt to master one of the greatest forces in nature, to whose effect you have exposed yourselves.

## Animal Magnetism, and the Dangers Arising Therefrom.

Most persons live and die in happy ignorance of the power of animal magnetism, just as most of us live and die practically ignorant of the anatomy and physiology of our own bodies; practically ignorant of the laws of life and death; practically ignorant of the fact that law, inexorable and inevitable, is as actively operative in the mental and moral as in the physical constitution of man. And they are, perhaps, wise who remain thus ignorant—and are as willing to forego the secrets of animal magnetism as the secrets of the dissecting room, of the shambles, of vivisection. Much better back to our office, or store, or home, and attend to our ordinary business and enjoy our usual pleasures, than wander unguardedly in the laboratory of the magnetiser, at risk of an explosion at the first step. I am no alarmist, and I detest sensationalism; but I speak as a sober scientist of some experience in psychic research when I say animal magnetism is a force not to be touched unguardedly; not to be investigated without every precaution against injury to the investigator; it is more than playing with fire; it is more like arousing the lightning's flash, which may strike one dead in unskilful hands, may cook a dinner or tick a message to a friend, in the hands of one who knows how to use this subtle, mysterious force. I repeat, very soberly, the most delicate or the most formidable experiments in electric science, with powerful batteries and magnets, or the most ticklish chemical compounds, whereby the explosives of commerce are manufactured—these are not to be attempted without full knowledge and every precaution on the part of one who has made them a study against explosion or other danger. Yet we understand these things much better than we do animal magnetism, and by so much the more should we approach the latter warily and with circumspection, if possible under the guidance of one who has made the subject a study.

But I hear you asking yourselves if this universal potency is all about us, and so dangerous, why do we not all run greater risk in ignorance of it than by making its acquaintance? That is a fair question, and one not easy to answer; but strangely enough, though we are all in a sense and to a degree at the mercy of currents of animal magnetism, yet ignorance of them does seem to confer some immunity or to act as a barrier of some sort. Is not a child exempt from some danger to which an adult may be exposed? Is not a prisoner's cell a safe retreat from some dangers? Is not what is called a good tough



hide a shield against some of the stings to which a more sensitive person is exposed? And in the case of our hypothetical circle, sitting to develop mediumship, did not there develop certain powers, with certain consequences, which were latent before? Every activity, whether of soul, mind, or body, entails certain consequences which would not have ensued but for that activity. And so with the formidable matter of animal magnetism which faces the psychic researcher in the second stage of his investigations. For, observe, he will never know anything about it by reading about it, nor even by witnessing it! He must study it experimentally. He must magnetise or be magnetised; he must practise the art of magnetising or suffer it to be practised upon himself. He must demonstrate it in and by his own person. He must be the magnet himself. All cannot do this, for various reasons—some for one reason, and some for another—any more than all men can become doctors, or lawyers, or merchants, or poets, or thieves, or murderers, or what not. There is no royal road here; no study, or reflection, or theorising, or speculating will avail much. That is the reason why so much so-called psychic research is futile, utterly barren of results and unworthy the name of science, unworthy the name of some of the scientists who fancy they can of necessity investigate it perfectly well. They will fail, and spin theories, and beat the air, and fight a windmill in attacking Spiritualism and Theosophy and religion, because they themselves are not instruments whereby psychic research can be conducted. They will fail where a sick sensitive of Reichenbach or a hypnotic subject of Charcot will demonstrate a great fact in psychic science. Remember, then, the instrument of research along this line, gentlemen, is always and necessarily a human being; either the experimenter's own person, or the person of some subject over which he has absolute control. All experiment is made on and by and with the bodies of men and women, nay, upon and by and with their very souls. That is psychic research. Psyche means soul, and think you it is to be lightly or ignorantly or blunderingly prosecuted? A thousand times no, for here blunder and crime are one and the same thing.

Recollect, then, that psychic research, if it mean anything, is an investigation of the human soul,—not of the body alone, that is physiology or anatomy; not of the mind alone, that is psychology of which you may learn from any text-book, and only a step ahead of ordinary physiology such as every medical man studies. And animal magnetism is the key to the discovery, the very uncovering, of the soul that inhabits the body; it is the pass-key to every mystery and secret of life and death of the body, and to every knowledge we may hope to acquire of the conditions of the soul's existence after the death of the body. In using that key we open the way to all that was barred before, and unlock every secret recess, expose every hidden thing, unveil every mystery of the human being that it seems possible to scrutinise in our present state of existence. He needs, then, must be a pretty brave man, and I think he should be a very good, honest, pure-hearted, truth-loving, kind and gentle man, who should undertake psychic research beyond its initial stage.

Perhaps I can make clearer now what I tried to explain a while ago, about the pursuit of this thing exposing one to dangers that otherwise might have slept. A person who has ever magnetised or ever been magnetised is never afterward the same person exactly that he was before. The difference is not only mental, for, of course, he has got some new experiences and new ideas; but it is to some extent physical. It is like the difference between iron that has become magnetised, and this same metal that has never touched the loadstone. The currents of animal magnetism passing through the particles of the body seem to make some change. I would almost say some new or different molecular motion is set up; just as a current of ordinary magnetism passing through iron affects the particles of the metal in such a way that they exhibit activities and produce visible effects that were absent before. How profoundly the whole being, physical, mental, psychic, moral, spiritual, even, can be affected by this exquisitely subtle, unspeakably powerful form of force, few are fully aware.

#### The Great Power of the Magnetiser.

The induction of complete trance by a magnetiser in his subject is the most astounding instance of the supreme control of one human being over another that the nature of man admits. One may kill another's body by many a kind of mechanical violence, as a blow; destroy life by poison, which disarranges the vital machinery fatally; in neither case is the mind, still less

the soul, at the mercy of the murderer. But the magnetiser can utterly deprive a victim of mind without leaving a trace upon the body; he may make a lunatic of a philosopher; he may make a criminal of a saint. He can call up at will the most fervent religious ecstasy; he can excite with equal ease the most malignant and devilish passions and roaring blasphemies. He can blot out the mind for the time, making a drivelling idiot; he can induce artificial lockjaw or complete catalepsy; he can suggest crimes which his victim, forgetting the source of the suggestion, shall afterwards commit at a given moment. He can cause various bodily sicknesses at will; he can excite vomiting by a suggestion; he can make and unmake the most excruciating pains; he can make the patient insensible to pain and amputate a limb without the patient's knowledge. As to hallucinations of the mind he can produce, they are simply endless, at his will and pleasure. The patient shall see, hear, smell, taste, touch, what the magician pleases. He can induce somnambulism, clairvoyance, clairaudience, in some cases even to the extent of informing himself of what is occurring at a distance. I need not prolong this catalogue of his powers, to which it is not using figurative or extravagant language to apply the terms superhuman or magical, so far above ordinary powers and everyday experiences are these actualities of animal magnetism.

The moral aspect of this case is a very grave one indeed; but it is obvious, and I need not dwell upon that. Let me only say it has come so far to the front, in France at least, as to require legislative action, and upon it hinge some of the gravest medico-legal questions, to say nothing of the range of professional study of alienism or insanity. Let me only ask, also, if the Theosophists are so far wrong, after all, when they say they possess some kinds of knowledge and some kinds of power which it is not expedient that everybody should share? And let me ask the Spiritualists if, in this tremendous range of the possibilities of the spirit while still in the body, with that wonderfully organised apparatus at the command of his trained intelligence and concentrated will-power, a good many of the phenomena commonly ascribed to disembodied spirits, and supposed to be feasible to them alone—may not be fairly and safely referred?

#### Magnetism the Pass-Key to Psychic Science.

This brings me back to the position I am trying to hold, that of the scientist, pure and simple, looking at these things with an eye only to psychic research. This is the field that opens before you, gentlemen of the Society, offering an abundant harvest. It is here that you can safely proceed from the well known to the less known, and the now unknown. Your feet are on solid ground. Your instruments are at command, in the persons of those whom you can use in your investigations. Have a care only, I implore you, that the instruments be neither injured in themselves, nor turned against others. Whether you will fully believe me or not, my friends, I know that in giving you animal magnetism I give you the pass-key to psychic science; I invest you with the Master's word of the greater mysteries in the construction of the temple, for refusing to surrender which to those unworthy to receive it, Hiram Abiff was slain. The word was lost in his grave; the substitute is what we use so guardedly; then let us be doubly on guard, lest we misuse the sacred syllables.

But of what use, after all, is this key, if we know not how to use it? But for its use, it were merely a bauble to hang on the breast as a visible sign of authority. What is the use of the Master's word unless it be spoken to some purpose? Let us see about that.

What, then, is animal magnetism? Is it a myth, a figment of the imagination, an idea only and thus purely immaterial, or is it a thing, a concrete reality? To define its substance or essence were impossible. Even the most learned electrician, who uses electricity most skilfully and successfully, is silent when asked, "Well, but what is electricity?" To define this much more subtle form of force or mode of motion called animal magnetism, were still more difficult. But it is a great point gained and a great advance made when we clearly recognise and define its operation and effect. That it is a mode of motion, there is no question; for it is a force, and every force is a mode of motion of something. Heat is a mode of molecular motion of ordinary matter. Light is a mode of motion of a very delicate, tenuous, ethereal substance known to science as luminiferous ether. Electricity is another mode of motion; so is ordinary magnetism as of the loadstone; and so is galvanism, a force resulting from the chemical decomposition of various substances. But animal magnetism differs from all



these in at least one respect, and that is one of supreme consequence ; for it is partly mental, not entirely physical, and it is capable of acting without any known medium of communicating, and it is capable of communicating what ? Thought ? Yes, whatever be the substance that is stirred when this kind of magnetism acts and sets it in motion, that is the substance of mind that is moved ; it is something in which thought, will or volition, memory, take form. It is a conveyer of consciousness ; it is the medium of changes of consciousness, by means of which one's state of mind may affect another's state of mind, without any known means of transferring the affection or making the cause take effect. No one now has the hardihood to deny the obvious and incessantly repeated manifest action and result of magnetism, for it goes on constantly under our eyes, and comes into play in the simplest acts of mesmerising.

Now since there is no known medium of transfer of the effective force of animal magnetism, and since there can be no transfer of any force without some medium of transference, and since there is probably no absolute void or vacuum in any space in Nature, it is necessary to infer that there must be some kind of substance, of what kind I do not permit myself to say ; no ordinary matter as known to the chemist or physicist, yet material in one sense, in the motions of which magnetism is manifested, and whose motions constitute, in fact, magnetic currents whose visible effect we can study. In point of fact, there is such a substance, some of whose properties I could describe if I would ; and when I said "unknown," I only meant unknown to the materialistic science of our day, since it is not a kind of matter which can be investigated by the ordinary methods of the chemist, or physicist, like any ordinary solid or fluid or gas ; yet it has been known to some scientists for ages ; it has been known longer than most of the sixty odd elements which the chemist knows ; and it has received more names than any one of the chemical elements of the text-books. The oldest name of it that I know is *akasa*, the Hindu name, given many centuries ago, perhaps by Kapila, the founder of one of the four great schools of Hindu philosophy. Theosophists and other occultists commonly called it the "astral fluid." I have often heard Spiritualists speak of it, without knowing it, by the name of "spirit light." It has many remarkable properties, different from those of ordinary matter, and for the most part quite the reverse. But the property which chiefly concerns us now is that property which it has of sustaining consciousness and conveying thought. It carries mental images ; and it is capable of reproducing in the mind of one person the thoughts that have been formed in the mind of another. It is the medium of all actual exchange of thought ; for the words we use are merely conventional noises which we understand as a set of symbols of thought agreed upon. It is the means of all genuine mind-reading. It is the substantial basis of all clairvoyant visions and all clairaudient sounds.

The real existence of this akasic or astral fluid is the secret of all telepathy, or the affecting of one mind by another at any distance without physical means of communication ; and no fact in Nature is better attested than the fact of telepathy, which the London Society for Psychical Research has rediscovered and carefully demonstrated by thousands of cases, though that Society has as yet given no hint that they have any knowledge of the rationale of telepathy. Nay, more ; in this same astral fluid, in whose properties telepathy has its possibility and its realisation, is found the material or substance which composes the bodies of those strange apparitions or phantoms, with which the public has become familiar, and has laughed at and stormed at, known in Spiritualistic circles as materialisations. These alleged spirits of the dead are in most cases, I will not say exactly the percentage of cases, but in most cases, are deliberate frauds !—the veriest humbugs in the world, gotten up for money to deceive the unwary, just as coolly and carefully as an actor gets himself up for his part on the stage ! But in cases of the genuine thing, a materialisation is for the time being a substantial reality, whose substance consists of this astral fluid in a temporary state of condensation, which renders it palpable and visible to our ordinary senses.

Let us draw a long breath here, and see the length we have gone in the last few moments I have been speaking of the properties of the astral fluid : from mesmerism through telepathy to materialisation, almost in a breath ! It is a mighty power we have invoked, and almost like magic rises the ghost we have conjured up to confront us and refuse to down. For the linking

of these phenomena is so close and unbroken, the chain of reasoning is so inevitable, that once the first least phenomenon called Theosophic or Spiritualistic be proven, the rest follows as a matter of course, and the whole body of psychic science is before you, needing only patience and care in psychic research to be clothed in proper vestments to stand before the world by the side of the orthodox physical science of our day.

But lest I may have overhauled the links of this chain too rapidly, let us retrace our steps for a moment. We have assumed or inferred the existence of this astral substance to account for the facts of animal magnetism, which have been established, and we find that it has every proper character of a legitimate scientific theory, in that it is *a priori* probable ; that if true it accounts for the facts ; and that the facts have never been accounted for on any other theory in a way that will bear investigation. But this magnetic substance is everywhere ; it penetrates all space, probably, and certainly it interpenetrates all matter, residing in matter side by side with the gross molecules which the chemist knows. It is in our bodies as well as in all other bodies, animate or inanimate. Animal magnetism is in all living animals, not excepting that one which crowns creation. It is, in short, a part of the composition of man, an element of the human constitution. If special proof of this were requisite, I should only have to point to the unquestionable fact that this magnetic force proceeds from the magnetiser at his will, and certainly nothing can be got out of a man that is not in him. So obvious is this that some scientists have used the expression "brain waves" in connection with some of these phenomena. In mesmerising, also, the operator is often aware that *something has gone out of him* ; some influence has proceeded from him, which it is no irreverence to liken to the virtue that departed when the woman had touched the hem of the garment. Indeed, if there happens to be in my audience a good clairvoyant to-night, or some one easily open to mediumistic influences, that person may have actually seen something not visible to all, when I may have flagged at a time and then spoken with increased energy. Certainly I have been conscious in my own person of varying tension and relaxation of the magnetic currents, and I have no doubt that in time we shall have instruments to record these ebbings and flowings with the same accuracy that the sphygmograph now records by the pulse the varying tension of the arteries. And I have spoken to little purpose if my remarks have not gradually led you up to the pivotal idea I wish to present—the existence of the astral body, as a substantial entity.

#### The Astral Body.

For my own part, I regard the astral body as proven. The demonstration is to me complete, from not one but many experiences I have had, in my own person ; from not one but many experiments I have made on the persons of others. But the popular verdict is, impossible ; and the scientific verdict is the Scotch one—"not proven," and it is to you, gentlemen of the Psychical Society, that I appeal, to confirm or disprove the theory I advance. The facts, that is, the evidence or testimony to the facts, is established indisputably ; the only question is as to the explanation of those facts of animal magnetism. And when I said that animal magnetism was the pass-key to psychic research, and then proceeded to discuss how that key was to be used and to what purpose it was to be turned, I meant to give you, as I have done, access to the very goal of all sound psychic science—the recognition of the astral fluid as the medium of the manifestation of all Spiritualistic phenomena, and the recognition of the twin fact, that a human being is partly composed of this same substance. And on the heels of this very grave and momentous assertion, let me record a warning : You will make no satisfactory progress in psychic research along any other path than that which I have pointed out ; and you will have no solid body of psychic science than that which incorporates the doctrine of the astral human form. This is the pivotal point on which all the rest turns—turns to sink, on the one hand, into some mere theory of nervous action, such as our text-books of physiology teem with ; or turns, on the other hand, to rise and melt away in the cloudland of the visionary.

Though I can thus point the way, and perhaps help somewhat to find it, yet that way each one must tread for himself. Those who have entered upon the path know this way ; those that live the life discover these things ; the whole secret cannot be imparted. Many have found it ; but not all seekers are finders in this line of search. For, strangely enough, one must



first become aware of the existence of the astral body in himself before he can use the faculties of that body in psychical research. Just like the man in Weir Mitchell's experiments on pain, who was the necessary instrument of investigation, is the psychic researcher himself the instrument of psychic research, and the demonstrator of his psychic science. Just as the natural body, with its natural five senses and other natural or physical faculties, is the apparatus of investigation of ordinary material or physical phenomena, so is the psychic or astral body, with its senses and faculties, the instrument of research into extraordinary and non-material and non-physical phenomena. Most persons live and die with only the conscious exercises of their physical senses to guide their reason and enlighten their minds; consequently and necessarily they know only those phenomena which address those senses; that is, only become aware of material things. But there is an eye back of the outward eye that catches rays of ordinary light; the clairvoyant's natural eye is shut when the other eye opens to the vision. There is an ear back of the natural ear that catches ordinary sounds and the clairaudient's natural ear is shut when the voice of the silence is heard; and all these and other senses and faculties of the psychic body are those which must be brought into operation to determine the facts of psychic science.

Now you have all heard of the practice of occultism; of so-called operative magic; of the training of the adepts; of the development of the mediumistic faculty, for such are phrases of the Theosophists and of the Spiritualists. But do I not invest them with a new or different meaning not at all unreasonable, when I speak of them as only the exercise of the psychic faculties and their direction to a desired end? Mediumship is, in fact, the activity of the psychic senses more or less intelligently and consciously opened to have impressions made upon them by other psychic forces, be these forces to proceed from an intelligence still embodied, or from an intelligence which has left its outer tenement of clay. Far from me be it to say that this last is never true; on the contrary, I think it is true, and not very rare either; in which case the claims of the Spiritualists, their statement of which is called "spirit communication," the interchange of thoughts and feelings and wishes and wits between us who are here and others who have gone on, becomes a fact in psychic science of the utmost possible moment. And what now is the adeptship of which we hear the Theosophists speak, but the full activity of the psychic senses, trained to do the will of their master, acting under the conscious and intelligent operation of the expert in psychic science, and impressing upon other psychic organisms the thoughts that the adept desires to cause? If there be any truth in this, the claims of the Theosophists, which seem so wild, may after all be found within the limits of sober facts, and amenable to verification by experiment, just as in the case of mediumship; and the communication between two bodies of Theosophists, by the projection of the double or some similar means, is reducible to a simple successful experiment in psychic science; and if such communication be possible between trained adepts still in the flesh, it should not be impossible between one such and another who has cast off the flesh; and some of the wildest dreams of the Rosicrucians may thus be realised.

If there be truth in what I say, once more, we see the phenomena of mediumship and of adeptship, if not fully explained, at least brought under one broader law capable of application to both; we see that they differ only in degree, not in kind; we see in them both the possibility of successful psychic research, the material for sound psychic science, and the probability that the pivotal propositions of the Spiritualist and of the Theosophist may become demonstrable theorems, which so far from refuting or antagonising one another, do countenance and confirm one another, each rendering the other more likely to be established; and that is a consummation devoutly to be wished by every lover of truth.

Do I then believe in spirits and spirit intercourse? *Assuredly* I do! For am I not a spirit, too, like every one of you? And do I not communicate with this visible world by my natural body, my visible apparatus of relation with the phenomenal world without being thereby shut out from my spiritual prerogative of communicating with such other spirits as I can reach, on another plane, by the spiritual body appropriate to that plane of existence? Ask me for my authority for this statement, and I point first to the ascertained facts of psychic science; but if other authority be acceptable I may quote one whom not many may be inclined to dispute when I repeat the solemn words: "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

What now, my friends, think you, are the real "Signs of the Times" when such questions as we have discussed to-night are to the fore? We know not, indeed, what a day may bring forth when that day is on the turning-point of one of the great natural cycles of the evolution of the human race. Not alone are the spiritual phenomena we have so hurriedly reviewed; they are signalled by greater terrestrial disturbances than have been witnessed on an equal scale for many a day; volcanic action has sunken parts of the earth's crust, and altered the coast lines of continents, and the dust of the conflict of these Titanic forces has reddened the very sky. Earthquakes have shaken the solid ground; and not less active than such grand cosmic forces are the corresponding spiritual agencies at work, their exact counterparts. Men and women are shaken in the beliefs of a life-time; things sacred and things profane seem melting indistinguishably in the single crucible of the mind. Every revered religious creed is fiercely assailed and hotly defended. The challenge of science to religion resounds; the counterblast of the Church to the State echoes back that challenge. Everywhere are old foundations shaken; everywhere the scaffolding of new structures is erected. The times are revolutionary in thought, in feeling, in belief. Nothing is too wild or fanciful to find its heralds, nothing too securely grounded for attack. Emerson said, "Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker in the world"; and here are thousands of thinkers all around us, thinking for themselves with small deference to authority, and little regard for precedent or established custom.

Thoughts are free, and the thinkers are freed, as perhaps never before in the history of the world. Who or what shall be the moderator in this vast "debating society" where everyone may be heard in debate? My eyes turn wistfully back to the fixed faith of the bygone years, and lo! where is it? We must look forward, not backward, and in all the glare it takes a steady eye to be undimmed and discern the truth that is surely advancing. Physical science has well nigh conquered the physical realm; and may we not hopefully turn to psychical science to establish also her kingdom on the earth. The problem of the day is not a question of matter, it is a question of mind; and the problem of mind has ceased to be only a question of the intellect; it has become the cry of the soul for more light in the dungeon of the body. And the cry goes up the loudest from the women of the land, because her soul's imprisonment is harder to bear than man's, her duty to redeem the world more imperative. A great convention of women is but an outward sign; the real sign most legible is the inward compact the woman's soul has made with her spiritual self, the covenant of a new dispensation to re-incarnate the God in man, as the final triumph of spirit over matter. That is the law of life here and hereafter; that is the Master's word, for ever lost and found again, that every man himself shall know and do the will of the Most High.

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#### NOT ALONE!

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"I tell the tale as it was told to me. There had been a period of great distress among the farmers, the oats had failed, the hay had been drowned by the weather and the floods, the cattle had had scarcely anything to eat, and there was something like starvation in the dales. The curate had collected a subscription in the lower country, and was himself taking about the money to the different farms, but the distances were so great that he was sometimes kept till quite late at night. One evening on his outward journey he suddenly became aware of a figure moving beside him, and in the gloaming he recognised his brother who had died some time before. He was too awestruck for any words, and after keeping by his side for some distance over the lonely moor, the silent figure disappeared. He noted down the time and the vision, but nothing occurred to throw any light upon it. Some years after he had taken the duty at a gaol in another part of the country, and one of the prisoners, being under sentence, desired to make a confession to him. He told a number of crimes and ended with, 'I was very near once taking your life, sir. It was in that bad year, I heard as how you went carrying money about in those lonesome dales. I hid behind the big boulders on the brown moor, I seen you coming up, and waited till you should be near enough, but that night you were not alone!'"—VERNEY'S *In the Dales Sixty Years Since* (Macmillan's Magazine).

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THE hypothesis of pre-existence renders possible a belief in eternal justice.



## JOTTINGS.

It looks as if hypnotism were to be compelled to show cause why it should be indiscriminately practised. Already placed under control of capable medical men in Paris it is now interdicted in Prussia :—

"The *Gazette de Liège* says that hypnotism has been interdicted in Prussia, and commenting on the matter, remarks that it hopes such an interdiction will not be imposed everywhere, for the cloven foot and horns of ecclesiastical journalism is seen through it all. Hypnotism explains a crowd of phenomena which the surpliced gentry call miracles; so down with hypnotism!"

That criticism is one-sided. No doubt exists in minds that have studied the subject that, just as hypnotism is the key to a vast number of psychical problems, so it is a most dangerous subject for the rash, inexperienced trifler to meddle with.

The American Spiritualist Alliance has instructed Professor Kiddle, Judge Cross, and another, to report to them on the best means of scientifically investigating Spiritualism. There are several ways how *not* to do it, as we long-suffering Spiritualists know. But these gentlemen, Psychical Researchers in a proper sense of that abused term, seem to have hit on a vein of sound sense.

Unfortunately "LIGHT" limits are not elastic, and we cannot quote their full report. But this, as the reasons for which most people attend séances, is exhaustive. This is not the place to discuss the question of their attainment.

1. To convince unbelievers of the reality of the phenomena, and their spiritual origin.

2. To extend the knowledge of spiritual facts and principles: that is, to enlarge the boundaries of spiritual science.

3. To afford an opportunity to Spiritualists to hold intercourse with relatives or friends in the spirit world.

4. To obtain trustworthy information from spirits as to the spirit-life, its conditions, laws, &c., as well as other topics connected with the philosophy of Spiritualism.

5. To cultivate spirituality: that is, to promote the spiritual advancement of the members of the circle.

6. To ameliorate the condition, or aid in the spiritual progress, of the manifesting spirits, when such amelioration or aid is possible, necessary, or solicited.

7. Specially and primarily to establish the personal identity of the manifesting spirits.

The report dwells strongly on the general desirability of not prescribing what are known as "tests," and of abstaining from dictation to the communicating intelligence. True. And we may ask in return that the communicating intelligence, whether in or out of a physical body, should not cheat or fool us. We are none the better for association with that which is mean, silly, or frivolous, whether it wears a body or not.

This seems to us a point that Spiritualists may well think out. Many messages given at séances are very foolish, judged by the standard of our own mental experience. In some cases, our own fault, no doubt. But not always. Should such not be kindly discouraged, or at any rate received without the effusive encouragement that seems to be the normal reception of any abnormal communication?

A Beecher story from the *Banner of Light* :—

"On one occasion the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was approached by a mother whose daughter, a most intelligent young woman and a member of Plymouth Church, had become interested in the subject of Spiritualism. 'You must labour with her, Mr. Beecher,' said the lady, 'and if you find her obstinate, threaten to excommunicate her.' 'That, madam, would be something of a joke,' said the minister, with a twinkle of the eye, 'because if the folk with Spiritualistic tendencies were to be cut off from Plymouth Church I shouldn't have a corporal's guard to preach to.'"

An interesting letter of William Howitt's to Robert Cooper :

"DEAR SIR,—Thank you for your little volume of *Spiritual Experiences*. I consider it a very valuable addition to the history and evidences of this great dispensation. Some parts of it read like a narration of the persecutions of days gone by.

"If our Press and scientific men could blush, the account of the rational reception of the Davenportes in Belgium, Holland, and Russia would make them do it; but there is no country on the face of the earth which is so arrogant and so materialised in spirit. They think themselves 'the people, and that wisdom will die with them,' but in all except what relates to matter and mere material operations and money-getting, they are the stupidest people living. Material science

has made great progress among them, but it has been at the expense of everything that marks the truly philosophic mind. The theories of philosophy never were so grovelling and degraded. If there be a thing that marks the dignity and glory of human character, that they reject and spurn from them. They desire *not* to live hereafter, and they prefer believing that they are descendants of monkeys than the directly created children of God. Is it possible to conceive of a more earthly and contemptible generation? Let us bless God that he has wrenched us, by unexampled revelations from the unseen, from the thralldom of such a stupidity. You, indeed, must feel great satisfaction in the services you have been permitted and have had the will to render. You will have your reward.—Yours faithfully,

"Robert Cooper, Esq.  
"August 1st, 1867."

"WILLIAM HOWITT,

There is to be, we learn, a Spiritualist International Convention in Spain at the same time as the Barcelona Exhibition.

The *Two Worlds* gives us some very interesting excerpts from a rare copy of the London *Athenæum*, in which Miss Harriet Martineau published seven letters on Mesmerism, or Hypnotism as we now call it.

In the same journal Mrs. Hardinge-Britten gives some visions of hers which are instructive.

Charles Dawbarn has been delivering an address before the Ladies' Aid Society of Boston, U.S.A., which secures the attention of a report in the *Banner*, the *Journal*, and the *Dove*. It is full of good sense.

Gems from Dr. Elliott Coues's recent address :—

"The failure of history to repeat itself would mean that eternal cycles of time should swerve from an appointed course; that human progress should be, not an ordinary unfolding of man's destiny, but a spasmodic struggle against fate."

"The progress of Spiritualism has suffered much from difference of opinion and ever-fluctuating shades of belief in its own ranks."

"I cannot tell how often the thought has come to me during my long haunting of spirit-circles, as if I were a ghost myself instead of one trying the spirits, when my mind failed me to explain what I saw, when my heart sickened at the shams that I witnessed, at the shameful impositions practised upon the most sacred emotions of the human breast—Is this the pursuit of truth? Then it is like fishing for 'the pearl of great price' in the gutter. But if Spiritualism stirs the lowest and worst part of man, so does it also reach and move his very highest."

"The induction of complete trance by a magnetiser in his subject is the most astounding instance of the supreme control of one human being over another that the nature of man admits."

What a pity it is that Mr. Walter Besant should tarnish his fair name by writing such a foolish book as *Herr Paulus*! If he wished to write a burlesque on Spiritualism he might at least have kept to the truth, and have refrained from maligning an honest man by name. He saw Dr. Slade, he says, exchange a blank slate for one which he drew from a slide under his table, a slate afterwards found to be full of writing. As the London Spiritualist Alliance happens to possess the table which Dr. Slade used, we should like Mr. Walter Besant to point out to us where the slide is, or has been.

The book will probably be popular, because cheap sneers at Psychical Research are so, even *ad nauseam*; but no one acquainted with Spiritualism can fail to observe Mr. Besant's utter ignorance of the simplest matters with which he deals, and his confusion between the medium's office and the sitter's, while the inconsistencies he exhibits in the character of the hero of the book will show a weakness in artistic power of delineation to such an exaggerated degree as to be the best refutation of the lessons he would teach.

We shall think much less of the author's former works after reading this, and when inclined to emotion and sympathy, we shall find ourselves asking, Is it true to life? We know *Herr Paulus* is not; and we shall be driven to doubt the accuracy of much that is depicted in the *Children of Gideon*, or *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*. Was *Herr Paulus* written to order? If so, Mr. Besant would have done well had he refused the commission on the ground of incompetency and ignorance of the subject he professes to treat,



## 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 Guldenstübbe, &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 C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

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