

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I have no intention of trenching on the ground of the reviewer when I mention the fact that "Nizida's" long promised book, *The Astral Light*, is issued from the Theosophical Publishing Company. It is an intelligent attempt to throw some clearer light on abstruse subjects than we have yet got. As I understand the writer's aim it is not to rival the elaborate treatises which already exist for the patient and learned student. It is rather, I apprehend, to help beginners to grasp what all students of occult mysteries regard as an all-important matter, the understanding of which is a condition *sine qua non* of progress in knowledge. "Nizida's" clear language and habits of direct thought will, I do not doubt, put before us what is deemed necessary for our enlightenment in the simplest and plainest manner. The paper contributed to our columns by this writer on "Odic Force; or Currents in the Astral Light," is on the same lines of thought as are contained in the little volume of less than 200 pages which I am thus briefly noticing on its appearance, and which a more competent hand will eventually review.

Another small work (128 pages) containing much information in a very small compass is Mrs. Hardinge Britten's *Faith, Facts, and Frauds of Religious History*. The writer gives us her opinion as to the primal source of all systems of theology—the Sabean system, Astronomical Religion. The writings of Dupuis, Gerald Massey, Godfrey Higgins, and other writers of the same school, are quoted in support of conclusions which may be imperfectly summarised thus. (1) The Ancients believed the heavens to be the chart of creation, law, and Divine government: and religion to be the study and application to life of what was to be learned there. (2) The Sun was the symbol of creative energy: the Moon represented woman, the feminine principle: the Stars in groups or constellations exercised their influence on man's birth, life, and destiny. (3) As time went on, students of the heavens discovered the complicated movements, acting and re-acting, of the various orbs, and established in remote ages the theory of cyclic periods—divisions of time marked by great changes or notable conjunctions in the heavenly bodies indicating corresponding changes, cataclysms and catastrophes on earth. These neroses or cycles were fixed at the close of every 600 years, when the Sun and Moon were in special conjunction, and a fresh Avatar, or Incarnation of a "Son of God" was supposed to take place. (4) The next cycle in magnitude was at the end of every 2,160 and the next again at the close of every 6,000 years. From this briefly sketched astronomical system the author believes that theological systems such as Brahminism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity have been gradually

evolved. For an account, rapid but clear, of this growth and development I must refer my readers to Mrs. Britten's pages without feeling called upon to express any personal opinion as to the success with which she demonstrates her theses. Especially interesting, if I may select where all is readable, are the chapters concerned with India and Egypt.

"Members one of another" gives Mr. Page Hopps a congenial theme in his October *Sermons*. The discourse is one of the best I remember among many good ones. It is the directness of the preacher, his common sense, his evident earnestness, and above all the absence of cant that attracts plain men who seek for simple guidance, and not for metaphysical subtlety or arid dogmatism. Critics sometimes forget that a sermon is good in proportion as it does *not* contain what they look for in it. There are many, no doubt, who would miss in these sermons the bones of robust orthodoxy. There must be many more to whom their sweet reasonableness will prove increasingly attractive. The preacher has been speaking of the links that bind together the whole universe of matter.

And what we find in relation to matter, we find in relation to mind; what we find in the world of physical forces we find in the sphere of mental activities. The education of the race is a great historic fact; and what I said about the solidarity of the race in relation to its prosperity and happiness, I say now in relation to its mental education and development. The earth, I said, is one laboratory, one workshop, one home: but it is also one school. The ancient nations have left their marks, and more than their marks, upon the modern world. Who shall tell us how much of our modern life,—our life social, political, intellectual, artistic, religious,—is the product of what went on in ancient India, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Palestine, Rome? Our laws, our institutions, our varied intellectual and artistic developments, our religious ideas, are nearly all inherited; and they are the complex products of periods now closed—of people now practically dead and gone. There is, indeed, a tremendous mental solidarity of the race,—a strange, living, awe-inspiring link between the living and the so-called "dead." And, just as every atom might cry to every other atom, and just as every force in the heavens above or the earth beneath might join the cry: "Lo! we are all members one of another," so might the modern cry to the ancient world,—so might the living races of to-day cry to the dead races whose very sepulchres are a riddle we cannot read,—so might we all stretch forth our hands to our brothers and sisters of ancient India, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Palestine, Rome and cry: "We are all members one of another."

In delivering the opening address of the Session at the Middlesex Hospital, Mr. Bland Sutton chose as his subject, "Intellectual Blindness."

He pointed out that success in the practice of medicine depended largely upon careful observation and correct interpretation, especially as medical practitioners were essentially followers of Bacon, and depended upon observation and deduction for the detection of general laws. Unfortunately, doctors were too often mere observers, and although the inductive method of late years had led to some very brilliant results, it was not adopted so frequently as it should be. This was regrettable, for a carefully elaborated induction often led to the discovery of facts which remained undetected when no theory guided the perceiving power of the observer.

I believe that Mr. Sutton did his young hearers a real service by pointing out to them that a man may spend the

years devoted to preparation for his future profession in most assiduous industry, may pass a most successful examination, proving his mind to be a perfect storehouse of facts, and yet remain densely ignorant for lack of the power to correlate and interpret what he has learned. The man who enriches our store of knowledge by some brilliant discovery or some illuminative classification, as Crookes or Darwin have done, usually starts out with a theory and fits it to the facts that he observes. Not till that is done have the facts any real value.

"CLOTHED WITH THE SUN."*

We have in this volume the original sources of *The Perfect Way*, so far, at least, as concerns one of the joint authors of that notable work. The method of reception of these "Illuminations" was inspirational—"the spontaneous operation of the spirit in a soul duly luminous and responsive." The subjective conditions consisted—"not in the search for phenomenal experiences—though these would sometimes occur—but in the intense direction of the will and desire towards the highest, and an unchanging resolve to be satisfied with nothing less than the highest, namely, the inmost and central *idea* of the fact or doctrine to be interpreted; the motive also being the highest, namely, the emancipation, satisfaction, and benediction of souls, our own and those of others." The form of communication was, in general, dream, that is to say, the innermost intelligence, belonging to another order or degree of consciousness, came to manifestation under the usual condition of the dramatic severance (to use Du Prel's expression), yet without any claim to alien personality. With great propriety is this inmost intelligence called the "genius," since the characteristic of genius is just the inspirational facility or spontaneity of thought, resulting, when communicated also to the faculty of verbal or artistic expression, in the full "incarnation" of the transcendental spirit or power. The products of this power, in the metaphysical region, must carry with them their own verification for the intuitional reason, even as the works of artistic genius must appeal to the æsthetic sense, which is as unequally developed as is the sense for truth. And those—the great majority in these days—who disparage Divinity and metaphysics, in favour of the generally objective validity of "scientific" verification, thereby reduce all positive knowledge to its lowest term or standard, implying that the universality of rational assent, which is only obtainable upon a single level of faculty, is the sole test of truth. To develop the intuitional sense is the precept which Theosophy and cognate schools are now proposing as the true means of compliance with the demand for "scientific" verification of things spiritual. And in this book the empirical basis of spiritual knowledge is distinctly declared. "For sensation is the only means of knowledge, whether for the body or for the reason. The body perceives by means of the five avenues of touch. The soul perceives in like manner by the same sense, but of a finer sort, and put into action by subtler agents. The soul can know nothing not perceptible, and nothing not perceptible is real. For that which is not can give no image. Only that which is can be reflected." From this we are, of course, not to understand that the "image" and the "reflection"—the "object" in perception—is the "real," but that they are the representatives of the real, the only knowledge of it possible by objective consciousness.

Not a new Gospel, but a "Gospel of interpretation"—that is the claim which the editor, in his preface, makes for this book and for its predecessor, *The Perfect Way*. "The

position maintained is that Christianity has failed, not because it was false, but because it has been falsified." It is an "indictment of the Church visible on behalf of the Church invisible." That there has been falsification, chiefly in the article of the substitutionary "satisfaction" for sin by an innocent "victim"—an evident amalgam of juridical fiction with Jewish sacrificial traditions—probably very few readers of this paper will be found to dispute. Nevertheless, we must doubt if "falsification" is the term properly applicable to the general body of Christian doctrine as delivered by the Church. Interesting here will be a citation expressing Mrs. Kingsford's own relation to the Catholic Church, from a note at p. 191. "How wonderfully," she says, in a passage in her diary of 1883, "the Church helps one in matters of Theosophy. When I am doubtful about Divine order, or about function in the human kingdom, I appeal instinctively to Catholic doctrine, and am at once set in the right path. I think I should never have clearly understood the order and function of the soul but for the Catholic teachings concerning the Mother of God; nor should I have comprehended the method of salvation by the merits of our Divine Principle, save for the doctrine of the Incarnation and Atonement." She adds, however, "The Church has all the truth, but the priests have materialised it, making themselves and their followers idolators." Perhaps it would be a truer statement to say that the material is the objective vesture and representation of the spiritual, truth in this external guise being only "materialised" in the sense in which the soul of anything is materialised by its body. Of deliberate degradation of spiritual truth there is little evidence; and the principle of evolution elsewhere expounded in this book points rather to the natural and gradual unfoldment of interior significations, of which the original form was dispensationally adapted to the needs and capacities of human comprehension. Nor can we forget that thousands of souls have been purified from the dross of their own personality by faith in the personal Christ. For ethical power and operativeness we need the living type, at least as much as the idea, and it would require all our loyalty to truth not to apprehend ethical loss from the entire transmutation of personality into symbol. With what force that transmutation can be proposed to us, can only be appreciated by those who follow the interpretations of this book with candid, even though, it may be, with reluctant attention. Impressions of fact and history in the sacred "records" evaporate under the alchemical touch of these "Illuminations," and in their place we find a doctrine of the soul, which we must recognise as conveyed in almost every particular by the parable of the Christ. The great Catholic doctrines undergo a transfiguration which reveals their spiritual import and significance. But the negation of historical fact certainly derives no evidential support from the remarkable vision concerning the origin of the Gospels, in which the seeress beholds the destruction of the Serapeum at Alexandria, A.D. 390, and of the library containing "the documents out of which the new religion was made," and the actual "concoction" of the Gospels by Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, and Ambrosius! It is in vain that we are told in the foot-note (p. 127) that this vision "was wholly independent of any knowledge or prepossession." That the library was destroyed with the temple is a statement of Gibbon, the authority for which has been controverted, indeed, but which has been too current to be treated as original in the composition of a dream. And the alleged motives of the several alleged instigators are too confirmatory of the general tenor of the dreamer's thought for any explanation to be sought beyond suggestive imagination. It seems strange, too, that Mr. Maitland has not thought any reconciliation necessary between this piece of information

* *Clothed With the Sun: Being the Book of Illuminations of Anna (Bonus) Kingsford*. Edited by EDWARD MAITLAND. (London: Redway.) 1889.

and the dream at p. 122, ("concerning Paul and the disciples of Jesus"), in which the responsibility for the "new religion" is laid upon Paul by the actual contemporaries of the Master, several centuries earlier!

But if, here and there, one may suspect the intrusion of those "astral reflects" which have never been better discriminated from genuine illumination than by Mrs. Kingsford herself, the chief impression left by this work is that of a deep insight, and of an interpretation with which all existing theology will assuredly have to reckon. And yet, consistently with this recognition, we must ask: Is this new Christianity—new, at least, to the general Christian world—which, we are assured, contains the sole and entire truth of the old, still a religion, or is it only a mystical philosophy? Without a critical analysis which would be voluminous no confident answer can be given. It may be a misunderstanding which tempts us to describe it as Christianity without Christ, for spiritual headship and universal Divine agency in the soul seem sometimes to be recognised, though inferior prominence is given to these essentially religious ideas. The view, that organic integration is the whole office and process of religion, and that its science corresponds metaphysically to physiology, is sufficiently stated, and it is, perhaps, the most important of all those truths of which the significance has been lost to the Church, by treating their Scriptural enunciation as mere metaphor and figure of speech. Wherein the doctrine, as here affirmed, appears to fall short of the religious exigency, and even to contravene the order of physical analogy, we shall venture presently to suggest. But certainly the foundation is well laid. The law of integration, the synthetic unity of constituent elements of a common soul or consciousness, is applied as well to the so-called "individual" as to worlds and systems. "The material of the physical brain," we are told, "is constituted of countless cells and innumerable connecting fibres, and each cell hath its own consciousness according to its degree. Yet the resultant of all these concordant functions is one perception and one consciousness. There is also a consciousness of the nerves, and another of the blood, and another of the tissues. There is a consciousness of the eye, another of the ear, and another of the touch, &c." . . . "The vice of your biologists lieth in their pursuit of the unity in the simple rather than in the complex. . . . They refuse unity to the man, in order to claim it for the molecule"—where, by-the-by, they fail, in their sense of unity, to find it. But we must similarly recognise that the individual human soul represents only a stage in the process of integration, we must not take a stand upon our own individuality, but see in its subsumption under a higher unity the condition of the progress we name religious. Now, if this grand spiritual generalisation from the physical order as recognised by science is the true natural religion, revealed to us by Christianity, assuredly we must follow the analogy throughout, and seek the condition of integration in the original operation of a higher principle upon the future constituents of the corporate unity. The mineral is not raised to vegetation, nor is the vegetable tissue raised to the animal, save by the assimilating potency of the higher order. To make this power intelligible, we must indeed concede to the lower order a capacity for the exaltation thus effected in its substance; and this capacity is a principle, or soul-power, in latency, which is evolved by the agency—external to itself—of the same principle already developed and manifested. It is this, in *that* sense, external agency on which the Christianity of the Church lays stress; whereas in this book, the "Divine principle" of the soul is a term which seems to be used exclusively of the correlative subjective capacity, as if the mere abstract knowledge, or rather idea, of this immanent and latent divinity in us were a revelation sufficient for religion. But the true

object of religious faith is that divinity already raised to power and manifestation, which in ourselves it is not. But for the analogies referred to, we might be disposed to seek in spontaneous and unassisted evolution from within a sufficient explanation of spiritual progress from stage to stage. The proposition, that "man must work out his own salvation," i.e., must himself educe the full consciousness and realisation of the higher principles of his being, is the antithesis to Christianity which has been frequently promulgated in recent years—especially by teachers of the Theosophical Society—as a great scientific advance on the old belief. Yet it is as much opposed to notorious facts of nature as is that other mutilated tenet of Brotherhood, in which Fatherhood is denied or suppressed. Passages might indeed be quoted from this book to show that the metaphysic of Mrs. Kingsford's *Illuminations* is deeper and sounder, but weighed with others they are of doubtful import. Thus, nothing can be more satisfactory on a first perusal than the distinct recognition of the transcendent unity which presides over every integration, in the following (as in several other sentences that might be quoted): "The immanent consciousnesses (spirits) of all the cells of a man's entity" (and it must be remembered that the same truth is applied to the higher integration of which individual man himself is but a cell) "cause by their polarisation a central unity of consciousness which is more than the sum total of all their consciousnesses because it is on a higher round or plane." (p. 197 and Appendix Note X.) But our satisfaction suddenly fades as we observe that this "central unity" is postulated as derivative, and not as antecedent, as the effect, not as the cause of the integration which is no doubt rightly—as regards *process*—attributed to "polarisation." Herein, not less the order of nature than what we conceive to be the vital principle of Christianity is contradicted. The central unity is not the "resultant" of convergence, but is the point of attraction. Every suppression of what may be called the objective Christ, in supposed favour of the subjective, mutilates the perfect doctrine to which all nature testifies—the evolution of that principle which is only in capacity, through appropriation and assimilation by the same principle in energy. To such suppression may be aptly and succinctly opposed a forcible utterance of Claude de St. Martin: "Il faut que nous soyons dévorés comme une proie par toutes les puissances du Seigneur."* But whether the Son of God "generated in substance," the "Adonai," as distinguished from "the Macrocosmic Christ, generated through humanity," sufficiently satisfies the essential demand of religion for original Divinity, and duly recognises the office of that Divinity in the evolution of its own correspondence in the individual soul, these are questions, the answers to which, if given in the affirmative, will greatly diminish the importance of the above criticism, leaving it only a highly abstract and metaphysical relevance.

It is vain to attempt, within the limits of a review, to do any sort of justice to the wealth of material and felicity of exposition, packed into the (frequently) brief statements and aphorisms of this volume. Those who are well acquainted with *The Perfect Way*, will, of course, be already familiar with the main theses and interpretations in the "Illuminations"; but they will find the latter an invaluable companion work; and Mr. Maitland's notes in the Appendix, executed with his usual classical lucidity and force, add distinctly to its value, and aid us in the comprehension of it.

THE *Sunday Times* has an interesting item of news from its New York correspondent. *Verbatim et literatim* it reads:—

Much excitement is caused in esoteric circles by a published statement of Dr. Coves, who asserts that Madame Blavatsky has been expelled from the Theosophical Society.

* ST. MARTIN: *Le Nouvel Homme*, p. 38.

HEAVEN REVISED.*

By "M.A. (OXON.)"

III.

I omit much that my readers will, I hope, peruse for themselves when the book is procurable in this country, and pass on to a striking description of the sphere inhabited by those who on earth have cultivated the intellect at the cost of the affections, and have neglected the development of their spiritual nature.

The same narrator, accompanied by the Guardian Margaret, sets out to visit

THE REALM OF INTELLECT AND SELF.

The direction that we took I remember not, nor the time occupied in reaching our destination. The air grew chilly, and the sky took a steely blue. The light was dazzling, and the scene one of rare beauty, but so cold, oh, so cold! I shivered as the breath of winter fell upon me. I then recalled what Mary, the ministering angel, had said about the domain of winter. In the distance snow-crowned mountains gleamed and glittered in the sunlight, and giant icebergs, carved in a thousand beautiful and fantastic shapes, reflected all the colours of the prism. Rivers of ice wound their way through the landscape, dazzling in the light, but currentless. The trees were cased in crystals, reflecting the light from a thousand points, while the flowers and shrubbery were seemingly of congealed vapour, as fantastically beautiful as the frost-tracery upon earthly windows. Silver and crystal everywhere—pearls and diamonds; but no warmth of colour, no warmth of light—beautiful and cold. The very houses were ice palaces or ice cottages, more radiant than marble.

I saw many people who seemed for the most part perfectly content with their climate, as though they had never wished for or perhaps known any other; only I noticed that now and then one shivered slightly, as if unconsciously.

A strange object met my view here. As strange as was everything about me, this object, being found anywhere in the Spirit-world, seemed out of place. It was a man who wore only the scantiest of rags, and carried upon his back a sort of sack. He was seeking here and there for rubbish of any and every sort, which, when found, he gathered up and put in his bag with an eagerness that amounted almost to a greed. He shivered continually, and now and then muttered to himself: "I am so cold! Shall I never be warm again?" When he met a passer-by he held out his hand as if asking alms.

"Are there, then, beggars and tramps in the Spirit-world?"

"Yes, many," was the reply of my companion. "They are found principally in this and the lower spheres, though they occasionally wander even into higher ones. They belong nowhere, as they have no home. You are astonished, and want an explanation. Well, I will tell you what this man was, which will account for what he is:

"In earth-life there was once a merchant prince whose name was a power in the financial world. Rising from poverty and obscurity, he reached the topmost round of the financial ladder. He was strictly honest as the world counts honesty. He told no business lies. He met all his obligations promptly and fully; but he was selfish to his heart's core. He oppressed the poor. He paid his *employés* the lowest wages for which he could get men and women to work, and when old age overtook them he turned them off to linger on and finally to die in destitution, and put younger ones in their places. If he ever gave to charity, he did it blowing a trumpet before him, so that he might reap a sevenfold advantage in his business. There was not one man or woman in all the world, outside his own family, who could say that they had ever known him to speak a genuinely kind word or do an unselfish act. In his veins seemed to flow ice instead of blood. At last he passed away, and not one human being was the better for his having lived, save those who inherited his money. He had heaped up wealth on earth, but he could not take a penny of it with him; and, though he belonged to an aristocratic and exclusive church, he had utterly neglected to lay up treasures in Heaven. He had not even builded himself a house. Therefore you behold him homeless, friendless, destitute, begging of those whom he once oppressed. It is the old story of Dives and Lazarus revised. True to the instinct of

greed which governed him on earth, he must accumulate something, and as his accumulations there were utterly worthless when gauged by the standard of eternity, so he goes on gathering worthless rubbish."

This story gave me much to think about, but I put it aside for the present, in the more absorbing interest which the scene awakens.

"But what strange place is this," I asked, "where winter seems to reign perpetually?"

"This," Margaret responded, "is the realm of pure intellect and of self. Truth sheds its light here, but the beams of love which lighten and vivify the sphere from which we came, never descend, never melt the perpetual ice and snow of this fairy-like scene; never warm human hearts. Here those who lived purely intellectual lives find their congenial home—men who were given up wholly to scientific and business pursuits, and never cultivated the affections; men who were honest and upright from pride or instinct, but who never knew the meaning of the word charity; men who sought to be just but not merciful; men who were never stirred by kindly or affectionate impulses toward their own sex, and who knew not the higher meaning of the word love in their association with each other. Here some of the so-called wisest men and the brightest geniuses of earth have found themselves upon their first entrance to the Spirit-world. But as truth may and does enter here, it furnishes an open door through which they may pass, if they will, to the warmer spheres beyond."

The chapter on mediumship contains so much that is true so well put that I should be glad to reprint it if space allowed. As it is I cannot do more than give a specimen of its merits. I condense slightly but do no injury to the writer's ideas:—

The time finally arrived when I was permitted to attend the very circle of which I had once been a member. A dozen or more persons sat in a semi-darkened room, clasping one another's hands. Around them were circles upon circles of spirits of every grade, all anxiously awaiting an opportunity to communicate with those of earth. Of the mortals present three or four were recognised mediums, possessing diverse gifts. Two or more of these were attended by their little familiar spirits, through whose agency the communication of others was usually received.

Various motives had brought the remainder of the circle thither. Some were actuated merely by curiosity. One or two came with an earnest and honest desire to investigate. The larger number were simply anxious to hear from their departed friends; but of the entire number not more than one or two were really seeking spiritual light and truth; and each one attracted around him spirits whose moods and motives corresponded with his own. There were idle, mischievous spirits bent on having a good time; there were earnest spirit investigators, ready to second the efforts of mortals; there were those who had recently departed from the earth, and were most eager to send back a word of comfort; there were high and pure spirits who sought an opportunity for impressing mortals with the grand truths which Spiritualism holds in reserve for those who truly desire them.

A clairvoyant first spoke, and described the spiritual forms which were presented to her vision. As I listened to the descriptions I, who beheld the spirits described, looked at Margaret in amazement. A youth nearing manhood was represented as an infant, still dressed in earthly baby habiliments. A man apparently in the prime of life, grand and glorious in his presence, was depicted as decrepid with age, and wearing an earthly garb of a quarter of a century ago. In no case did age, appearance, or garments in any way correspond with the actual presence before me.

I turned to Margaret with impatient angry words: "Was clairvoyance, after all, only a delusion?"

"No, my child. You do not understand. Let me explain. Neither mortal eyes nor spirit eyes in mortal form can behold spirit. It is too ethereal to be perceived. But for purposes of identification it is possible to impress the medium's brain so that he believes that he sees; and, in order to make the identification complete, this impression is almost invariably of the spirit as it appeared while still dressed in mortality, the impression corresponding with the memory of friends. It is not a delusion; it is not even a deception. But those who are content to stop at this phase of spirit manifestation, and seek nothing further, know nothing whatever of Spiritualism. They accept the guarantee

* *Heaven Revised: A Narrative of Personal Experiences After the Change called Death.* By MRS. E. B. DUFFEY. (Chicago: Religious Philosophical Publishing House.) 101 pp.

for the thing itself ; that which is offered in testimony of truth for the truth."

"But how can humanity protect itself from the impositions of this class?"

"The way is very plain. Let mediums themselves in their personal characters rise above them, and they can not approach them for purposes of evil ; and, on the other hand, let mankind at large bring to the study of these phenomena its reason and its judgment. Let it not take all spiritual utterances on faith, simply because they are spiritual in their source. Let it discriminate between the good and the evil, the wise and the foolish, that which if accepted will benefit, and that which will prove injurious. But to return to the subject of mediums, study this clairvoyant, and see what she is."

I did so, and her character was revealed to me, showing me that she was not only ignorant and credulous, but with no clear convictions of duty, no just conceptions of the importance of her mission as a medium of communication between the two worlds. The display of clairvoyant powers concluded, one spirit after another took possession of her organism for a brief time. The communications of those who wished to speak to earth friends were for the most part brief and unsatisfactory, though several names were correctly given. Why was this? In answer, the power was given to me to perceive in part the method of communication. The impression was made upon, and the work performed through, the brain of the medium, and this being dull and untrained, responded but faintly to the touch of spirit hands. One of the higher band of spirits found opportunity to attempt communication through her ; but what a look of dismay and discouragement came over him when he heard his brilliant thoughts dulled, the truths he would utter obscured, his meaning perverted, and his very language murdered in passing through the channel of this woman's intellect. Disappointed, he soon ceased his efforts, and again a degraded spirit stepped in, and with scarcely a break in the discourse, proceeded at some length with a jargon of ideas, and a grammar eliminated of all recognised rules ; and when he concluded he announced the name of one of the most brilliant statesmen America has ever known. This name was received with a rapture of delight by a large number of those present, while the boon companions of the mischievous invisible were equally expressive of their pleasure. Oh, it was rare fun for them.

Then a second medium was controlled by one or more spirits. I could look into his heart and see good impulses there, but also impurity and lack of high principle. He, too, though not so much the plaything and jest of mischievous immortals, drew around him only a lower class of spirits, and nothing of any real spiritual value was received through his mediumship ; and as I studied him I saw that it was impossible that there ever would be, until he was radically changed. This instrument, like the other, gave forth only weak and discordant notes, even when played upon by master spirits, because it was imperfect and out of tune.

A third medium opened her lips in her turn, and I waited anxiously to see and hear what would be the message, and how delivered. Again I was given that inner perception of character. I saw a woman of weakly good impulses, superstitious in her nature, and with a zeal for her faith which was only excelled by her ignorance. Only partially controlled by unseen powers, she allowed her eagerness and imagination to run away with her. She mistook her own impulses for genuine impressions from the Spirit-world, and that which she gave was a medley of truth and falsehood, reality and delusion—the whole so debased by ignorance and misconception as to be utterly worthless ; yet the woman did not intentionally deceive. She was a victim of her own zeal and her own mental delusions, while other victims, enshrouded in the same mental and spiritual darkness as herself, listened intently, and even reverently, to what she said, and accepted her words without question.

Almost disheartened, I then turned my attention to the fourth and last medium, to see if any hope were left for the communication of truth from the Spirit-world. As I studied her from my vantage ground of the Spirit-world, from which we can look through the disguises of the flesh, I found that she was a woman of quick perceptions, keen discernment, true to the heart's core, and fully appreciating the privileges and duties which fell to her because of her peculiar gift. I had known all these four mediums while I was still in the flesh, and had gained a tolerably accurate estimate of their different characters, but had never realised, as now, the important bearings these characters and acquirements had upon their mediumship. As I still

regarded the fourth speaker, I noted that she was surrounded only by bright spirits. As others approached her they seemed restrained at a certain distance by some invisible barrier which, try as they would, they could not pass. She was herself true, and, therefore, as a medium she uttered words of truth. She was intelligent, and did not unwittingly pervert the truth. All her desires and aspirations seemed to be directed Heavenward, and the cry of her soul seemed to be : "Oh, make me worthy—make me more worthy of the mission to which I am appointed !" And a bright band of angels, as if in response, encircled her head with a glowing diadem of stars, while their hands were extended above her in benediction. Even she was not perhaps fully capable of becoming the messenger of communication from the brightest and best of those who have passed to the Spirit-world from the earth life ; but then how few there are—where can they be found?—who are thus in all things capable !

But still another shock was in store for me. Words were spoken in which there was much wisdom—words which were not unworthy of almost any source ; but when a name illustrious in the annals of literature, whose possessor had passed to spirit-life more than a generation ago, was given, I felt my heart sink within me. I knew the spirit thus named was not present. I had already sufficient knowledge to feel assured that he passed onward to a sphere whose inhabitants do not return to earth. Was there, then, no dependence to be placed in the utterances of mediums? Were even the best liable to self-deception? Margaret, ever watchful, divined my thoughts.

"Look," said she, pointing upward. As I obeyed her I beheld, or seemed to behold—for if it was not sight, it was a perception as strong as the sense of seeing—a succession of links extending from sphere to sphere, and from spirit to spirit, and on this chain of links the thought has been conveyed, originating far Heavenward, and descending from spirit to spirit, until it had finally found utterance on earth. Oh ! these wonderful spiritual bonds which can bring earth in communication with the higher spheres, and bind all together as a perfect whole !

My readers will now be able to estimate for themselves the value of this allegorical teaching. It does not appeal to all classes of mind, but I believe that it gets home its lessons to many who would never be reached by mere didactic essays. It is impossible to estimate the influence that the greatest allegory in our language has exercised over the minds of the young. When Bunyan published his *Pilgrim's Progress* he launched a mighty weapon. I could wish that more messages of a worthy type from the world of spirit were published, and that we had more symbolical teaching of the high character of that contained in *Heaven Revised*.

THE CORRECTNESS OF A DREAM VERIFIED.

During an expedition in 1876 of the noted Indian scout, "Yellowstone Kelly," W. W. Erwin, the now famous criminal lawyer of St. Paul, a warm friend of Kelly, one night, says the *Pioneer Press* of that city, arose from his bed while asleep and threw himself on the floor, excitedly crying out : "Kelly is in danger. The Indians are in ambush for him in the cañon. There is but one way of escape. He must ride straight forward, then turn to the right and put spurs to his horse for dear life. If he does that he will escape."

A gentleman who occupied the same room was awakened and rushed to where his chum lay on the floor, talking in his sleep, and awakened him :

"What is the matter?" he asked.

"I have had a dream," was the reply. "Yellowstone Kelly has been in danger from the Indians. They lay in ambush for him. I can draw a map showing the only way of escape," and he took a piece of paper and drew a diagram showing where the Indians were and the only path by which escape could be made, as it had appeared in his dream. It made so vivid an impression that he was anxious for days for the fate of his friend the scout.

A few weeks later Kelly came to St. Paul, and the two friends met.

"Where were you on the night of September 9th?" asked the St. Paul man.

"I had a close call that night," was the reply, "and the saddle I sat in that night has a bullet in it from a redskin's gun. I was caught in a cañon and almost surrounded." And then he described the lay of the land and how he had escaped by riding straight toward the Indians until he found a passage to the right, through which he had ridden and escaped. The situation was exactly as the St. Paul man had dreamed it was.—*Banner of Light*.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, W.C.

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Light:

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

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12th, 1889.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. 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. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

THE PARIS CONGRESS OF SPIRITISTS AND SPIRITUALISTS.

As I had the honour of attending the Congress of Spiritualists and Spiritists recently held in Paris as the delegate of the London Spiritualist Alliance, the readers of "LIGHT" may perhaps be interested in learning something of my experiences and of the impression which I gathered from the proceedings. I am unable to give any very exact report of what took place, for the simple reason that I am not familiar with the French language, into which alone the remarks of the various speakers—English, Dutch, Norwegians, Spanish, Italians, Swedes, Portuguese, Germans, Russians, &c.—were interpreted. And fortunately it is not necessary, as an official report will be published, from which the required information will be obtainable.

The Congress assembled on the morning of September 9th, in the large hall of the Grand Orient de France, Rue de Cadet, and the opening address was delivered by the President, M. Jules de Lermina, whose remarks evidently kindled a good deal of enthusiasm in the minds of his hearers. Though not a Spiritualist he was spoken of as a cultured and liberal-minded man, and as one who deservedly stands high in the estimation of the Parisians. The delegates subsequently repaired to the several "Sections" according to the particular phase of subject in which they were chiefly interested. These Sections met every morning from nine till twelve; and every afternoon at three o'clock there was a general meeting in the Great Hall, when the secretaries of Sections gave a brief *resumé* of the morning's proceedings in the various rooms, and the topics which had been under discussion in the several Sections were freely ventilated by the general body. One of the "Sections" was devoted to "Spiritism and Spiritualism," and, naturally enough, this was the one to which I confined myself, but, of course, I was present during the afternoon debates on all the other questions in the Great Hall.

The Congress evidently comprised men gifted with rare oratorical powers, the chief of these so far as I could judge being Señor Miguel Vives (one of the sixteen Spanish delegates), M. Léon Denis, M. Ch. Fauvety, and M. l'Abbé Roca, representative of *L'Etoile d'Avignon*. These all spoke with great earnestness and fluency, holding their listeners spell-bound. Of M. l'Abbé Roca I was told that

he brought a strong indictment against the Church; declared his conviction that the time would come when the people would reign without the priests; described the priests as jugglers with the truth, who not only did not enter Heaven themselves but also prevented others from entering; and described pure Christianity as pure Socialism. These sentiments, I was informed, made him popular with the masses; but were doubtless regarded by some as out of place at a Spiritualist Congress.

On the third morning the President called upon me to address the meeting, and at his request I also occupied portions of the fourth and fifth mornings. I spoke of the various phases of phenomena with which I have been familiar during many years through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt; referred to the numerous interesting questions to which these phenomena had given rise; and contended that they were explicable on the Spiritualist theory alone. My remarks excited an immense amount of interest, the plain statement of unquestionable facts coming as a great relief after the discussion of dry, speculative problems. Indeed, at the close of my first speech, Mrs. Everitt and myself were surrounded by an eager crowd, all anxious to shake us by the hand and to make us understand by words and signs how delighted they had been with what I had had to tell them. In this connection it is my pleasure to acknowledge with gratitude the kindness of Madame Pognon, who not only interpreted my speeches, but generously insisted on our becoming the guests of herself and sister (both Spiritualists and both speaking English) at their charming and well-appointed private *pension*, 7, Rue Clément-Marot, Champs Elysées. Here we spent a very pleasant time, and in one of the very comfortable rooms placed at our disposal had the privilege of giving several sésances to members of the Congress, at one of which were present the representatives of no fewer than five nationalities. It would occupy too much space to narrate what occurred at these sésances; and it is sufficient to say that on each occasion there were abundant expressions of gratification and thankfulness. Just one word more in regard to my addresses to the Congress. A very brief summary of some of these appeared in the *London Standard*, but the reports were so ludicrously incorrect that I must suppose that the *Standard's* correspondent was not in the room when I spoke.

On the afternoon of the eighth and last day of the Congress, a large and final meeting was held in the Great Hall, followed by an elegant banquet, at which about 250 friends were present.

I should like to add a few words in conclusion as to my general impressions in regard to the Congress. Seeing that so many languages were spoken and that the addresses were interpreted into French only—and that but very summarily indeed—many of the delegates must necessarily have had a very imperfect conception of what was said. This was a serious drawback, but under the circumstances it could not be avoided. In every other respect the arrangements were admirable; and I understand that in the Official Report the proceedings will be given in full. One feature in the Congress which must have been apparent to all was especially gratifying. I refer to the universal feeling of kindness and good-will. There was much difference of opinion, of course; but there was also much evidence of brotherly love—and no bitterness. THOMAS EVERITT.

In this connection we give the following summary, which we gather from the *Revue Spirite* :—

The Congress was opened on September 9th, at 9 a.m. in the Salle du Grand Orient, Rue Cadet. After certain formalities had been gone through, the Sections were organised, and serious work commenced, this work going on from nine a.m. till midday, and again from three till

six, for six days. The honorary presidents were MM. Ch. Fauvet, Eugene Nus, and the Duchesse de Pomar. The acting president was M. Jules Lermina. Five interpreters gave voluntary assistance. A general meeting of the Congress was held on September 15th, to receive reports from the various Sections. A summary of these reports was read by M. Papus, the general secretary.

M. Papus first referred to the inception of the Congress, and the favour with which the idea was received. He then went on to speak of the way in which the French press had commented on the proceedings, and referred to the serious manner in which especially the *Temps* and the *Débats* had treated the Congress. M. Papus then spoke naturally of Allan Kardec. Of him he said, "I do not think I am wrong in asserting that the great majority of the members of the Congress have been brought to the consideration of these questions by the direct or indirect influence of the founder of philosophic Spiritism, Allan Kardec. I render my homage to that noble spirit, and this homage is the more impartial because I represent among you the ancient occult science, and not a Spiritist group." M. Papus is, in fact, a Theosophist.

Perhaps one of the most striking incidents connected with the Congress was the selection of M. Lermina as president. Of him M. Papus said, "As you all know, Jules Lermina is not a Spiritist, the immortality of the soul and communion with the dead are still for him unsolved problems, but he is the enemy of every prejudice which tends to restrain the flight of human thought." It certainly was a happy thought on the part of the managers of the Congress to choose such a man for president.

The secretary-general then referred to the "consequences" of the Congress, and to the *facts* and *philosophy* of Spiritism. In speaking of the facts, M. Papus recognised with gratitude Mr. Crookes's "magnificent series of experiments," and then specially referred to the spirit photographs of Captain Volpi. Of Captain Volpi's work he said, "In his experiments, impartially carried on for five years, Captain Volpi took every necessary precaution. He has arrived at such results that true spirit photography cannot be imitated by any of the means at present known. This is due to the action of a special modification of the light made by the apparition, a modification of such a nature that Captain Volpi has offered 500 francs to the photographer who succeeds in imitating one of his spirit photographs by any fraudulent means whatever. Many photographers have tried; all have asserted that the phenomena cannot be imitated."

M. Papus then presented the reports of the various Sections. These reports should presumably be read *in extenso*, if a fair judgment is to be made of the tabulated results of the investigations. Space will permit of only a few of these conclusions. The first Section, of which Dr. Chazarain, and MM. Delaune were the presidents, and in whose discussions Mr. Everitt took part, was devoted to Spiritism and Spiritualism. With regard to Re-incarnation the report says, among other things:—

"(1) The great majority of Spiritist schools affirm that the development of man can only be effected by successive incarnations of its superior principle, the soul.

"(2) Between each incarnation the soul, accompanied by the *Périsprit*, preserves intact the personality of the dis-incarnated. The personality is complete, that is, it is endowed with memory, intelligence, and will."

"(6) Nevertheless, a great number of Spiritists and Spiritualists, forming a school which deserves every respect on the part of their brethren, deny the fact of Re-incarnation. This, however, in no way affects the general doctrine received by Spiritists."

"(7) It is useful for all to take note of the arguments used by both schools."

As to phenomena this Section asserts that they are of three kinds—physical, psychical, and fluidic. This last includes such phenomena as materialisation, direct writing, &c. "Spiritism, like magnetism, proclaims the real existence of invisible fluids spread all through the universe."

The second Section took the philosophic and social aspects of the problem. The president was Dr. Huelbes Temprado. Here the foreign delegates were much to the fore. The Spanish and Italian delegates proposed that the Congress should assert the existence of God as "the universal cause and reason, the final end and absolute good of all creatures," and that "spirit and matter are identical." The Dutch delegates proposed that the Congress should affirm that "God is the Spirit by which everything lives that does live," and the Belgian delegates proposed the approval by the Congress of the following: "The existence in the universe of a supreme and intelligent One, the directive force of all worlds, the source of all moral laws, the supreme ideal summed up in these words, the good, the beautiful, and the true, good, evil, and suffering." Several other propositions of a similar nature were made by the foreign delegates. A very striking one was made by the Spanish delegates, that the Congress should declare its belief in the "infinity of habitable worlds."

The third Section dealt with Occultism, which included Theosophy, the Kabbala, and Freemasonry. MM. Papus and Jules Lermina took part in the discussions, which turned upon the various points of agreement and disagreement existing between Spiritism and Occultism.

The fourth Section considered the question a Spiritist propaganda. This Section recommended the creation of an *Annuaire Spirite*. M. Denne, of Mexico, proposed that the government should found a professorship of Spiritism. This was rejected as premature.

After the reports had been read by M. Papus several speeches were delivered to a crowded audience.

A second general meeting was held on September 16th, when M. Jules Lermina made an excellent speech, in which he defended the position he had taken up. He said: "Which side have I taken? I am of those who aided Galvani and Volta, when, against universal incredulity, they struggled to prove the existence of electricity; of those who encouraged, even at the risk of being wrong, the Marquis de Jouffroy and Fulton, when would-be scientists shrugged their shoulders at their attempts at steam navigation. I am of those who sympathised with Mesmer, Puysegur, and Dupotet in their endeavours to discover animal magnetism; of those who admire the Charcots, the Bernheims, the Luys, and the Liégeois, who dare to question the sphinx of suggestion. An investigator myself, I salute all investigators, and help them when I can. I am not stopped by the wall of any dogma, until, by boring, a fissure is made in the wall and I see a ray of light come through."

In the evening of the same day the members of the Congress celebrated the holding of the Congress by a banquet.

It is to be regretted that the *Revue Spirite* gives no account of the way in which the various propositions of the Sections were received by the Congress generally. The propositions are given fully, but nothing more. Perhaps the next issue of the *Revue* may contain the information. The Congress seems to have been satisfactory, for says M. Lemayrie, whose account we have abridged, "The Congress has succeeded from all points of view, in spite of the ill-will and criticisms of its journalistic adversaries," though he recognises the less bitter tone of the press, and, as before mentioned, singles out the *Temps* and *Débats* for praise.

In further reference to the absurd claim made by the Spiritists at the Paris Congress, Mr. Henry Lacroix, who represented the American Spiritualists on the occasion, has

addressed the following letter to *Galignani's Messenger*. It ought to be unnecessary, in the face of history, to make any refutation of a claim that attracts attention only from the fact that it ever occurred to anybody to make it, and to any assembly of Spiritists to admit its validity:—

SIR,—For the information of those who may wish to have the right side of the Kardec question, the other side being explained by Miss Anna Blackwell, in her letter to this paper, 21st inst., I would add the following:—

Allan Kardec is not the founder of Modern Spiritualism!

Andrew Jackson Davis was the first who issued a most important and large work, entitled *Nature's Divine Revelation*, dictated to him by spirits, published in New York city at the beginning of 1848. Prior even to Kardec, and almost simultaneously with Davis, Cahagnet published *Les Arcanes de la Vie Future Dévoilés*, translated afterwards and published in the United States under the title of *Celestial Telegraph*.

The first edition of Kardec's work, *The Spirits' Book*, in two-column pages, appeared only in 1856, and not in 1851, as Miss Blackwell erroneously states. Kardec, besides, was perfectly aware of the American movement, and his colleagues as well, as I can prove. I was in correspondence with him at the time, and I have those letters still, in which he refers to the American manifestations. Therefore, Miss Blackwell is wrong also on that second point.

The second edition of *The Spirits' Book* appeared only in 1858, at the same time as the *Revue Spirite*. Kardec became initiated only in 1855, at the same time as Judge J. W. Edmonds, of New York, Emma Hardinge, myself, and hosts of others. He then became a member of a circle held in the Rue des Martyrs, Paris, which had been established in 1850 by M. Sardou, sen., now aged eighty-nine, who lives at Nice, and is the father of the great dramatic author, Victorien; M. Tiedeman Marthèze, ex-Governor of Java; Saint René Taillandier, Academician; M. Didier, editor and printer of the French Academy, and others. That circle held séances every other day, and being composed of scholars, serious investigations were carried on there, with the active co-operation of many mediums. Kardec was unanimously chosen by the members of that circle to compile the immense number of communications received and arrange them in proper order. He selected those which bore a character of continuity, and by questioning the spirits on ambiguous questions, and obtaining explanations through mediums, he finally was enabled to give the world, first, *The Spirits' Book*.

The above information I hold from a good, reliable source—from the archives of the mother society, written by Allan Kardec himself, being the *History of Spiritism*, which he left unfinished.

As to the translation made by Miss Anna Blackwell, I am requested to state, by an interested party, that the renderings in English of the three works thus presented are wanting in various ways. Throughout, for instance, the word *soul* is styled *it*, in the neuter gender, while the word *spirit* is styled *he*, in the masculine. That error is deplorable, because in the English language the term *he* is essentially masculine and cannot represent the two active genders, as *il* in French. It must be borne in mind that the word *it* can alone answer in this case (neuter), and cannot be confounded with the term *he* (masculine), while in French the pronoun *il* (or *he*) serves equally to designate the masculine and the neuter.

HENRY LACROIX.

PRE-EXISTENCE.

If the life that now is will merge, as we believe, into one yet to come, it, presumably, did not commence with the conception of the physical body. That which is eternal or potentially eternal after death is reasonably postulated as existing before physical birth. But none remembers his past. None can say when and how he lived before, unless, indeed, we are to except from that general statement some whose fancied allegations which are only the exception that proves the rule.—“*LIGHT*” (September 21st, p. 454.)

“West Aryan” (Edinburgh) writes to ask us “to give a few words amplifying this utterance. They will be eagerly and earnestly read by sundry who see in this enunciation a blessed and a cheering solution of the dark, cloudy mystery which we call death.”

The quotation is from an article in which we discussed Mrs. Besant's reason for joining the Theosophical Society. The argument specially referred to was concerned with re-

incarnation and reminiscences of previous states of being. We took up the position that this earth-life is but a phase of being, and that, as it has no end in death, so it had not its beginning in birth. It is a phase only in the experience of an immortal soul. That which correlates it with earth is the physical body, and when the experiences of this world are gathered up the individual dispenses with a body that is no longer required and goes into the next state of being the same individual with the experiences of this training-school and without the body that was his necessary appurtenance in this phase of existence. The life that now is is only a stage in a long journey which did not begin with birth and does not end with death. As the former event gives a consciousness which is partially expressed in and through the bodily senses, the latter—a new birth—introduces the immortal Ego to an extended sphere of conscious existence. Death and birth are the same thing. One brings us here; the other takes us hence, the same being only with enlarged experience. There is much that bears on the points respecting which inquiry is made in the recently published *Key to Theosophy*, by Madame Blavatsky. It is to be remembered that these opinions are not dogmatic, and that Spiritualists, as a body, have never put them forth as an integral part of their creed. They seem to us to be a necessary result of the study of facts which we, as Spiritualists, observe and admit. That is all.

THE DISCUSSION ON MRS. BESANT'S ADDRESS.

By “M. A. (OXON.)”

There are some points in the discussion that ensued on Mrs. Besant's lecture, “Why I became a Theosophist,” which are of more than passing interest. An excellent report appears in our contemporary *Lucifer*, of which Mrs. Besant is now co-editor with Madame Blavatsky.

Asked why she “denied the possibility of the existence of disembodied spirits,” Mrs. Besant replied:—

My reason is, that in my opinion investigation has completely broken down the theory of it being a disembodied spirit of the dead who was attending the séances. I have done a good deal in that way by personal investigation. I have been to a few séances, I made a number of experiments, and in a few cases I got a great many results. I did not find, putting the whole of them together, that they led in the direction of disembodied souls. Sometimes the things said were absolutely untrue, sometimes the statements when verified did not work out. Sometimes they did. I came to the conclusion, after patient investigation, that the phenomena fell rather under the head of magnetism and thought transference, with probably the working of some forces outside which I did not understand, but which I was not going to call disembodied spirits of the dead until I had definite proof. The Theosophists explain those occurrences not as being cases of disembodied spirits of the dead, but as being very often projections of some person who has mediumistic capacities. They put the view that it is not likely that spirits shall be at the mercy of everyone who wants to call them back to earth, so that they should be continually in trouble from the interruptions.

Well, Mrs. Besant is young at this work yet, but it is fair to admit that she is associated with people who are old at it. I am free to confess that I have gone through a compact mass of experience—personal to myself, and very often with no one but myself present—which has left on my mind a conviction that I was conversing with people who had once lived on this earth, had died, and who were just as alive still as I was myself, and just as much their own selves as I was myself. That, be it observed, was the result of prolonged investigation conducted with pains and care, and not complicated by the presence of others, from whose brains I might be alleged to have got facts by thought transference. Some of the most perfect evidence I have had has been given to me when I was absolutely alone. So far from careful “investigation

having broken down the theory of disembodied spirits," I maintain that it is the only theory that covers all the facts. How Mrs. Besant can contend that the phenomena of the ordinary séance "fall under the head of magnetism and thought transference," I wholly fail to understand, except on the ground that her experience has been very limited and superficial, and that she approached the subject with a mind that carried preconceived ideas. I admit readily that Madame Blavatsky and others who reject my theories are persons of large knowledge; but I am disposed to say that if they had had my experience they would probably have arrived at my conclusions.

Let me say, by the way, that I have never believed or desired that "spirits shall be at the mercy of everyone who wants to call them back to earth." I did not call them. They came: and I never voluntarily did anyone the disservice to call him back to this nether world. Yet I have had communications from many hundreds of people whom I call "spirits"—for so they called themselves—and whom I believe to be "disembodied souls."

Mrs. Besant proceeded to deal with the problems of Personality and Individuality. The new *Key to Theosophy* treats the same subject, on which it must be confessed there is a deal of confusion. Etymologically I am guided to the idea that Individuality is the essential Ego which is masked by the Personality (*persona*). In other words, the true Self, the Ego is correlated with its earthly surroundings by the Personality. That seems, at any rate, to be a convenient definition, though I am aware that "Personality" is used in a different sense by some writers.

Mrs. Besant, dealing with a professed Atheist who seems to have talked very loosely, had no difficulty in pointing out the development of the Ego through a long chain of evolution, part only of which is within our present ken. Then there was an Indian Ex-judge who traversed the old Coulomb ground, and trotted out Mr. Hodgson. He was not of much importance, but he gave Mrs. Besant opportunity for making some very forcible and apposite remarks.

There is a well known rule of law: "No case; abuse the plaintiff's attorney." The gentleman appears to have entirely followed that rule of law. I shall be compelled of course to follow him, although permit me to say at the outset that were all the lies told about Madame Blavatsky as true as they are false, Theosophy would remain. I do not say she would not be discredited, but Theosophy does not rest alone on her, great and noble as her life has been. It would be a terrible shock to many of us who know her, and who knew these charges, and know them as well as the speaker. But I may give you now the other side. Madame Blavatsky is a Russian lady born of wealthy parents of high rank. She left Russia—having a strong desire to investigate the line of thought I have put to you to-day—giving up all the advantages she might have had, throwing aside all the ordinary enjoyments of life for the great desire to find out truth. Permit me to say to the gentleman who admires me so very much that he ought to extend some of this admiration to this lady who gave up far more than I did (Cheers and slight interruption from the ex-judge). I listened in silence, absolute silence, to words spoken against a woman who is very dear to me, and I will ask the gentleman to listen to me in the same silence. Madame Blavatsky found the truth she sought, and she began to teach it, as honest people do when they believe they have found the truth. Amongst others who came to her near the close of her stay, there were two people, M. and Madame Coulomb. They were destitute and they were starving. She took them in, fed them and sheltered them, placed them in a position of half-housekeeper, half friend, in her house. She kept them there for a considerable time. After a while she was called away from India to Europe. She left the keys of her room with these people. They apparently thought they had got all out of her they could, and some misbehaviour of theirs had already made their tenure of office doubtful. Christian missionaries approached them and offered them money if they would fabricate charges which would discredit Madame Blavatsky in the eyes of the world. Naturally they hated her, for she worked against the missionaries in India, and they were maddened with the success she had had. The Coulombs earned their money. They

made up a story about a shrine in the house which had a false back to it. They made up stories about men who went about with bladders on their heads and pretended to be the Masters. Rather curious that about the walking bladders, but such stories are told when missionaries' money is wanted. The Psychical Research Society was interested in these phenomena, but it was not that body which examined; it was one young man, Mr. Hodgson, a smart young man but young. He went out and investigated these stories, and he found what he was sent to find.

It is the old story once more repeated. Personality seems the breath of the very nostrils of some folks whose spiritual development is not as high as their intellectual, and so it will be, I suppose, till we have learned to fix our minds not on persons but on principles. Half the time of the nation is wasted in Parliament because party men will discuss men and not measures. Half the time of Courts of Law is taken up by trivial personalities which might be left to die with advantage to everybody concerned. Let us, who ought to know better, strive with all our might to crush out this mean and petty spirit that is still rife among us.

ASSEMBLIES OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, AT 2, DUKE-STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.

Arrangements are being made for the opening by the President of the Discussion Meetings, on October 29th. It is hoped that, with some necessary intermission at Christmas and Easter, these may be continued until the end of May. Full particulars will be announced shortly.

COMPROMISE AND COMPREHENSION.

This is an age of movement, of strange, blind groping after union and brotherhood; of upheaval and reconstruction. We have received so curious an instance of this in the form of a letter from Henry Frank, Minister to the Independent Society, Jamestown, N. Y., that we give some extracts. Mr. Frank desires to establish a "National Institute of Free Religion" in an extensive property on Lake Chautaugua, fifty miles from Buffalo. He contemplates an absolutely "free platform for the unrestrained discussion of every intellectual problem which appeals to the intelligence of the age." It is a large order, and imagination fails to picture the Babel of discordant sounds that will arise to heaven from that platform. This is Mr. Frank's glowing invitation. Our readers will observe in the notion an indication of what in more temperate ways is in the air. We all want some unity, and we are groping after it:—

The greatest problem of the age is, How to establish the Brotherhood of Man? How to bring together in the circle of love and honest fellowship the leaders and representatives of all phases of thought and agitation? Will not the new institute afford a noble opportunity for such national and possibly world-wide fellowship? Here all may come who have an idea to advance, or a new hope for humanity, and however much ostracised in the common walks of life, if they be rational and intelligent people, may give full and free vent to the pent up fires of their eager souls.

Here may meet the extremes of all theological, educational, political, sociological, psychological and scientific schools: Calvinism with freest Arminianism; high churchism with low and broad churchism; conservative Biblical criticism with higher and highest criticism; Biblicists and anti-biblicists; Religionists and secularists; papal propagandists and anti-Roman Catholics; indeed the opposite phases of all great religious questions are here to meet and be mutually arrayed in intellectual antagonism from Mediævalistic Christianity to Ingersollistic Infidelity.

Here may come the representatives of the opposite sociological schools of thought and openly discuss their fondest schemes; Conservatives and Protectionists may meet Free-traders and single taxers, and all the phases of the labour question may here be justly represented from the Knights of Labour under Powderley and the Federation of Labour or the United Brotherhoods under their respective leaders to the

Christian and anti-Christian Socialists, Nationalists, Georgites, Marx', La Salle's, and Gronlund's followers, and whatever other leader may choose to be heard. Likewise the great Temperance cause may here have a hearing in all its phases. Here let the saloon-keeper's plea be heard side by side with that of the Restrictionists and Prohibitionists. Let third party and anti-partyites here meet each other face to face. Here will be a common platform for Kate Field and Frances Willard; for John P. St. John, and Dr. Howard Crosby.

Then, I need but hint at the great psychological questions which may here find a free and untrammelled platform. Here may come the leaders and followers of Spiritualism, Spiritism, Theosophy, Christian Science, faith-cure, mental healing, and all the great phenomena of the spiritual movements of the age. Likewise shall all those who philosophically explain away or utterly deny the existence of such phenomena have a perfect hearing, so that justice may be done to all, and the fountain of knowledge may send forth its every stream.

Thus shall the opposite extremes of all the phases of agitation meet.

What say you? Do you not think great good can thus be accomplished? Is not the age yet all ready for so comprehensive and truly Christian a scheme? Cannot a movement be successfully established on the following simple platform: NO DOGMATISM IN DISCUSSION; NO SECTARIANISM IN RELIGION; NO SEX IN REFORMATION; NO RESTRAINT IN AGITATION?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Personal Experiences.

SIR,—I have been reading the pamphlet *Sympneumatic Handbook*, by Mrs. Laurence Oliphant, and am so far struck by its contents as to feel induced to make public in your columns some experiences of my own; which, though they may be not unfamiliar to many of your readers, possess, at least, the distinguishing character of differing from most manifestations related, inasmuch as they were wholly unsought, and not at all anticipated.

In those days I knew nothing of Spiritualism, had read very little of Mesmerism, and should certainly not have given ear to anything savouring of the supernatural. I may add that even at this date I have never attended any séance, and am unacquainted personally with any professional or acknowledged medium.

It was about ten years ago, that having been subjected to much domestic anxiety and sorrow, which circumstances had compelled me to bear alone, I awoke one morning to see fluttering around my bed-head a number of wing-like flames, bright, clear and steady. For a moment I imagined the curtains to be on fire, but the flame was so concentrated and individual, each in itself, that the impression was quickly dispelled. They disappeared, one by one, quietly, slowly, and I lay simply awe-struck but in no way alarmed. Rather a singular feeling of repose, and comfort, and protection was borne in upon my mind. I arose, if I may so express it, sustained and strengthened to meet the difficulties of my position with newly born hope and determination. Certainly to me this was the beginning of a new era.

Time went on, and I was cognisant of nothing phenomenal except the change in my own views; the new light, I may term it, in which many things came to be regarded.

Details would be impossible here. There came a day when, though it seemed the result of accident, I was led to take up a life of much labour and responsibility, the former chiefly manual and domestic; very practical duties allowing no time for day dreaming or theorising, but certainly resulting in the comfort of very many persons. And at this period, singular as it may seem, occurred my most vivid and pleasant experiences.

One night I had retired to bed with a distressing headache which had baffled all the skill of a doctor to relieve, I having refused his tender of morphia. Sleep, however, came, and in a dream my mother (long since departed this world) stood beside me. With her hand upon my head she seemed to soothe the pain, and, in the voice I well remembered, she said, "My child, you suffer! Would you not like to work in a garden of light?"

Then I awoke. The room was full of a mild, soft glow, neither like sun, nor moon, nor lamp. It flowed in through the open door, as though one might have passed out thence, bearing some heavenly taper. And all around there waved green leaves and plants, palm-like, or ferns of enormous size. Exquisite! But more than all, be-

yond description, was the sense of peace, rest, beatitude indescribable. Truly it might be called "the peace that passeth all understanding." Pain and anxiety were gone. No possible cause of grief seemed conceivable. I raised myself on my pillows, and watched all fade away. Then I slept, and again the awakening was a "lifting up," which I do hope many know of, but none, I think, could describe.

Since then, many a time have such precious pictures appeared, though none so surpassingly wonderful as that.

I wake suddenly; the room is light; upon the ceiling is cast an exquisite shadow, a trellis overhung with quivering leaves, sometimes a bird upon it. Again, a large tree stretches across, the branches waving. Often, and this in the morning light a beautiful arabesque design, as of tapestry, all in colours, or a damask cloth, in squares and diamonds, till I have looked upon my bed to see if really the quilt were there, and by any mysterious chance could be reflected! They fade out very slowly, I close and open my eyes again while they remain.

Once I awoke to see the ceiling all aglow in rose colour, with a glimpse of children's faces looking through. Though I knew no coloured curtains were there, I had to question myself if there could be any forgotten which by possibility could cast the glow.

Often it has been light alone all over the room, and I have sat up and thought it was morning, every object in the room being visible. But all fades away slowly again, and it is dark night.

And always, always, there is the heavenly peace, the exceeding comfort, the hushing sensation, lifting above all worldly care, as though a voice might whisper: "It is I, be not afraid!"

Now, sir, the word "hallucination" has no terrors for me, rather I would shrink from any imputation of "egotism," for why should I be favoured? I who will not join any circle, who decline to argue or theorise, who could in no way seek for, or urge, or ask for such manifestations, priceless as they are?

But that is my experience, plain, sober truth. And only when I told some of it to friends, did I hear it associated in any way with Spiritualism or mediumship. Then first I read books upon the subject. Then, alas! I read of kettles boiled by spirit-hands, and of tambourines playing, and of folk who purposely darkened rooms and asked questions about worldly matters, and, in short, I was shocked and vexed, and I put it aside as better not to be handled.

But I found presently, as we often do, that there is a true and a false side to everything. Just as there is the blessed sleep of the labour-weary and the false slumber of the drugged,

So I took heart. There came in my way *Spirit Teachings* and *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*; higher every way; then *Scientific Religion* and *Sympneumata*. More than all I found the teachings of good men verified, the holiest words of the Master made clear by what I knew, and I stood fast.

One word more. Hallucination, I believe, is applicable only where one person sees or supposes to see, an appearance.

One night, when all light was extinguished and I was nearly asleep, my husband startled me by exclaiming: "Why have you left the candle alight?"

I replied that it was out long since.

"No," he returned, "it can't be. I see the window, all light, red curtains, what is it?" and he sat up.

I had not spoken of my vision for he would not have believed in anything of the sort. But he had seen for himself; and again the lattice work, and the pink glow were visible to him one night alone.

Of course I have heard it all explained: "Pressure on the optic nerve." "Disturbance of brain equipoise." What will they not explain away?

But to me nothing in life is more real. And, measuring by results, nothing could be more valuable. So I am well content to let the expounders alone, "Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind."

F.O.

Is It Buddhistic, or What?

SIR,—Can any of your readers inform me to what religion does that Temple belong which stands in the Paris Exhibition? I have been present at the service which is daily performed about three p.m., and from all I can find I believe it is Buddhistic, but cannot be certain to which section of Buddhists it belongs. It stands in the central avenue of the *Esplanade des Invalides*, close to the Annamite Theatre. There are several priests who take part in the service and an Arch-priest who heads them. The correspondence between the vestments, ceremonies, and ritual here and in the Christian Church are very noteworthy and interesting. There is no admission to it by any

money payment, whatever; a feature which strongly commends it to me as genuine. Only those who have permits from (I believe) the Annamite Ambassador are admitted. I hope some of your correspondents will be able to throw light on this.

I. O.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated, will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions.]

KING'S CROSS, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD, ENTRANCE CORNER OF KING'S CROSS-ROAD.—Next Sunday Captain Pfoundes will lecture upon Theosophy at 6.45 p.m.—S. T. R.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last owing to some mistake in the dates, Mr. Walker was unable to come as announced. Mr. Veitch kindly offered his services, and delivered a very interesting address on "Joan of Arc." The room was full.—A. GIFFORD.

LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—We went through the usual programme on Sunday last, and recitations were given by Mary White, Lizzie Mason, Martha and Anne Cobb. Mr. Lewis, a Spiritualist from Manchester, gave us several lessons in marching, chain marching, &c., and has promised to help us in the future, for which we are very grateful.—C. WHITE, Conductor.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Our social gathering was a great success on Tuesday last, between sixty and seventy friends spending an enjoyable evening. We intend holding social meetings on the first Tuesday in each month during the winter. On Sunday last Mr. R. J. Lees occupied our platform. Next Sunday we expect to have Messrs. Veitch and U. W. Goddard. After the evening service the quarterly general meeting of the members will be held. We hope to have a good muster. Mrs. Spring will be at 99, Hill-street, on Wednesday, October 16th, at 8 p.m. Strangers invited.—W. E. LONS, Hon. Sec.

BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—On Monday, October 14th, at the Assembly Rooms, Beaumont-street, Mile End, E., under the auspices of the Mile End Spiritualist Society Mr. Veitch will give an address, "What is Theosophy?" Chair to be taken at eight o'clock prompt. Admission free by ticket; tickets to be obtained at the door, or of Mr. Marsh, 218, Jubilee-street, Mile End, E.—E. COHEN.—Mr. Marsh begs for contributions towards the purchase of a harmonium for the Assembly Rooms. He trusts that generous friends will help by sending donations to him at the above address.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 24, HARCOURT-STREET.—On Wednesday, October 16th, an Entertainment, with dissolving views, illustrating the facts of Spiritualism, followed by readings, will be given by A. Maltby, Esq., in aid of the above Association, at Carlyle Hall, Church-street (three doors from Edgware-road). Admission 6d.; reserved seats, 1s. Tickets may be had of Miss Smythe, 44, Tavistock-crescent; Mr. Godard, 14, Princes-mews; Mrs. Hawkins, 195, Euston-road; Miss Peddle, 113, Lisson-grove; 24, Harcourt-street; and at the Hall.—Next Sunday, Lecture by Mrs. Bell or Mr. Towns; and on Tuesday, Social Meeting.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, 290, GOSWELL-ROAD (GOSWELL HALL).—The first Sunday service under the auspices of the Federation was held at King's Cross. There was a good attendance, which included friends from Mile End, Notting Hill, Marylebone, and Peckham. Messrs. Rodger, Hopcroft, Towns, Mason, and Mrs. Bell spoke upon the progress of Spiritualism in London, and Mr. Everitt, fresh from the Paris Congress, was able to tell us a little of Continental Spiritualism and Spiritism. A business meeting of the Federation was held, at the close of which plans for future work were considered. The next Sunday evening service will be held at Marylebone on November 3rd.—S. T. R.

THE LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, CARLYLE HALL, CHURCH-STREET (three doors from Edgware-road, near station).—Next Sunday, October 13th, at 7 p.m., the Society will commence its fifth course of lectures at the above hall, when Mr. Iver Macdonnell will deliver a lecture entitled, "The New Religion," before which I shall read a short paper on "The Society and its Aims," and Mr. J. J. Barrett will give a reading, "Silence a Fable," from the works of Edgar Allan Poe. There will be music as usual. We hope all friends will rally round us, as we have taken a large Hall and want to see a good attendance. On the following Sunday we shall have Mr. Hopcroft with us.—A. F. TINDALL, A. MUS. T. C. L., President.

PECKHAM RYE.—Mr. R. J. Lees opened the debate on Sunday, and combatted Mr. Major's statements in a very able manner, leaving no loophole of escape. Mr. Lees read an extract from "LIGHT," dating before the Seybert Commission, which was an exposé of the Fox Sisters, showing that Spiritualists were the first to bring frauds to light. In reply, Mr. Major stated that he had attended séances for materialisation, &c., which were all humbug, but when asked the question he could not say that he had thoroughly tested them; as to Zöllner, he was a mad-

man; in fact, his arguments were very weak. I thank the many friends who attended, helping to swell the very large number of listeners. No further meetings for the present.—J. T. AUDY.

ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE.—Mr. W. E. Walker, of Edmonton, gave us a very clear and intelligent address last Sunday evening, on a subject chosen by the audience, viz.: "Materialisation." Several questions were put and answered satisfactorily. Chairman, Mr. Milligan. Next Sunday this association will open the hall, for morning, afternoon, and evening services at eleven, three, and seven o'clock respectively. The lecturers for the evening are Mr. J. Veitch and Mr. Towns. It has been rumoured that this association will have to discontinue these services; but I beg to inform your readers that the report is quite unfounded, as we are in a better position now than we have ever been before. No reasons can be assigned for such a report having got about. Speakers for October 13th, Messrs. Towns and Veitch; 20th, Mr. J. A. Butcher; 27th, Mr. U. W. Goddard. The committee are open to receive members, names to be sent to the secretary.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

[Any acknowledgment of books received in this column neither precludes nor promises further notice.]

Speech: *A Monthly Journal devoted to Elocution, Oratory and the Drama.* (Vickers, 317, Strand.) [Contains useful hints in regard to the power of speech, a portrait (appropriately) of the Speaker, and a variety of interesting notes and news. Price, 3d.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

The Editor begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to return rejected MSS. If accompanied by stamps to pay postage in case of its being deemed unsuitable for publication, he will use reasonable care in reposting any MS.

He also begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to prepare for the press communications that are not suitably written. He begs his correspondents to see that all articles and letters forwarded are written on one side of the paper, are ready for the printer, and are of moderate length. Those over a column in length are in danger of being crowded out.

Several communications, articles, and items of news are unavoidably held over from pressure on space this week.

M. L. H.—Thank you. We use with pleasure as soon as space permits.

S. F.—*Nineteenth Century* received with thanks. Placed on the table of our reading room.

C. E. J.—Declined with thanks. No good end is likely to be served by discussion on such a point.

X. AND OTHERS.—The current number of the *Revue Spirite* contains some account of the Paris Congress. We give a summary in the present issue.

P. H.—We have given so much space to letters on Re-incarnation that we are not disposed to re-open the discussion, interesting as it appears to be to a certain section of our readers.

O.—We are not able to give you information. Next year you will find a considerable amount of space devoted to the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, but not to the exclusion of a careful consideration of the philosophy of the subject.

R., AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS.—We print what we have respecting the Paris Congress. The official report is not yet out, and the account of our representative is published in the present number.

A.M.—The easiest way would be for you to call at our offices and see Mr. Godfrey. He would be able to tell you what books you should consult. But you have undertaken a heavy task, and some considerable acquaintance with the extensive literature of Spiritualism, and some personal experience, are essential for its discharge. Look at the Bibliography published frequently in "LIGHT."

THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS (of Leicester) will preach in Unity Church, Upper-street, Islington, on Sunday next; in the morning at eleven and in the evening at seven. All seats free.

THE *Inquirer*, a high-class weekly which circulates chiefly among Unitarians, Free Christians, and other liberal religious denominations, and which has, since, 1882, been published at twopence, has been this week reduced to one penny. From 1842, when it was founded, to 1882, it appeared at fivepence weekly. There is to be no reduction in the size of the paper.

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 23 years' standing by a simple remedy will send a description of it FREE to any person who applies to NICHOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. 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 contemporaneous, 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 TORNEBOOM 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 in "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 anylegerdemain, 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.”