

Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 61—VOL. II.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1882.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Another correspondent of the *St. James's Gazette* gives (February 20th) his experience of "faces in the dark." With him, as with my friend whom I alluded to last week, the vision "is almost instantly followed by sinking into a dreamless sleep." The faces that prelude this sleep "are of a nature wholly unexpected and novel." The writer notes that many times, though wide awake, he has been able to make the mental remark, "I am not asleep, but I shall be asleep directly, for I never saw him, or her, or that before." But the most interesting part of the letter is the suggestion that, concludes it. The writer asks "whether it is not conceivable, that as the organised human being of a certain order of development, has the power of presenting echoes of life to the eyes of his followers by the painful use of the implements of the painter, so it may be within the power of living beings to impress their own thoughts visibly on one another, by a more direct though a more subtle process." Many things point to the hope that we are on the very verge of great discoveries in the science of mind, and especially of the power of interaction between mind and mind. The careful study of such curious phenomena as *thought-reading*, and especially the facts of *mesmerism*, so luminous in their relation to physical phenomena in general, will give us a rich harvest, and that before long. It is one of the most hopeful signs of the times that these facts will now receive an attention from trained minds that has been too long denied them. It would be most unjust to say that no attention has been paid to these subjects. The labourers have been few, and the public recognition of their work by science has been very grudging: but much has been done, rather perhaps in the observation of phenomena more startling than these problems of mind. The attention lately directed to these, and the association of a number of persons of eminence in science and literature, whose names will give weight to testimony in the eyes of the public, lead me to hope that the newly formed Society for Psychical Research will gather a rich harvest in these comparatively unknown fields. Thus it will best illuminate the dark places of Spiritualism.

Mr. Maskelyne, I observe, advertises that he is presenting at the Egyptian Hall a *burlesque* of Spiritualism. He has been doing so, with inconsiderable intervals of rest, for many years past. But till lately he called his performance "an exposure." I am glad to find that he has abandoned that pretence, and now calls his stage tricks by the appropriate name of a "burlesque." I remember seeing his first efforts in this direction many years ago, when his machinery was crude and his devices were very palpable. He has improved since then, I have no doubt. The way in which Mrs. Maskelyne was shot up into the air with a very palpable creak, by way of illustrating levitation, was very unspiritual, and, from her efforts to balance herself in her elevated position, very funny in a sense not intended. The aerial flight of the dummy that counterfeited Mr. Maskelyne was equally creaky, and suggestive of cordage and windlasses. But experience has been serviceable, and the present burlesque entertainment is said to be one from which some idea of the wonders that are called Spiritualistic, but which are absolutely physical

in their nature, may be gained by the ignorant. Spiritualism has been a profitable business to Mr. Maskelyne, and though it suited him once to say that he had slain the goose that laid his golden eggs, I am glad to see that he has found out his mistake. I entertain no doubt that he will find the eggs as good as ever, and the demand for them largely increased.

One of the secretaries of the Theosophical Society has, at the instance of the President, forwarded to "LIGHT" a copy of the *Times of India* (January 19th ult.), containing an abstract of a lecture by one Mr. Joseph Cook, in which he attacks the Theosophists and Spiritualists in terms of much coarseness and vulgarity. I presume this is the same Rev. Joseph Cook whom Epes Sargent took some trouble to convince of the reality of certain phenomena, among them psychography. If so, his published opinions, after that experiment, contrast strangely with his present attitude as a "vehement anti-Spiritualist." I remember Mr. Sargent writing to me at the time of the impression made on Mr. Cook by what he saw, and he rather congratulated himself on the result of his efforts at proselytism. I had my doubts, and expressed them freely. I thought that a man who so evidently trimmed his sails to catch the favouring breeze would hardly stand the obloquy that would be likely to fall to the lot of any prominent advocate of the most modified form of Spiritualism. A very brief interval of time passed, and my estimate of the man was verified. Some Evangelical paper assailed him, as, of course, must be the case, and the Rev. Joseph Cook incontinently "ratted." He found it necessary to explain that he did not mean what he said. He was far from being a Spiritualist. In fact, he was nothing of the kind. He was not even sure that he saw what he thought he saw. As to Spirits, he knew nothing about them. And so on. The transition to the "vehement anti-Spiritualist" is obvious. Men of this type do no injury except to the cause which they may elect for the moment to advocate. The only surprising thing is that so discerning a man as Epes Sargent should have taken any trouble about him. Colonel Olcott says that he is going to answer him, which, on the whole, is a pity. Such persons live and gain notoriety by misrepresenting the answers of those who are indiscreet enough to notice them. He should be left severely alone.

"It seems a pity," says the secretary, "that Western Spiritualists could not think more kindly of us, and realise that we are their natural allies against Christianity and that materialistic scepticism which will not—perhaps because it cannot—even throw an unprejudiced glance at psychic phenomena." This is such a typical utterance that it may stand as a fair illustration of the different points of view which we and they, Spiritualists and Theosophists, occupy. To them Spiritualism is a thing to be described in terms of almost unqualified reprobation, except when, on remonstrance, such terms are temporarily modified. The type selected is the lowest; the blots and disfigurements are magnified into unnatural prominence. The Western Spiritualist is depicted much after the manner that *Punch* draws his typical Irishman as a brutal Yahoo or a villainous-looking monkey. Who shall say what permanent mischief has been done by this insult to the feelings of a susceptible and emotional people—such as the Kelts all are, and such as the Irish are in a high degree? In just the same way, it is idle to treat our facts and experiences as has been done (I hope I may use the past tense), and then to complain that we do not recognise Theosophy as "a natural ally against Christianity." Heaven preserve us! We want no ally against Christianity: we need rather a closer and more intimate alliance with a system which our philosophy could greatly illuminate, and our facts abundantly illustrate. The Theosophists deal with Christianity as they deal with Spiritualism, and display the same want of intelligent comprehension of both. They select some blots,

and in pouring scorn upon them think they have annihilated a religion the beauties and moral sublimities of which, where separated from the obliquities of its professors, they seem quite unable to comprehend.

There is no talk of any antagonism between Spiritualism and Christianity. Spiritualists are fully alive to the moral excellence of the Christian code: they reverence the pure life of the Christ: and only a few among them make the mistake of confounding the essential principles of the system with the disfigurements which time and man's meddling have put upon it. Some Spiritualists, no doubt, see strongly the faults and failings that inhere in any system of Ecclesiasticism: many are willing to go a long way towards reform: an increasing number recognise the extreme beauty of the Buddhistic philosophy, and are disposed to be angry at the contemptuous ignoring of it by the average Western mind. But no portion worth a thought is disposed to flout the religious beliefs of the most influential and progressive peoples of the world, or to seek any alliance against what they trust to see purified and purged of error, simplified and confirmed in its essential elements of truth, by the increasing spread of a pure Spiritual philosophy. It is nothing short of a confessed incompetency for any real criticism to estimate Spiritualism by the ineptitudes of a promiscuous séance, and Christianity by the vagaries of some of its erratic adherents, or by the foolish utterances of some fanatical missionary. I hope that we have both some better work to do than to run amuck against the religious beliefs of any man. The Theosophists have before them an excellent work in popularising the hidden lore of ancient India. I would find no fault with them if they devoted themselves to the elucidation of the powers of the human spirit: or to the demonstration of the many beauties of the Buddhistic philosophy and religion. It is not necessary to that end that either Christianity or Spiritualism should be persistently depicted by a caricature of its worst deformities.

I find that I have not properly described the "pungent and offensive odour" alluded to in the last Teachings (No. 17). I spoke of it as peppermint. I should have said pennyroyal (*pulegium*). The former word conveys an idea that to some minds would not be suggestive of disgust, whereas I am sure no one could endure to breathe that foul odour of which I speak. As a matter of fact, moreover, the garments were never purified, but were destroyed. These details are not important, except as they emphasise the striking nature of what has always seemed to be a profoundly striking and instructive phenomenon. The perfume was, at starting, of remarkable delicacy, and of extreme sweetness. An argumentative discussion, provoking a condition of irritability and inharmoniousness in the medium, sufficed to change this material substance into something foul, offensive, and intolerable. There is a proof of the influence of *mind on matter*; or, at least, of an unseen Spirit-operator on what had an objective material existence. The previous conditions of harmony and beauty gave place to intolerable discord, to which, as to a congenial atmosphere, "alien influences" were attracted, and which were fitly typified by the foul odour from which we all fled in dismay. It seems to me that this incident conveys in a parable profound spiritual lessons.

In reviewing Mr. Lillie's "Buddha and Early Buddhism" in the *Psychological Review*, I incidentally stated my conviction that the meaning of annihilation attached to Nirvāna by such writers as Professor Monier Williams was quite erroneous. I quoted the words of Jesus to his disciples as nearer the mark—"The kingdom of heaven is within you." In the *Spectator* (February 25th) Mr. Rhys-Davids has a letter strongly enforcing the same idea. "Nirvāna," he says, "in the earliest Buddhist records, is only death in the sense of death to trespasses and sins: it is always death in the sense of the extinction of 'excitement' in its three forms of lust, malice, and delusion. The Christian might say to the converted, 'Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Ye are born again to peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' The early Buddhist would say, 'Ye are dead already in this world, and ye are alive again in the peace and joy of Arahatsip.' No doubt the selfness, the love of individuality is extinct in Nirvāna, which is invariably described as a state of mind to be reached here on earth (*very closely akin to 'the kingdom of Heaven which is within you'*), but the samemay be said of the Christian ideal." This is a striking confirmation of the view which, the more I think of it, commends itself

more decidedly to my mind. There is very much in the writings of James Hinton, on whom Mr. Rhys-Davids is commenting, that is very interesting to the philosophical Spiritualist in relation to these matters. M.A. (Oxon.)

THE HIMALAYAN BROTHERS.

Colonel Olcott has requested us to publish in "LIGHT" the following letter, which has been addressed to the editor of the *Spiritualist* :—

Theosophical Society, President's Office,
Bombay, 7th February, 1882.

To the Editor of the "*Spiritualist*."

SIR,—About two months ago, I sent you from Ceylon a letter respecting my personal knowledge of the so-called "Himalayan Brothers," which has not yet been published in your columns. It was called forth by your editorial remark that I have not given public testimony to the fact of their existence; and the necessary implication that my silence was due to disbelief in the same, or at least to lack of proof sufficient to make me willing to so commit myself. Pray allow me to set the question at rest, once for all.

I have seen them, not once but numerous times.

I have talked to them. I was not entranced, nor mediumistic, nor hallucinated, but always in my sober senses.

I have corresponded with them, receiving their letters, sometimes enclosed inside the letters of ordinary correspondents, upon common-place subjects, coming to me by post; sometimes written on blank spaces or margins of such ordinary letters: sometimes dropped to me in full light from out the air; sometimes in their own covers, through the post, and from places where I had no other correspondents, and where they personally did not reside, and in other ways.

I have seen them, both in their bodies and their doubles, usually the latter.

First and last, as many as thirty or forty other witnesses have seen them in my presence.

I have thus personally known "Koot Hoomi" since 1875, making his acquaintance in New York.

Since November last, four different Brothers have made themselves visible to visitors at our head quarters.

I know the Brothers to be living men and not Spirits; and they have told me that there are schools, under appointed living adepts, where their Occult science is regularly taught.

It is all this actual knowledge of them and close observation of multifarious phenomena shewn me by them, under non-mediumistic conditions, that has made me take the active part I have in the Theosophical movement of the day.

And their precept and example has made me try to do some practical good to the Asiatics. For their lives and their knowledge are devoted to the welfare of mankind. Though unseen by, they yet labour for, humanity. The first lesson I, as a pupil, was required by them to learn, and having learnt, to put into practice, was—unselfishness.

For the sake of their fellow men some of them have made sacrifices as great as any that history records of any philanthropist.

Your "S." (*Spiritualist*, January 20th) is a sibilant cackler, and your man "Beyond the Grave" another. Their talk is that of the ignorant. If they want to be convinced (which does not appear certain) of the practical benefit our Theosophical Society is doing, let them come here; visit our branches in India and Ceylon; talk with our members, of various races; examine our schools; see our vernacular publications; mingle with the crowds that throng at our lectures; and take a consensus among the missionaries (whose diatribes are our best certificate). The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* is, I believe, the most widely circulated vernacular paper in India. It says of me (January 12th):—"Whether there be 'Himalayan Brothers' or not, there is at least one white man who is acting like a brother to the Sinhalese and will as occasion permits it act similarly to the Hindus. If it be not asking too much, we would request the Colonel to come to the City of Palaces and enlighten the Calcutta public on subjects with which he is so familiar and which are calculated to do so much good to the Hindu nation."

In conclusion, if you or your correspondents can shew that in a single instance our Society has done harm to the community or to individuals, I ask you to make the fact known. I believe that we are doing good, practical as well as spiritual, and that we can prove it by "a multitude of witnesses."

H. S. OLCOTT.

THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—No one can see the effort made by Mr. Farmer in the cheap production of his very excellent work, without recognising that it is an admirable one in the direction of popularising the religious aspect of Spiritualism, and that it is calculated to assist in removing many of the difficulties which lie in the way of the acceptance of our belief by the religious classes generally. But to enable advanced truths of this kind to be generally accepted and understood, it is no less necessary to work from another side.

The real barrier to Spiritualism is in the theological ignorance of the people, which prevents liberal-minded clergymen dwelling on much which they realise with regard to the Scriptures and the history of the past. Nine-tenths of the congregations which attend churches and chapels are studiously brought up with one idea with regard to the Bible, viz., that it is a book beyond criticism, that it is of equal authority and value from Genesis to Revelation, that it always existed as it now stands, and that it is correctly interpreted by men of the past, who materialised many passages susceptible of far higher meaning, because the spirit of their age was not sufficiently enlightened to apprehend it. All this is persistently upheld throughout our land by thousands of pulpits and millions of popular little religious books, by which young minds are carefully educated. Young men trained for the ministry are for the most part held within the same lines, and strictly keep to the level of their congregations, and the few original minded or really cultivated constitute a helpless minority.

What we want both for Spiritualists and this immense mass of the people, is a basis of sympathy in sound knowledge on religious questions in all matters in which this can at present be attained. The Bible is the most outraged and misused of books. It is placed in the hands of millions who know nothing of its history, nothing of the light which modern science and research have thrown upon its pages, nothing of the careful examination which, while removing superstitions and erroneous ideas, proves that the Hebrew race has unquestionably held towards mankind that position with regard to religion which Greece and Rome have maintained in philosophy, government, and art. A popular work embodying the great facts of Hebrew history, the acknowledged results of careful Biblical criticism by the greatest authorities, and the discoveries which have been made in ancient records and monuments, and Egyptian history, is a *desideratum* for the people. All this addition to the knowledge of our time is scattered up and down a hundred elaborate and erudite volumes, and is quite beyond the reach of the majority. Nor would most Spiritualists be the worse for obtaining easy access to accurate information with regard to the unique history of the Jewish race. Many of our works are destructively radical, but offer little that can be called scientific on the subject of the Bible, and they naturally excite opposition from those whose minds have been strongly biased in a wholly different direction. A work such as I indicate would require the co-operation of some of our best scholars and scientists, and its value would be immense. More rational and liberal religious ideas would remove the ingrained prejudice at present visible wherever Spiritualism comes to the front, and pave the way for those obvious reforms in the religious services of the churches which will never take place until demanded by the culture and conscience of the people. Ignorance alone prevents Spiritualism from being universally welcomed and accepted, but it is an ignorance not only of our own phenomena and their philosophy, but also of the very sacred writings which form the common ground of religious discourse and earnest devotion in the minds of millions of human beings. The Bible rationally used and understood would be an immeasurably more useful and valuable book than the Bible perverted as it now is, and what we require now is "more light" everywhere. Nothing should ever be taught to the young which is at variance with facts acknowledged alike by men of science and great scholars and critics; and candid and liberal religious teaching is the best preservation from Atheism, and the best preparation for the reception of those truths concerning immortality and a future life which seem to be governed by laws as immutable as those which sustain the physical world. The religion of the future, indeed, will be based on a true science of man as a spiritual being, and the possibilities to which he may attain in the development which has been dimly foreseen by seers of the past as the great end and

design of life upon our planet; but although far distant, he who upholds truth points in this direction, and in no way can men be better served than by working in behalf of their spiritual freedom, and by placing religion as commonly understood in the clear light of true knowledge, and endeavouring to remove the obstacles arising from its popular and empirical treatment.—I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

S. E. G.

MR. HUDSON, THE SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Let me ask your kind interest and that of your numerous intelligent readers, on behalf of Mr. F. Hudson, the Spirit photographer.

It is not necessary that I recall his career, and how, a suspicion being entertained of the genuineness of his performances as a psychographer, his customers fell away, and his position was destroyed.

From such an unjust suspicion the interesting book just published by Miss Houghton brings him out entirely exonerated, and it appears to me that it would redound to the honour of Spiritualism and Spiritualists if a helping hand were extended to raise Mr. Hudson from his present difficult position, and enable him to establish himself again as a photographer. To this end a movement is already on foot.

It is proposed that an exhibition of Mr. Hudson's, and other Spirit photographs, should be shewn by the magic lantern, and that a subscription be added to the proceeds of such entertainment for the benefit of Mr. Hudson.

The case seems to me one deserving the cordial support of every Spiritualist.—Faithfully yours,

G. DAMIANI.

February 27th.

DEATH.

The mantle of a vast exceeding peace
Over the lonely, wandering poet fell;
The noises of the worldly war did cease,
And all was well.

Some understood him better now that death
Had folded round him its embrace secure,
And breathed upon him with its awful breath,
Most sweet, most pure.

The women who had followed through wild ways,
With love and longing, in most tender hands
Brought him his roses and his wreath of bays,
Plucked in lone lands.

But over him fell sweet unbroken sleep,
And rest divine that nought could change or mar;
One woman watched his grave with great grand deep
Gaze like a star.

Nought moved her from his grave: his other queens
Sought other pleasures,—bought and sold and slept;
But still, where over him the grey stone leans,
This woman wept.

They found her there one summer morning dead
Beneath the solemn marriage-sealing sun,
To his live, endless, deathless spirit wed—
So these were one.

[From "Song-Spray."]

GEORGE BARLOW.

THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—A society, with at its head a man of such a cool and discriminating intellect as Mr. Henry Sidgwick, ought to do some very useful work by promoting organised "investigation of certain obscure phenomena, including those commonly known as psychical, mesmeric, or spiritualistic." It must have occurred to most thoughtful persons that an enterprise of this kind, if carried out in a really scientific manner, and over a sufficiently wide field, could not but be of great public advantage. Great numbers of wilful impostures and brain-sick delusions could be exposed; natural explanations of apparently well-authenticated supernatural or otherwise incomprehensible phenomena could be discovered; and, it may be, an inexplicable residuum would remain to support those who hold Hamlet's view as to the insufficiency of common-sense philosophy. At any rate the attempt is worth making, and we shall all wish well to the new Society for Psychical Research. Whatever the result of its proceedings on popular belief in the supernatural, it ought to do a good deal to establish or disprove the accuracy of such ideas, for example, as that influences can pass from one person to another at a distance, without the employment of any material means of communication, as at present understood.—*Leeds Mercury*

DARWINISM.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am sorry to see in the current number of "LIGHT" an article by Mr. Newton Crosland against the theory of evolution as propounded by Mr. Darwin. I am sorry, for Spiritualists have work enough of their own to do, without playing Don Quixote to distressed causes throughout the world. They are already associated in the eyes of the outside public, and not unfairly so, with vegetarianism, anti-vaccination, anti-vivisection, anti-tobaccoism, and whatever other "antis" there may be. It was surely unnecessary to add opposition to the doctrine of evolution to the tale of their sins. And, indeed, this last differs altogether from the other heterodox opinions which I have enumerated. Vegetarianism and the rest are at least *practical* matters. The evidence for them is by no means wholly scientific, and every man is more or less qualified, in the measure of his experience and his common-sense, to pronounce an opinion upon them. But the question of the origin and development of life upon the earth is one mainly for scientific experts. It is not a matter which common-sense is competent to decide. And it is even less than the others a question on which stupidity and conceit have a right to form an opinion at all. The general theory of evolution is based upon a very large amount of evidence, more or less unintelligible to those who have not prepared themselves by careful study for its appreciation. To estimate the value of the arguments by which it is demonstrated, there is needed a special logical training—and there is needed, above all, a mind which prefers the truth, however unpalatable, to long-cherished opinions when these last are proved untenable. The doctrine, though it has been before the world for less than a quarter of a century, has secured the adhesion, not of a large number, or of most men of science, but of the whole scientific world, with hardly a single exception, and of a large proportion of the intelligent outside public besides.

Now this doctrine of evolution—whether by natural selection or otherwise—thus firmly established, I am not concerned to defend.

There is a splendid recklessness in Mr. Newton Crosland's challenge to the evolutionists. It reminds the spectator of some story of old-world heroism—say, of the famous knight who ran a tilt against a windmill; or rather, in the sublime hardihood of his incompetence, he is like those savages who try to frighten away an eclipse by shouts and the banging of tin-kettles. I do not propose to argue with Mr. Newton Crosland. I have a friend who believes that the earth is flat, with upturned edges, like a willow-pattern plate. The sky is a covering stretched over it, and Sirius, and Orion, and the Pleiades are little lights fastened up there: some of them, my friend thinks, as much, perhaps, as a mile across. I have never argued with my friend. From what source he derives his opinion, or on what grounds he bases it, I have not cared to inquire. It was the accepted belief, I understand, of the Christian Church in the first few centuries, and so, like Mr. Newton Crosland, he has the sanction of antiquity for his ideas. But I do my friend wrong by the comparison. He, no doubt, could and does strengthen his position by arguments, perhaps even plausible. When I said above that I should not argue with Mr. Newton Crosland, I too hastily assumed that argument was possible. In fact, his only weapons are declamation and abuse. Scientific arguments, perhaps, we should not look for; but we have a right to look for common-sense. But what are we to think of the intelligence of a man who understands so little—I do not say of the subject with which he professes to deal—but of the world in which he lives, and of the infinitesimal part which man, as a physical agent, plays in it, that he can pen the following sentence: "If man did not hunt and destroy the elephant for the sake of its ivory, it would multiply to such an extent that in the course of a few hundred years there would scarcely be standing room for all the elephants which would be produced in Asia and Africa"! Does Mr. Crosland really believe that? A few lines further on, he warns us that "we must take great care to clearly distinguish between selection and affinity." One good turn deserves another. I will also give Mr. Newton Crosland a friendly warning: let him be very careful not to confound fried potatoes with repoussé brass-work.

Of Mr. Newton Crosland's utter incapacity to appreciate the position of the evolutionist; of the facts which he has misrepresented, and the arguments which he has misunderstood; of his crass ignorance, and of his sneers at those who know, it is not necessary to speak. Mr. Newton Crosland

twitting Charles Darwin with presumption and ignorance of the laws of nature, is not a spectacle which it is possible to contemplate seriously. But all readers of "LIGHT" have a right to complain that anyone writing in its pages should grossly violate the laws of courtesy and good taste. Is it seemly or decorous for a man in Mr. Crosland's position to speak of Mr. Darwin's language as "metaphorical, platitudinarian, scientific cant," or "simply scientific slang"? or to say of Mr. Darwin's books: "The author maunders and twaddles on through thousands of wearisome pages, every one of which is open to some serious objection. To call such workmanship science and literature is to degrade both"?

Because of the additional discredit that such utterances are likely to bring upon the study and the students of the phenomena of Spiritualism, it is much to be regretted that Mr. Crosland's paper was ever published in a journal devoted to such subjects.

FRANK PODMORE.

London, February 26th.

[With all due respect to our esteemed correspondent we cannot agree with him in the opinion, which he seems to entertain, that Darwinism is not a subject suitable for discussion in these pages. The doctrine of Evolution materially affects the question—in which all intelligent Spiritualists are interested—of the nature, origin, and future of the human soul; and in admitting Mr. Newton Crosland's letter we had hoped that it would lead to a consideration of the subject in this relation; especially as there is in many minds an apprehension that the doctrine is calculated to promote a disposition towards Materialism. We do not believe that, rightly understood, it has any tendency in that direction—but we should have liked to see this clearly pointed out by some competent correspondent. We regret, of course, that Mr. Crosland should have used such strong language, but we are also sorry that Mr. Podmore, in the warmth of his indignation, has been betrayed into a similar error. Under the circumstances the subject must be dropped—for the present.—ED. "LIGHT."]

TRANSCURRENCE OF COLOURS FROM MATERIALISED FORM TO MEDIUM.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As to the transference of colour I have a single fact. One day at Malvern, with Mr. Eglinton as medium, "Joey," a materialised Spirit, wishing to prove to me his personality as distinct from that of the medium, seated himself at a table and asked me to get him a glass of ink. I filled a gill glass nearly full of aniline purple fluid. He held up his index finger that we might all see it, dipped it in the ink, dabbed it on a sheet of paper, and then said, "Now, as soon as I am gone, examine my medium."

"Joey" vanished, and I went at once to Eglinton, who was entranced on the sofa, and examined his hands. There was not a speck of ink upon them. I presume there was none upon his body. The test as to the distinct individuality of "Joey," which I have often heard him insist upon and seen him prove, seems to me perfect.—Yours truly,

T. L. NICHOLS.

32, Fopstone-road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.,

February 26th, 1882.

RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I trust you will make room for a short, and, I hope, civil question.

If the advocates of Re-Incarnation are so positive of the truth of their doctrine, why do they not furnish us with a single, undoubted fact to prove the soundness of their theory? For years I have wanted in vain for a particle of evidence to support their views.

Until the fact which we require is produced and tested, I, for one, must continue to believe that all the discussion on the subject is a mere mountain of useless words. Your correspondent, Signor Damiani, makes the following assertion:—"We know that the child dying prematurely is bereft of training. This is no assumption, but a fact." Again I ask for proof of the accuracy of this opinion, because it is distinctly in the teeth of all my experience. I know that a child dying prematurely *does* continue to grow and improve in that future spiritual world with which our destiny is associated here; and not in some other unknown and unnamed "material world."—Yours, &c.

T. TRIDENT.

A STRANGE PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent, "I. H. G.," has raised a point regarding the apparent injustice of the inequality of the periods of life that fall to our various lots. I received lately some ideas which may be of service as touching on the subject.

But first I will describe how these ideas came to me. While sitting by myself to develop dawning powers of clairvoyance which I have discovered to have been latent in me, I often feel my control over my train of thoughts become somnolent, and then a voice in my inner world seems to speak, and my outer self, mechanically, without effort, writes down the words. So little effort am I conscious of that the conviction is strong within me that these ideas come as they purport from Intelligences who are in my inner mind, but still not my individual self. My individual self gives way to them, and they come to merge themselves in me and myself in them. My outer self is thus a machine turning out fabrics whose patterns and structures are according to its make, its wheels and cranks; and this machine is ordinarily started and fed with raw material by my inner self—an intelligent operative, who gets his raw material from what the senses bring him. In this somnolent condition—abnormal I will not call it, for I believe the time will shortly come when it will be recognised as the natural antithesis or relaxation of the externally active state—my own intelligence seems to give way to some other operative or operatives who bring raw material of their own, but my outer-self, being a mere machine, working automatically, weaves this according to its inherent powers.

But whether the help of foreign intelligence be the true explanation or not, the phenomenon which I record of the human brain being able without effort, and in a somnolent condition, to solve its own problems, is one worthy the attention, not only of psychologists, but of all philosophers. I can now understand what Socrates meant when he used to say he heard the voice of his genius speaking within him. So Andrew Jackson Davis and others record the same feelings.

For those investigating this branch of intuitional or inspirational knowledge, I will mention another phenomenon that has shewn itself in the recent development of my mind. Often when sitting with strangers I receive such strong ideas or "impressions" about the faces, dress, and attitudes of deceased friends of theirs, that I have only to shut my eyes and I see them projected by my imagination objectively before me, and my descriptions have been verified to the smallest detail.

The communication to which I referred was as follows. I had asked the following question:—

"You have taken me to your various homes, and I see your worlds and your lives in them radiant with happiness. Yet often in my daily life, when combinations of circumstances are causing me happiness or unhappiness, I cannot help feeling that you are by me, not so much from charity to me, but taking a delight in experiencing some new combination of circumstances through me—in fact, in living with me in my active hours just as I try to live with you in my passive—that you are passive or receiving when I am active, and active or imparting when I am passive. Is this so?"

The answer was as follows:—

"It is. It is the old law of the balancing of forces—the one great law that throughout all nature causes all change, and change is life realised. By this law everything is giving and taking, and the compensation is exact. There is no such thing as injustice; a fact we see more and more clearly as we find that the few moments of earth-life or directly after earth-life are not everything. We none of us live for ourselves or by ourselves. Life is complex. Life, which is the only possession we each of us know for certain that we have, we none of us know for certain what it is. It is always changing like the kaleidoscope. Like all other phenomena of the manifest, it is the resultant of two opposite forces. The opposite forces in the case of Life are the God within and the God without. I am taking God in His aspect as a Creative Force. We have the creative force of the God within, powerful according to the purity of our states of mind and the knowledge of our minds, and according to the gravitation we have acquired by giving up the infinitesimal, atomic, individual self, and affinitising into molecules and masses. Our world which we have shewn you clairvoyantly seems internal and shadowy to your present ideas, but is external and substantial to us. The spheres above us in a similar way are in our inner worlds, but, when we have cast off our more outer skin,

will become in turn outer worlds to us. The strong creative force of God inside us is creating for us a beautiful and happy world, where the perfumes, and the music, and the colours are the irradiation of the power within us. That is why our spheres are so happy, as you see. Now why do we want to come down to your material plane? you ask. We know we do like it, and we know when we get back to our own homes we feel the freshness of morning and spring there. The reason why, we cannot all of us tell. It is only philosophers who attempt to analyse their feelings. I will give you the reason of my philosophy; accept it if it suits your reason. We like to come down to the material plane because there the God outside is stronger than the God inside, and the God outside is always giving lessons to the soul and shewing it how to create and be a god in the likeness of the Great Creator. It is in your plane where the formative life principle has its roots and derives its nourishment. The higher the tree shoots, the lower and the wider it strikes its roots—aye, striking all along your sphere with all its rolling planets and external creations—your sphere where alone time is marked by its relative moments, and space with its relative differences of position—your sphere where alone consciousness is realised in detail, where lives the Holy Ghost or Holy Principle of Life, as opposed to self and existence, who are the Son and the Father, the God within and the God without. Not that these Gods are separate Gods: no, they are only separate segments or phases of one great circle which meet here on the plane of units, and once again right away at the far opposite pole of unity—the poles of the all-excluding and the all-comprehending. But why, you naturally ask, do we want to meet the creative force of the God outside us, seeing we have already learnt how to make our own worlds bright and happy? The answer is simply this: we want to realise our happiness in detail. Some of us were taken away apparently prematurely from the rudimentary school of your earth plane. I say apparently prematurely, because this freedom of God which allows us to return to you removes the idea of prematurity and makes it one of providence. We are the sap in the boughs not removed from the tree, because we have been removed from the roots to seek the sunshine and electricity in the higher branches; no, we return in due course to bring back the effects of the geniality above, even to the sap in the roots still in the darkness and earthiness below. And there is always something new for us to learn in your plane. Circumstances are always making new combinations. In our earth-lives some of us may have lived a few years and some of us many; some may even in a long life have had little experience, and some of us much. What does it matter, when we can come each to such persons as can supply the experience required, and who thus, as a compensation for the activity spent in getting this experience, obtain the spirituality of our sympathy? Each new experience we mix in teaches our souls a new way of expressing their feelings, and no soul, let me tell you, is perfectly happy until it can express its feelings; and the more concrete, particular, and detailed the expression, the greater the happiness of the feeling. And where is the most concrete expression to be had? Why, only on the most objective plane and in the most individual form; which to us are the feelings and acts of incarnated intelligence. Again, what is light without darkness to contrast it? With us, you know, "there is no night." What is heat without cool places to luxuriate in? Believe me, whenever we have the glow of God's universal love shining full and direct on our hearts, it is natural, it is pleasant, to us to seek the cool, tear-shedding caves of sympathy. What, in short, is realisation without contrast? Ask Art how to get vividness—how to make real. And without this realisation what would life be to us? Mere existence."

I do not give the name of the Intelligence who communicated the above to me as he has given me his name without any objective proof of his actual presence with me beyond having shewn himself to five different clairvoyants, who have independently described his appearance in identical terms but have been unable to give his name. F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

STOPPAGE OF "THE TWO WORLDS."—We regret to learn that owing to increased ill health, Dr. E. Crowell is compelled to discontinue publishing his paper *The Two Worlds*, which consequently ceased to exist with the number for the 18th ult. The journal in question was in every way a creditable production, and its tone was unexceptionable. Its patrons will be sure to regret its cessation, and join us in earnest wishes for the speedy restoration to health of its estimable and cultured proprietor.

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.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Our Correspondents will greatly oblige us if they will take care, in every case, to write on ONLY ONE SIDE of the paper.

Subscriptions for 1882 are now due, and should be forwarded to our Office without delay.

LETTERS BY SPIRIT POST.

The following account of a letter conveyed by Spirit agency from a ship at sea I had from Mr. John Davis, of Clapton, whose word will be implicitly trusted by all who know him. He himself doubted whether it would be wise to publish an occurrence so impossible to be credited by the general public, but he left the responsibility with me, and I do not think that the evidence should be withheld from the readers of "LIGHT" on account of the incredulity with which it may be received by the public at large.

Mr. Eglinton sailed for India in the s.s. Vega, on the 12th October last. A day or two before he sailed he paid a visit to Mr. Davis, at Clapton, and after a sésance at which some astonishing phenomena were exhibited, he shewed several letters which had been conveyed to him by Spirit agency from a medium friend at a distance, in answer to letters of his own which had been carried in the same way, under circumstances which made it impossible for them to be carried by any other means. The sight of these letters led Mr. Davis to ask whether it might not be possible for him to have a communication with Mr. Eglinton, through the same agency, after he had been two or three weeks at sea. Mr. Eglinton agreed to try, and it was accordingly arranged that both parties should hold a sitting for the purpose on the evening of that day three weeks, when Mr. Eglinton would go privately into his cabin for the purpose of writing his letter. The following week, when Mr. Davis was sitting at his usual family sésance, he was directed by his Control to get an india-rubber air ball (such as children play with) and to carry it in his pocket until that day fortnight, when the sitting for the conveyance of the letter was to take place. It was not explained how the end in view was to be promoted by this means, but Mr. Davis followed the directions given him, and procured a small ball, and having had it stamped with the seal of the office where he is employed, he carried it about with him until the evening of the trial sitting. He now told his children of what he was trying for, but neither he nor they had much expectation of the accomplishment of his purpose. On the evening of the 2nd November he had his usual family sésance, consisting of himself and his four children, with the addition of Mrs. Nichols. The stamped india-rubber ball which Mr. Davis had been carrying about, was laid on the table, and things had been going on for some time in rather a dull way, when Joey, one of Mr. Eglinton's Controls, made his presence known, took up the mouth organ, and through it said something which Mr. Davis understood to be, "I have forgotten it; good night; cannot stay." After he had gone, Mr. Davis asked his own Control what Joey had said, and was informed that it really had been, "I have got it," and accordingly, on lighting up, the collapsed ball, identified by the stamp of Mr. Davis' office, was found on the table, with a sheet of paper doubled up into a small compass inside it, one corner of the letter having burst through the coating of the ball. The case had to be torn in order to get out the paper, which was found to be a letter from Mr. Eglinton, on half

a sheet of thin note-paper, dated s.s. Vega, November 2nd, to the effect that in accordance with his promise he had just come down from deck to write the letter. "Should Joey be clever enough to take this," he proceeds, "I shall take this into my cabin about eight to-night, and you must notify me if you have received it." The writing was unquestionably that of Mr. Eglinton, and on the back of the letter is written in pencil, "Sitting in my cabin, 7.45." It was received at Clapton at 9.40, and as Mr. Eglinton had then been three weeks at sea, he could not, I suppose, have made less than 60° E. Longitude, corresponding to a gain of four hours apparent time; so that the letter was received at Clapton about six hours after it was endorsed by Mr. Eglinton in his cabin.

February 23rd.

HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD.

SOME FACTS ABOUT MATERIALISATION,

I often strongly desire to convey to "M.A. (Oxon.);" my appreciation of his facts, and also of his philosophy, as far as it goes. That he does not know everything need not surprise us, as Hosea Biglow told us some time ago that "they did not know everything down in Judee."

That "M.A. (Oxon.);" has not yet learned that he has been re-incarnated here several times certainly is not his fault, if it is not true. That there may be economical motives in the scheme of the Universe, to use again and again most delicately prepared matter and its correlative spirit, may present itself as a fact in his philosophy in due time. The worms begin the preparation of the earth for culture and growth of food, for the sustenance of higher, that is, more complex forms of life.

"What can we reason from but what we know?" I expect much reasoning from "M. A. (Oxon.);" because he knows much, and I commend to him the infinite scale of reason fastened to our finite. Somehow the matter of this globe has been used over and over again, as we can trace for ages. Has not spirit used this matter and developed itself by these means? A few faculties; the simple worm business with the earth at first; more, as means are made; mere simplism, then melody, and afterwards harmony. Shall the All-wise lose any means on his way from a worm to "M. A. (Oxon.);" and from "M. A. (Oxon.);" to what he can conceive of culture and its possibilities?

What I wish to do now is to give him some facts in materialisation, and though I preface them with questions in philosophy, it is only from my true respect for a man more than half made up. And are any of us aware how few have reached the half-way house in their creation?

When I first saw Willie Eglinton, some years since, I heard in the first moments of our interview raps upon a table standing near us. I said to him, "Do you hear those raps?" He replied, "I heard sounds, but I think they were in the street." I laid my hand on the table; the raps became distinct; I called the alphabet, and Jesse B. Ferguson spelt out his name and a wish to have a sésance with us and materialise. Willie Eglinton said, "All my time is engaged." Soon afterwards there came a ring at the door bell, and a note was handed Willie from a person relinquishing a sésance. He then said to me, "I can sit for you."

The sésance was held in a cottage at a high point on Malvern Hills. There were present, beside the medium, two men and five women. We first excluded light from without, then hung a shawl between us and Willie, and lighted one candle. Presently I saw a child, apparently about two years old, standing in front of the shawl. The child disappeared, and an Indian girl (North American Indian, with whom I have been familiar) appeared. She seemed twelve or thirteen years old. She rose about the middle of the room, and I said, "I wish she would come to me." She came at once, and, as the sofa on which I sat was some distance from the wall, she came between the back of the sofa and the wall. She had a deal of thin white muslin over her, which looked hardly appropriate to her brown, hard, Indian face. She took my hand, and said, as she kissed it, "I love you; I love your hand that gives." I remember thinking at the time that the baby had grown to be this Indian girl. She was known to some in the circle as one of Willie Eglinton's familiars, and they called her "Daisy." Afterwards I got well acquainted with her, and I said to her on one occasion, "Daisy, did you grow from a baby the first night I saw you?" She seemed much surprised and answered, "I no grow; I Daisy; I no baby; I Daisy."

It was plain that Daisy had no understanding of the extent of my credence. After she disappeared, we were asked to put out our one candle. When we were in the dark, the husband

of a lady present appeared, bearing his own light. It seemed like a radiant globe of glass, held up near to his chin. It lighted his face perfectly. He came up to me and looked into my eyes in such sharp fashion that I begged him to go over to his wife on the other side of the room, which he did. On this occasion the Spirit, J. B. Ferguson, who promised to materialise, did not put in an appearance.

We somehow got another séance, and I have seldom seen such power manifested. It was not worms dealing with matter, but those who had somehow, by practice on matter or otherwise, got great skill in manifestation.

Mr. Ferguson was well-known to me in his earth-life. He was a very powerful man, more than six feet high, and very broad in the chest. Before he appeared, "Joey," one of Willie Eglinton's familiar Spirits, materialised, and asked for some pins. We had hung two shawls in a corner to screen Willie from us, and they had fallen apart. "Joey" took a box of pins and pinned the shawls carefully together. Then he put the box back on the mantel-shelf from which one of us had taken it, saying, "A place for everything and everything in its place. I like to see things tidy." He was very friendly with me. I had never seen him before, but he came to me and kissed the hair on the top of my head. Not long afterwards he adopted me as his mamma, and I should now be as much surprised if he called me anything but mamma as if one of my own children should do so. At first he used sometimes to say "Mrs. Nichols," but on one occasion, after calling me by my name, he stopped and said "mamma" as many as twenty times, and never since has he called me anything but mamma.

After "Joey" had pinned the shawls together, Mr. Ferguson appeared—never in life more natural—every motion his own. He moved a very heavy mahogany centre table to a distance from us, and then drew an arm-chair, which was also very heavy, up before me, and seated himself and took my hand. He seemed unable to speak. I asked for one most dear to me. I said, "Is she here?" He rose and went back to the place where Willie Eglinton was seated, and I heard three raps. Instantly he disappeared and the one appeared for whom I had inquired. She came and knelt before me, took my hand and kissed it. The remainder of the phenomena of this evening I cannot now write.

Mr. Ferguson had told me in advance of phenomena that we are now familiar with. Ira Davenport's double had appeared when they were at Glasgow and convinced Spiritualists that they were being misled. They plainly saw Ira at liberty when he was bound in his chair. The "coat trick" as it was called, *i.e.*, the removal of the coat when the medium was bound, was disbelieved at first by Spiritualists, just as the appearance and communication from living persons was disbelieved twenty-five years since. I remember some leading Spiritualists in New York being quite out of patience with me for believing that living persons could be present at our séances and communicate. But how could I disbelieve when I could see the form of a friend living at a distance, and get a communication by raps? I insisted on these facts. Spiritualists got angry and said it was not possible, just as non-Spiritualists get angry now at the ordinary phenomena. Mr. Ferguson told me years ago that when they blackened the hands of the Davenport Brothers, and bound them in the cabinet, blackened hands were thrust out of the apertures in the cabinet, and yet the brothers were found securely bound. On one occasion Willie Eglinton had a similar experience. A musical instrument was blackened. Hands were formed and dealt with it, and the black was found on his hands, though he had been securely held every moment. One of his guides assured me that the black was transferred to his hands when the material they had used to make hands was restored to him.

One thing I would like "M. A. (Oxon.)" to deal with. How much matter is used in the shadowy form that I see beside the table when it is lifted, or that caresses a friend or relative in the circle, and which no one sees but a clairvoyant?

Another question: Is there so much matter and so much spirit belonging to our system of worlds, and our planet; or is there a definite amount of matter, and an indefinite amount of spirit, the last quite separable from, and in no certain way related to, the matter of our globe?

32, Fopstone-road, Earl's Court.

M. S. G. NICHOLS.

A DEBATE ON RE-INCARNATION.

The Spiritualists of the Continent, as is well known, generally believe in the doctrine of Re-Incarnation; and the same views have of late been growing in favour in Great Britain. The result has been that at a recent meeting of Spiritualists, at which Tien-Sien-Tie, the reputed controlling Spirit of Mr. Morse, chanced to express views at variance with those of the Re-Incarnationists, he was invited to a formal discussion of the subject. The invitation was accepted, and the debate was held at the rooms of the B.N.A.S. on Monday evening last, Mr. E. T. Bennett occupying the chair. The affirmative position was taken by Miss Arundale. Tien-Sien-Tie, who took the other side, claims to have been three hundred years ago a Chinese Mandarin of the Second Class. There was a very large attendance of visitors, and the great interest manifested in the discussion must be our justification for devoting so much space to a report of the proceedings. Mr. Morse having passed under control,

Miss Arundale, in opening the discussion, said: I conceive Re-Incarnation to be a fact for the following reasons. I believe that physical evolution has been proved, and although we may not be able to trace all the links in the great chain of life, nevertheless there is, as a whole, a continuous ascending series of physical organisations, capable of manifesting and expanding the development of the intellectual; and as it is spirit that moulds and governs matter, there seem of necessity to be corresponding grades of spirit manifestation through the various forms of sub-human existence. As I see also differences in the human race—that some are the happy possessors of a far higher development physically and morally than others—it seems to me unreasonable to suppose that the Spirits animating the various organisms have started on the same plane, or that each child is at birth equally elevated. If there be this equality, is it just that the Supreme Spirit should allow such adverse conditions for the development of one Spirit, and grant to another all the advantages that a good physical organisation and harmonious surroundings can bestow? We shall be told that we have no right to call in question the justice of God, but I hold that my reason has been given me for this purpose, and that I am bound, as a reasonable being, to exercise my judgment in all things. Again, if physical experience is for the advantage of Spirits, why should infants and those who pass away before arriving at maturity be deprived of that experience? If, on the other hand, it is possible for a Spirit to obtain its full development in the Spirit-life with the same ease as on earth, why do we pass any existence on this earth? for in that case earth-life would be a great disadvantage to many of us, if not to all; as a Spirit that had passed a life in evil surroundings would become, as it were, overshadowed by the great incubus of sin and vice, and one whose actual life, through long association with evil, had become degraded and debased, could not, on entering the Spirit-world, take the same status as the infant of an hour, that had never known earthly contamination. If it be said that earth-life is the appointed means of progress, is it not reasonable to suppose that the Spirit will return to the school of life till it has received all the lessons that earth-life can give, previous to ascending to those other schools that may be for its progress in the future? I cannot conceive that one earthly existence, however advantageous, can be sufficient to enable it to develop the various qualities of spirit. I may have borne the trials of poverty with resignation, but who is to say that I should have been virtuous and humble amid the temptations of riches and power? I may have been able to accomplish my duties amid the surroundings of a happy family life, but should I have been strong to bear if these had been denied me? Then I may refer to the vague reminiscences that many possess of having passed through experiences totally unconnected with their earth-life. Many have had this feeling who have known nothing of the theory of Re-Incarnation, or any other Spiritual hypothesis. A gentleman recently told me that he had a friend who from the age of eight till nearly twelve was frequently conscious of having been at some time or other confined in a cell, and that on looking through the bars he could see rows of seats tier upon tier. This, which at the time he could not understand, he recognised in after life as an amphitheatre. He also recollected seeing wild beasts, and had a feeling that he was to be thrown to them, and that while agitated with this fear the door of his cell was thrown open, and in his horror at so terrible a death he ran his head against a wall and dashed out his brains. Now this is totally opposed to an experience

B.N.A.S.—At the Fortnightly Discussion Meeting, to be held at 7.30 on Monday evening next, at 38, Great Russell-street, Mr. R. Wortley will read a paper on "Christian Faith versus Spiritual Reason."

what a boy's would naturally be, who would certainly give himself credit for far more bravery. The two principal objections to Re-Incarnation are loss of memory and the absence of identity. As far as memory is concerned, I conceive that when the Spirit re-enters physical conditions the memory of past existences may fail. It is much the same in the present life. How little we remember of the details of our past. One year presses the remembrance of another from the mind, and it is only at times that life passes in review before us. May not the Spirit have also its periods of retrospection? I can well understand that the memory of past lives would be a hindrance, rather than a help, to Spirit progression. If any Spirit remembered having been a Nero or a Robespierre would not such remembrance blight the aspirations by plunging the Spirit in a sea of remorse and despair? If a Spirit has appropriated the lessons of a previous life, he will act from the vantage ground thus gained, although he may have forgotten the details of the ascent: he has arrived at the place, but may have forgotten the road. Thus Nero will not remember having been Nero; but by development through many personalities the Spirit will efface the traces of the past and perhaps live on the earth as a Howard or a Washington. The fact that the identity of the Spirit has been veiled in the clothing of different personalities does not prevent the Spirit *ego* from from being the same through all the various developments. A man, even in earth-life, may experience great changes. Temper, opinions, character, have sometimes been essentially altered either by a severe illness or a great trial; and we often exclaim that such a one has become "quite another man." And when animal life is ended do we not recognise that our mother, brother, friend, husband, or wife is not in the form that lies dead before us, but in the individuality of being that has been developed through many changes from childhood to maturity? It is said that Re-Incarnation confuses relationships; but shall we feel less affinity to our loved ones from the thought that our love may have been of larger growth, and that we may have passed previous lives together? Earthly relationships are of earthly origin, and will pass away with earthly things; but the true sympathy that binds hearts together will endure even in that world where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.

Tien-Sien-Tie, after congratulating the opener and the audience upon the pleasant and temperate way in which the subject had been presented, said: We, like our sister, have a perfect faith in the doctrine of evolution, but we are apt perhaps to draw different conclusions from it from those which have been presented. We believe that the entire universe is moving forwards from the unformed of matter to the formed of material conditions. We look upon these infinite varieties of development as so many manifestations of the indwelling spirit; and we believe that as they successively unfold they are clothed with their appropriate out-growths either in animate or inanimate nature. But we do not believe that there is any retrocession for the progress of the human mind, as implied in the supposition that it is a necessity to have to return to material conditions to get experience which it is presumed could not be obtained by other methods. The appearance of humanity upon the plane of mortal life is a result of preceding developments that have been taking place, which render such an appearance possible. So far as we know, consciousness and identity are cognate realities, and we cannot presuppose the possibility of a previous existence the memory of which has been abrogated during the present career. As to the justice of God, we prefer to leave that matter entirely on one side. We are utterly incapable of comprehending His intentions and should feel somewhat awkward in assuming to judge of the justice or otherwise of any proceeding in nature. We prefer to take the facts of being as they are and if we fail to reconcile differences and divergencies we would rather call in question our own knowledge than criticise the assumed justice or otherwise of the Deity. This marks the commencement of one of the fatal weaknesses of the theory under consideration,—the weakness of assumption. The possibility of strict evidence in support of the theory is so exceedingly limited, that however interesting the inquiry it can derive little colour or substance from actual facts. Our sister introduces an illustration which is susceptible of a totally different interpretation from that which she placed upon it. The hallucination might have been the result of ante-natal conditions inherited by the young man, and producing a species of mania which developed itself into a consciousness which gained force with the increase of the

intellectual agencies through which such things are expressed. The differences existing in the careers of individuals may be explained without any resort to the doctrine presented to us. Every condition of nature is the exact result of contributing causes. If you depart from the fact that conditions are the results of causes, all straight sailing is well nigh impossible. The conditions of the human kind are the exact result of the causes, general and special, which have preceded, and the result of inherited tendencies and acquired dispositions through ages of training and development; and however startling the differences may seem, there is no necessity to attribute them to the supposition that the people of the world are largely or partially composed of re-incarnated Spirits who occupy divergent planes of action because of the different circumstances attending them in their previous existence. It is said that one child lives only for a few brief moments and dies, while another has a long life of misery and sorrow. It may seem sad, hard, and unjust, so long as you limit the field of view to the possibility of one material existence, but looking beyond this life the doctrine of Re-Incarnation may modify its conclusions. What is the purpose of material existence? We do not think that coming into this world necessarily implies that therein is to be gained the experience which is absolutely to fit the soul for the future life. We do not think that the lack of physical experience in this world constitutes an essential and great loss to the individual. Possibly the object of physical existence is only to found the consciousness of the soul, and to give a personality and identity to the individual, not really to educate and train it for all future possibilities. To talk of the necessity of an individual having to come back into this world to wipe out the characteristics of a Nero or a Robespierre, and develop into a Howard or a Washington, is to argue a retrocession in the character and development of the individual, and an obliteration of past qualities and attributes. For punishment, even that which is reformatory, to have any value there must be a knowledge of why it is inflicted. Punishment without consciousness of offence is simply an arbitrary expression of vengeance directed by a superior force. But apart from the non-recollection of past existence, we would like to ask how often is this Re-Incarnation process to take place? If the individual has missed the chances of his own spiritual good in a first incarnation, is it certain that the second, third, fourth, fiftieth, hundredth incarnation will any more succeed? The real qualities of a man's nature are not those which unfold themselves in the material organism, but only those which belong to the soul itself, which are more or less perfectly or imperfectly expressed through the material life here. The thing to be desired is not the perfect development of the physical agencies of the expression of the consciousness, but a perfect development of the spiritual qualities of the consciousness, which must be dissociated from the former. If so, the soul had better be translated to that condition more akin to itself, where such perfect development is the most likely to be accomplished. If it is the perfect development of the qualities of the body that is needed, then it had better be re-incarnated into other bodies. Another point to be considered is whether this Re-Incarnation is voluntary or not. If it is something you must submit to whether you will or not, the inevitable encounter, the battle of life, will have to be taken again; if it is voluntary, can you absolutely assure yourself of obtaining that physical embodiment that is suited to your present requirements? If so, you will have attained to a degree of prescience and wisdom very remarkable: if not you will have to take Hobson's choice—this or none—and you, with all the aspirations of grace and beauty, with all nature's highest nobility, might unfortunately, for disciplinary purposes, find yourselves embodied in some physical form of life most outrageous to yourself. Granting the necessity of Re-Incarnation, it should be educational to the individual and beneficial to humanity. We have asked over and over again for a proof that Re-Incarnation does take place. People believe they are re-incarnated as they believe many other things that experience has developed into mere crazes; they believe that they are victims of strange, wonderful spiritual obsessions, when perhaps it is only some mental derangement that is afflicting them. We sometimes hear it said, "I was a prince," or "I was a duke," or "I was a priest at some past time," but the plain rank and file of life seems strangely deficient in the desire for Re-Incarnation. We have never met with one fact that would stand the test of a rigid analysis; we have heard a great many theories and

much talk upon the subject, many affirmations and allegations, but for proof positive we have waited in vain. When once you depart from the standard "I think, therefore I am," "I am myself"—when you depart from that and become somebody else, the vagaries that may result are too numerous to require detailed mention. Consciousness is the foundation of individual being, the one sheet anchor that holds you to the great heart of God; destroy that anchor, loose your moorings, and float out on the sea of speculation, and heaven only knows where you will bring up to in the end. Either you are yourselves basically, or you are not. Our friend referred to changes of character and disposition experienced by individuals through great sorrows and trials; but these do not destroy the consciousness or identity of the individuals. Such persons remember their past. The essence of progress consists in its relation to the past and to the future. We are sometimes told that when the individual who has been re-incarnated returns into the Spirit condition, he remembers the previous incarnations, and the tale of life is then taken up even as you take up the tale of life when interrupted by a night of sleep. Yes; but unless you can prove that the sleeping hours are essential links in the conscious bodily life of the individual, the analogy cannot hold good. That proof has not been brought forward. Sleep fulfils a function that can be accurately and physiologically defined: it interrupts and suspends the external working consciousness, but there may be and doubtless is an interior action going on. But we do not see that the idea of past re-incarnations, when you have returned to the spiritual state, in any way helps the problem at all. Our contention would simply be that the present incarnation, to be valuable to you while here, and through you to humanity, must be accompanied with consciousness. Only by means of such consciousness could you profit by again coming into contact with the physical or material conditions of life. We say that we have no evidence of this, and that while we may agree with certain portions of what our sister has placed before us, on the main essential principles we are obliged earnestly but respectfully to dissent.

Signor Damiani asked the Chinese philosopher to explain what he meant by the statement that if Nero returned upon earth and became a Washington it would imply a retrogression.

The Chairman said it did not appear to him to follow that a life in a spiritual state of existence, followed by a life in a material state of existence, necessarily implied a retrogression.

Dr. Nichols said he thought the question before the meeting was a matter of fact rather than of argument. He wanted the Spirits who had been re-incarnated to give an account of themselves, and to explain the why and wherefore. It was remarkable that for twenty years in America and England, nothing was said upon the subject of Re-Incarnation. The first thing he remembered about it was from Allan Kardec, and certain Spiritualists in France. He thought that one chance on earth was enough, and that if he had to be re-incarnated he would rather go to some other planet; he did not see why he should be sent back to such a beggarly place as this. He should like, as a Spirit, to come and look at the world and observe human life in all countries, rather than return and lead his single, isolated, and troublesome existence as before.

Mrs. Hallock said she thought the Chinese philosopher was really Mr. Morse in some of his former incarnations. All he had said was simply begging the question, and a series of glittering generalities. All admitted that there was progress, but where, when, and how was progress obtained? Re-Incarnationists simply alleged that some Spirits or all Spirits might re-incarnate, not necessarily on this earth—which Dr. Nichols had found such a shabby place—but perhaps on other planets. Dr. Nichols might go to Jupiter, and perhaps be glad to get back to earth again. Dr. Nichols had stated that he heard nothing of Re-Incarnation in America. As an old attendant at the New York conferences, she well remembered a Methodist minister who constantly advanced the theory of Re-Incarnation, much to the amusement and derision of the rest of the attendants. He spoke of three incarnations, which he remembered and described historically; but, of course, nobody believed him, and she was sorry and ashamed to say that she was one of his mockers. She was suddenly converted, and since that time it did not appear to her that the question had two sides. It was a matter of fact to her mind, though perhaps she might not be able to prove it to another person; indeed she did not think it was susceptible of proof on the external plane. If they had not made proper use of one life in the flesh they came to another. The Chinese philosopher had

spoken of the next life, but where was it?—and what was it? a place, condition, or a state! They too often considered heaven and hell as places instead of states. There had been more great men Re-Incarnationists than many of them imagined. Michael Angelo believed that the doctrine of love at first sight was explicable alone by a former life.

The debate was continued by Mrs. Kingsford, M.D., Mr. C. Pearson, Mr. E. Maitland, Madame de Steiger, Signor Rondi, Mr. Greenwell, Mr. Wortley, Mr. E. Tietkens, and others, but our report of their remarks is necessarily deferred till next week.

"A REQUEST FOR 'MORE LIGHT!'"

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have read your paper for some weeks, and although I find in it many matters of interest, I am compelled to say that there is little that is new with reference to the so-called science of Spiritualism. Table tilting and rapping are doubtless very amusing, but surely we have had them *ad nauseam*, and really the instruction contained in pantomimic furniture is, I think, so infinitesimal that we might be spared the infliction of, as it were, verbatim accounts of household goods attacked in a painful form with St. Vitus' Dance. I am not writing in a jesting or sceptical spirit. Far from it, as my signature will shew, but I certainly think that the latter day shadows are deteriorating considerably from those of earlier times.

My own experience, and it is a large one, tells me most distinctly that Spirits of any mental calibre worth mentioning utterly decline to perform any dramatic tricks whatsoever, and they say that those of lower power are unable to do so. I am quite able to believe them. I believe, or to be correct, I know, that those who have passed that shadowy line which divides Time from Eternity are capable of impressing *certain* individuals on certain subjects, but it does not always follow that those impressions are correct. I know that man in spirit, as man in body, is liable to error, and also to lie. A case in point. When I was in Japan some forty-seven years ago, I was informed by a Japanese medium who had given me a truthful description of my home in Germany, that on a certain date mentioned I should receive certain private intelligence that I was then anxiously expecting. The intelligence never came; was never sent. It may seem sufficiently easy to account for this by casting suspicion upon my informant. That, however, I had no reason to do, owing to the fact that I knew him to be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion.

I would ask any one of your readers to favour me with some undoubted proof that this power which *is*, is not a latent force produced by their own organisms. I am satisfied personally that the power is Spiritual, but I have no sound reason to adduce to account for that satisfaction.

When a very young man, I made the acquaintance at Tortuska of a Brahmin, who, for some unexplained reason, had lost caste. This man lived for study, and studied for life. He was able by his studies to inform me of many things which really transpired in accordance with his statement. He had an idea of the possibility of extending the existence of his body for an indefinite period. An idea only, I should imagine, but one that he was capable of making me then think almost a probability. His name was Aljtea. It is possible that some of your readers may have known him.—Yours truly,

OTTO VON TEULSDROCH.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- A. Z.—No. We are *not* Re-Incarnationists—not at present, at least—but that is no reason why we should not give the Re-Incarnationists fair play. One of the greatest difficulties we have is to exercise impartiality towards those with whom we differ, without giving offence. We are often severely blamed for doing this simple act of justice.
- E. A.—Mr. Meugens is expected to reach England again about the middle of this month, we believe.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—The name of Mr. Morell Theobald was inadvertently omitted from our last issue as a member of the Council, and as hon. treasurer of the new Society.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—GLASGOW, March 5; GATESHEAD, March 6; STAMFORD, March 12; NOTTINGHAM, March 19; CARDIFF, March 26; BELPER, April 2; FALMOUTH, April 16 and 17; LONDON, APRIL 23 and 30.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.—[*Advt.*]

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"The Medium and Daybreak."

A full report, quoted from the *Spiritual Offering*, is given of an oration by Mrs. Richmond, the subject of which was, "The Trial of Guiteau—is he Assassin or Lunatic?" the address being professedly delivered under the inspiration of "J. A. Garfield."

Mr. Burns, in a letter to his friends, gives the following interesting particulars of his work and position. These are the facts:—"I earn my living altogether independent of Spiritualism. Every member of my family works; they earn more than they secure. Nearly the whole of my time is free to devote to Spiritual work 'without money and without price.' By management, labour, and service of various kinds, I am thus able to donate, as a free gift in money's worth, £500 to the Cause yearly. Many of the subscriptions announced are actually free gifts given to ourselves personally, for special favours conferred on the donors: but how can we enrich ourselves therewith while the Cause is starving? Now, in addition to this contribution on our part, it takes £500 more yearly to render it effective; that is, Spiritual work spends money rather than makes money. True Spiritual work is a work of self-sacrifice on all hands. The above being my contribution to the Cause, I respectfully ask the members of the Cause to put down pound for pound with me,—and not one farthing of which comes to me for personal enrichment—and in return the subscribers are members of the Spiritual Institution, and can obtain books in abundance from the Progressive Library, and thus have the advantages of a local library in any part of the country."

"The Banner of Light."

The editor reports the results of a visit to Mrs. Fay, a medium for "materialisations" concerning whose mediumship we quoted some particulars in "LIGHT" for February 18th. The editor writes as follows:—

"We have just received additional proof of the truth of our position—were it necessary—in the course of a highly interesting séance held by us with Mrs. H. Fay, of 14, Dover-street, Boston, on the evening of Wednesday, February 1st.

"On that occasion we were accompanied by a gentleman from New York City, who is an investigator whose intelligence and shrewdness, coupled with honesty of purpose, none can gainsay. Twenty-five persons—male and female—composed the company present, and it was a noticeable fact that the sitters were nearly all middle-aged individuals. During the séance which followed, and which lasted from 8 to 10.30 p.m., forty-three spirit-forms—seven males, the residue females—exhibiting the appearance of all ages, from the child in arms to the man six feet high, came out of the curtained recess and made themselves clearly visible, in many cases adding the testimony of touch to that of vision in favour of their objective presence.

"Among those manifesting we can of course specify but few, as specimens of the convincing character of all. Ma-too-ka, an Indian girl, materialised, and came out to us very plainly. She was the first spirit that appeared; she exhibited great vivacity, and slapped us vigorously on both shoulders, by way of more forcibly appealing to our recognition. Other forms materialised, and appeared in rapid succession; one, that of a lady, with especial earnestness beckoned to an old gentleman in the circle, evidently requesting his presence at the cabinet entrance; he complied, and the affectionate reception he received, coupled with the agitation he at once manifested, showed the company that the spirit was evidently one of near relationship, and held in high estimation by him; this proved to be the case, when on returning to his seat he announced, in a voice full of emotion, 'That was my wife!'

"The procession of materialized ones continued, being in the main joyfully recognized by friends present. Ma-too-ka again appeared, after a number of others had been recognized—and, approaching us, retreated toward the cabinet, beckoning us to follow, which we did; arriving at its entrance she reached out her hands and taking ours led us into the darkness of the materializing room: while there we were allowed to satisfy ourselves of the verity of the presence in that cabinet of two forms beside our own, by repeatedly touching the medium's forehead and arms with one hand, while at the same time with the other we maintained a firm grasp upon the arm of the materialized Ma-too-ka!

"A very pleasing episode during the séance was the materialisation of Em-mu-no-es-ka, a young Indian girl, one of the few survivors of the Sand Creek massacre; she was an inmate for some time, while in the mortal, of the home of the late Mrs. J. H. Conant, in this city: she subsequently went to Washington, where she died. We had her earthly remains placed in Forest Hills cemetery, in the vicinity of Boston. Em-mu-no-es-ka came in a form which could not be mistaken, expressing her gratitude for favours rendered her by us in the past.

"During the evening the medium was six times exhibited by spirit-forms who drew aside the curtain, thus showing Mrs. Fay, deeply entranced; two spirit-forms were also seen at one and the same time in some half-dozen instances. The sitting throughout was a success, and what was witnessed as it proceeded will long remain in the memories of those who were privileged to attend it."

"The Herald of Progress."

The following letter, from Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, upon the late convention in Newcastle, will be read with interest, especially as there seems reason to believe that the change of front spoken of was not the only deviation from the original intention:—

"As the plan of holding a Convention of Spiritualists at Newcastle for the sole and express purpose of endeavouring to unite in bonds of amity, charity, and union, the dissevered ranks of English Spiritualists originated with me, and I offered to give time and service to this work, to the utmost extent of my power, I have just read, with equal amazement and indignation, the following passage signed 'Enmore Jones,' and printed in your last issue of February 17th:

"When, however, I found that the Convention was to be used for the purpose of sanctioning a line of action principally, if not wholly, to fight the Churches on Church belief questions, which were only slightly connected with subjects touching the spiritual body, it was obvious to me, that my journey from London to Newcastle would be worse than useless, for such Convention could not be in any way suitable for the mighty task of uniting all sections of Spiritualists so to work as to be a power in the nation."

"My object in addressing you now, Mr. Editor, is to require, through the columns of the paper that printed that libel on the Convention and its first promoters, the writer's authority for the statement he has made."

"The Two Worlds."

The editor, commenting upon the duty of Spiritualists towards mediums, lays down the sensible rule that "it is highly desirable, for many reasons, that the sensitiveness of mediumship should always be coupled with high and firm moral principles, as well as with good intellectual development and spirituality of mind. This is especially desirable in those who offer themselves as public mediums, for the reason that they thereby become exposed to deleterious influences of a dangerous character, which tend to drag them down to evil courses. Such influences need to be firmly resisted in their beginnings, else degradation and debauchery are likely to ensue; and only those who are firmly grounded in moral principle are equipped for such resistance. If they fall, they are liable not only to become the mouth-pieces of evil and seductive Spirits, but whatever of truth and good may be imparted through them from higher sources will be more or less adulterated with falsehood and evil, and their very atmosphere will be deleterious to all who approach them. It is a serious question, therefore, for all intelligent and well-meaning Spiritualists, how far they should give encouragement and patronage to any medium, public or private, who does not manifest a sincere devotion to truth and good, and an earnest *endeavour* at least for a life of rectitude and purity. However startling and convincing may be the 'tests' sometimes given through those whose lives are notoriously at fault, it is questionable whether the influence of such on the whole is not more harmful than favourable to the advancement of true Spiritualism, that is, spirituality."

WE hear that Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt is preparing a small medical work, which will contain information enabling every family to employ means, whereby, as the authoress asserts, they can safely and effectually prevent, treat, cure, and eradicate organic and functional diseases of every description.

AT RUTLAND, Vt., Horace Hotchkiss, aged 70 years, having been insane forty-three years, suddenly came to himself one day last week, and asked his wife, who had devoted all these weary, dreary years to the care of her lunatic husband, to sing. This she could not do, but she repeated a hymn that had been familiar to him in other days, and he brightened with the pleasure it gave him, repeating it after her correctly and entirely. Then he recalled and repeated two or three other hymns, sunk away into unconsciousness, and died.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

PRESENTMENT IN A CHILD.—Little Maud S. Ford, daughter of Geo. F. Ford, of Edmore, Michigan, aged two years, 11 months and seven days, passed to Spirit-life after a very brief illness. About three weeks before she passed she came from her play to her mother and said, "Maudie is not going to stay; she is going away to be buried up in the cold ground." About a week later she said to her sister, "Let Maudie go and ride with you to-day, for she will never go again." In the morning of the day of her departure she appeared in her usual health, when she came to her mother and said, "Maudie don't feel well. Don't you feel sorry for Maudie? She is going to be very sick. She is going away off where you will never see your little Maudie again." The mother tenderly clasped her to her bosom, wondering what this could mean, but was not left in doubt long, for her loved "Maudie" grew seriously ill, and later in the day she said to her mother, "Good-bye; lift me up—I hear the band playing—I am going now." Her little Spirit then departed to be carried by the angels to the bosom of the faithful. I have been acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Ford for many years, and believe they have made truthful statements.—A. H. MACK in *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday evening last this hall was overcrowded with a sympathetic and enthusiastic audience, that had come together to hear the last discourse of the series which has been given here by our friend, Mr. J. J. Morse and his Guide, "Tien-Sien-Tie." The subject of this discourse was "The Day of Judgment." As a matter of course, the popular orthodox teaching of this subject was easily shewn to be inconsistent with the character and attributes of a loving Father and a just judge. It was contended that such ideas of a Judgment Day had been evolved from the minds of the human family, and most decidedly were not a revelation from God. The Judgment Day is neither more nor less than the results of each individual's actions, be they good or bad. If a favourable judgment is desired, then all must use the only means possible to ensure such a result, viz.: by leaving off doing everything that you know and feel to be wrong, and persevering in the performance of what your inner self plainly and distinctly tells you is the right, the true, and the just. From beginning to end this lecture was characterised by a powerful flow of eloquence, which again and again was greeted with hearty bursts of applause. At the close, Mr. Greenwell, in a few well-chosen remarks, moved a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Morse, his Guides, and the gentleman who has so kindly been at the expense of having the whole course reported with a view to their publication in book form. It was truly with feelings of pleasure and regret that this was moved—pleasure at having been the recipients of such an intellectual treat, and regret that the series had come to a close. Mr. Brown, the vice-president of the Society, seconded the motion, which was carried by acclamation, and feelingly acknowledged by Mr. Morse on behalf of all parties; Mr. Morse also desired to thank Mr. Swindin, the worthy president, and Miss Allan (who has contributed several choice recitations at the services), and the Goswell Hall committee for the sympathy and kindness manifested towards himself, concluding with an earnest hope that much good may be the outcome of the services he has felt so much pleasure in being engaged in, and that the audience which have been gathered together will continue to support the other speakers in a similar manner. Thus concluded the most successful course of lectures in the Spiritual movement for a long time past. I hope the time is not far distant when such another treat will be forthcoming.—RES-FACTA.

DALSTON.

On Thursday evening, February 23rd, Mr. A. Rita kindly gave a séance in aid of the funds of this Association, when a large number of the members assembled. I am happy to say that we were not disappointed, as the manifestations were most conclusive in their character. The phenomena consisted of Spirit lights and forms; the lights were exceedingly satisfactory; and one of the forms was instantly recognised by a lady as her niece, who had recently passed away. The striking feature of Mr. Rita's mediumship is the total absence of any preparations in the shape of cabinet, &c. We simply took our places round the table, and the writer, being in close proximity to the medium, can vouch that he never left his seat, but joined in the conversation. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Rita for his kindness, and an earnest desire was expressed that at no distant date we shall again have the pleasure of a sitting with him. The anniversary soirée takes place on Thursday, 9th inst.; tea will be served at 5.30 p.m.—J.N.G.

BRIGHTON.

Last evening, the 28th ult., in the Town Hall, Brighton, a lecture was delivered by Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, on "The Truth about Ghosts." The chair was occupied by Mr. Robert Cooper (of Eastbourne), and the audience was very limited. The chairman having made a few remarks, in the course of which he expressed his opinion that the greater part of humanity tacitly acquiesced in the existence of "these things," Mr. Morse proceeded with his lecture. He endeavoured to prove the reality of the existence of ghosts by comparing the angelic visitations, recorded in ancient Scripture history, to the appearances of the Spirits of the departed; and was of opinion that if these spiritual appearances were properly investigated, they would prove stepping-stones to the demonstration of the truth of a "life after death." He alluded to the phenomena of mesmerism, which at first were ridiculed, but were now believed in throughout the civilised world, and the various arguments put forward by him were sustained with considerable tact, showing that the lecturer had no mere superficial acquaintance with his subject. On the motion of a member of the audience, a vote of thanks was accorded the lecturer, who suitably acknowledged the compliment.—*Sussex Daily News*.

CARDIFF.

At the weekly meeting of the Cardiff Spiritualistic Society, on Sunday evening last, the Darwinian theory of Evolution was taken into consideration, and explained as briefly as the circumstances permitted in a reading by Mr. E. Adams. Subsequently

a select circle sat, and some very interesting communications were received through the trance mediumship of Mr. Brooks. The Unitarians held an anniversary tea meeting and conversation on the 21st ult. The proceedings were varied by music and singing, prominent parts being taken by some local Spiritualists, both ladies and gentlemen, a number of whom were present. Mr. Hammett, the hon. sec. to the Cardiff Unitarian Society, in the course of an excellent address to the members, reviewing their experiences, took occasion to remark that the only sympathy shewn to their Society by outsiders came from the Cardiff Spiritualists, for which he publicly thanked them. As a matter of fact several members of the Cardiff Spiritualistic Society have for some time worked sympathetically with the Unitarians, helping them both in their Sunday-school and pulpit, and whenever their assistance has been required, without taking any undue advantages in the way of pushing their opinions down the throats of the Unitarians. A friendly feeling has thus grown up between the two societies which shews every sign of continuing.

LIVERPOOL.

The condition of matters Spiritual in this city on the Mersey is on the whole satisfactory. The Society is earnestly carrying on the work of the Sunday meetings, and the almost constant services of Mr. J. C. Wright are much appreciated by the audiences which attend his lectures. On the occasional absence of that gentleman his place is taken by either Mr. J. Shepherd, or Mr. Ainsworth, both of them competent exponents of liberal and Spiritual thought. On Sunday, February 19th, Mrs. E. H. Britten lectured here, and at the evening meeting even standing room was unattainable; it is needless to add that her labours were most successful. The friends are working hard for the cause, and are glad to know that their endeavours are not quite in vain.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—I am heartily grieved to find that the editorial pen of our Newcastle contemporary has so far forgotten itself in last week's issue as to lose its temper over my Newcastle news, and though the intents of its elaborately prolonged preamble are quite transparent to those acquainted with the source whence they proceed, yet it is probable there may be some, through their ignorance of how matters stand in the North, who will be misled by this specious seeming. I am charged with telling half-truths. The fact is I tell as much of the truth as I can get hold of, and far more of it than my assailants. Both papers are before the country; people can read and understand for themselves. My report of the convention which my friend is kicking at is exactly correct, as I can prove. Moreover, I hold in my possession information as to the correct cause of the abandonment of the convention, which I have authority to use, and will use, if I am driven to it. It is evident our friend is apprehensive of the Newcastle Society's disjointed condition as he is the first to write upon it; and when we know that some of its best and most earnest workers have been driven to sever their official connection through the abuse dealt in all round by the powers that be, we are inclined to think that there is really something out of joint. Concerning the Gateshead Society I may state from inquiry in their ranks that they are in accord with all societies in the district, and with no one in particular, and as to their recognising the N.S.E.S. as their parent, outside of two or three inconsiderate factors, they deny the suggestion *in toto*. The writer further says:—"We have observed, for months now, the subtle means and devices which these London people have adopted to throw the apple of discord in our midst." On this point we believe as little in his observing powers as we do in his prior facts. As far as we are concerned in the above insinuation, we give it an emphatic denial.

GATESHEAD.—Last Sunday evening at 6.30, at the new hall of the G.S.I.S., Mr. Nicholson, a young and promising trance-speaker, lectured to a good audience upon "Hope in the Future." The subject was chosen by the audience, and rendered by the speaker in a very intelligent manner, which appeared to meet the appreciation of the audience to a very considerable extent. The president occupied the chair. We desire to inform the readers of "LIGHT," who, we are happy to say, are growing more numerous in the North, that Mr. J. J. Morse, the celebrated trance orator, of London, will lecture from the Gateshead Society's platform, on Monday, March 6th, at 8 p.m., on "Spiritualism, Past, Present, and Future."

ASHINGTON.—Last Sunday, Mr. W. H. Robinson, of Newcastle, lectured in the afternoon and evening at the meeting-room of the Ashington Society, to good audiences. His subjects, which dealt chiefly with the power and progress of the Spiritual movement, were treated with great ability. Mr. Grahaime, late a local preacher among the Methodists, occupied the chair.—NORTHUMBRIA.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTON has promised to lecture as follows:—Sundays of March and April, Manchester.—Apply, The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.—[Advt.]

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.; Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., Professor of Physics in the University of Cambridge; 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, F.R.S.; *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. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning, &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 *mediumistic 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 hereby 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 sésances, 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 sésance.

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.