

Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The question of prevision, prophetic dreams, and warnings is full of interest and perplexity. Among many curious things connected with this group of subjects is the singular and persistent nature of the dreams that come to particular persons. I have a friend, for instance, whose dreams have lately been in a sense prophetic, and the symbolism used is always connected with a coffin. For some time past, subsequent to the loss of a near relative (a most potent means of opening the spiritual faculties), he has been conscious of the possession of some psychic power, and of the endeavours of unseen friends to manifest their presence by using it. The attempts so made have been rather in the way of personal guidance and direction, and the signs used are objective. It seems probable, therefore, that his visions and dreams are referable to Spirit influence. They are not in themselves of a startling nature, but are curious in that the coffin-symbolism runs through them all, and they apparently refer to persons with whom my friend is only incidentally and remotely connected. I asked him to note for me the broad facts, and from his narrative I extract what follows.

"The circumstances of which I have to speak are wanting in the element of time, as unfortunately I forgot to mark the exact dates of either the vision or the dreams—but all have occurred since the commencement of the present year. The first occurrence was this:—I was sitting alone one Sunday morning by my fire-side smoking and reading. On my right hand were several Austrian bent-wood chairs with open backs; suddenly there came an impression on the right side of my retina, of a white coffin-lid just occupying the space of which the frame-work of the chair back formed the border. I was rather startled, and wished very much that the impression might fade away, or that it might prove to be an illusion. I went on with my book, and when I had got fairly into my reading again, and had for the time forgotten the incident, the whole was repeated. I then had no doubt that some information was intended to be conveyed to me, and as the apparent coffin-lid was white, and about three feet high, I conjectured that some child of a friend or acquaintance would die soon. The two-year-old son of a friend and colleague, closely connected with me by business ties, did actually die within, I think, three weeks, though at that time I was not aware that the child was ill, beyond some slight suffering caused by teething."

"The second set of occurrences was three dreams.—Dream I. was the figure of a man carrying a coffin apparently through a street in a country town.—Dream II. was a coffin-lid placed against a wall, with a smaller coffin-lid resting upon it.—Dream III. was a set of several coffins of a common kind outside the door apparently of an undertaker's shop. The three dreams have all occurred within the last few weeks, though I cannot, as I say, fix the dates. On Wednesday last, on visiting some friends, I heard that a man whom I once knew fairly well, and who was intimately connected with people with whom I also at one time was intimately connected, was then dying in the town of Lewes. This seems to be the meaning of Dream I. On Sunday, four weeks ago, Mr. C. died; on Sunday week his son, aged seventeen, also

died, the latter quite suddenly. In my second dream the coffin-lids were just those of a full grown man and of a youth. This seems to be the meaning of Dream II. Going into my club one day last week, a friend said to me almost directly, "My father-in-law dropped down dead yesterday." On Thursday last my cook had news that her father had been taken ill suddenly, and on Saturday he died. This morning's paper records the death of the father of an old pupil; and in the obituaries of the morning papers there have been announced the deaths of several others with whom I have been connected in some way or other; this, perhaps, is the meaning of Dream III."

It may be that these are but coincidences; strange enough in their recurrent nature, if so it be. But that cheap and easy method of getting out of a difficulty does not commend itself to me. I think it is the inner impression that such dreams are indeed meant to draw attention to certain events, if not to give actual warning of them, that is to me the strongest argument for their spiritual source. Coincidence will not explain more than an insignificant proportion of occurrences that we *must* account for in any scheme of spiritual philosophy. It is not the dreamer only, or the seer, that finds prophetic warnings. I have another friend whose warnings come to him through numbers, of whose mystic properties he has been a student. To him, also, at a time when his inner senses had been opened in like manner by the purifying touch of sorrow, there came, by this method—the easiest, perhaps, as being that which interested him most—warning and evidence of the nearness of unseen friends. Why the coffin, in the one case? Why the numbers, with their perpetually recurrent significance, in the other? I—though this is more in accord with our knowledge (as we audaciously call our blank ignorance)—I have frequently found myself impelled, *directed* to take up or procure books or newspapers which it proved useful for me to read; though, left to myself, I should never have thought of getting them. Is it not fair to say, in the light of all these and countless other collateral facts, that about our paths, and about our bed, in the silence of night, and in the bustle of life, are waiting and watching unseen friends, who guide and guard us when we least think of it?

In that very remarkable book which is now attracting so much attention—"John Inglesant"—there is a passage which contains these words:—"There seems to me something frightfully grotesque about the Roman Catholic Church as a reality. Shewing us on the one side a mass of fooleries and ridiculous conceits and practices, at which, but for the use of them, all men must needs stand amazed: such rabble of impossible relics, the hay that was in the manger, and more than one tail of the ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem. . . . To look on these, on the one side, and on the other to see those . . . cruelties by which thousands have been tormented by this holy and pure Church, has something about it so grotesque and fantastic that it seems sometimes more like some masque or dance of satyrs or devils, than the followers of our Saviour Christ." This, of course, is a superficial, and very one-sided view: but it struck me, when reading it, as being just the view that superficial observers and loose thinkers take of Spiritualism. To many minds, Spiritualism is "frightfully grotesque," "a mass of fooleries and ridiculous practices," which occupy the whole mental view to the exclusion of the noble and elevating that there is in this communion of Spirit. We too have our "more than one tail of the ass," and they are so attractive to our critics that they dwell on them as on a congenial theme, and can see no further. Has the Catholic Church no "Lives of the Saints"; no records of self-sacrifice and self-denial; no stories of patient, heroic women who, like Him they serve, "went about doing good?" To ignore these, and to dwell on stories of the Inquisition and those "tails of the ass," is to treat the history of the Catholic Church as men treat Spiritualism when they make much of the

fraud and the folly that blot its otherwise fair features, and pass glibly over its religious teachings and its consolatory glimpses of the hereafter.

Of the many sinners in this respect Swedenborgians are perhaps the most blameworthy because they ought to know better. A man who knows of Spiritualism just what his penny paper tells him at breakfast may not be expected to take any but an utterly one-sided and superficial view of it. He reads only of "tails of the ass," and knows no better. But they who may be supposed to be familiar with the writings of Swedenborg are in another category altogether, and ought to know better. Yet they are usually very unfair and bitter in their treatment of Spiritualism. For instance, the *New Jerusalem Messenger* (New York, U.S.A., February 22nd), contains what is editorially described as "a rational, simple, and useful treatment" of the subject by W. B. H., in the course of which all that is fair, noble, and of good report is ignored or be-littled, and the whole of the communications made from the world of Spirits are described as "falsities of wicked Spirits." The attempt to meet the intellectual needs of men who crave for evidence of what they fondly hope—such evidence as will lift them from the slough of Materialism to a firm standpoint of spiritual belief—is described as "turning back to a lower plane," a pandering to "the sensual part of the mind." "Let those things be for persons who do not know any better!" The prophet Samuel is described as "a party to a disorderly transaction" with the woman of Endor! After this it is odd to be told that "the attitude of New Churchmen towards those people who are engaged in it" (Spiritualism) "should be one of the utmost kindness and charity. Anything like indiscriminating criticism or wholesale condemnation should be avoided." I would humbly suggest an antecedent attitude of mind as desirable. It is a reasonable and reasoning attempt to estimate the elementary principles and facts of the subject under "indiscriminating criticism and wholesale condemnation." The methods of the *New Jerusalem Messenger* are not conducive to the discovery of truth. M. A. (OXON.)

DISSENTERS' MEETINGS IN NEW YORK.

The *New York Sun* recently contained a report of a round of visits made by one of its correspondents to different places of meeting, advertised for "religious service," &c., outside the pale of the ordinary and long-established sects.

In the course of his round, extending over many Sundays,—encountering on his way the same kind of open-air gatherings as one sees in London,—he entered the "churches" and "halls" of the Service of Song, Hebrew Christians, Christadelphians, Christian Israelites, Second Adventists, Latter-day Saints, Gospel Meetings, Ethical Culturists, French Baptists (the preacher being an ex-Catholic priest who closed his service by marrying a couple); the Druids (whose meeting-room was on a fourth floor); the Cremorne Reforming Mission (an ex-pugilist being its preacher); the Scientific Church, the lecturer taking for his text "The Unknowable." This philosopher rapidly stated the views of Plato, Aristotle, Tyndall, Huxley, and Herbert Spencer, and upset them all to his own satisfaction. At one hall, "Marriage and Divorce as in America" was the subject. In the Hall of the College of Physicians and Surgeons preached "Bishop Snow of Mount Zion," who told his congregation that he was called mad because he insisted on holding up Bible truths to the world.

The correspondent also visited the hall of the Harmonial Association, where Andrew Jackson Davis lectured, and also two Spiritualist meetings, at one of which there was a denunciation of some one who claimed to be a medium, but was "a fraud."

The *New York Sun* gives this report, it says, to let its readers know of the great diversity of theological opinion and the extent to which freedom of thought and speech reaches in America.

Mrs. F. H. BRITTEN is lecturing most acceptably to the Manchester Spiritualists.

Mr. JOHN WALKER—brother of the talented Thomas Walker—is about to enter the ranks of professional speakers upon Spiritualism.

The premises of the B.N.A.S. will be closed for the Easter holidays from Good Friday to Monday next inclusive. The Council meeting will be held in ordinary course on Tuesday evening next, when important business will be transacted.

REMARKABLE CURE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having seen the child, Master Peas, mentioned in the subjoined letter, and taken his own statement, and having also seen a lady who knows the child, I can so far vouch for the correctness of the statement in the mother's letter.

The blindness in the one eye was the result, I believe, of paralysis of the nerves of the eye.

Possibly the sight of the eye might have been restored by friction with stimulating liniments, but anyway the result is much to the credit of Mr. Mack.

March 29th, 1882.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

Cromwell-road North,

To Dr. Wyld.

Peterborough, March 27th, 1882.

DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in giving you the particulars of our child's accident and consequent blindness, and his perfect restoration of sight by Dr. Mack's treatment. About a year and ten months ago, he fell down and struck his head upon a door-post. A large bump arose very quickly just on the eyebrow, and a slight black eye ensued; both bump and blackness disappeared in a few days, but the eye began to turn in, and he has always squinted since. For months we thought it would get better in time, that it might be a habit which he would out-grow. However, in the last week in August last the eye was very much turned in and the child complained of pain over that eye, and on the 28th of August I took him to a very reliable physician in this city, who examined him, and said he "thought a good glass would remedy the evil—the sight was defective, and caused the boy to squint; there was no hurry for the glass as the child was so young" (just seven years old) "and he would see him again." The child went from home on a visit, returning in November. He was again taken to the same physician, who, in company with his partner (likewise an M.D.), thoroughly examined the eye. The latter gentleman said glasses would be of no use, he would never see any more with that eye, but the squint could be moved by operation. We had nothing more done. After Christmas the child had severe colds for some time, resulting in inflammation of the lungs. When he was well enough to be up again, a discolouration, like part of a bruise, was visible, as far back as we could see when the eye was turned in towards the nose. This was on the 26th of February. He was then perfectly blind with that eye, and had been some time. We were most anxious to consult some celebrated oculist as our friends were urging us to do so. We had not decided where to take him, when two lady friends who were going up to London offered to take him with them to Dr. Mack, 26, Upper Baker-street, London; both of them knew of cures that gentleman had effected. The offer was thankfully accepted, and the child went to town on Tuesday, March 14th. On Wednesday, the ladies returned, leaving the boy under Dr. Mack's care, and we were informed that the child could see to point out letters of the smallest print with the affected eye. I went to London the following Friday, and the sight appeared to be perfectly restored as far as I could judge; for the child could tell the time from the clock on the Houses of Parliament, the colours of small flowers at a distance, and had quite lost the habit of "feeling" his way with his hand. The time being so very short, it was deemed advisable for him to remain a little longer with Dr. Mack and he returned home on Thursday last, having been away ten days. I was present three times during Dr. Mack's manipulations. The child seemed really to be comforted thereby. Dr. Mack's great kindness to him during his stay at his house has made his sojourn there a very happy visit that will never be forgotten, and he returned to us with perfect sight, without having undergone any operation or suffered the slightest pain.

It is my sincere belief that if something had not been promptly done the eye would have had to be removed. Could any other treatment have been so quickly effective and so perfectly painless? His general health too was so much improved.

Hoping I have written intelligibly, I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

ANNIE PEAS.

Mr. J. C. WRIGHT, the Liverpool medium, intends to be present at the Hudson testimonial meeting at Neumeyer Hall, on the 20th inst.

Mr. J. W. MAHONY, lately resident in Birmingham, where he was well-known as an able lecturer upon Spiritualism, has recently removed to Newcastle-on-Tyne, where he is actively engaged in lecturing and healing.

OUR FANCIES AND OUR FACTS;
THEIR DANGERS AND THEIR USES.

Paper read by MR. J. J. MORSE, at 38, Great Russell-street,
on Monday Evening, April 3rd.

That Spiritualism is associated in the minds of many outsiders with a variety of fancies more or less grotesque, is, without doubt, only too true. Equally correct is it that Spiritualists are not always superior to the charge urged against their faith and principles, for an examination of the literature of the movement, in past and present years, will certainly disclose a charming variety of speculation and theory upon spiritual matters in general, and upon Spiritualism in particular. This variety may be indicative of the intellectual vigour of Spiritualists, but it is not a little confusing to those who desire to know something definite concerning the teachings that really belong to what is called Spiritualism. Nor is it beyond the fact to add that this luxuriance of fancy would be gladly exchanged by many in our ranks for greater definiteness upon the leading principles in our belief.

Naturally, where the ground is so strange, and the circumstances so novel, as is the case to the investigators of our cause, we may expect hasty generalisations, sweeping assertions, rash conclusions, and fancies that are literally

“The baseless fabric of a vision.”

Nay, more, we must not be surprised if our co-workers in the early days of the cause, were carried away by the force of their emotions, and so sometimes mistook weeds for flowers, fancies for facts. For movements, like individuals, are apt at first to be enthusiastic, indiscriminating, and to assume characteristics which excite the ridicule or contempt of observers. But a distinction exists, though a little difficult to define, between the crazes of individuals, and the incorrect assumptions put forth in the name of a party. For, sometimes, if the individual be blessed with persistence enough, he may live to see his craze to some extent adopted, in which case he succeeds in creating lumber for others, who may come after him, to clear away.

There is also to be noted in connection with the rise of schools of thought, that such schools are either initiated by a single mind, which seizes some great principle and adapts it to the general good; or else such school is the result of the thoughts and conclusions of many minds being brought to a focus, and their principles disclosed by a thinker capable of extracting harmony from the apparent discord. In the first case we have a leader; in the second case we have a teacher. And nearly always the appeals are to our feelings and to our judgments, respectively. At present, Spiritualism does not seem to possess either; many have tried to lead, more have tried to teach; and neither have attained any considerable success. Fancy has luxuriated; speculation has abounded; while agreement on any point seems almost unattainable. Far be it from me to suggest that it should therefore be inferred that fancy and speculation are to be banished from Spiritualism. On the contrary, within the limits of sense and reason, fancy and speculation are useful as safety valves—aye, even as steps to heights to be attained. It is when judgment is obscured, reason rejected, and fact ignored, that fancy runs riot and produces disorders, which are reflected in the vagaries of individuals, or the absurd pretensions of a party.

The origin, nature, powers, and destiny of the soul are all favourite topics for speculative minds within our ranks, and the fancies expressed concerning such matters are varied in the extreme. One writer asserts that our souls are “monads,” sparks of the Divine, incarnated in fleshly vesture; another claims us as being built up of the Spirit of God, through nature’s laws; an eminent lady lecturer argues that we are only a piece of ourselves, since only certain parts of the soul are clothed in flesh, and the complete acquaintance with material life is a piecemeal process; while not many years ago the doctrine was boldly urged that only a few had got souls good enough—it should be strong enough—to survive the ordeal of death! And we have a school of thinkers at the present time who inform us that we are most likely somebody else, and may have been playing at a sort of hide and seek between this world and the next for heaven only knows how long! At first sight these fancies upon such an important matter as the origin and destiny of the soul fill one with a sort of hopeless bewilderment. Further reflection will show us that they are evidences of a desire to know more on the question than has been obtainable from previous associations. This thirst for knowledge is natural. Minister to it by the results of investi-

gation and experiment, and the solid nutrition thus given will displace the windy platitudes and contradictory fancies that please the unthinking, but disgust the intelligent. Indeed the accumulation of substantial proof that we have a soul at all is perhaps as good a service to the world as we can render. That proved, so that scepticism is vanquished, we can then commence the consideration of its origin and destiny.

A few years since English Spiritualists were not a little exercised in their minds over what has been christened “Theosophy,” and which for the most part consists, as to its machinery, of a secret brotherhood, whose members are adepts in matters of the occult. These Theosophs look down with a deal of pity upon our Spiritualism; and a leader of their number professes to be able to duplicate the Spiritual phenomena by the aid of will power alone. They talk of “astral Spirits,” and “sub-mundane Spirits,” and revive for our edification gnomes, sylphs, Undines, Kobolds, and the rest. They deal largely in fastings and invocations and claim ability to control Spirits; and they profess to number among them not a few of the Spiritualists of this country. Is it not time that mystery and mummery were lifted out of the inquiry into the nature of man’s spiritual powers and relationships? If these occultist fancies are to be attached to Spiritualism, then magic, witchcraft, and sorcery will surely be upon us again, and the superstitious and uncultured will find devils in dreams, mistake indigestion for obsession, and will see special Spirit interventions in the most trifling actions of daily life.

Another fancy which has attained prominence is the much misunderstood subject of “Christian” Spiritualism—misunderstood because it has been imperfectly formulated by its supporters, on the one hand, and because it has been associated with creedal Christianity by its opponents, on the other hand. When clearly defined and intelligibly stated, Christian Spiritualism does not mean the current orthodoxy varnished over, but a restoration of the spiritual truths and experiences of the early Churches, so that they may take their places with the new experiences of to-day, and aid us, it may be, to better understand the lives of, and lessons taught by, Jesus and His followers.

Now among the rankest fancies of our cause ought to be classed Spirit and medium-worship. How often is it assumed that Spirits are all-wise and that their utterances are to be accepted *ex cathedra*, and their requests obeyed at all costs; when, as a matter of fact, the Spirits are, sometimes, only just as wise, or otherwise, as ourselves. How frequently, too, is medium-worship encountered, the unfortunate subject of it being dosed with flattery, and intoxicated by the sickening sentimentality which is poured into his ears, until at last he becomes an intolerable nuisance, sets up for a sort of a second-hand God, and claims oracular power, while in truth needing a pin’s prick to reduce the volume of inflated vanity that injudicious friends have created. By all means let us give due honour to these servants of the cause. Let us never fail to recognise their use. But do not let us spoil them by over praise. Most of us can endure censure; but flattery causes many to fall. All true-minded workers will admit that the kindly criticism of a friend is worth all the flattering praises of an injudicious admirer.

Three forms of policy are presented within the ranks of Spiritualism. The fancies they involve are clearly marked and well defined; so much so, that it is well nigh impossible to harmonise the divergent issues presented.

It is a strong fancy with some Spiritualists that Spiritualism is purely and merely scientific—a question of phenomena. Observation, experimentation, classification, registration, make up the whole of Spiritualism as the phenomenal Spiritualist understands the matter. Facts, curious facts, but facts only. Souls there may be; a next world there may be; but we must be careful not to say that the facts we have investigated warrant any such conclusion! The “scientific” fancy becomes at last an attenuated Spiritualism, with the Spirits strained off! Let us have accuracy of observation, calmness in judgment, by all means. Let us carefully scrutinise the phenomena of mediumship, but let us watch that we do not by an inordinate and unjustifiable and intolerant scepticism, close up the avenues by which the facts reach us, for scientific Spiritualism is not too mindful of the feelings of either mortal or Spirits, at times.

There is an emotional Spiritualism, also, which hysterically accepts every statement, every phenomenon, and is a revulsion from the rigid methods of the form of Spiritualism just dealt with. It accepts all “conditions,” permits all reactions, but makes no stipulations in return. It trusts the medium

implicitly, and is cheated by some tricky Spirit, and being in a "shut-your-eyes and open-your-mouth" condition of mind, gets more than was bargained for, and less than is honourable or creditable, either to Spirit or medium.

Then, again, the Spiritualism which assumes a religious character, and claims a place in our hearts, is rich soil for fancy-mongers, who delight themselves by uttering doctrines that vary between the eccentricities of a Harris, the fervour of a Peebles, the intellectuality of a Tuttle, the poetry of a Davis, the Rationalism of a Denton, the transcendentalism of a Tappan and the high-minded wholesomeness of a Britten.

Dangers there are in these fancies that some of us are fairly well versed in; fancies that have caused us to be laughed at, or scorned; fancies, too, that have been fanned by those who should have known better; fancies that have made Spiritualism in some quarters synonymous with ignorance and superstition. And the danger is that these fancies, growing unchecked in our midst, may cause the unreflecting and enthusiastic to turn aside from that path of safety which has fact for its foundation, and principles for its guide-posts.

To turn now to a consideration of our facts and their uses, it will be best and most convenient to limit the inquiry to three points upon which Spiritualists are mostly agreed—those three points being Spirit Intercourse, Spirit Identity, and Human Immortality. The term "fact" is not used here as belonging to the phenomena of Spiritualism, but to those essential facts which, so to put it, are evolved from, and rest upon, the phenomena.

We, as Spiritualists, are agreed upon the reality of our intercourse with the spiritual world, and this being so, we are compelled to admit that the old time opinions as to a period of sleep, or rest, between death and the resurrection are untenable to us now. Indeed, if this starting point, the reality of spiritual intercourse, be admitted, our opinions concerning the future life must be modified by that admission most materially. May we not even go so far as to say that it may entirely change our ideas of the nature of the departed, and of the character of Hell and Heaven? For one idea being abandoned, may leave us no logical alternative but to retreat from all contingent ideas also.

Most of us are also satisfied as to the identity of particular communicating Spirits, and from that we gather that the Spirits of our former companions carry their characters with them into their second life, so that identity and consciousness are inseparable conditions of individual being. Further, we conclude from the foregoing that identity being retained, the companionships of earth are not necessarily severed by death, but may be, and in fact are, carried forward and renewed in the Spirit life. There is also opened up to us the conclusion that death effects no immediate change in the nature of the departed, who remain at first even as they were spiritually in this life—progressed or not, with the certainty, the Spirits assure us, of ultimately becoming better and better, in all cases.

The accumulated testimony in matters of Spirit intercourse and Spirit identity, lays the foundation for a modern basis of belief in immortality, which, conjoined to ancient evidences, places the Spiritualist in an impregnable position. It is not only faith, it is knowledge. The apostolic injunction "to add to your faith knowledge," is fulfilled. Now, based on what has just gone before, are there no points of teaching that we can all unite upon—not merely as matters of opinion but as the true deductions from the facts rehearsed? Surely it may be suggested that the Spiritual platform contains the elements of a religious philosophy positive in statement, liberal in character, elevating in effect? We know that immortality is true, by reason of being in communion with those who are its living witnesses, who tell us, moreover, that it contains conditions of punishment and progress. And surely this for ever prevents the need of our depending upon any theological creed to secure the means of happiness hereafter.

Here is indicated a scientific Spiritualism, with full scope for the exercise of its critical and experimental skill in analysing the methods by which the intercourse between the two worlds is conducted. Here, too, is scope for an emotional Spiritualism, appealing to the heart, by restoring to the bereaved its loved ones, and reuniting ties which had been thought for ever sundered. And is there not also here room for that emotion of enthusiasm, which urges us to carry the good news abroad? And is it not here, too, that we may find the elements of a religious Spiritualism, which is capable of purging the present conventionalities from true spiritual and religious life, making it a thing of beauty, as indeed it is? Surely the use of these facts is, that they may become foundation stones upon which the

structure of a definite and pronounced Spiritualism can be erected.

We must turn from mere fancies, mystical, semi-scientific, or superstitious, and address ourselves to the problem, how can we make this Spiritualism of ours a power in our midst? Never until we can put it plainly and frankly that we are agreed upon some such principles as here presented, until we can say "This is our platform," shall we take our place as a distinctive factor in the thought of modern times. One thing is certain, if this is not to be yet, a mind will some day arise which will be capable of gathering the scattered threads of the Spiritual faith, and twist them into a cable stout and strong, that will give us something firm and sure on which to hold.

This, then, is the use of our facts; it is, that they will be clay in the coming potter's hands—may wisdom attend him at his wheel. Until the potter comes let us carefully sift every fancy, weigh well every fact—accepting fact as final, and truth as authority; sternly discountenancing wrong; and ever remembering that if the facts and teachings of Spiritualism are contrary to reason the sooner we withdraw from such a system the better. After fourteen years of consolation, illumination, and profit of mind, the writer can truly say that a reasonable Spiritualism which can stand criticism and the light of day, has but few real dangers, but is plentifully blessed with innumerable uses.

GHOSTS OF LIVING PERSONS.

The remarkable apparition of a living person narrated in your last number is far from being unique, as "S. W. W." supposes. It may be paralleled in every particular by a story originally sent to the *Spectator*, in 1869, by the Rev. W. L. Clay, Vicar of Rainhill, and afterwards published in the *Spiritual Magazine*, N.S. iv., p. 302. In this case the father of the narrator was seen by his wife to come in at the yard-door of his house. They then heard him enter the hall, put his umbrella in the stand, stump upstairs, and enter the drawing-room, where he stood over the fire (it was raining heavily), until his wife suggested to him that he had better go upstairs and put on dry things. He said, "I suppose I might," and went out. Shortly after she discovered that he was not really in the house, and it was not till about an half an hour afterwards that he actually came in, and repeated exactly the scene which had been enacted by his double, just at the time that he himself was leaving the prison where his duties called him, about two miles off. H. W.

MR. AND MRS. EVERITT.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you permit me to give expression to some fear that friends and upholders of Spiritualism think that large sums are desirable to record their sense of the services of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt to the cause?

It is *au contraire*. A large amount is not needed to accomplish a very important object; and surely four subscriptions of five shillings each will be far better than one of a pound.—Truly yours, S. C. HALL.

THE "EVERITT" TESTIMONIAL.—We have the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of the following contributions:—

	£	s.	d.
F. H.	2	2	0
F. W. H. Myers	1	1	0
Earl Bird	1	1	0
W. P. Adshead	1	1	0
E. Dawson Rogers	1	1	0
Morrell Theobald	1	1	0
John Lamont	1	1	0
Frederick Griffin	1	1	0
G. R. Tapp	1	1	0
Mr. H.	1	1	0
Mrs. H.	1	1	0
G. Damiani... ..	1	1	0
S. C. Hall	1	0	0
J. P. Turner	0	10	0
Mrs. A.	0	10	0
J. J. Morse	0	5	0
	£15	18	0

Mrs. JENCKEN.—We have received the following sums towards the fund proposed to be raised for the benefit of the widow and children of the late H. D. Jencken:—

	£	s.	d.
S. C. Hall	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Stack	5	0	0
H. Wedgwood	5	0	0
R. Glendinning (Birkdale)	5	0	0
R. B. (Edinburgh)	1	1	0

"EVENINGS WITH MR. MORSE."

At the meeting on the 29th ult., at 38, Great Russell-street, (the last of the present series), the following questions were asked :—

Some persons at séances are liable to sudden changes of bodily temperature from warm to cold. Can you explain the cause of this, and also state whether there is any danger to health therefrom, and suggest a remedy?

The Controlling Spirit said that such changes were frequently due to physical causes, such as dyspepsia, lack of digestive power, a flow of blood to the stomach, deficient circulation, &c. In such cases there was danger, but not to any alarming extent, unless these fluctuations were due to a tendency to heart disease. Then there was danger, which should be carefully watched and guarded against, as these symptoms might develop into confirmed heart disease. With regard to the first mentioned troubles, the remedy was, careful attention to diet, frequent bathing, gentle exercise; and avoidance of stimulants, so long as the symptoms prevailed. These remedies would in most cases relieve the patient and ensure health. In the case of heart or lung disease far greater caution was necessary. Persons suffering from such should avoid séances as a rule, especially those for physical phenomena; as the vitality they lost, if drawn away repeatedly, would cause the incipient malady to become chronic, and accelerate their removal from this world.

Question.—Stress is sometimes laid upon the necessity for individualsitters at séances of different characters and dispositions taking up different positions in regard to the points of the compass. Is there in your opinion anything in this: if so, be good enough to throw some little light on the subject?

The Control said that he had never been able to detect any imperative necessity for such an arrangement. People had confused ideas regarding the magnetism of the Spirit—so to speak—and terrestrial magnetism. Although some conformity to arrangement at a circle may be necessary there is no real basis for the one referred to in the question—except perhaps this: that when thoughts are present in the minds of sitters which are entertained more or less dogmatically on this subject, opposition to such strong ideas produces discomfort and retards manifestation. The controlling Spirits, therefore, do not oppose the disposition of sitters at a circle in this or any other way which may be acceptable. If harmony is secured, this is all that is needed. Some Spirits, for the sake of obtaining this, which enables them to manifest to advantage, do not, moreover, scruple to confirm the notions of sitters, however absurd or eccentric, in this or similar matters.

Question.—Whether a post-mortem examination, taking place soon after the death of the body, is a painful operation to the Spirit—that is, whether the Spirit, in all cases, gets away from the body in time?

The Control said that as far as his knowledge went, Spirits are, as a rule, entirely free from the body in a very short time. In some cases there might be sympathy. Very gross or ignorant persons, or peculiar thinkers who set great value on their earthly envelopes, might perhaps be pained; but this feeling could not long continue, as it would all the more speedily help them to realise their changed condition. Some, who in life disliked to witness such operations—and very few cared to see them unless professionally led—might feel that disgust when in the Spirit, even if they did not feel pain; but no intelligent Spirit could be distressed to any extent by such an occurrence. It was, after all, a matter of education. Possibly the time was not far distant, when with a more extended knowledge of matters psychical and their bearing upon material conditions, post-mortem examinations would become things of the past.

A conversation then ensued, during which the Controlling Spirit said, in reply to a suggestion from one of those present, that when these meetings were resumed the Controls would be prepared to open discussions on topics which might be arranged such as "Occultism," "Mesmerism," and cognate subjects.

The Strolling Player then for a short time amused and instructed the audience with his quaint remarks, which were chiefly upon the difficulties experienced by Spirits leaving the body in accommodating themselves to the circumstances in which they found themselves, and learning the conditions by which they had to progress in the other world,—so different to what the majority of them had imagined or believed in.

The head must not be allowed to predominate over the heart.

THE DEVIL'S CONNECTION WITH SPIRITUALISM

A correspondent of the *Church Times* thus defends Spiritualism from a most stupid objection which is often brought against it:—

The facts of Spiritualism are usually first denied; then all kinds of theories are broached to account for them, and break down one after the other through failing to cover all the facts; lastly, the cry is raised, "it is the work of the Devil." To this point, one that steam engines, winnowing machines, and the telegraph, have long passed, we have now come. Some say the Devil himself personates the spirits of the departed; others, that he sends evil spirits (whether of man or not is not asserted) to do so; but, considering the strong tests of identity, even to the presentation of a material likeness, that have been given, if this be true, I see not why I am not just as likely to be deluded by a diabolical spirit, while I suppose that I am conversing with a friend in the street. Grant to the Devil a general power of impersonation, and there is no means of settling any question of identity.

Respecting the Devil's supposed connection with Spiritualism, the facts I give below throw some light. A personal friend of my own attended a séance, when the spirit of a woman, who stated that she had lived in a quiet sort of way a very immoral life, professed to communicate. She said that her mental sufferings since her death had been past description, and she commissioned my friend to go to a certain house in a street here, and warn her two sisters, who, so she said, were leading similar lives to her own, what the end would be if they did not repent and forsake their sin. My friend very naturally objected to undertake this very delicate mission, and expressed doubts as to how he would be received. The spirit communicated to him certain items of information which, she said, if mentioned to her sisters, would ensure their credence, and attention to his errand. Reluctantly, he went to the street, found that two women of the name given lived at the house that had been mentioned, delivered his credentials, with which his auditors appeared to be perfectly satisfied, and then gave to them the solemn warning he had been charged to convey. In another instance, the spirit of a suicide professed to describe the blackness and apparent hopelessness of his first state in the spirit-world. A spirit voice said to him, "Have you asked for mercy?" to which he replied, "No, it is of no use, there is no mercy for me," and to this the voice responded, "Yes, there is; the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Then the spirit said, after these words dawned the first ray of light on his mental darkness. I have also read of a case in which a spirit urged a young woman not to neglect going to the Holy Communion on some particular occasion. I cannot recollect the details, but I know that at the time I thought the advice given was what I should have given myself.

If these facts support the theory of diabolical agency, then, either Satan is reforming (which Origen considered at least a possibility), or he is divided against himself, and we know what our Saviour said on that point.

Respecting the un- or anti-Christian character of very many spiritualistic communications, the truth would appear to be this:—The door of communication is now open and spirits of all kinds communicate. The bulk of those who have lived during past ages of the world were not Christians at all; hence, as we have no reason for supposing that non-Christians in this life are to be made Christians in the next state, if the spirits of such communicate on religious subjects, the substance of their addresses must be more or less un- or anti-Christian. From what I have learned, but do not feel at liberty to set down in print, I have no doubt but that with carefully selected sitters (for on this careful selection much of the result of a séance depends) a very high and truly Christian character of manifestation could be obtained.

* * * * *

That some Spiritualists are endeavouring to manufacture a religion out of the facts of Spiritualism cannot be denied; but the attempt cannot but fail, and for this reason, if none other, that until the highest class of manifestations are systematically obtained, the premises must be incomplete, and conclusions drawn from incomplete premises must necessarily be more or less faulty. It rests, I believe, with the Church of Christ to obtain these higher manifestations of Spiritualism, and when they are regularly obtained, I cannot but think that the facts of Spiritualism, rightly explained, will not fail to coincide with the teaching of Christ Jesus our Lord.

JOHN HEXWOOD,
Camp Hill, Birmingham.

March 18th.

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.

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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.

VISION AND PREVISION.

If the soul has primarily but one sense, that of feeling, then our different senses come from different appeals to this primary one, and it is not strange that there is at times a mingling and confusion of our perceptions. When I was very young I heard a Voice. It spoke to me words of wisdom, warning, and instruction. It was sacred to me. I do not think that I ever doubted its sacred character. After some years, it seemed merged in vision; I saw pictures instead of hearing words. I used to speak the words which I heard the Voice utter, in public and in private; and the effect was as marked on others as it was on myself. Now, I have several forms of communication, and the Voice does not seem so exclusive and so valuable as it did formerly. After I had heard the Voice for some years, I began to see the speakers. In 1856, I remember giving a sermon which I heard preached by the Spirit of a Spanish martyr, who appeared at a séance I was holding in our home. My husband wrote down the words. The subject was "Obedience" as understood by the Catholic Church.

The Spirit demonstrated that true obedience was no arbitrary submission to control, but obedience to law; as the planets, and the plants, and all nature, obey law. This discourse was published, and made a remarkable impression on Catholics. Of course they knew nothing of the way it came or to whom.

My vision of persons, whom we call Spirits, varies much in clearness and distinctness. Sometimes no words are spoken. Some sign may be made, or there is an emanation which impresses me with ideas more strongly than words. When mere facts are given, it is done in words. For instance, in 1855, I went into my husband's publishing office in autumn. A large new stove had just been put up by a very clever foreman. I do not know that we had ever distrusted this man. When I came opposite to the stove, I was arrested by the "Voice," and I was so affected by what I heard that I found it difficult to support myself. The Voice said, "John — has taken the money that the doctor gave him to buy this stove, and has paid for it in books." I sought my husband and told him what I had heard. He went immediately to the place where the stove was bought, and found that the Voice had spoken the exact truth, and he found also that the man had sold valuable books for a mere nominal price. The end was that the man ceased to be in our employment.

On another occasion we were living four miles from our place of business, which was on Broadway, New York. A young clerk had the care of stamps. I distinctly saw him, four miles distant, stealing stamps. I told my husband, and by marking the stamps the fact was brought home to the young man, and he was dismissed.

Distance or darkness I have never found impediments to vision. I have been waked from a sound sleep, and made to know that wrong was being done at a distance, and in darkness. This has never happened to me unless I could do good, and rescue one or more of the persons concerned.

It is hard not to theorise at times, and it is very easy to be wrong in theories. But it has seemed to me that Spirits have

the power of presenting pictures to us that may warn or instruct more effectually than words. I once had a friend who was addicted to the use of tobacco. One of my theories is that no man can be his best in development, or use, who takes tobacco. I have found it hinder the higher spiritual manifestations effectually. My friend had given up tobacco, as I supposed entirely. He was living some fifty miles distant from me. One day when I was thinking of him, I saw before me thin flakes of tobacco floating in the air. They were so thin as to be almost transparent. Every time I thought of him I saw these filmy flakes of tobacco. After this vision had continued some days my friend came to see me. I told him what I had seen, and he shewed me a quantity of these flakes, identical with what I had seen, which he had been laying on his tongue. How this vision was produced I leave others to decide. It had a beneficial result, for my friend really gave up tobacco.

The reading of a friend's letter when written, or fully conceived, and the answering of it before it was received, has been a not uncommon experience with me. Prevision has involved small and great matters in my case. I remember in 1856, we had a pretty country place as a "water cure." We had it on a lease for years. One day in spring I was in the grounds picking sweet violets, and greatly enjoying their fragrance and the murmur of a brook that ran through the place, when suddenly I heard the Voice say, "Enjoy this time as if you were on a visit, for you will leave here in three weeks." Three weeks from that day I packed my goods for my departure.

Once when I was spending some months in a Southern city of the United States, a little incident occurred, which illustrates the smallness of matters that were the subject this time of clairaudience. I was lying on a sofa when I heard the door bell ring. The Voice said to me, "A person is coming to ask you to establish a water cure in this city." It was a most unlikely event, and yet a person had rung the bell and was seeking to see me for this purpose. A gentleman offered to pay the rent of a place, if one suitable could be found. He and others sought carefully, but vainly, for many days to find a house, and as our Civil War soon after broke out, I rejoiced in the failure.

M. S. G. NICHOLS.

DISAPPEARANCE AND RE-APPEARANCE OF MATTER.

The following communication has been addressed to a gentleman in London, who has handed it to us for publication:—

"In the latter part of October of last year, my wife and I were spending a few weeks in St. Louis, Mo. During our visit, we were fortunate in meeting many kind Spiritualist friends, who had learned much of the powers of the Spirits through the remarkable mediumship of Mrs. V. C. Eldridge, of that city. On the morning of October 28th, my wife, in making preparations for breakfast, removed from her neck an amulet. This amulet, together with one worn by myself, has a history in connection with Spirit power quite remarkable and worthy of record, did the limits of this letter permit. The amulet was taken from the neck and placed upon a bureau, with the intention of being soon replaced. During the preparation for breakfast, it passed from the mind and was not thought about again until we were returning to our room from the breakfast table. As we entered our room, my wife remembered that she had not replaced the amulet upon her neck, and she went to the bureau expecting to find it where she had left it—but no amulet could be found after a most thorough search. The chambermaid, who had been putting the room in order, was asked whether she had seen anything of it, but she replied that she had not.

At the probable loss of an article which we prized so highly, we were much depressed, and during the day renewed search was made from time to time, but without avail. We had an invitation to attend that evening a private séance, with Mrs. Eldridge as the medium, where in a dark circle the Spirits speak audibly with voices quite strong and loud, besides materialising hands, and bringing articles from a long distance. In our uncertainty this one gleam of hope came to us, that as no one knew of our loss but ourselves and the maid, we would inquire at the séance of our Spirit-child (who rarely fails to meet us when conditions are favourable) whether she could tell us where the amulet was; and whether it could again be found. The evening being favourable, and the circle harmonious, the Spirits manifested most satisfactorily. Soon after sitting

down my wife was touched upon her shoulder by a materialised hand, and the voice of our Spirit-child was heard by all—"Mamma! I am here!" The mother quickly replied, "Oh! Lizzie, I am so glad! But I have lost my amulet; do you know where it is; and shall I ever get it again?" "Yes! mamma, I took it, and am wearing it in the Spirit-world." "Oh! I am so glad! Dear Sissy, you can wear it for ever!" "No! mamma, I will bring it back to you." "Will you?" "Yes! I will return it; but you must watch!"

Next morning, we closely examined our room, thinking the amulet might have been returned during the night whilst we were sleeping—but no amulet was discovered. It being Saturday, my wife had an appointment at half-past ten in the morning, to receive treatment by a physician for her throat. The doctor's residence was some two miles from the hotel where we were stopping. Mrs. H. was there at the appointed time, and whilst awaiting some preparation, the conversation turned upon the topics of the day and matters of trivial import, shewing that the lost amulet was not then in her thoughts. Very soon the preparations were complete, and my wife stepped into the room by herself to remove her wraps. Stopping before a mirror with drawers, she began to remove the pins, and place them upon a small marble slab, upon which was standing a small sea shell. She picked up the shell with her left hand to remove it; and was bringing it towards her face when she saw, quickly bound about her hand and the shell, a narrow red ribbon. Being startled somewhat at its sudden appearance, she watched closely, and saw the ribbon materialise, or grow, as it were, about her hand and the shell, winding in a quick zig-zag motion about the hand three times, and then the "amulet" dropped below attached to the ribbon. Thus did our Spirit-daughter fulfil the promise made the evening before, "I will return it, but you must watch!" As the amulet dropped below her hand, the mother gave utterance to a heart overflowing with delight:—"Thank God and the Spirit-world for this!"

The doctor and his family were called in to hear and see this new marvel, performed, as we believe, by our Spirit-child, who had left us nearly four years before with all our future happiness apparently crushed and darkened, now once more returning to make our hearts thrice glad that she was so taken. The knowledge that our dear ones can return and demonstrate their presence by acts so loving and so marvellous, is that which makes one's sorrow a joy for ever.

Astoria, Long Island, New York,
March 12th, 1882.

A. L. HATCH.

AN ARGYLLSHIRE VISION.

The very interesting vision communicated by Mr. Podmore in your issue of March 25th is of so singular a character that one is hardly able without some preparation to realise it as an actual fact. It may, however, be illustrated by a vision of somewhat similar nature published in *Good Words* for March, 1875, on the authority of witnesses vouched for by the Duke of Argyll; and as the two accounts mutually reflect credibility on each other, while that which is buried in the pages of *Good Words* is not likely to be widely known to students of psychical phenomena, I think that it would be generally appreciated by those interested in the subject if you would reproduce in your journal the narrative in question. I may add that another vision of the same class may be found in Lieutenant Welstead's story of the bloody horse at the conclusion of "Bealings Bells."

H. WEDGWOOD.

The contribution of the Duke of Argyll to *Good Words* is as follows:—

An Argyllshire Vision.

Contributed by his Grace the DUKE of ARGYLL.

I had often heard the late Duke of Argyll relate an extraordinary vision which had been seen about the middle of the last century by two men of the name of Bell, father and son, in the immediate neighbourhood of this place.

In looking over some old papers lately, I found an account of this vision, written in 1808, by a Mr. Bell, a writer in the burgh of Inveraray, who was the son of the younger, and grandson of the elder, of the two men who saw the vision. Mr. Bell and the family to which he belonged were persons of the highest respectability of character, and no doubt was ever entertained as to the truthfulness of the narrative.

I may mention that in some details the written account differs slightly from the form in which the same story was related to me, derived from oral tradition. But the locality is so

accurately described, that the spot can be identified at the present day. The thorn-bush, referred to in the narrative, still exists; and though the two clumps of trees, also mentioned, were cut down many years ago, their position can be seen from the curious indelibility with which old pasture retains ghostly indications of former operations on the surface of the soil.

My father always attributed the vision to the effects of *mirage*. But it is a very extraordinary example of this phenomenon. Thinking it may possibly interest some of the readers of *Good Words*, I send the written narrative which I have found.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM MR. BELL TO COLONEL CAMPBELL,
SHAWFIELD.

SIR,—As you wish to have an account of the vision which my father and grandfather saw in the neighbourhood of this place, I will now endeavour to comply with your request. I have heard it with all its circumstances so often related by them, both when together, as well as by my father separately, since my grandfather's decease, that I am as fully convinced they saw the vision as if I had seen it myself. At the same time, I must acknowledge that, however desirous I am to oblige you and Lady Charlotte, I commit the account of it to writing with some degree of reluctance, well knowing how little reliance is given by the more intelligent classes of people to a narration of that kind, and how little it corresponds with the ordinary course of causes and events.

This vision was seen by them about three o'clock in the afternoon of a very clear, sunny day in the month of June, or July, between the years 1746 and 1753. I cannot go nearer to ascertain the year.

My grandfather was then a farmer in Glenaray (which you know is within four miles of this place), and my father, who was at that time a young unmarried man, resided in the family with him. On the morning of the day above mentioned, my grandfather having occasion to transact some business in Glenshira, took my father along with him; they went there by crossing the hill which separates it from Glenaray, and their business in Glenshira being finished a little after mid-day, they came round by Inveraray in order to return home. At that time the road generally used from Glenshira to Inveraray lay upon the west side of the river of Shira all the way to the Garron Bridge, where it joined the high road, which leads from Inveraray to the low country by that bridge.

As soon as they came to that bridge, and had turned towards Inveraray upon the high road, being then (as you know) within view of a part of the old town of Inveraray, which has been since demolished, the ground upon which the new town presently stands, and of the whole line of road leading from it, to the above-mentioned bridge, they were very much surprised to behold a great number of men under arms, marching on foot towards them. At this time the foremost ranks were only advanced as far as Kilmalieu. They were marching in regular order, and as closely as they could move, from the point of the new town, near the quay, where Captain Gillis's house now stands, along the shore, and high road, and crossing the river of Aray near the town at or about the spot where the new bridge has since been built. Of the rear, there appeared to be no end. The ground upon which the new town now stands was then surrounded by a park wall, and the road beyond it lay in a circular direction between that wall and the sea. From the nature of the ground, my father and grandfather could see no further than the wall; and, as the company was advancing in front, the rear as regularly succeeded, and advanced from the furthest verge of their view. This extraordinary sight, which was wholly unexpected, so much attracted their attention, that they stood a considerable time to observe it. They then walked slowly on, but stopped now and then, with their eyes constantly fixed upon the objects before them. Meantime, the army continuing regularly to advance, they counted that it had fifteen or sixteen pairs of colours; and they observed that the men nearest to them were marching upon the road, six or seven abreast, or in each line, attended by a number of women and children, both above and below the road, some of whom were carrying tin cans, and other implements for cooking, which I am told is customary upon a march. They were clothed in red—but as to this particular circumstance, I do not recollect whether my grandfather mentioned it or not, though I know my father did—and the sun shone so bright that the gleam of their arms, consisting of muskets and bayonets, dazzled their sight. They also observed between Kilmalieu and the salmon draught an animal, resembling a deer or a horse, in the middle of a crowd of soldiers, who were (as they

conjectured) stabbing or spurring it forward with their bayonets.

My father, who had never seen an army before, naturally put a number of questions to my grandfather—who had served with the Argyllshire Highlanders, in assisting to suppress the Rebellion in 1745—concerning the probable route and destination of this army, which was now advancing towards them, and the number of men of which it seemed to consist. My grandfather replied that he supposed it had come from Ireland, and had landed in Kintyre, and that it was proceeding to England; and that, in his opinion, it was more numerous than the armies on both sides at the Battle of Culloden. My father having particularly remarked that the rear ranks were continually running forward in order to overtake those who were before them, and inquiring into the reason of that circumstance, my grandfather told him that that was always the case with the rear, that the least possible obstacle stopped and threw them behind, which necessarily, and in a still greater degree, retarded the march of those who were behind them, and obliged them to run forward till they gained their own places again. And he therefore advised my father, if ever he went into the army, to endeavour, if possible, to get into the front ranks, which always marched with leisure and ease, whilst those in the rear were generally kept running in the manner he had seen.

My father and grandfather were now come to the thorn-bush, between the Garron Bridge and the gate of the deer park, and at the same time the van of the army had advanced very near to that gate, which you know is a very short distance (I believe not above a hundred or two hundred and fifty yards) from the thorn-bush, and as the road forms into a right-angled corner at that gate, and the front of the army being then directly opposite to them, they had, of course, a better opportunity of observing it minutely than they had at first done. The vanguard, they then observed, consisted of forty or fifty men, preceded by an officer on foot; at a little distance behind them, another officer appeared, riding upon a grey dragoon horse. He was the only person they observed on horseback, and from his appearance and station in the march, they considered him as the commander-in-chief.

He had on a gold-laced hat, and a blue hussar cloak, with wide open sleeves, all lined with red. He also wore boots and spurs; the rest of his dress they could not see. My father took such particular notice of him, that he often declared he would have known him perfectly well, if he had ever seen him again. Behind this officer, the rest of the army marched all in one body, so far as they observed, but attended by women and children, as I mentioned above.

My father's curiosity being now sufficiently gratified, he thought it was high time to provide for his own security. He represented to my grandfather that it was very probable these men, who were advancing towards them, would force them to go along with them, or use them otherwise ill; and he therefore proposed that they should both go out of their way, by climbing over the stone dyke which fences the deer park from the high road, observing that the spot where they then were was very convenient for that purpose, as the thorn-bush would help to conceal them from their view while going over the dyke. To this my grandfather, objecting, said, that he was a middle-aged man, and had seen some service; he did not believe they would give any trouble to him; but he told my father, as he was a young man, and they might probably take him along with them, he might go out of their way as he thought fit.

Upon this my father leaped instantly over the dyke, he then walked behind it for a little time in the direction of the Garron Bridge, and when he had got about half way, he turned up towards the clumps of trees in the neighbourhood of the Bridge, believing that he was then out of the reach of pursuit, should any be attempted. But when he arrived near the clumps, he looked back to observe the motions of the army, and whether any person attempted to follow him, but he found, to his utter astonishment, that they were all vanished. Not a soul of them was to be seen.

As soon as he recovered from the surprise which this extraordinary scene had occasioned, he returned to my grandfather, and cried out, "What has become of the men?" My grandfather, who seems not to have paid much attention to them after my father left him, then observing that they had all disappeared, answered with an equal degree of astonishment, "that he could not tell."

As they proceeded on their way to Inveraray, he recommended to my father to keep what they had seen a profound secret, adding, that they would make themselves ridiculous, by mention-

ing it, for that "no person would believe that they had seen a vision so extraordinary." At the same time he told him, that though he (my grandfather) might not live to see it, my father might probably live to see the vision realised.

This conversation was scarcely ended when they met one Stewart, an old man, who then resided in Glenshira, going home, and driving a horse before him. This, as they believed, was the same animal they had observed before, surrounded by a crowd. My father, notwithstanding the admonitions he had just received, was not able to contain himself. He asked Stewart what was become of the people who were travelling with him? Stewart, not understanding the drift of the question, answered that nobody had been in company with him since he left Inveraray, but that he had never travelled on so warm a day, that the air was so sultry he was hardly able to breathe, and that his horse had become so weak and feeble, he was obliged to alight and drive him before him.

The account I now send you of this vision was not only communicated by my father and grandfather to me, but was also communicated by them to many others in this place and neighbourhood soon after it happened; it being scarcely possible that so extraordinary an occurrence should be long concealed. It is no doubt extremely difficult to account for it upon the ordinary principles which regulate human events, but no person acquainted with my father and grandfather ever supposed that either of them was capable of inventing such a story; and accordingly, as far as I can understand, no person to whom they told it ever doubted that they told anything but the truth.

My grandfather died several years ago. My father only died within these two years, but neither of them saw their vision realised, although, indeed, my father had strong expectations of seeing it a few years before his death, peculiarly at the time of the Irish rebellion, and of the last threatened invasion of the French.

It may not, perhaps, be improper to add that upon the day on which the vision was seen, neither my father nor grandfather had tasted anything stronger than milk; so that, whatever was the cause of the impression made upon their imaginations, it could not be owing to any intemperance.

I shall be extremely happy if this story can contribute in any degree to your own or Lady Charlotte's amusement; and am, with due respect,—Sir, your most obedient and humble servant,
Inveraray, November 8th, 1808. ARCHIBALD BELL

CONCERNING RE-INCARNATION.

Convinced as I am that the right understanding of the doctrine variously known as Transmigration, Metempsychosis, Re-Birth, and Re-Incarnation, is the very basis and groundwork of all spiritual philosophy, I beg to supplement, as briefly as is consistent with the subject, the short paper I have already contributed to "LIGHT."

Dr. Wyld seems to find something absurd in the idea that man is a complex being. Yet this belief—I ought rather to say, this knowledge—is as ancient as the Mysteries themselves. Not to cite Eastern philosophy, which is full of illustrations and apologies to the point, let me refer him to the Homer of his school days, where, in the *Odyssey* XI., he will find this passage, part of the recital given by Odysseus of his descent into Hades, or the under-world, and of his discourse with the ghosts of the dead:—

"There also I descried the mighty Heracles, *his phantom*, I say; but as for himself, he hath joy at the banquet of the deathless Gods. . . . And anon he knew me, and when he beheld me, making lament, he spake in winged words."

Let it be observed that in this passage the true soul of the Hero is represented as not being in the land of shadows at all. The "phantom" with which Odysseus converses, and whose discourse is reported in the lines immediately following, is but the outer Ego or exterior personality of Heracles. These phantoms, the poem tells us, love the earth and are fain to return to it, and to manifest themselves to their living friends, the method by which they seek to materialise being precisely that recounted by Lady Hester Stanhope in her "Travels;" by Madame Blavatsky ("Isis Unveiled"); by Eliphas Levi, and in short, familiar to all students of magic and the occult.

It is surely strange, that at this time of day, a Theosophist of Dr. Wyld's understanding should need to be reminded of the witness of Paul and of all Christian writers who have had spiritual experiences, to the strife which continually rages in every human kingdom between the outer and the inner will,—

between the old and the new Adam,—between the interior and exterior self. The fleshly or earthly self is that Ruach or Mind which constitutes the mundane individual; the heavenly or spiritual self is that essential soul “whose name is known only to God.” It is in order that this essential and inner man may grow, expand, and finally become all in all, that progress and re-births are necessary. In its initiatory stages a tiny spark—to speak in metaphorical language—it grows and gathers strength by successive purifications, and at length returns to the bosom of God—a glorious and “consuming fire.”*

The conflict between the two selves is a matter of personal experience; therefore of this doctrine, which is the very fundamental doctrine of all religion, whether Oriental or “Christian,” the witness is, chiefly, *in* oneself. Speaking personally, I am profoundly sensible of this conflict, and am daily reminded that I am a compound personality.

With regard to the dissolution of this compound personality at death, it appears to me no more surprising or difficult of belief than the phenomenon of skin or shell-casting common among certain animals; which phenomenon, being by the ancients regarded as a type of Re-Incarnation, caused these creatures to be venerated as religious symbols.

All that has been in its nature eternal and noumenal in any transient incarnation, all that has contributed to build up the true and interior spirit of the man, is absolute and permanent, and will survive all ephemeral constituents of past personalities. To appropriate a phrase from Mr. Noel's work on Immortality:—The conception of true personality consists in the “absolute unity and self identity of the spirit in its innermost self, wherein all its phenomenal lives are known, understood, resumed, felt to be indeed one.” Thus the spirit, the true Ego of the man, on entering Nirvana, resumes in itself all that is lasting and noumenal of its past manifold existences. For only that which by nature is Divine, can survive eternally. Thus there are two kinds of memory, or consciousness;—that of the exterior, and that of the interior, Ego. The work of the saint is to *centralise* his consciousness, and to prevent it from becoming dissipated. As says the “Bhagvat Gita,”—“The Yogee who labouring with all his might, is purified of his offences, and after many births, made perfect, at length goeth to the supreme abode.”

It is no concern of mine to defend such holy personages as Krishna, Buddha, Pythagoras, or Apollonius of Tyana against Dr. Wyld's criticisms. The reputation of these men and the wisdom of their many great disciples need no championship. But I will add a word in respect to Swedenborg, whom Dr. Wyld is accustomed to cite as an authority on his side.

In Swedenborg's voluminous writings we have unfolded a series of pictures reaching from Hell to Heaven. At times the seer was carried aloft to the highest; at others he groped amid the manifold illusions of the astral and magnetic. Hence many incongruities, obscurities, and contradictions are apparent in his works and are admitted by even his warmest admirers. Vistas of wondrous and far-reaching spiritual interpretation are opened before the reader's mind, to be suddenly crossed and obliterated by grotesque images which alike bewilder and repel. Swedenborg's exterior manner of life was not, in effect, such as to assure the constant level of his interior perspicacity. Although abstemious and temperate, he did not, on principle, or invariably, refrain from the eating of flesh, and thus exposed himself to dangers of which no one who has not had similar experience, can gauge either the nature or the extent. For many reasons I exercise considerable caution when studying his writings, as I do also when studying those of a modern seer who somewhat resembles him:—Thomas Lake Harris. I doubt much whether, if Swedenborg were now living among us and were one of our circle, Dr. Wyld would be inclined to attach more importance to his experiences than he does to those of certain of his friends with whom he frequently converses. “But no man is a prophet in his own country, or in his father's house.” There is one at least, whom I do not name, for it would be unbecoming to do so, who is no stranger to heavenly visions and voices, and who to my knowledge has freely communicated her experiences to Dr. Wyld. In these visions there has never been anything either incongruous or inconsistent; and the life of the recipient is such as to preclude danger of the kind to which Swedenborg was exposed. And in all these visions the doctrine to which Dr. Wyld so emphatically objects, is ever

strenuously and forcibly insisted upon as the very basis of human philosophy, and of a right understanding of Divine justice, and of the progress and evolution of the soul. The person of whom I speak could not, without renouncing religion itself, and turning traitor alike to her whole past experience and to the Divine light whose guidance she follows, and from whose interior illumination all her knowledge is derived, reject as illusory, teaching so attested and so conveyed; teaching, moreover, which alone is capable of interpreting satisfactorily to human reason and intelligence, a natural system of apparent incongruities and injustices, utterly inexplicable on any other hypothesis.

Will Dr. Wyld, or any other champion of the “one life” theory, explain, for instance, the problem of brute suffering and misery? Will he tell us why a good and wise God should have, by the exercise of His arbitrary power and will, produced such creatures as the snake, the wolf, or the tiger? Will he account, on the theory of the “one life,” which in the case of the lower animals involves no eternal evolution in the “spheres,” for the heartrending suffering of the dumb, intelligent, and loving dogs, horses, and other domestic creatures whom man has adopted as his friends and servants, and whose moral qualities often furnish him with an example or a rebuke? I will tell him frankly, that rather than adore a God who could deliberately have made these poor souls and endowed them with feeling and intelligence for no other end than to become the victims of the sportsman, the vivisector, or the cobra; or to wear out their lives in suffering and toil, with no prospect of the education and progress which toil and suffering bring to human spirits,—rather, I say, than adore or reverence such a Being as this, I would turn Agnostic or Atheist to-morrow, and cry “Forward” to the disciples of a Monteil or of a Bradlaugh.

There is evidence in Dr. Wyld's present article, and in a former paper published by him in these pages, that he has never rightly comprehended the doctrine he impugns. Else he could not possibly maintain it to be “entirely antagonistic to the central doctrine of Christian Theosophy—*i. e.*, that the Logos is in every man, and that there is no salvation save by it;” with more to the same purpose.

If I were to ask Dr. Wyld whether he considers, for instance, that this mystic Logos is as developed and as potent in the breast of a Billingsgate costermonger or of a Dahomey savage, as in that of a St. Theresa or of a Swedenborg, he would answer:—“No, but it will be developed after death, in other spheres, and under spiritual conditions more favourable to its growth.” I should then ask him how a soul which needs objective and material conditions for its evolution and training, is to obtain them in a state from which they are excluded; and why a soul which, admittedly, has *not* detached itself from matter and from material attractions, should be enabled miraculously to defy the universal law of Affinity, and gravitate, after physical dissolution, to ethereal and spiritual spheres, rather than return, as we should naturally expect it to do, to renew its progress and education in God's great preparatory school,—the material world?

In my view, and in that of those who think with me, life has a much vaster and lengthier scope than is afforded by the span of one human existence; and not until the soul has rid herself of all affinity for matter, and of all mundane affectional cares and desires, will she, by the operation of a natural and immutable law, be free to mount to the “higher spheres” and to enter on a course of evolution unconnected with material limitations. Until that time arrives, however, the same causes which have hitherto operated to detain the soul within the earth's atmosphere will, undoubtedly, continue to operate. In such a view, at once scientific, reasonable, and just, I can see nothing either “repulsive” or ludicrous. But I am fain to confess that both these attributes appear to me to be exemplified by the description I have heard given by Dr. Wyld of the spiritual sphere upon which he supposes *all* souls to definitely enter after their one earth-life. He said that there, the man whose supremest earthly joy had been in his pot of ale at the tavern, would still continue the same delights in a spiritual existence; as doubtless also would the sportsman, the prize-fighter, or, shall I add, the vivisector? It did not appear to him a necessary truth that as the “spiritual sphere” represents rather a *state* than a *place*, no soul whose condition is incongruous and dissimilar with it can enter upon it. For Dr. Wyld's idea of “Brahma's bosom” is not that of a state of rest between one incarnation and another; but of a new

* This word “consuming” is used to denote the property of this immortal spirit, which is to convert impurity into purity, and to lick up and appropriate, as does a flame, the fuel supplied to it, transmuting into spirit that which was matter.

progressive world into which the infant of a day old enters as definitely and with as perfect certainty of having done with earthly limitations, as the veteran of a hundred years of struggle and experience.

Clearly, then, in the view of the "one life" school, the education of objective Incarnation, and the lessons of the body, are *not* necessary to the soul, since myriads of souls, undergoing physical dissolution at the very moment of birth, pass into the world of spiritual conditions and escape them.

Blessed, thrice blessed indeed then, are still-born babes, and cruel and accursed is the hand of the physician who seeks to retain the departing soul within its earthly tenement! "How far better for my infant," ought to be the cry of the mother, "that he should escape the bitter pains and experiences of earth and be brought up and trained by the angels!" For, according to "Tien-Sien-Tie"—one of the recently declared champions of non-Re-Incarnation—this earth is the platform only for the acquirement of *identity*; and this object is as amply attained by an existence of a day or of a week as by one of a century.

As a last word, I would record my belief, expressed with all possible love and sympathy for those whose views differ from my own, that too much of the personal *likes* and *aversions* of the exterior Ego have been brought to bear on this question.

On every side one hears the cry, "I can't bear the idea of coming back to earth!" "This world is a beggarly place!" "The very notion of a re-birth is repulsive to me!" "I have had enough of the world!" Alas! all these cries are but signs of impatience and self-will; the voice of the unregenerate soul. It would be better to hear it said humbly and in self-abnegation:—

"Thy will, my God, be done! Though the way be long, and the path such as I would not, let it but bring me at last to Thee, and I am more than content. For I know that Thine order is beautiful, and that Thy method is love; therefore, I pray that not *my* will but *Thine* may be all in all!"

ANNA KINGSFORD, M.D.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"Psyche."

The second number of *Psyche* is a decided improvement upon the first. The staring coloured borders have been abandoned, and black borders substituted. The contents are also more varied. The Countess of Caithness continues her narration of "Remarkable Séances," that which she describes this month being a séance with Mr. Home in March, 1869, at which the Countess, the Master of Lindsay, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, and Mr. E. Dawson Rogers were present. Under the heading "The Chronicle," are given some items quoted from "LIGHT," and other English and American Journals. Four pages are devoted to "Cases of Cure," by Dr. Newton. In the first number of *Psyche*, which was announced as an illustrated periodical, it was stated that though the engravings in that number "chanced to be of a scientific character, it was not intended to hereafter confine them exclusively to that groove." Accordingly this month the engravings represent "Ancient Portraits of Mother Shipton."

"The Medium and Daybreak."

The opening article is a contribution through the mediumship of Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool, upon the subject of the relations of "conjurers, parsons, and bishops" to Spiritualism. The following extract is one of the many effective points presented:—

"The most effective way to crush Atheism, is for the Theists to demonstrate Theism, and for the Church to demonstrate the natural immortality of man. If man be not immortal, as a Church it is of no use. Its sermons, prayers, offerings, rubrics, ceremonies, synods, confirmations, baptisms, and saints' days are all utopian chimeras, blank-cartridge shot into the gulf of the unknown. If immortality be a fact in Nature the Church can have a foundation, and rest upon something broader than the Bible, more authoritative than Revelation. It meets the Materialist on his own ground, and adds a new chapter to the Science of Life. The Church, instead of decrying the facts of Spiritualism, ought rather to hope for their truth, and pray for a fuller demonstration, even as a policy of expediency."

A paper is given upon a "Year of Years," the production of the editor, in which a sketchy review of twelve years' doings in connection with Spiritualism is presented; but it is very imperfect. Another paper, containing many thoughtful reflections, by Mr. R. W. Lishman, entitled the "Lesson of Science," and the usual notes and news, make up the remaining contents.

"The Herald of Progress."

The editor, writing in a leading article upon the opinion entertained by some of the readers of the paper that a change in its policy was about to commence, puts forward the following statements:—

"We see a great error in the minds of nearly all who have touched the subject of our future aims. It seems the belief exists and is industriously fanned, that the *Herald* is to be the organ of one man, and of one set of opinions. On the contrary,

the Directorate has been enlarged, and will be probably still added to, making it a certainty that all parties will be represented as far as is consistent with dignity and fairness. Thus far the contention has been a mere war of words, and we have discovered that there is no difference between our ultimate aim and that of other zealous workers. Our platform is as broad as ever, and all that we discourage is the tendency in our sacred cause to underrate and undermine the revelations of all past ages. We would like to see the gifts and graces of the spirit sitting upon the daily lives of all—far less talking, and more holy dedication of body, soul, and spirit to the truth, and to spiritual teachings is the demand of our mission, and until we turn our attention to this mainly, we shall retrograde rather than progress. The *Herald of Progress* will still chronicle the facts of Spiritualism, and open its pages to all matters of universal interest, but it will seek to avoid contentions, and the raising of questions upon which even spirits are not agreed."

"The Banner of Light."

Mr. W. J. Colville, the trance speaker, has lately assumed a novel responsibility in connection with an enterprise which is described as "The Boston Spiritual Bethesda," in reality an attempt to found a Healing Institute, upon a large scale. Our contemporary prints the "Constitution" of the Association, which embraces twenty-four "articles," and occupies a closely printed column. The "Medical Director" is Mr. Colville, and his duties are thus set forth:—

"The duties of the Medical Director shall be to visit the Institution at stated hours and assign each patient to such a medium as shall seem best adapted to his or her case; and from time to time he shall visit each medium and patient, and notice his or her method of treatment, and order a change of mediums if his guides shall so direct; but the Board of Managers shall not needlessly interfere in any of his dealings with patients and accepted mediums." The objects of the "Bethesda" are thus referred to:—"The object of this Institution, as the Constitution declares, is to heal the sick through spiritual instrumentalities and to do this 'without money and without price' to those unable to pay. If these two things can be successfully accomplished in this public manner, will not Spiritualism receive an additional impetus to its ever onward march? The 'spirits of just men made perfect,' affirm that it will, and the reasons of all thoughtful persons agree in the truth of the statement. But it is said by some, Will the means be furnished for its success? To this we answer, Yes. 'He who has begun a good work will perform it to its completion.' The guides of many persons, including our greatest mediums, confidently assert this." The progress of the project will be watched with interest.

"The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

AN EDITOR'S EXPERIENCES.

Mr. A. P. Miller, editor of the *Worthington Advocate*, Worthington, Minnesota, thus relates his experiences in the Home investigation of Spiritualism:—

"In 1876, a few of us began the investigation. After sitting nearly every night for two or three weeks around a small parlor table, we were rewarded with a few raps. Then we procured a planchette which went through the usual gyrations, and then came, first a word, and then half a sentence. Then our spirit friends began to give their names, and soon, like a paralytic who throws his crutches away, we discarded planchette, and through a simple lead pencil in the hands of one or two of our friends, we received volumes of the most wonderful communications, including scores of tests from departed friends.

"One of our number (the wife of a retired naval lieutenant) developed into a remarkable clairvoyant and seer. Quietly and persistently, in spite of the sneers and taboos of ignorant church people, she has exercised her divine gift until scores have been convinced. Her best phase is that of prophetic visions. These relate to religious and church matters, national and local politic and private affairs, and their fulfillment is a constant surprise and test to her friends.

"We have a volume of these visions recorded. Many of them relate to our local affairs. Thus the only fire of any consequence which has occurred in our midst and which destroyed the largest building in the town, she foretold a year before it occurred, with wonderful minuteness of detail. In January, 1881, before Garfield was inaugurated, a vision of 'Old Father Time' appeared to her and said that Garfield would be assassinated. On Tuesday night before the assassination, I was spending the evening with the family. The lady said: 'What is this I see? I see a rock with Garfield's head carved on the front and a ship with Conkling's head carved on the prow. The ship runs at the rock and the rock is split in two.' This rock and this ship undoubtedly represented the two factions of the party, and on the Saturday following, the memorable 2nd of July, we saw the meaning of the vision."

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—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.*]

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

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES

GOSWELL HALL.

ANNIVERSARY OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

The thirty-fourth anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was celebrated by the members and friends of the Central London Spiritual Evidence Society, at Goswell Hall, on Thursday evening, March 30th. The proceedings took the form of a concert and ball, and both were eminently successful. Some delay occurred at the commencement, but a few minutes before eight o'clock the chairman, Mr. J. J. Morse, proceeded to open the meeting in a few brief sentences of welcome to the visitors, after which the following programme was gone through:—Misses McKellor and Wittie, pianoforte duet; Mrs. Ratcliffe, song, "Jessie's Dream;" Mr. R. W. Lishman, song, "The Arab's Farewell to his Steed;" Miss F. C. Allan, recitation, "The Shadowless Man;" Miss A. Crome, song, "At the Ferry;" Mr. E. A. Tietkens, song, "My Little Sweetheart" Mr. F. J. Crome, violin solo, "Romance in G.;" Miss Sparey, song, "The Lover and the Bird" (cornet accompaniment, Mr. Walter Sparey); Misses McKellor and Wittie, piano duet, "Victoria Waltzes;" Mr. G. W. Record, recitation, "Sergeant Buzfuz;" Miss A. Crome, song, "Tit for Tat;" Mr. Sidney Matthews, song, "The Blue Alsatian Mountains;" Miss F. C. Allan, dramatic selection, "As You Like It;" Mr. E. A. Tietkens, song, "Good-night Beloved;" Miss Alice Sparey, song, "In the Gloaming;" Mr. F. J. Crome, violin solo, "Lohengrin."

In the interval between the first and second portions of the above programme, the chairman made a brief and happily conceived address, having special reference to the occasion of the assembly. He spoke upon "what we celebrate; why we celebrate; and how we celebrate;" and his remarks were greeted with enthusiastic applause. The company ultimately engaged in dancing, and in spite of the criticisms of a certain individual who had described the affair as a "shilling hop," the company separated with a consciousness of having had an agreeable evening in congenial companionship, and not at all unmindful that they were in the company of invisible friends from the other shore.

The gathering was a large one, and among those present we noticed Mr. and Mrs. James B. Stones, of Blackburn; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Wortley; Messrs. Record; Mrs. and Miss Record; Miss Keeves; Mr. and Misses Davis; Mr. Frank Everitt; the Misses Everitt; Mr. and Mrs. R. Pearce; Mr. and Mrs. Swindin; Mr. J. N. Greenwell; Mr. and Mrs. W. Bowman; Mr. J. Freeman; the Misses Freeman; Miss Glendinning; Mrs. and Misses McKellor; Mr. Landers; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Allan; Mr. Walter Sparey; Miss Sparey; Miss A. Sparey; Mr. and Mrs. Thompson; Mr. and Mrs. Ratcliffe; Mr. R. W. Lishman; Mr. A. Brown; Mr. and Mrs. Cowderoy; Mr. Patterson; Mr. Wray; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Morse, &c.

On Sunday evening last, it was our pleasure to hear Mr. S. Gass deliver another of his valuable and interesting lectures; subject, "The True Spiritual Religion," with a review of the intellectual progress of mankind. He entered, at great length, into the religious aspect of Spiritualism, and, in an earnest and impressive manner urged their higher claims "over other sects and creeds." It is much to be regretted that there was not a larger audience present to hear such an able lecturer as Mr. Gass. The lecture was preceded by an interesting selection of a "Basis of a New Belief," which was read by Mr. J. N. Greenwell. Next Sunday evening an experience meeting is to be held which it is hoped may be productive of good results.—RES-FACTA.

BARROW-IN-FURNESS.

The friends of this town celebrated the thirty-fourth anniversary of Spiritualism, on Friday, the 31st ult., by a meeting of the Society. Mr. J. Walmsley, the president, was in the chair, and the exercises consisted of music, recitation, and addresses. Among the speakers were Mr. Condon and Mr. William Proctor, trance medium, and Mr. Mather, while the chairman delivered an address appropriate to the occasion. The meeting was opened with a hymn, and closed with a benediction. The event was quite a success for all concerned.

MANCHESTER.

The Manchester and Salford Society of Spiritualists held its half-yearly meeting on Sunday last (April 2nd), for the election of officers for the coming six months. Mr. J. Thompson presided. The following gentlemen were elected: President, Mr. G. A. Brown; Vice-Presidents, Messrs. Braham and Thompson, Miss H. Blundell, and Mrs. Brown; Treasurer, Mr. John Plant; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. E. M. Whyte; Secretary, Mr. W. Hall; Librarian, Mr. Elliott; Bookstall Keeper, Mr. and Miss Highfield. Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool, gave two trance addresses. In the afternoon the subject was "The Rig Vedas: What is it; how long has it existed; and in what form was it given to the world?" and in the evening, "The Teaching and Character of Jesus," concluding with a poem on the death of Longfellow, and another on "Love and Charity." The Society has made progress during the past six months, both in regard to membership and finances, whilst increasing interest is manifested by strangers in its proceedings.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

THE CONVENTION.

NEWCASTLE.—The Lecture Hall of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, witnessed last week from March 28th to April 1st, the gathering of the adjourned convention; but we are sorry to say with as little real success as the gathering a month ago. With but three or four exceptions, the meetings were represented by the local Newcastle Society, and all the business of the convention was settled by their vote. The real business of the sittings resolved itself into some propositions of the president Mr. J. Enmore Jones, which are as follows: That a Society be formed for all England, and called "The Spirit Evidence Society of Great Britain," to consist of a president and twelve members, of *influential position*, who shall remain in office three years; the Society to meet quarterly or yearly, at which meetings the country can send representatives, who shall pay subscriptions to cover working expenses. The proposition embraced an allied Society for every county which should endeavour to gather the local Societies within its influence for the systematic working of the county. He further elaborated a creed, which he considered to be essentials of the movement:—1st, God is a Spirit, personal, infinite, incomprehensible—a *belief*; 2nd, Man is a Spirit, finite—a *knowledge*; 3rd, Man has a spiritual body—a *knowledge*; 4th, Man, at physical death, passes out a living intelligent substance, perfect in form and individuality—a *knowledge*; 5th, That, under condition, the spiritual body can be discerned, and its limited power over physical substances witnessed—a *knowledge*; 6th, Man, under laws, can and does as an ethereal ministering Spirit, assist in various ways those he is connected with by ties of affection—a *knowledge*; 7th, Man is as a spiritual being, responsible for his actions, be they good or be they bad; whether in the physical body or out of it. These proposed seven points did not pass unchallenged. Mr. W. C. Robson made a bold stand in the Thursday meeting against the endeavour that was being made to "creedalise" the broad platform of Spiritualism, step by step. He warmly combated the proposals but the creed was carried by a large majority of the thirty persons present. At the Friday meeting the matter once more came to the front through the incorporation of the aforesaid tenets in the scheme of organisation presented as above. Mr. W. C. Robson proposed an amendment that the scheme recommends itself for consideration, with the exception of the points creedalised, and particularly excepting the first point, which would have the tendency to disintegrate, instead of uniting and consolidating the cause. Mr. Henry Burton seconded the motion, contending that if they desired, as they professed, to create one common ground of agreement whereon every shade of opinion could work harmoniously, and with one common purpose, for one great end, the persons with orthodox predilections had no more right to insist upon dogmatic beliefs under which Free-thinkers should labour, than the latter had to establish crotchets of their own dictation to the others. Mr. Hare contended the discussion was out of place as the points had been settled the day before. Mr. Swanson protested against Mr. Hare's interruption of Mr. Burton as he was simply using the privilege granted by the chairman, who had invited discussion. The chairman ruled Mr. Burton in order, and that gentleman then proceeded to state that if the professed supporters of Spiritualism desired to meet on common ground of fairness, irrespective of their crotchets, they could find it in the one simple and beautiful fact which alone was the basis point of the movement. Mr. Robson argued that the subject was a most important one and should not be so readily and inconsiderately put aside. There was a great deal more involved in those seven points than appeared at the first blush, and he (Mr. Robson), firmly believed that the introduction of a creed would be the first thing to destroy the movement. Mr. John Mould, who till recently opposed organisation pressed upon the N.S.E.S., and who has hitherto expressed himself doubtful as to the advisability of introducing fixed points of belief, contended on this occasion for the advisability and necessity of organisation. After further discussion, the chairman having put the motion, it was carried by a large majority, a few remaining neutral.

At the Saturday meeting it was resolved that the next quarter's meeting be held in the room of the N.S.E.S. On the Friday evening, Mr. Enmore Jones lectured to a fair audience on "Spirit Power Phenomena," illustrated by means of prepared slides, and by the aid of ox-hydrogen lime-light. The illustrated lecture gave much satisfaction, and was of a very interesting nature. On Sunday evening, April 2nd, Mr. H. Snook addressed the Society and friends on the "Reasonableness of a Revelation from God."

GATESHEAD.—Sunday evening last witnessed a very pleasant evening at the lecture hall of the G.S.E.S., the meeting being set apart for the purpose of hearing the experience of several of the friends. Altogether the meeting was highly entertaining Mr. Jos. Stephenson occupied the chair.

FELLING.—At this place on Sunday last Mr. Wilson, of Windy Nook, delivered himself very ably on the movement of Modern Spiritualism.

CONSETT.—Mr. Barker, test medium, lectured at the Central Hall, on Sunday last, interspersing his remarks with some excellent tests.—NORTHUMBRIA.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson, 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 medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER, AT BERLIN.—I 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 a *absolutely* impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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