

Light:

A Journal devoted to the Highest Interests of Humanity both Here and Hereafter.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Some experienced persons are disposed to think that manifestations of power, and without noise, coarseness, and vulgarity, or worse, can be secured only by the practice of an extremely temperate diet on the part of both medium and circle. Such recommend vegetarian food, and abstinence from all stimulants and narcotics. In such a circle, they say, noisy and objectionable manifestations do not occur, and what is presented is of a less gross character—more refined, and more spiritual. This is *primâ facie* probable, though I have no personal experience on which to draw for confirmation. But I have seen the converse, and have marked how a copious meal of nutritious food, assisted by stimulants, not in excess, but freely taken, seems to strengthen the force, and accentuate the manifestation of it. With some mediums so treated, I have seen phenomena of surpassing power, but so noisy, coarse, and ill-regulated that they repelled me. They would, however, have been extremely useful for the purposes of convincing those whom no other argument seems able to reach, and to whom spiritual things are not discernible until they are, as it were, materialised.

Among other evidence bearing on this point, I may mention some facts as to the development of the mediumship of Mr. Spriggs, to whom I have frequently alluded in these Notes. Mr. Rees Lewis, of Cardiff, has been at the pains to furnish me with particulars of the growth of Mr. Spriggs' psychical power, which he watched in his own house from its very beginning. There are in the narrative many points of interest which I may usefully place on record. They may be supplemented by some reflections on the philosophy of physical mediumship which Mr. Smart contributed to the *Medium* during the month of September last, and which are well worth study. Mr. Rees Lewis is a man of experience during nearly twenty years, and his observations are on the surface of them intelligent and transparently truthful, and devoid of exaggeration or emotional colouring. Mr. Lewis's attention was called to a young man who was said to get communications by table-tipping in the year 1875. For two years Mr. Lewis had him in his own house, and during that time he passed through the ordinary phases of mediumship. The Eddy Brothers were then attracting attention to the rare phenomenon of materialisation, and Mr. Lewis was anxious to know whether they could not obtain something of the same kind. Stringent directions were prescribed, and religiously followed with signal success.

One condition was that the séance-room should be set apart, consecrated to its own special use. Another was that medium and circle should lead a life of abstinence from flesh-food, alcoholic drinks, and tobacco. The circle was selected and arranged with the utmost care, and Mr. Lewis bears warm testimony to the simple, plain, pure life led by the medium. He has maintained with him ever since the "relations of a good and affectionate son to a father." The circle never varied: no fresh elements were introduced into it; and, as far as possible, regular attendance was enforced. During the séances the light was always sufficient for accurate observation. "At the commencement, the light would be reduced about one-half, and as the

forms manifested, the light was regulated according to their request." I may say that it was never diminished so as to prevent exact observation, and in the case of the appearance of one "John Cobham" the gas-lights were turned up, at his request, to their fullest extent. The light used was "a strong one, with a blue globe," by which one "might easily read the smallest print." No cabinet was used. "The medium, having been entranced in the séance-room, would retire to a small back room adjoining, to which there was no other entrance." The room was on the first floor. Such were the conditions under which the séances were held. Any strangers who might be admitted were requested to examine the room and the clothes of the medium, Mr. Lewis engaging to pay £10 to the Infirmary if any drapery or material for fraud were discovered.

The results obtained were in the highest degree remarkable. I can but give specimens here, but hope to deal more fully with the subject in the course of my paper on materialisation in the *Psychological Review*. Mr. Lewis gives me details of cases of the dematerialisation of forms in the centre of the room, and of the building up of a form of a different size and appearance from the mist which alone shewed where the other form had been. One male form that thus faded away he distinctly recognised as his father. The rapid succession of forms totally different in size and shape is a good piece of evidence. Mr. Lewis details cases in which a figure six feet high was instantly succeeded by a female form of some five feet, and that again by one of quite a different type and height. This instant succession of figures would be maintained for a considerable time. Moreover, these psychic forms grew so familiar as to roam the house and garden at will. If a certain portion of the circle removed to a room on the lower floor, or if some of the observers stood under a pear-tree in the garden, ninety feet from the medium, or went to a green-house at the extremity of the garden, 165 feet distant, one of these forms would present itself there, accompanying, for instance, Mr. Lewis and his grandson "the entire length of this tolerably long garden to the green-house." There, Mr. Lewis says, "I cut off a bunch of grapes and gave them to him. He ran back with them to the seance-room (on the first floor, be it remembered) and divided them among the sitters."

Part of the circle being transferred to a room on the ground-floor, while the medium remained in the inner room on the first floor, a form six feet high came and moved freely about the room. It was instantly succeeded by a female form that sat on the sofa with the sitters; and this again by a child. These different forms were presented with great rapidity, and must have been built up in the hall or outer room adjoining that in which part of the circle was placed, though the medium was at a distance with the other part of the circle. This same phenomenon has taken place "frequently on summer evenings about seven o'clock, the sun shining brightly," when a part of the circle was transferred to the garden "sitting under a large pear tree." This extension of the psychical influence (which usually operates only in a narrow circle round the person of the medium) by extending the circle, is very suggestive. If I remember rightly, a similar experience has been recorded by Mrs. Nichols as occurring in the presence of Mr. E.; but I think that the medium was not then at so great a distance from the forms.

One figure that was fond of dancing in a wild but very graceful fashion, went on more than one occasion and took a child from a bed in the house, and danced with him in her arms, restoring him to his bed unharmed and in no way frightened. In brief, for space forbids more minute reference to these astounding stories "which can be verified by upwards of fifty (50) persons," it is impossible to conceive that any organised system of imposture could have produced these results without the conscious complicity of every individual concerned

We must suppose that these persons, none of them avowedly lunatic, all reputable and respectable in their lives and conversation, met regularly for four years to perpetrate on each other an elaborate and silly practical joke, objectless, purposeless, and criminally foolish. This they must have done at great cost to themselves of time and money; at grave risk of discovery by those whom they permitted from time to time to see for themselves what was being done; and with no object to gain, seeing that they sought no publicity whatever. My readers must judge for themselves whether this hypothesis commends itself to common sense.

M.A. (OXON.)

“MARY JANE.”

I have lately met with a strange work entitled, “Mary Jane; or, Spiritualism Chemically Explained—1863,” with Spirit drawings. It is a handsome large octavo volume. The author, who is anonymous, and calls himself “A Child at School,” has considerable wit, and writes in a lively and pleasant manner, but his conclusions are most extraordinary. He has witnessed all the phenomena, including clairvoyance, except, I think, materialisation, and believes in them most profoundly. He has practised them largely in his own family circle, and has obtained intelligent and sensible replies to questions, insomuch that his wife and he agreed to call their invisible guest “Mary Jane”—hence the title of his book.

Notwithstanding all this, his conclusions are absolutely materialistic and atheistic. He disavows the latter imputation, and explains in his preface that he considers Atheism to consist in a denial of any cause for what exists. He does believe in a cause, and what sort of cause?

In consequence of the witnessed phenomena, he considers it “an indubitable certainty that there issues from the human body, totally unconsciously, a vapour, combining power, *thought*, and the power of expressing that thought; and that analogous vapours exude from every particle of the organic creation.”

One would naturally argue that intelligent answers imply personality, and as the reply comes from no living person in the circle that it must come from Spirits deceased. But he says, no; and he grounds his denial on this, that he has observed that the communications are always, and, in every instance, a mere reflex of the minds of those who are present in séance. He does not conceive it to be a mere copy of the thought of the medium, but inasmuch as odylic vapours proceed from all in the circle, he conceives it to be the compound result of all the influences—a *tertium quid*.

Respect for your space obliges me to give only the merest outline of his argument. Thus, to shew that the communications are a mere reflex, he says that if the medium is angry, the communications will be violent, and *vice versa*. Thus, too, if no musical persons are present, there will be no playing. If no artistic persons are in the circle, there will be no drawings, or only wretched attempts. Thus, too, if there is an atheistic tendency predominant in the circle the invisible agent will boldly declare there is no God. If again, there is a moral and devout sphere prevailing religious and holy exhortations will be given.

To prove this the author makes the monstrous assumption that the combined odylic vapours actually produce at the moment thought and intelligence. He asserts that the possession and action of all the senses, including *thought*, can, may, and do exist in a vapour. This vapour combines the powers of force and intelligence. Also that phosphorus is the principal agent of vitality in these vapours and germs.

Then to account for the facts of astronomy—the sun, and planets, and comets, moving in appointed orbits—all this he receives as proof of power united to intellect. It leads him to the conclusion—seeing that emanations proceed from all objects whatsoever—that “through all the realms of space an invisible intellect is unceasingly acting;” but that this intellect is only the outcome of chemical constituents.

I wholly disavow and repudiate these monstrous conclusions; but as some of your readers may have read “Mary Jane,” and are well-acquainted with phenomena, I invite their comments on the conclusions there arrived at.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

[We believe that “Mary Jane” was written by the late Mr. Guppy. We ourselves have never read it, but as there must be many amongst our friends who have done so, we hope they will give their views on the theories propounded in the book, as requested by our rev. correspondent.—Ed. “LIGHT.”]

It is the intention of the heart which carries us to hell or heaven.

MARVELLOUS SEANCE WITH MRS. FAY.

I think that the following account of a sitting I had yesterday with Mrs. Fay, of this city, will interest some of your readers who have not enjoyed similar opportunities of attending a really good materialising séance.

Mrs. Fay will only give one séance a week to the public, as her husband is comparatively independent, and the sittings tire her very much. The seats are usually taken up to three weeks ahead; but as I had travelled nearly four thousand miles, and had come to Boston purposely to attend one of her séances, she consented to let me in before my turn.

We were twenty-one in number, and were seated round three sides of a room, the fourth side of which opened with double doors into a small room, which had been converted into a cabinet by replacing the doors by curtains. I was invited into that room to inspect it, and satisfy myself that there was no loose drapery or mechanism that could be used in the manifestations.

The light was turned down, leaving sufficient for us to see each other's faces; and the medium retired into the cabinet, she having a dark dress on. Scarcely had the curtains fallen behind her than the controlling Spirit appeared, draped in flowing white robes.

In a few minutes an Indian jumped out into the room from behind the curtain. He was followed by another familiar cabinet Spirit, a gipsy girl, who came forward dancing and as full of life as any gipsy I have yet seen. These were followed by relations and friends of the different people in the circle. Husbands, wives, daughters, sons, &c., were recognised by the people present.

The figures appeared as human as the relatives to whom they spoke loving words, while kissing and embracing them. The Spirit figures had the advantage of appearing to be made of more refined and delicate material than their friends, and of being much more graceful and beautiful. One old gentleman had his three wives come to him consecutively. Another had his sister and mother present themselves to him together. I personally have few relatives in Spirit-life; however, a young lady whom I met in Spain years ago, came and presented me with a rose. She was dressed in a black satin dress and a white lace mantilla.

The Spirits, three times during the séance, pulled aside the curtain and shewed the medium in her chair. They led one gentleman in and made him sit there, while the form of his Spirit friend stood beside him holding his hand.

At my request to the controlling Spirit, a satisfactory demonstration of de-materialisation was given. A Spirit form came and stood at the curtain, his head being about a foot and a-half from the bar crossing the top of the door. He increased in height before our eyes till his head reached the top of the door. The form then gradually decreased in height till only a little mass of white drapery lay on the floor. From this the form again rose slowly to its full height, and again decreased till only a little spot of light, the size of a walnut, was left on the floor, and then that disappeared.

One Spirit form of a lovely girl of about sixteen came forward and kissed her mother, who was in the circle. She then led her mother up to within about three or four feet of the cabinet curtain, and after talking to her for about three minutes suddenly disappeared—apparently melting into the air.

Perhaps the most satisfactory incident was the following:—After the séance was over and the gas turned fully up, and people were leaving the room, a Spirit form threw aside the curtain, behind which the medium was still sitting, and stepped forward.

We thus saw the full form of a girl about twenty-two years old, dressed in white, as human-looking as any person present. The skin of the face was pure and clear. The blue eyes sparkled, and then the lids contracted before the strong rays of light. The hair was auburn and curly. A lady present at once rushed up to the figure, exclaiming, “My daughter!” The figure retired at the same moment, but again came forward and embraced her mother before all present, in the full gas light.

The phenomena were a complete manifestation of the control of spirit over matter, and of the power of the Spirit, given the necessary conditions, to re-clothe itself temporarily in matter in such a manner as to permit of its intelligent expression through that matter. I have previously enclosed my card, and beg to sign myself, yours faithfully,

A SUBSCRIBER,

Boston, 26th November.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

Second General Meeting.

The second General Meeting of this Society was held on the 9th inst., at 11, Chandos-street, Cavendish-square, and was largely attended both by members and friends. Among those present, besides the gentlemen who took part in the business of the meeting, were:—Mr. John R. Hollond, M.P., Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P., Hon. Roden Noel, Rev. Edward H. Rogers, Rev. W. Stainton Moses, Rev. W. D. Bushell, Dr. Myers, Dr. W. H. Stone, Dr. Malcolm, Dr. Laurie, Dr. T. L. Nichols, Professor Cassal, Major Hamilton, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Stack, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Lane-Poole, Messrs. W.R. Browne, C.C. Massey, J. Walhouse, J. Stewart Glennie, G. B. Longstaff, Henry N. Ridley, Oscar Browning, M. Theobald, John S. Farmer, E. Dawson Rogers, J. F. Collingwood, S. R. Redman, Mrs. Boole, Mrs. Tebb, Miss Mason, Miss Arundale, Miss Houghton, Miss V. Cramp, and many others.

The President of the Society, Mr. Henry Sidgwick, commenced the proceedings with the following address:—

President's Address.

In opening this, the second, meeting of the Society for Psychical Research, I do not propose to detain you long from the records of work done and planned which our Committees have to lay before you. Indeed, I should be sorry if it became a general rule for the chairman at our meetings to occupy any substantial part of our time with such general observations as must be already familiar to many, and will soon become trite to all. But our undertaking is so novel, and is still viewed with so much suspicion and disfavour by important sections of the educated world, that it may be well if for a few minutes I take up again the line of thought pursued in my address delivered at the last meeting; and reply to some of the general criticisms on our aims and endeavours that have been offered in somewhat greater abundance since the publication of our first Proceedings.

When I say that many regard us with disfavour, I do not mean to imply that the reception of our Proceedings has shewn this to be the case to a greater extent than I anticipated. Indeed, it has shewn the very contrary. The number both of adhesions, and of expressions of sympathy and approval from persons who do not join us, has gone decidedly beyond my expectations. I think the most cautious members of our council are convinced that the existence of our Society is firmly established; that we are to have a fair field, and a fair hearing from at least a considerable portion of the educated world, by whom whatever work we do will be estimated on its merits without prejudice; so that if we fail to attain our ends, it will be due either to our own deficiencies, or to the peculiar difficulties presented by the matters that we are trying to investigate. It is not, therefore, because we are under any positive necessity of conciliating hostile critics that I wish to reply to their objections; but because, from the nature of our undertaking, it is important that the largest possible number of persons should be induced to render us at least incidental and casual aid, and also because in our attempt to carry the methods of organised and systematic investigation into ground so little trodden by the scientific investigator, I, for one, feel that we have need of whatever instruction we can derive from any criticisms or suggestions, whether delivered in a friendly or hostile spirit.

For my own part, I should have been glad to learn even from those who treat our endeavours with unmitigated ridicule, holding as I do with Horace that it is quite possible for a jester to speak a seasonable truth. But I have found that the very few persons who, in the Press or in private, have adopted this line of treatment, have been so totally, so ludicrously, ignorant of the facts from which they tried to extract jokes, so utterly unacquainted with the nature of the evidence that, in our view, constitutes a *prima facie* case for serious investigation, that it has been impossible to derive from their utterances anything but amusement—which was, no doubt, what they wished to furnish, though in a somewhat different way. If any person who might otherwise have assisted us could be dissuaded from doing so by the buffoonery of (*e.g.*) the *Observer*, his assistance, I think, could hardly have been of much value.

A graver attempt at dissuasion, which was made by a more important organ of opinion, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, deserves, perhaps, more serious consideration.

On October 21st that journal, in an article written with a great air of scientific culture, urged its readers to abstain from inquiring into ghost stories on account of the dangerous tendency

to give them credence which, on the principles of evolution, must be held to exist in our brains. Owing to the many generations of our ancestors who believed in Spirits, we retain, it seems, in our nervous mechanism, "innumerable connections of fibres," which will be developed into superstitious beliefs if we give them the slightest opportunity. Our only chance is to starve these morbid fibres by steadily refusing them the slightest nutriment in the way of apparent evidence. We must "keep clear of the pitch" of superstition if we would avoid defilement. "The scientific attitude can only be maintained by careful abstention from dangerous trains of thought."

When I read this article I seemed to remember having heard something very like it many years ago, only not quite in the same language. And then it flashed across me that this was the exact counterpart of the dissuasions which certain unwise defenders of religious orthodoxy, a generation ago, used to urge against the examination of the evidences of Christianity. They told us that owing to the inherited corruption of the human heart we had a proneness to wrong belief which could only be resisted by "steadily neglecting to develop" it; that we must keep clear of the pitch of free-thinking if we would avoid defilement: that, in short, the *religious* "attitude can only be preserved by careful abstention from dangerous trains of thought." And I remembered the generous and sincere indignation with which our scientific teachers then repudiated these well-meant warnings, as involving disloyalty to the sacred cause of truth, and a degrading distrust of the God-given reason of man: with what eloquence they urged on us to maintain our privilege of free and unfettered inquiry, to keep our minds impartially open to all evidence from all sources and follow our reason whithersoever it led, at whatever sacrifice of long-cherished conviction; and I thought how the whirligig of time brings round his revenges and how the new professor is "but old priest writ large," in a brand-new scientific jargon.

But it would be a pity to dwell too long on these extravagances, for I do not really think that the article I have referred to represents the view of any considerable number of scientific men; indeed I do not suppose that any instructed physiologist would gravely discuss the grotesque substitute for original sin which the *Pall Mall* offers us in the shape of superstitious connections of brain fibres. What our scientific opponents for the most part really mean, however contemptuous their manner may be, is not that they will refuse to look at any evidence we bring forward, but that they will require a great deal of very good evidence before they will look at it. Now I think that their demands in this respect go somewhat beyond the limits of legitimate scientific caution as regards the investigation of thought-reading, of which we gave the results in our last proceedings; and it might be worth while to try to convince them of this, if all the evidence attainable had been already procured so that the stock could not be increased. But since we have no reason to believe this—since, on the contrary, I hope we shall keep making important additions to the evidence already brought forward—I do not care to dispute with them as to the exact amount necessary for reasonable conviction. I quite agree with them that very strong, very overwhelming, proof is wanted to establish scientifically a fact of such tremendous importance as the transmission of ideas from mind to mind otherwise than by the recognised organs of sense; and if they will not yield to half-a-dozen decisive experiments by investigators of trained intelligence and hitherto unquestioned probity, let us try to give them half-a-dozen more, recorded by other witnesses; if a dozen will not do, let us try to give them a score; if a score will not do, let us make up the tale to fifty. The time and trouble will not be thrown away, if only we can attain the end.

And here, I think, we may appeal for support to our scientific friends—I mean our scientific enemies, whom we hope to turn into friends—against another class of objectors who are much less difficult to convince of the truth of our conclusions, but are benevolently anxious that we should not waste our time in establishing them. I meet people in society who talk in this way; they think our evidence for thought-reading looks very strong, and they do not see why there should not be brain-waves or something of the kind; indeed, they have themselves tried some experiments after dinner at country-houses, which seem to confirm our view; and, as for apparitions at the point of death, they have always thought there was a case for them. But they do not like to see so many superior persons, as they politely say to me, spending a serious part of their time on such matters, instead of writing a commentary on Plato, or studying the habits of beetles, or in some other way making a really useful contribution to science or

learning. Now here, as I say, I think we may be content to set one body of our critics to argue against the other; for our really scientific opponents do not for a moment dispute the immense importance of our conclusions, if only they could conceive it possible that they could be established; they would admit that a man would be fortunate indeed who could hope, in any department of recognised science, to light upon a new truth of anything like equal importance.

And there is another objection, again, to the range we have marked out for our work, which equally misconceives the position we hold in relation to science. Some not unfriendly critics have given us to understand that if we had only confined ourselves to thought-reading, and, perhaps, clairvoyance, and similar phenomena of the mesmeric trance, we might have had their countenance; but that by taking in haunted houses, Spirit-rapping, and so forth, we make ourselves too absurd. And I quite admit that we might have avoided some ridicule by drawing the line as they suggest, but we should have avoided it at the expense of logic and consistency. Observe that we do not argue that all these different kinds of alleged phenomena must stand or fall together, and that by proving the reality of thought-reading we tend to prove the existence of ghosts. That would be a quite unwarranted inference. But we say—and I think any competent scientific authority will support us here—that the general presumption of established science against the possibility of thought-reading or clairvoyance is so strong that it could not be much stronger against any other class of alleged facts; and, therefore, if we judged reasonable to disregard it in the former case, on account of the strength of the testimony to actual instances of thought-reading, &c., it would be palpably inconsistent in us to refuse investigation in other cases in which the quantity and quality of the testimony is such as would be conclusive in any matter of ordinary experience. And that the testimony to the so-called hauntings of houses is strong enough to establish a case for investigation on this principle, appeared to us incontrovertible. Of the quality of this testimony the report of our Committee will presently give you a specimen; but we could not give you an adequate impression of its quantity if this Committee had the whole time of the meeting at its disposal. And I must repeat, we do not put forward this testimony as amounting to scientific proof, but merely as justifying investigation.

One word, before I conclude, in reference to an objection to one part of our investigation which proceeds from a very different quarter. There are not a few religious persons who see no reason to doubt the alleged facts of modern Spiritualism, but who regard any experimental investigation of them as wrong, because they must be the work either of the devil or of familiar Spirits, with whom the Bible forbids us to have dealings. Now as regards these Scriptural prohibitions, I think that there is much force in what has been urged by educated Spiritualists—viz., that they relate to a state of things in which the industry of diviners and soothsayers was in distinct rivalry and antagonism to the worship of Jehovah, so that any one who sought their aid tended to be drawn away from his allegiance to the true God; and that therefore such prohibitions should not be considered as directed against the Spiritualistic séance of the present day, provided it is conducted in a right spirit and manner. But with arguments of this kind we have here nothing to do; we have not come to the point at which it is needful to consider them. What we should urge upon our religious friends is that their scruples have really no place in the present stage of our investigation, when the question before us is whether certain phenomena are to be referred to the agency of Spirits at all, even as a "working hypothesis." It must be in the interest of religion no less than of science that this point should be somehow settled, because of the distrust thrown on all human testimony to the marvellous if the existing mass of evidence to these Spiritualistic manifestations is simply neglected; and when we have settled this point, if we should conclude that we have evidence of the existence and operation of extra-human intelligences, then the time will come to consider whether the character of these intelligences is such as to make it desirable to have any further dealings with them. Many of us, I think, will be amply content if we can only bring this first stage of our investigation to something like a satisfactory issue; we do not look further ahead; and we will leave it for those who may come after to deal with any moral problems that may possibly arise when this first stage is passed.

Reports of Committees.

The President then called upon Professor W. F. Barrett to read a further report of the Committee on Thought-reading.

The report dealt with a series of experiments made by Professor Barrett and others, with members of the Creery family, some at Dublin and others at Cambridge, in continuation of the investigations already reported, and published in Part I. of the "Proceedings" of the Society. Professor Barrett asked Mr. F. W. H. Myers to read the latter portion of the report, which described some interesting experiments made at Brighton with a gentleman and a lad as subjects. The most striking of these were the attempted reproduction by the lad, while blindfolded and excluded from all ordinary means of communication, of simple drawings made by one of the Committee, and seen by the gentleman referred to. Enlarged drawings of the originals and the copies were shewn to the meeting. The rough resemblance was in most instances exceedingly striking, in one or two cases being almost as good as an ordinary blindfold attempt to copy a drawing which had been seen;—only in these cases, as the report quietly observes, the drawer had not seen any original to guide him. A curious series of experiments had also been made with regard to the transference of sensations of pain between these two subjects, sharp local pain being inflicted on one, which was after a short time experienced by the other, the other being secluded from all ordinary means of transmission of sensation. It was suggested that these experiments might be widely and easily tried!

Some interesting discussion ensued on the reading of this paper, especially in regard to the possible explanation of the curious fact that as regards the drawings they were generally or frequently reversed in the mental copying.

The next report, read by Mr. Edmund Gurney, was from the "Literary Committee," and was a long and able document, going into the aims of the Society, and the special branches which it was deemed advisable to take up first. The Committee gratefully acknowledged the large amount of material which had been placed at their disposal, and appealed for more, as it was only by the accumulation of facts and evidence that a foundation could be laid for future progress.

Mr. F. Podmore read a report of the "Haunted House Committee," in the course of which two remarkable instances were given, as samples of the quality of the evidence they desired to collect.

A report of the "Reichenbach Committee" was read by Mr. W. H. Coffin. The Committee "are acquiring facilities for experiments which at first will be directed to a determination of the reality of the simpler phenomena described by Baron Reichenbach." They hope soon to have suitable rooms for experiment placed at their disposal. The Committee "trust they may continue to receive encouraging offers of assistance in providing 'sensitives,' and securing observations, and particularly request the communication of any results (affirmative or negative) of personal experience in the subjects of their inquiry."

Dr. Wyld was then called upon to read a paper on Clairvoyance. This paper was full of exceedingly interesting and valuable facts, and entered at some length into the considerations to which they gave rise, and the conclusions to be drawn from them. The lateness of the hour prevented the paper receiving the attention it deserved.

Regret was expressed by several after the meeting, and we believe was generally felt, that it was not possible to have more time for discussion and remark on several of the reports. Had there been the opportunity, an interesting half to three-quarters of an hour, at least, could have been profitably spent on Dr. Wyld's paper alone.

We hope to give our readers more or less complete summaries of some or all of the reports, previous to their official publication by the Society.

"LIGHT" FUND.

Amount already acknowledged	...	...	£195	14	6
C. Blackburn	...	...	3	0	0
Miss Withall	...	...	1	0	0

"MORGENRÖTHE."—We learn that a new edition of this work, and also of "The Supremacy of Man," by the same author, may be expected in the Spring.

MISS LINDA DIETZ has achieved great success in the part of "Mrs. Macdonald," a leading character in "Impulse," just brought out at the St. James's Theatre. All the papers speak highly of the new play, and they are also unanimous in attributing very much of its success to the accomplished acting of Miss Linda Dietz.

THE SOUL.

A Parable. By Mrs. C. G.

Prone upon her couch reclines a human unit. One standing near would think she slept: her eyes closed, her chest regularly rising and falling with her gentle breathing. The body, indeed, is calmed in an almost unconscious sleep; but the soul has been lifted into a world where the body may not enter.

Standing in her white robes, purified through long sufferings from all stain, the soul had commanded—"Open those doors: I will go forth, free from restraint!" And the doors, dark on the one side, but white with a pearly light on the other, swung open before the out-going soul, and she stood free, in a world no mortal eye may behold; a world of beautiful shapes and sounds, delicious odours, and exquisite colourings, where the soul *breathed* happiness, drawing it in as life, and exhaling it as in an ecstasy, upon which she seemed lifted ever higher and higher, as the lark seems lifted by his matin song.

And blissful indeed was the soul, meeting beloved, beautiful ones, who daily spoke to and cheered her in her prison-house, lying prone on the couch; that *woman* who was her dwelling-place, who was her mortal self indeed, when she returned, and reanimated her.

But the soul enfranchised for these brief, blissful moments, knew herself another and a different being, who had slowly grown, ripened, and expanded into broader and higher capabilities and powers, whilst shrouded, contained, and darkened over by the lower woman, lying like a temporarily disused garment—a vehicle of expression worn upon the plane of earth. She shed from her high happiness a brightness on the patient, humble, external self lying there; for the face of that other woman wore a bright, sympathetic smile, the eyelids quivered with joy, and the chest heaved with long sighs of happiness, for the link which bound the lower and the higher had not been severed, and the obedient earthly casket responded in perfect sympathy with its higher animating principle.

But the lower self cast an upward shadow upon the soul's robes of brightness. And the soul saw it, and felt that she was tethered still to the earth by a leaden weight of matter. She knew her birthright of divinity; she felt that the flame of divine life burned in her; the God she worshipped was within her, as well as without her; was her life, her beauty, her joy, her thought, her love; surrounding as well as filling. She longed to feel herself a new self of That Self in which the old would for ever be lost and disappear as though it had never been; that old which was named and known on earth—a personality she had learned *not* to love, *not* to desire; sickening of it wearily often and often, in its cramping earth prison-house of flesh; knowing it was but a temporary apparel, and feeling it all too narrow, dark, and ugly, to express the bright, refined, expanded beauty that had slowly come to existence in her. She longed to know fully that Diviner spirit which was herself—(had she a self?)—in God: which hovered over her as the dove over the head of Jesus; and infilled her being with a sense of new, indescribable life. She, the purified soul, lifted above the body, knew a higher being still to be herself—that being who was to know, to realise a fulness of condition at last completed, after a round of lives, or personal expressions upon planets. She, this soul, was rising, growing, expanding, to become, or be lost, as the seed in the flower, the grain in the wheat, in that deified Being. Thus would she be lost, absorbed in God; and the old, the darkening shadow of the earth-woman be no more,—gone, as the mist before the fully risen sun.

In view of this Great Consummation a longing for it pervaded the yearning soul, like the burning thrill of a divine inspiration, to which she responded with a new growth of mystic power. All the beautiful sights and sounds of the ethereal world paled, for the soul prayed,—prayed to the Father and Mother God of her being. As if her trembling lips quivered, like those of an infant, against the very bosom of Deity, she prayed—"O Father! destroy ME! Annihilate ME! Let no longer a ME exist! Let all be Thee—THEE! O Father! O Divine Mother! I would no longer know a *self*! Let *myself* perish for ever! It is cramping, deforming, dark, and ugly! Let that woman die! Let me know the beauty of a new Being in Thyself, and lose for ever the old woman of earth! Now do I know what Jesus meant when he said: 'O Father, glorify Me with that glory which I had with Thee before the world was!' O Father, I repeat to Thee the words of my Divine brother, who has been *my* Way too. *my* Truth, and *my* Life, for it is

Thy Life, O Father, and he is *Thyself* too! O Father, let that glory I knew with Thee before the world was, descend upon me, and be mine, and I shall be Thine!"

And for a few brief moments,—long in Time, but brief in Eternity,—the soul hung poised in unspeakable prayer, as the lark hangs poised, voiceless, and lost to sight in the midst of the heavens above, ere he drops silently to earth. And the soul returned silent and quiet to her woman-home on earth, and the doors closed again upon her, and her brightness was dimmed here below again and again; for her times are not completed. But she slowly gathereth strength for a long and last flight, when she will for ever leave—that woman.

December 3rd, 1882.

REST IN GOD.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

I have received from Herr Hugo Wernekke (translator of Fechner's "Life After Death") the following poem, which I believe I am at liberty to make public. C. C. M.

From the German of G. T. Fechner by Hugo Wernekke.

- In God my soul reposes.
Life is in Him alone;
I live because He liveth,
Who life and spirit giveth,
Who never leaves His own.
- In God my soul reposes.
Avaunt, vain doubt and fear!
I know she dieth never,
Is safe in Him for ever,
Who holds and guards her here.
- In God my soul reposes,
Encompassed in His love,
While yet to dust united,
One day to be invited
To boundless realms above.
- In God my soul reposes.
To witness of His might
The prophets raise their voices,
Christ sheds—and she rejoices—
The Glory of His light.
- In God my soul reposes—
Behold the angel host
Move through ethereal spaces;
Ay, one of them embraces
Even me, lest I be lost.
- In God my soul reposes,
Through him all souls are one:
Faith, Hope, and Love in union
Bind them in sweet communion
To whom this truth is known.
- In God my soul reposes,
His peace pervades my mind,
His will directs my duty,
Where Wisdom is with Beauty
And Holiness combin'd.
- In God my soul reposes;
How useless all her strife!
In vain my trepidation,
God worketh my salvation;
In Him is bliss and life.
- In God my soul reposes.
His bidding to fulfil;
Though often I oppose Him,
I know I cannot cross Him,
He works His holy will.
- In God my soul reposes,
And art thou gone astray?
For all His own He careth,
Them and their sins He beareth,
He'll lead them to His way.
- In God my soul reposes—
Sweet comfort in despair!
He makes what is distressing
A promise of a blessing:
On Him lay all thy care.
- In God my soul reposes—
This word for ever stands;
On tempest-toss'd ocean
Sleep thou in peace: its motion
Guides thee to happier lands.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—CARDIFF: December 17th, 18th, and 31st. LONDON: Goswell Hall, December 24th. —For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
4, NEW BRIDGE STREET,
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sésances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding, and enclose stamps for the return postage.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained direct from our Office, and also of F. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

1883.

With the new year the price of "LIGHT" will be reduced to twopence, or post-free 10s. 10d. per annum, paid in advance; while the size and number of pages will remain the same as at present. This reduction has been determined upon in consequence of very strong representations which have reached us that the change will add very materially to our circulation, and thereby greatly extend the sphere of our usefulness. We hope that the friends to whose suggestions we have thus deferred will do their best to ensure the fulfilment of their own prognostications.

Those of our readers who have already forwarded subscriptions at the present rate, will either have their term of supply proportionately extended, or will for a time receive an additional copy of the Journal. In the absence of instructions to the contrary, the latter course will be adopted, in the hope that the second copy will be forwarded to persons who may thereby be induced to become subscribers for themselves.

Many of our friends can well afford to aid in the extension of our circulation. Let them begin with the new year to take two or more copies instead of one, and so introduce "LIGHT" amongst their friends and neighbours. They will thus be doing a good work, and at the same time make our success secure.

"CATERINA"—A VERITABLE GHOST.

I think it was in 1863 that my brother, writing from Tasonis, an estate of his a few miles from Cagliari, Sardinia—after referring to other matters—continued:—

"I have now something of a different kind to mention—no less (do not laugh) than a most unquestionable ghost! If the history be long, I think you will acknowledge it to be worth the time and trouble, since it is rarely indeed that an incident, at once so extraordinary and so strongly accredited, comes fairly under one's notice."

I will abbreviate as much as possible my brother's narrative—a substantive fact, as far removed from the sphere of fraud or fancy as the most accepted tale on record.

In the autumn of 1860, there were resident at Aritza, Sardinia, two young men—brothers—named Giovannico and Battista Ligas.

Both had become warmly attached to the peasant belle of the district, one Caterina—and those who know anything of the exaggerated form love attains in the breasts of the fiery Sards, may judge of the complications likely to arise from this unfortunate clashing of inclinations.

It is customary, in Sardinia, to remove the sheep in autumn from the colder regions to the temperate pastures of the South, and the two young farmers, about to quit Aritza, the Sardinian Switzerland, for the valleys of Morongia, paid (each without the other's knowledge) a farewell visit to Caterina's home.

Now it so happened that the girl, though liking both, had evinced no especial preference for either, and, consequently, the two lovers, having no indications to guide them, each made his separate proposal.

Both were promptly refused. The young beauty made no secret of the grounds of her decision.

It must be mentioned that, for many years, there had existed—and even may yet secretly exist—a sort of society in the island, composed of persons who believed themselves invested with the power of direct intercourse with the Spirit of Evil, for the purpose of obtaining from him—on conditions I need not particularise—any information he was disposed to afford relative to the material mammon supposed still to lie concealed under the soil where once stood the burned and plundered cities of the island.

To this society both the brothers Ligas were reputed to have once belonged, and to that evil stain Caterina had unhesitatingly pointed in refusing their offers.

It was not without grief and reluctance that she did so. Never, in this world, will it be known to which of the two her affection really inclined, but such was the impression left on her mind by what had occurred that she resolved to retire from the world, and actually did so—entering the Capuchin Convent of Santa Rosalia as a professed nun.

The brothers, thus definitively deprived of hope, made mutual confidence of their disappointment, and shortly, with heavy hearts, took their departure for the South.

Five months went by, and the time approached when it was usual to return to the mountain districts for pasture.

It had fallen to the lot of Giovannico Ligas to precede his brother by a few hours on the road home, in order to select convenient spots for the repose and watering of the flocks.

Fatigued with his march, Giovannico halted on the brink of a spring called "*La Mizza Velada*" (the Hidden Fountain), which subsequently, through an exchange of land, became annexed to my brother's property, and, after slaking his thirst with the sparkling water, fell into a train of sombre and remorseful thought. That kind of mysterious awe which sometimes visits us in woodland solitudes, more, perhaps, than in any other scenery, crept slowly over him, bringing in its train feelings to which he had been for many years a stranger.

But, overshadowing all, came the reflection that he had perhaps bartered for visionary wealth a life of love and peace. Caterina was lost to him. No. was that the only sacrifice. He had been prompted to pawn his very soul in unholy traffic—or that which he believed such—in pursuit of the wealth that cannot save; while even that wretched reward had evaded his grasp.

Giovannico put his face to the ground and wept.

How long he remained in that position he could never tell. But when he again looked up the sun was sinking, and there, before him, right in its parting gleams, stood—Caterina, in the dress of a nun!

For a moment he was stricken motionless with surprise; then, rousing himself, he rose, and, throwing himself at her feet, began passionately to renew his suit.

She made no answer in words, but, with a pitying smile, raised her finger towards Heaven.

The next instant there was a crashing through the under-wood, and Battista Ligas, bursting into the open space, with eyes ablaze with fury and a knife in his hand, flung himself upon his brother. The latter leaped to his feet in time to avoid the deadly blow, and, closing with his assailant, caught and mastered the uplifted hand.

In the desperate struggle that ensued for possession of the knife, the unfortunate Battista wounded himself so severely with the fatal instrument, that he sank at length to the ground, his blood flowing in torrents.

Giovannico hastily bound up the hurts, and having thus averted immediate danger, turned to look for Caterina. She was no longer visible!

Battista, conveyed with all care to the nearest village, survived this unhappy occurrence only a few days. About to breathe his last, he summoned his brother to his bedside, and faltered forth the following explanation:—

About an hour after Giovannico's departure, he had seen suddenly, standing before him, the appearance of Caterina, silent and motionless. Overwhelmed with surprise, and at a loss to comprehend how or whence she had come, Battista's voice and limbs refused their office. At length the spell was broken by Caterina moving slowly away in the direction of the wood which lay close at hand.

Battista followed.

She led him through the windings of the forest for a considerable distance, and, in spite of the varying pace by which he endeavoured to approach her, always preserved a space of about twenty yards between them. At length, she suddenly disappeared altogether.

Notwithstanding this, Battista had continued his bewildered way, deserting flocks and everything, until near sunset, when just as he had resolved to return, the sound of his brother's voice, in earnest supplication, struck his ear.

Directed by the sound, he plunged through the thick covert, drawing his knife as he ran, and, frantic with rage and jealousy, threw himself, without a moment's thought, upon his brother, kneeling, as he had expected to find him, at Caterina's feet.

Such was the strange story Battista was enabled to finish, before he expired with his brother's hand in his.

The funeral over, Giovannico collected his flocks, and set forth for Aritza, not without a secret hope that Caterina might yet become his bride.

Arrived at the porch, he was not long in repairing to her cottage, where he found her father and mother seated in the porch.

Their mourning garments and grief-stricken faces affected him so much that it was with difficulty he forced his lips to pronounce the name of Caterina.

"Morta," (dead) was the fatal reply.

It was too true. Caterina had died, a few days before, in the convent to which she had retired.

Overcome with wonder and horror, the young man sank down in a sort of fit, from which he never recovered. He lived, however, long enough to impart to his confessor a minute relation of the above facts, not under the seal of confession, but with the express desire that they should receive publicity.

The narrative was repeated to my brother by the priest himself.

Giovannico likewise verified, before a judge, certain other circumstances, by means of which the authorities were enabled to seize and convict before a tribunal the promoters of the secret society to which I have alluded.

These—a monk, a priest, and a layman—were engaged, one night, in the vicinity of Cagliari, in their unhallowed occupation. A circle had been drawn, incantations made, and, previous to commencing their search, a last invocation had been addressed to the Father of Evil, when a stern voice responded "*Son qui*" (I am here), and a sturdy gendarme, sword in hand, and followed by four spirits of a like order, leaped into the magic circle, and captured the whole party, with all (to use the words of the report) their *attrizzi infernali* (diabolical apparatus).

This was done under a law which has, I believe, no parallel in England, and which I can only translate as "Church Scandal."

HENRY SPICER.

MR. EPES SARGENT, MR. RODEN NOEL, AND THE "SPIRITUAL BODY."

In his "Philosophy of Immortality," Mr. Roden Noel includes Mr. Epes Sargent among those who seem to confound the Spiritual body with the Spirit. I rather doubted the justice of this censure when I was reviewing Mr. Noel's book for "LIGHT" some time ago, because of all writers on modern Spiritualism, with, perhaps, the single exception of Mr. Noel himself, Sargent was the best read in philosophy, and the most familiar with its distinctions. Mr. Noel refers to the "Proof Palpable," but I will vindicate the distinguished American author by citing the following from his latest work, "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism."* Speaking of the "trichotomy of physical body, spirit-body (or soul), and spirit,—a trinity of principles, physical, psycho-physiological and Spiritual, all proceeding from the Infinite Force, but the last, like God Himself, inscrutable," he quotes from Lord Bacon, and refers to early Christian belief. He then proceeds: "Such is not only the early Christian belief, but such, so far as relates to the spirit-body, is the so-called *animism* of the barbarous tribes. It is consistent also with the views of both Plato and Aristotle. In the progress of philosophical speculation this simple idea, explaining so many of the phenomena which have puzzled metaphysicians as to how an immaterial, unextended principle can act upon a physical body, was superseded by a doctrine which identified spirit-body and spirit in substance, and distinguished them only in function, Aquinas, and after him Calvin, pronounced in favour of this dualistic rendering; but it was chiefly through the influence of Descartes that the belief in a psychical organism or spirit-body, distinct from the physical, was ruled out of philosophy, literature, and religion. Then began to arise the clamour, still kept up, against the 'gross materialism' of the Pauline doctrine of

a spiritual body; and hence the scornful defamation of Spiritualism as being a worse materialism than that which it would displace." The bearing of contemporary speculation on this question is ably treated by Epes Sargent in the pages following; but enough has been quoted to shew how free he was from the confusion of ideas imputed to him. The truth is that for expressed, or objective individuality, a body of some sort is indispensable. We make a body by thinking; originating it with difficulty, but feeling it afterwards in the reactive organism to which all *spontaneity* testifies. That is the "spirit-body," the Kama Rupa of Buddhism. C. C. M.

CASE OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS.

Some noteworthy psychical phenomena are recorded in the *Revue Spirite* of the present month, occurring in the case of a young Belgian woman. It was submitted to the Royal Academy of Medicine of Belgium by Dr. Verriest, who presented the case, with the patient personally, at a meeting of the Academy, a few months ago. His report was to the effect that the young woman, who is now twenty years of age, became paralysed at puberty in the whole right lower extremity. Coincident with this came on attacks of loss of consciousness and memory of persons and things, of which she had consciousness and memory in her ordinary state. In this extraordinary state she took no food—even liquid; her voice was gone, and if her lips moved no sound was uttered. This condition passed into one of lethargic sleep, in which there was still the same inability to swallow, and the breathing was scarcely perceptible: the last sleep of this kind endured six weeks. Out of it she awoke in her primitive ordinary state, which lasted six months, and during which she remembered all the persons and things she had had consciousness of during her previous primitive ordinary condition, but nothing at all of persons, things, and transactions in relation to herself during the extraordinary state which had followed. These two states of consciousness presented themselves in alternation.

Dr. Verriest received her into his house so that he might have the case under his immediate observation and facilities for treating the nervous paralysis by hypnotism (mesmerism, magnetism, Tr.). He found that, while immediately under hypnotic treatment, the paralysis disappeared, there was normal use of the vocal organs, and full consciousness of all that was passing.

Since hypnotic treatment has been pursued, the patient has found herself able, with the aid of a cane, to walk, and even to take a part in household work. Indeed, she exhibits so much improvement in her whole physical and mental condition, that Dr. Verriest felt warranted in expecting the young woman's restoration to normal health.

Dr. Verriest concluded by demonstrating his curative hypnotic processes in the case, the members of the Academy present manifesting marked interest.

"A STUDENT OF SWEDENBORG."—The writers of "The Perfect Way" send us the following reply to "A Student of Swedenborg":—"The passage indicated by your correspondent occurs in a chapter 'On God and Creation,' in, the writers think, the '*Arcana Cœlestia*'; but not having that book at hand, they cannot at this moment speak positively on this point. In the only volumes of Swedenborg at present accessible to them—the '*Divine Love and Wisdom*,' and '*Heaven and Hell*,' corresponding passages, identical in purport and almost in terms, abound; as, see pars 97 and 221, of '*Divine Love and Wisdom*.'"

DEATH WARNING.—We take the following from *Knowledge* for December 1st:—"A friend of mine (Dr. Goodall Jones, of Liverpool) related to me the following account of a case of premonition, which I thought might prove interesting, as it is well authenticated. The names and dates Dr. Jones will give if required. He called on a female patient on *Sunday afternoon at three o'clock*; her husband met him at the door, and said that he was about to come for him, as the patient was worse and delirious. On going upstairs the doctor found the poor woman in a very excited state, asserting that her brother (a Liverpool pilot) was drowning in the river, 'which,' said the husband, 'is impossible, as he is out at sea, to the best of our knowledge.' The doctor did what he could to soothe his patient, and left convinced that it was a case of ordinary delirium; but in the next morning's paper he read with surprise the account of the pilot's death by drowning in the river on the previous afternoon at three o'clock. —J. SINCLAIR.

* Pp. 208-9.

PROFESSIONAL MEDIUMSHIP: A WORD TO MY CRITICS.

I agree with Mr. Walton that our imperfect knowledge of mediumship is a good reason for suspending judgment and avoiding hasty inferences on either side in obscure or doubtful cases, but it is no reason for adhering to a foregone conclusion against evidence, or for concluding that imposture has not been practised when the proof of it is plain and palpable.

That a person has been proved to possess genuine medial powers may afford a general presumption in his favour where the manifestations are equivocal and the evidence conflicting, but is little to the purpose when there is direct evidence of manifest fraud. A man may present for acceptance a forged bank note, or a counterfeit sovereign, with no intention of fraud, and ignorant of their real nature. In such a case evidence as to character has point and weight, but if in addition he is found with instruments of forgery and of false coining in his possession, and is detected in actually using them, no sane jury would acquit him on proof, however conclusive, that in former times he had been an honest man.

So to take an extreme case; when at a séance an alleged Spirit is seized who proves to be the medium, it may afford strong and reasonable ground of suspicion, but standing by itself it would not to a well informed Spiritualist be absolutely conclusive against the medium, for the reason assigned by Mr. Wallace, and on other grounds that might be urged. But when a medium is caught *in flagrante delicto*, with the appliances of imposture, beard, mask, head-dresses and drapery, either in actual use, or with these indications of premeditated fraud artfully concealed about him to elude observation, something more is needed to establish his innocence than evidence, however conclusive, that elsewhere, on previous occasions and with other persons, the manifestations in his presence were genuine and no fraud was practised by him.

If such evidence is not conclusive of fraud I am a little curious to know what is to be considered so. If no kind and amount of evidence can establish imposture against an approved medium, had we not better abandon all pretence of investigation through his agency?

If, however, after all, my critic is right, he unwittingly adduces a most powerful argument in support of my contention against this phase of professional mediumship. Surely no friend would advise a medium to enter upon or remain in a profession in the exercise of which, although innocent of wrongdoing, he must from overwhelming evidence against him necessarily appear guilty. The sooner he relinquishes a profession in which he encounters such terrible risk, the better.

I have neither sought to promote nor prejudice the interest of any particular medium, and as the importation of names and personal questions would only excite irritation and embarrass the discussion of general principles, I must decline to follow the lead of my critic in entertaining them.

Had Mr. Blackburn been present at the discussion which followed my address, I feel persuaded he would not have accused me of wanting to deprive mediums of their bread. I distinctly reminded my hearers that Spiritualists, in encouraging mediumship as a profession, had thereby incurred the responsibility to mediums of which they could not readily be quit. I have always pleaded, and still plead, for their kindly consideration and generous treatment. As pointed out in my address, it was largely in their interest that my contention was raised.

I cannot agree with "M. A. (Oxon.);" that the abolition of public circles would increase the liability to obsession of private mediums by undeveloped Spirits. On the contrary, I think experience has shewn that the public circle presents a very serious and special danger in this respect, as some who have frequented them have found unfortunately to their cost; to say nothing of the converse danger, and very real and serious one, of the obsession of the medium by undeveloped Spirits who accompany sitters. Nor do I see how the purification of the sitters and the harmonious blending of suitable conditions can be affected, nor how the haphazard and fortuitous concourse he deprecates, can be avoided so long as the only qualification for admission to the circle is the presentation of a silver ticket. If the medium is to live by his profession he cannot afford to be dainty in his choice of sitters, nor to exercise scrupulous moral discretion in respect to them, even if in all cases that were possible.

At the conclusion of my address, I stated that there were many points I had only slightly adverted to which required

fuller discussion, and others which from want of time I was compelled to omit. Had the conditions been favourable all the objections raised by my critics, and others they appear to have overlooked, would have been anticipated and answered more completely than is now possible to me. I trust, however, that my critics and readers will be content with this general reply. Conditions over which I have no control, as the late Robert Owen would have said, will preclude my engaging further in this controversy.

THOS. SHORTER.

THE FAIRY-LAND OF MATHEMATICS.

No. II. Singular Solutions of Differential Equations.

By the Authoress of "*The Home Side of a Scientific Mind.*"

Draw a circle with a radius of an inch; and then ink it over so as to distinguish it from all the others which you are going to draw. Then close your compasses to a quarter of an inch. Put the point anywhere on your ink line and draw a circle in pencil. Put your point down anywhere else on the ink line, and draw another circle. Repeat again and again, till you have a dozen circles, or a hundred, or indeed any number that you like. For any point in the ink line is the centre of one such possible circle; and as the number of points in the circumference is infinite, there is no limit to the number of such circles except what may be imposed by the limitations of your patience or your eye-sight.

Well, all these little pencil circles, actual or possible, belong to what is called a "family." Any "family" of curves has certain laws to which all the members are subject, and which are the laws of their being. What are the laws of this family's being? "Every member of it has its centre on the ink line and is exactly half-an-inch across," you say. No, you are wrong. All the members *that ever you saw yet* are indeed subject to those conditions which you mention; and if you thought of them as isolated individuals you might never find out that there was anything more to say about them. But when a mathematician expresses in strict mathematical language the law which binds those circles into a family and states their connection with each other, he finds (to his great surprise if it is his first experience of the kind) indications of the existence, somewhere or other in space, of two other curves belonging to the family, which have a larger radius and whose centres are not situated on the ink-line. On inquiring further he finds out whereabouts in space these larger circles are.

Draw two circles, whose centre coincides with that of the ink circle, and whose radius is in the one case three-quarters, in the other five-quarters, of an inch; these two circles belong to the same family as the small ones. (The ink circle does not.) These larger circles are instances of what mathematicians call Singular Solutions. Ordinary people call them "exceptions." Philosophers call them "typical cases." Impatient people call them "Anomalies," and do their best to weed them out, so as to reduce everything to the domain of what they please to call "law"—by which they mean such law as they can understand.

A Singular Solution may be located anywhere in space; often it is a long way off from its family and of very different shape. In this particular case, and many others, it is of the same shape as the more commonplace members, and in contact with every one of them. Sometimes the law of a family has one Singular Solution; sometimes more than one.

Professor Boole's book on Differential Equations and their Singular Solutions, is still much used in the Universities. A few months before his death, in writing to me of his studies, he used this expression:—"I have made out what puts the whole subject of Singular Solutions into a state of Unity." No mathematician, so far as I know, has ever been able to guess what he meant, for when he wrote that, he had been for months unable to accomplish any original work in mathematics. Can you guess what he meant? His students said that when he was giving a lecture he looked as if he had forgotten his class, and were looking at a vision which he was painting on the black-board.

One day while he was by, a little girl looked up from her book, and innocently asked, "What is Jesus besides being a man?" She was told that nobody knew; but that, perhaps, she would find out when she was dead. The great mathematician started and looked as if out into infinite space for a minute or two; then softly said, "That is the answer." In a very few weeks he had the opportunity of knowing whether it was the answer or no.

THEOSOPHIC TEACHINGS.

By the Hon. Roden Noel.

"C. C. M.'s" answer is most interesting and ingenious. If I am allowed, I will just say a few final words to explain why it does not satisfy me, fearing the readers of "LIGHT" may be beguiled from their simplicity by "C. C. M.'s" very plausible arguments.

First, let me observe that I am not aware Hinton held the view about organisms, which "C. C. M." rightly attributes to me, and in which he acquiesces. I am anxious that great and good man, from whom I have learned so much, should not be charged with the burden of ideas which I believe he might have repudiated.

However, this by the way. "C. C. M." says that if the lower forms of life (the cells of which our organism is made up) can combine for the purpose of animal life, of which they are individually unconscious, they can also combine to represent human intelligence and its phenomena. But (I answer) they cannot so combine, even for the purpose of life, except when dominated by the organism of which they form integral parts. Their place and function is defined for them by the Whole, by the Idea of the complex organism. (See, for proof of this, H. Stirling's "Concerning Protoplasm," in answer to Professor Huxley.) Can they combine to "represent" animal life and its functions, when deserted by the dominant principle of the particular life, which now compels them to act as they do, and be what they are? If so, then we may be prepared to entertain the further, and, I fancy, still more unproveable, proposition of "C. C. M." And what is to compel the ethereal body to this individual combination? I should certainly expect that its disintegration would be simultaneous with the withdrawal from its constituents of the very Principle of Integration, though, of course, both processes might be gradual. Then "C. C. M." says, "The Ego is incessantly labouring at the construction of an organism, whereby its voluntary activity may be exchanged for a spontaneous one. All education and training have this for their aim." All this part of his article seems to me very instructive and important. But what is the end of this process? Is it not that the voluntary activity may be disengaged for ever higher and higher aims? The lower, automatically purposive life is subordinate and auxiliary to these, serves them for a basis. But can it be cut away from the voluntary, conscious energy of the person, who has constructed it in the manner so well explained by "C. C. M.," and yet remain what it has been and is in connection with and subordination to him? And what will he do without it? How shall I play a difficult piece of music, or attend to the solution of a difficult problem, when the automatic facility for grasping and using the elements of the science is taken away from me? And how comprehend such automatic facility for wielding them, except in subordination to the conscious will of the person who acquired it, and now wants it for use in making further conquests? I do not understand this Oriental passion for mutilation—for cutting a man up into little separate bits. Dr. Lynn, the illusionist, does it, and always makes me feel so uncomfortable! It appears particularly strange to maintain that our *habits* may be severed from ourselves, and go on existing apart from us! Of course, "C. C. M." could not maintain this, unless he placed all these habits in a body, which he thinks will continue after we have left it. But though physical habits may exist in the complex notion we name a body, mental and spiritual habits do not. You must not confound the *neurosis* with the accompanying *psychosis*. Voluntary energy doubtless modifies the body (and possibly as many more as you like to imagine)—but this body was *created* rather by involuntary than voluntary energy; and will does another thing on parallel lines with this process of modification—it modifies the character, the mental and spiritual life. And it is quite true that all this comes back to us as from outside. Remember, however, that hereditary character, temperament, circumstance, food, climate, education, planetary influence, constitution of body, does so equally—comes from outside. But I do not conceive it probable that we can ever get rid of all this—at least of the essence, inner meaning, moulding power of all this; that it can cease to be an integral part of us; it may go into the region of the "unconscious," whence the body, and indeed the mind, originally came; but that is only a *relative* unconsciousness. All our personal life *arises* from the *apparently* unconscious. But that, I apprehend, must be the *supra-conscious* self, in solidarity with all selves, from which our present fragmentary

consciousness is for a while partially dissociated. The essence of what has once belonged to us (soul and body) must be always ours, though that may be modified and transformed by a new direction of personal energy, the resultant being transfigured. Organism, says "C. C. M.," is the basis of spontaneity; if in this he includes subjective organism, non-material organism of thought and feeling, that may be true. But then, how get rid of it? How shuffle off our thoughts and feelings, that we have wrought into the very substance of our own selves? Whatever "shell" we may shuffle off, it will contain, if apart from us, no trace of our thoughts and feelings, which demand a thinker and feeler. The products of what physiologists call *retrograde metamorphosis*, contain none, nor can any ethereal "shell," if there be such a thing, contain any more. But, as when the spirit ceases to animate the vital frame, we know the corpse returns to the inferior sphere of chemical affinity, so must the ethereal frame be unindividualised if the spirit ceased to mould and inhabit it. In fact, however, the true Body and Soul must always follow, and express, and be auxiliary to the Spirit, being, indeed, the self-expression thereof.

"C. C. M." speaks of the inner body as if it were vital and conscious, but not involving what I mean by personality, the transcendent unity of the Ego. He admits that the "phenomena of force we call matter, are presentations to us of a real life and consciousness behind." But does he see that, if so, they are all necessarily personal, that is, involve the transcendent unity of one or many Egos to constitute them? Out of thought nothing is—but does "C. C. M." see that out of thinkers, no thought is? Because apart from thinkers, no differentiation and discrimination is possible. He speaks of a "disintegrating memory" in shells, with no rememberer behind it—and this to me seems a self-contradiction. "C. C. M.," refers twice to Hinton, as holding Nature to be conscious. Now where Hinton's thought seems deficient is just in his scanty recognition of the transcendent unity of the Ego or Person as the ultimate basis of all; he had not, perhaps, distinctly looked into that truth (and I am sorry to see that "M. A. (Oxon's)" Imperator, in his otherwise valuable teachings, endorses some such, as it appears to me, loose thinking about the "impersonality" of God). But yet recollect what Hinton's idea of Nature really was—the phenomenal manifestation to our limited perception of the Actual, which is no less than the spiritual attributes of God, and the higher Angels. Nature was no aggregate of semi-animate and semi-conscious *hypostatized phenomena* to Hinton, as it is to the Occultists, and to savage tribes.

Let us, however, look more closely at these Bodies, and the Habits associated with them. What are they? Now I will not dogmatize, being well aware how little we know; I can only state what appears to me most probable. These Bodies and Habits may be regarded, I think, under three main aspects, (1), as a collection of cells, *with a lower form of consciousness inconceivable to us*, but which, passing through the alembic of our modes of consciousness, modify it, and undergo perpetual modification from our changing energies, voluntary or other, once more re-acting in their turn upon us. Now it seems impossible that these, or any other lower organisms, should ever have been, or should ever be in future, uncontrolled by, insubordinate to, the higher organisms, in which they live, move, and have their being. Such a *lusus nature*, such a *hiatus* in the universal law, seems a gratuitously invented inconceivability. If it could be, then their release from this control would be the signal for their instantly becoming something perfectly different, an *a priori* expectation demonstrated to be true by our experience in the case of a corpse. But then observe: it is not *they* who thus change, any more than it is our bodies that corrupt; this is only apparently so. The Soul, as Aristotle maintained, is the Principle of Life; withdraw the Soul, and you withdraw the Principle of Life; but then the Principle of Life goes along with the Soul, which at once, by the necessity of the case, proceeds to form another Body, in accordance with its character and needs. Now the life being withdrawn from the chemical elements, they are free to seek their affinities; but if in the whole Body, then in its constituent cells. Must not in this event the true cell-bodies go with the true organism they compose, and their subjectivities follow the greater inorbing subjectivity of the man? In other words, you have the Ethereal-Soul-Body animated by the Soul, to the very existence of which is absolutely necessary its constituent soul-bodies, which were cells, and are now ethereal soul-bodies.

Hence we see the fallacy of "C. C. M.'s" plausible analogy—

when he seeks to prove annihilation of the unspiritual by this instance of the disintegrating corpse. The elements, are not individuals. No monad, no self-centred subjectivity, though it may deteriorate, can disintegrate. The elements restrained from following their affinities, were not nobler than when permitted to do so. The two antagonistic processes together make life, which implies function, quite as much as nutrition. But if the absence of full spiritual life leads to annihilation, how explain the actual existence of a long-lived elephant, or indeed, of any ordinary human being? A large-brained, self-willed Napoleon has nothing about him that looks like disintegration.

And does not "C. C. M." see that, when he talks of the influence of the Ego remaining in the Kama Rupa to make it hold together and simulate the Ego, if he endorses the view maintained by Fechner and myself about influence, which I had supposed he did, by his own admission the Ego is present in this shell after all, because the influence of a person or thing is the energy of the person, or thing, and cannot be divorced from him or it? He, moreover, seems to find this admission even in the very teaching of the Adepts themselves, judging by his final paragraph, where he apparently grants all he has denied, and all I have contended for—that shells in every case are animated by the Ego they belonged to. Anyhow, "C. C. M." admits that they must be animated by the medium, or adept who invokes them, and through whom they manifest. Then they at once get some Ego behind them. And then the question becomes one of evidence. Do they, or do they not shew individuality apart from that of the evoker, or circle of spectators? In my judgment, they decidedly do over and over again; and it is not mere memory, but intelligent response to present circumstance—fresh self-adaptation. By the way, I never yet heard even an individual, "automatically," or "without reflection," talk Latin and Greek, however good his classical scholarship might be; certainly not if he talked it appropriately to the immediate occasion—which is a power ascribed by "C. C. M." to the shell deprived of its individuality!

(2.) But has "C. C. M." considered that we do not derive our notion of the cell-components of our organism from themselves alone? Certainly the categorized sensations which indicate them are not *their* representation of themselves, but *ours*, and so far as these are external to us they are derived, not from them chiefly, but either, as Hinton thought, direct from God and the higher angels by limitation in us, or, as I have argued in my book on Immortality, ultimately, indeed, thus, but more immediately from other Spirits more on a level with us who transfer these ideas to us, the latter again appearing in us, according to the moulding, and modifying power of our own minds. If, then, we have modified the protoplasm of our organism, we have also modified these other Spirits, who reveal this protoplasm to us, modified them externally and internally. The habits we have formed, therefore, are partly transferred to them, at least have affected them, and return from them to us. There are thus many other Spirits concerned in the objectivity of our habits, besides the cells of our organism, and whatever corresponding individuals may be represented by the ethereal body. Our bodies, as I have argued in my book, express not only ourselves, but a myriad other intelligences also.

(3.) Then the essential part of these habits of ours, even though we may be unconscious of them just now, are represented in our higher and truer consciousness, since they belong to us, and radiate thence into phenomenal conditions as we experience them. Now does not "C. C. M." see that the inferior organic individuals, whether of cell or ether, are not by themselves, as *ding an Sich*, the vehicles of our spontaneous habits, and automatic reactions at all? *Their own consciousness is somewhat wholly different; they are totally incapable of representing ours; they are in isolation, and in another sphere.* They are only vehicles of our habits, when our superior consciousness reflects the peculiar subjective and objective moulding we have imparted to them, and transmits it in reflecting; but in this process also you have other Spirits, more on the same plane of development as ourselves, necessarily engaged, as I have explained; and you have also the transcendent Ego or Spirit in its higher sphere. So we find the Ego, to whom a special organism belonged, necessarily behind it wherever it is, and many other Egos beside. Wherefore the mere "shell" is altogether excluded from any conditions of possibility. It is far more true that we make the cells of our organism, and their character, than that they make us. And it is again the World-Soul, who makes us. It is no answer to my arguments to urge that Occultists do not attribute

personality to the shell, for what I argue is—(1) that there can be no consciousness at all without personality behind it; but consciousness is attributed to the shell, and is certainly characteristic of the entities that manifest at séances; and (2) the habits which "C. C. M." thinks can be entirely divorced from a person, and yet exist by themselves, did confessedly belong to him; hence the unity of personal consciousness is violated by such a theory. I fear we cannot so easily throw off our habits! I am glad to see that "C. C. M." does not adopt the absurd theory of "human automatism," and "unconscious cerebration" advocated by some scientists. He could be in no sense an idealist if he did.

P.S.—"C. C. M." rightly argues that an idealist may reason about physical phenomena in the language of physical science, tacitly, but not expressly, postulating his own principles. But if he maintains not only that there are bodies, but bodies with a consciousness out of relation to thinkers, consciousness without the integrating conscious unit, then he not only violates the first principles of idealism, but also those of reason itself. Bodies are phenomena in us, or in other minds, external to us. He who believes that can discuss their properties with the materialist, and use the same language. But he cannot say that these phenomena themselves (bodies) think, and think out of relation to synthetic thinking units, or Egos. For if he does, he virtually denies their merely phenomenal character, and also asserts that an integer may still exist when you have taken away one of the factors essential to the very idea of it. This is both materialism and fatuity, as absolutely inconsistent with any idealism I ever heard of, or can imagine, as with common sense itself. Again, physiological psychologists absurdly assert that our one self-identical consciousness is made up of the sum of sensations belonging to the unity of our organism. (See Bain, for instance.) "C. C. M." sees the absurdity of this. But does he reflect that no one of these units can have, or represent, one of our sensations, even if the adding them up could make our indivisible selves? Even a single sensation, as we feel it, implies our own proper selves to discriminate it in feeling. A sensation, as a cell feels it, we cannot at all represent to ourselves. And there is no reason why ethereal units in *Akasa* should be more capable of performing self-contradictory acts than protoplasmic cells are. They are alike isolated pulses of consciousness unimaginable by us, till transformed in and by us. But if they cannot feel like us, how much less can they remember our deeds, thoughts, and feelings!

(To be continued.)

MIND-READING AND MUSCLE-READING.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—With respect to the experiment with Miss Corner, commented on by her in your last number, the question in our minds was not (as she seems to suppose) between mind-reading and clairvoyance, but between mind-reading and muscle-reading. It was to the latter that we attributed Miss Corner's performance. Her opinion that we were wrong is entitled to as much consideration as that of any other intelligent person; but I would point out that it gains no special authority from the fact that she herself was the subject of the experiment. Her letter, indeed, suggests anew that very feature of muscle-reading which we quoted her case as exemplifying—the total unconsciousness of "reader" as well as "willer" of the extremely light pressure which, with a delicate organisation, is sufficient to ensure the desired movements.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

EDMUND GURNEY.

December 8th, 1882.

CLAIRVOYANCE.

Dr. Wyld will read a paper on Friday, 22nd, at 38, Great Russell-street, at eight o'clock, on Clairvoyance as a refutation of Materialism, and as a demonstration of the immortality of the soul.

Dr. Wyld has for many years given much attention to this subject, and his paper on the use of anaesthetics, as affording a scientific method of demonstrating the existence of the soul as an objective fact, has excited much attention in this country and in India. All who take an interest in this deep subject are urged to attend. The paper will contain twenty-five cases in proof of Clairvoyance.

MESMERISM.—On Monday evening next, Mr. Iver MacDonnell will give an address on "Mesmerism," at 38, Great Russell-street, at 7.30 p.m. In Mr. MacDonnell's hands the subject will be attractive enough, we hope, to draw a large audience.

MIRACLES.

Extract from "REMINISCENCES" by REV. T. MOZLEY, M.A.,
Fellow of Oriel, and Rural Dean of Plimtree, Devon.

Generally speaking, it is the Roman Catholic doctrine that miracles have not ceased. I should think that there are few religious people who are not under a strong and reasonable conviction that if they have not actually worked miracles themselves, they have witnessed them, and have even contributed to them. There is a kind of miracle that is not called a miracle, for no other reason than that it seems only a succession of providential interferences; but many must know of miracles that may be properly so-called.

When I was eleven or twelve years old, I was much impressed with an occurrence which at a later age I might have disposed of in some easy fashion. My father had an old man in his employment, Thomas Hill; he had attended "John Wesley" in one of his peregrinations for three weeks, taking care of his horse. In that service he was likely to pick up some special beliefs. He had a confident belief that he could charm warts away. My chief friend at my Derby school was E. Greaves, a healthy lad, but with one hand (the right, I think) covered and deformed by warts. I talked to him of Thomas Hill and his charm. He consented to try it. The old man required an assurance from me and my friend that we were not trifling, and had some faith in his cure. He did not wish to see my school-fellow. I had to remember and describe the warts. They were thirty-seven. In a fortnight they were all gone. What the old man had done I know not, but when I told him the result he expressed no surprise but took it as a matter of course. I could never hear it boldly asserted that miracles had ceased without remembering this incident. Another incident occurred. In an unfinished, ruinous mansion, not half-a-mile from Cholderton Parsonage, lay for a long time the mother of a large family, at death's door. The woman, I cannot conceive why, became sure she would recover if she received the Sacrament, and die if she did not; so I administered it to her, and some of her neighbours. She immediately recovered. I will add another experience. In the spring of 1820 there was to be a great eclipse, beginning about noon. We were released early from school that we might observe it with due preparation. I had half-an-hour or so to wait. Sitting down in my father's library, with my back to the book-case, I dived, with my hand backwards, into the book-shelf behind me, and took out a volume, which chanced to be a very old number of the *Monthly Review*. I opened it at random, when the first words that caught my eye were, "If any one of the present generation should live to see the great eclipse of 1820, he will have the opportunity of observing," &c., &c., &c. The writer went on to describe the "beads," the flames," "the corona," since more accurately ascertained, which things with our telescopes we did not make out. What did this occurrence mean? I can say it made a very deep impression on me, and that impression was that He who ruleth the heavens was there very near me, and that He guided my hand to open that book. I should not be bold to mention such experiences had I not frequently heard the like. Indeed, among the religious ideas that come up naturally and spontaneously, none are so common as those which testify to a deep and universal belief in the interference of the Almighty in our affairs. Such a belief may, and does, dwindle into superstitions, and it is the more likely to do so if not recognised, and if it be denounced it is driven into the dark corners of individual minds in fanaticisms. It is very commonly observed by objectors (to such phenomena) that you don't hear such incidents first-hand, and that second-hand reports are no good. But it takes more than ordinary courage for any one to tell anything of the sort first-hand, for in the very act of telling it he is thought by many to forfeit all claim to respect and belief.

THOSE metropolitan members of the Central Association of Spiritualists who may be desirous of attending regularly the members' free sésances, now being held on Tuesday evenings, at eight o'clock, are invited to attend forthwith. As these sésances are likely to prove interesting and instructive, regularity in attendance is especially requested.

THE METROPOLITAN SPIRITUAL LYCEUM.—A few good voices are required for the choir of this Lyceum, and any competent musical friends who feel disposed to join, are requested to communicate at once with either of the joint hon. secretaries. Letters can be addressed to care of Mr. J. J. Morse 4, New Bridge-street, Ludgate-circus, E.C.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

The Council of this Association held their usual monthly meeting on Tuesday evening last, at 38, Great Russell-street; Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, vice-president, in the chair. A letter was read from the widow and daughters of the late Dr. A. E. Nehrer, acknowledging in grateful terms the expression of condolence and sympathy accorded them on Dr. Nehrer's decease. A vote of condolence was ordered to be addressed to Mr. T. P. Barkas, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, upon the recent decease of his wife. On a letter from the Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum, it was resolved to invite Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten to a meeting of the members and friends at the Association's rooms on Monday evening, January 8th next, the arrangements being referred to a committee. An alliance between the Lyceum and the Association was then ratified, and the cordial support of members was invited towards the work of the Lyceum. Two resignations were accepted, and six new members elected. Presentations from Mr. W. Oxley and Mr. St. George Stock were accepted with a cordial vote of thanks. The Finance Committee's report was read and adopted. Proceedings of the General Purposes Committee were read, and correspondence reported with Herr Carl Hansen. Minutes of the Special Committee on Séance Conditions were read, and it was resolved to print the recent circular on the conduct of public physical sésances in form of a pamphlet for general distribution, the committee being instructed to carry out the arrangement. The Annual General Meeting was fixed for Tuesday, January 30th, at 6.30 p.m., and instructions were given for drafting the report. An offer from Dr. Wyld to read a paper on Clairvoyance was referred to the chairman to arrange with him for a suitable date. The Council then adjourned.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—At Weir's Court, on Sunday evening, December 10th, Mr. Holmes, of Bensham, occupied the platform, and although not a Spiritualist he gave some satisfaction to those who listened to his discourse. On the Monday evening a tea and concert was held in the Lecture Hall of the N.S.E.C., which, though fairly well carried out, was not so successful as anticipated. The severity of the weather no doubt militated against this desirable issue.

GATESHEAD.—Last Sunday evening Mr. Thomas Dawson, of Gateshead, lectured to a fairly good audience upon "God and Immortality in the Light of Modern Spiritualism." The discourse dealt with this most profound subject in a very interesting manner, and met with a considerable amount of appreciation from those who listened to it. We believe that on the second day of the New Year a concert will be held under the auspices of the Gateshead Society for the purpose of assisting to remove the little debt remaining from the furnishing of their excellent hall. Mr. J. G. Grey will lecture on Sunday next.

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING.—On Sunday afternoon last, Mr. Henry Burton, of the Gateshead Society, lectured to the members of the new Society, established at the above place, upon "Immortality," and in the evening upon "Spiritualism: Past, Present, and Future," to a large and attentive audience, which though composed of Catholics and Methodists as well as Spiritualists, listened most patiently through a long discourse, which dealt, in some measure severely, with some popular creeds and dogmas. The lecturer was enthusiastically received, and warmly pressed to visit them again on an early day. Mr. Burton, we may state, is the father of the movement in the large and populous district of Houghton and Hetton, and it must be gratifying to him to find at those places some of the largest audiences and most widespread enthusiasm in the country districts of the North.

CRAMLINGTON.—Mr. W. H. Robinson, of Newcastle, lectured to the members and friends of the Cramlington Spiritual Society, upon the movement in general, giving some really good advice as to the forming of sésances, and as to the judicious management of mediums. This gentleman, we may say, is most admirably suited to discoursing on this phase of our movement, and as it is a most necessary and important one, we trust his services in the same direction may be more generally utilised.

DUDLEY.—We are glad to observe that Mr. Barker, the able test medium, officiated at Dudley on Sunday last, and, as he invariably does, left a wonderful impression as to his valuable gifts.

BEDLINGTON.—Mr. Mahony, and Mrs. Hall, the physical mediums, of Gateshead, held sésances at the above hall on Sunday last.

NORTHUMBRIA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"S."—You will see that we have this week complied with your request. We shall do so as often as circumstances will permit.

"ALLIED TOPICS."—The communications which have reached us on these questions are so generally and so strongly opposed to their introduction into our pages that it is useless to discuss the matter further.

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S LECTURE APPOINTMENTS.—HALIFAX: December 17th.—Address, The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the 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.

Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER, AT BERLIN.—I herewith declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

The first indications of success usually are a cool breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form-manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly—Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning Spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your Reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.