

# 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 uncertainties of Spirit identity suggested by "J. P. T." offer a perplexing problem for solution. No suggestion of a communication from the incarnated Spirit of his son, then resident 10,000 miles away, seems to meet the case. A son would not come and play with his parent's feelings in that foolish and wicked fashion. Nor can it be fairly conceived that good Spirits would take such a method of conveying a lesson of trust in the Holy Ghost, as "Trident" suggests. The case was one of elaborated imposture, systematically carried out by unseen agents, who would seem to be destitute of moral consciousness, or at least to be very deficient in that quality. That, I think, must be admitted. Their acts furnish, by the way, a remarkable evidence of the existence of unembodied spirit, and of its power of communicating with this world. It is obvious that this elaborate deception was not the work of any human being—of medium or of sitters—and was not referable to unconscious cerebration or any of the explanations of Dr. Carpenter. The narrative is as good evidence as I know of the existence of spirit unembodied, with power of communicating, and apparently of reading human thought, and of getting up special facts so as to personate a human being.

Now, the question arises, Who, and of what order, are these Spirits? It seems clear that they must be human; otherwise they could not enter into the part and play it with success. No sub-human Spirit would, I should imagine, have the power which these Spirits had. For though we may be permitted to refer some of the Puck-like tricks that are not infrequent in dark séances to such an inferior order of Spirits, the narrative in question demands that we postulate a totally different class of Intelligence here. There is no question of the frolicsome gambols of a Puck; but rather of the calculated falsehood of a personating Spirit. Such Spirits there seem to be on the confines of the unseen world. Experience abundantly proves that the border-land is haunted by a class of Spirit that finds a pleasure in communicating with earth, probably on account of the tie that binds it there being unsevered, and because no magnetic attraction upward has been yet established. Such Spirits are in a state of desolation, vagrant, homeless, and with the affections (such as they are) still bent earthwards. They find their pleasure in posturing as some great man, or in playing a part that they see to be desired. These are the Shakespeares who cannot spell, and the thousand and one celebrities who exhibit themselves to the enthusiasts who value a few foolish words in proportion as some great name godfathers them. Whoever these Spirits may be, no experienced Spiritualist can fail to have been vexed by them; and few circles escape torment, and, indeed, risk of being broken up by their falsehoods and vagaries.

I have frequently wondered whether such Spirits be not the emissaries of powers antagonistic to the higher Spirits whose charge it is to disseminate truth in this world of ours. We have evidence of the action of these latter missionary Spirits. May it not well be that their beneficent work is countermined and attacked by those who love darkness rather than light, and to whom God and His messengers and the message that they bear to us are alike repulsive? It is not

necessary to postulate a devil going about on the earth "like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," in order to trace in the history of Spiritualism antagonistic efforts to those of good and truthful Spirits. I am convinced that no view of that great Spiritual movement which is in rapid development among us will be satisfactory unless it starts from a distinct conception of the action of two great spiritual forces antagonistic to each other. It needs no very recondite wisdom or too acute perception to see that there is no simpler way of breaking up a circle where truth is being instilled into receptive minds than to introduce falsehood and fraud. There is so much difficulty in discerning the good and true from the base imitation, when we deal with an unseen and unknown agent whose power we cannot gauge and whose character we cannot test, that the result is bewilderment, and, as in "J. P. T."s case, abandonment of the sittings altogether. Many is the warning I have received from those with whom I have been in communication on this head. They have always spoken strongly of the machinations of those whom they call the Adversaries, and have warned me that their efforts are most vigorous in times of earthly disturbance and unrest, when (as is now eminently the case) the Spirit-atmosphere (if I may use the term) is full of disturbance, and the world of effect reflects the conflict that has taken place in the world of cause.\* Anyone who agrees with my view of the beneficent purpose which directs what we call Spiritualism, and which has in many previous crises in the world's history brought advanced views of truth to mankind by similar means, will not find any difficulty in accepting this hypothesis; or, I should rather say, in receiving this view put forward by Spirits who may be supposed to know,

But how do these Spirits gain access to a circle composed (as "J. P. T."s seems to have been) of elements with which they should have no affinity? It seems to me to be a question of the power as well as of the wisdom of those unseen guardians whose care it should be to protect and fence round the circle. I have no doubt that assault is made on all circles. Some are protected by guardians who are able as well as willing to protect; others are attacked when guardians are weak, or powerless to resist so vigorous an attack. I have repeatedly been present when advice has been given to break up the circle at once so as to avoid unpleasant, noisy, or violent manifestations from such Spirits, who were getting beyond control. I believe that many of the frauds, falsehoods, and bewilderments that vex us come from this source. I believe, too, that to enter into close relations with the unseen world without the protection of a powerful as well as wise guardian is an extremely dangerous and foolish thing. And I entertain little doubt that until this is known and acted on as a recognised law, we shall find Spiritualism discredited by what we now so often deplore, and defiled by blots which seem to mark its origin as unclean. Curiosity, even when it is merely idle, is no suitable excuse for meddling with unknown forces which may be deadly. We have been, perhaps necessarily, pre-occupied in attempts to force on an unwilling world recognition of plain facts, of the phenomena, objective to the senses, which Spiritualism offers for investigation. It is time that we point to the dangers attendant upon a playing with that which, though spiritual, is not therefore always desirable, and to the curse that too often lights on those who rashly expose themselves to the risk of obsession by Spirits whom, could they but see them as they are, they would avoid with might and main.

These considerations, however, apply only partially to the case under notice. "J. P. T."s circle was conducted with reverent care, and with aspirations that should ensure a good result. And accordingly, it is instructive to notice that the deception was (if I may so say) of a corresponding order. There was no horse-play, no vulgar buffoonery, no coarse and patent lying which could be detected at once, and which would

\* The "Spirit Teachings" published this week are much to the point here.



inspire revulsion and contempt for its authors. The key-note struck by the sitters was taken up by the communicating Spirits, and they entered into the wishes which they detected, and elaborated a really artistic and finished piece of deception. Putting aside the morality of the question, it was a polished piece of acting. And this confirms me in my opinion that the deception was attributable to an organised attempt of adverse Spirits to frustrate the efforts of those whom they hate, and whose work they try to undermine. Their means were too subtly proportioned to their ends to be merely accidental. They effected an entrance, perhaps, because the guardians were too weak. These seem, so far as I can gather, to have been friends recently departed, and who would not, presumably, have much knowledge or power. The antagonists were aided on this side by the introduction into the circle "of most atrocious, but equally skilful deceit" on the part of some unnamed medium, with whom "J. P. T." sought relations. And they found their opportunity in the strong desire for a particular communication, entertained at a time when the affections were deeply stirred, and were, therefore, most open to Spirit influence. This conjunction provided the opportunity of which the personating Spirits availed themselves with such signal success.

I have to thank the editor of the *Journal of Science* for some courteous words in reference to my notice of his strictures on Spiritualism, and especially on the B.N.A.S., in respect to Dr. Anna Kingsford's Paper on "Violationism" read before that Society. I am bound to say that he puts a case for the defence which is strong, and for which I think there is much to be said. I am very strongly of opinion that Spiritualists should adhere strictly to their proper business; and that the various subjects, so grotesquely mixed up with a belief that perpetuated existence beyond the grave can be scientifically demonstrated, should be left severely alone. Perhaps it was that feeling that led me to protest, as I did, against being indiscriminately identified with much that I respectfully repudiate. I am still of opinion that the statements made in that lecture, if substantiated as fair samples of what is done, cry aloud for notice, not only from us but from all humanity.

Another strange place for Spiritualism to reach. The *Secular Review* has the funniest comparison between the phenomena of Spiritualism and the miracles of the New Testament. "There is scarcely a marvel boasted by the new faith which has not its parallel and prototype in the Old or New Testament." And then it goes on to quote instances, and to draw parallels, winding up what is intended as an onslaught on Christianity by asking why "Christians should accept as true the one set of reports and ignore the other?" It is perhaps needless to say that the writer, after setting forth very fairly the evidence of a parallel between the Old Faith and the New, characteristically rejects them both. But that is a matter of opinion; what he has gathered are matters of fact.

It is well that the President of the British Theosophical Society should repudiate what he very properly calls "the indiscriminate libel" on London Spiritualism published recently in the *Theosophist*. A Fellow of the B. T. S. circulated the slander, and the *Theosophist* gave currency to what it ought to have known must be at best a highly-coloured and exaggerated statement. It was brought under my notice, but did not seem to me to merit any treatment other than silent contempt. Such a libel should not have been published, any more than an anonymous correspondent should have been allowed to malign an absent lady. This also is done on the alleged authority of a Fellow of the B.T.S. (Is there, by the way, any occult connection between the study of Theosophy and such scandal-mongering?) The letters of Dr. Wyld and "C.C.M.," to say nothing of Mr. Damiani's vigorous onslaught, sufficiently dispose of an unpleasant matter. The inadvertence which permitted an attack on Madame Blavatsky in this journal has been promptly explained and apologised for. I hope the *Theosophist* will disavow the stupid libel on honourable, reputable, and able persons, whose sole care is the search for truth, to which it has given currency.

M. A. (OXON.)

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE B.N.A.S.—We beg to remind our readers that the annual meeting of the members of the B.N.A.S. will be held on Tuesday next, at 38, Great Russell-street, at 6.30 p.m. As there will be some important matters for consideration it is very desirable that there should be a good attendance.

#### LETTER FROM DR. PEEBLES.

Dr. J. M. Peebles, writing to Mr. J. J. Morse upon books and other business matters, speaks in commendation of "LIGHT," and says other things that may interest our readers. We are permitted to make the following extracts:—

"'LIGHT'—long may it shine! This weekly journal, while free from bitterness, idle tattle, and gross personalities, comes to me regularly, clean-faced, tastily dressed, and rich in scholarly contents. Gladly do I peruse it. Not a passage that 'M. A. (Oxon.)' writes ever escapes my eye. Miss F. J. Theobald always interests me spiritually. Dr. Wyld's late articles upon 'Buddhism and Christianity Compared and Contrasted' were more than excellent; they were 'thrice true' and magnificent. If Gautama Buddha was the 'light of Asia,' as Arnold sings, Christ is the light of the world.

"Thibetan Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, and Ceylonese Buddhism are as unlike as Roman Catholicism, Methodism, and Universalism. In China I conversed with Buddhist priests and watched their forms of worship for hours and days. Which school of Buddhism does Colonel Olcott belong to? Does he accept transmigration, and believe in their pictured hells? By the way, High Priest and Professor H. Sumangala, of the Buddhist Widyodaga College, near Colombo, interprets *Nirvana* as complete extinction of conscious being, and he believes in no God, unless some undefinable, *impersonal* force may be denominated God! This High Priest was careful to add that all priests and Buddhists did not agree with him in his virtual Atheism and belief in the non-immortality of the conscious soul. Mr. C. Alwis was my principal interpreter upon this occasion, and during the argumentative conversation with this High Priest, to substantiate some materialistic notion, he ordered, brought, and placed before me Dr. Louis Buchner's work on 'Force and Matter.' The free-thinking English Secularists of Ceylon have done what they could to make Atheists and Materialists of Buddhists. Certain Secularists are devout missionaries.

"Other contributions in 'LIGHT' always edify or instruct me, among which are Signor Damiani's, and not least by any means, 'Evenings with Mr. Morse.'

"Recently I received a neat little pamphlet from Mr. J. Enmore Jones. It had the right ring; and here permit me to thank you for publishing the following in a late copy of 'LIGHT':—'Christian Spiritualism does not mean the current orthodoxy varnished over, but a restoration of the spiritual truths and experiences of the early Churches,' &c.; when—may I add—it was said, 'Behold, how they love one another.'

"It is unnecessary for me to tell you that I have no sympathy with this rude, iconoclastic, atheistic, anti-Christian Spiritualism that poses upon a knotty string of negations; nor with a class of Spiritualists who delight to demolish, who persistently and indiscriminately destroy, and then sit down to chuckle over the destruction.

"The account of Colonel Ingersoll's séance with Mr. Henry Slade, copied from some American newspaper, was a fiction. Colonel Ingersoll utterly repudiates it. And further, he is not the least inclined to Spiritualism, but sneers at and makes merry over the 'superstition of ghost-appearings.'

"Somebody sends me *Punch* and the London pictorials; I think it must be Mr. J. C. Eno, to whom I am indebted for many personal kindnesses. Another forwards me the *Anti-Vaccinator*;—must it not be Mr. Tebb, always in advance of public sentiment? And still another furnishes me the *Psychological Review*. If I knew who it was I would pay him off in his own coin, in coin as genuinely good and true, if in my power to do so.

"Mrs. Everitt, I hear, is continuing her séances. Of this I am glad, for they were always genuine and convincing. Where are my old friends, Messrs. E. Harrison Green, C. W. Pearce, and others? Why so silent? Are their harps upon the willows?

"Pleasant are my memories of England and Englishmen."

Some of the teaching of Spiritualism is that all the worlds in the universe are but cradles and schools for infinite humanity; that they are for the development of the human body; that the body is for the development of the human spirit, and that this spirit is destined to everlasting progression. On casting aside the mortal coil, the spirit finds itself clothed with an ethereal body also imperishable or perpetually renewable, with which it can travel through space with the speed of thought. The eye becomes then the channel of speech, for thought is visible to the spirit. Reward and punishment are according to our deeds in the earthly career. Remorse attends on transgression of Divine laws, bringing with it mental purification.—DAMIANTI.



## AN EVENING WITH MR. STUART C. CUMBERLAND.

On Saturday evening, the 6th inst., Mr. Stuart Cumberland invited a number of ladies and gentlemen to the Marlborough Rooms, Regent-street, London, to witness some illustrations of his powers of "perception." Dr. Crichton Browne, F.R.S., &c., was in the chair. Among others present were the Right Rev. Monsignor Capel; Professor Ray Lankester, F.R.S.; Professor C. Bastian, F.R.S.; Dr. Woodward, F.R.S.; Professor Leoni Levi; Rev. Malcolm MacColl; Dr. Hack Tuke; Dr. Horatio Donkin; Professor Croom Robertson; Rev. Haywood Joyce (of Harrow); Mr. Lucy (of the *Daily News*); Rev. Newman Hall; Dr. G. Wyld; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; Dr. Simpson; Mr. Burnside (editor *Chicago Tribune*).

Dr. Crichton Browne opened the proceedings by remarking that a belief in the supernatural had existed in all times and in all nations; that there were two kinds of this belief, one a lawful and reasonable belief, and the other an irrational belief, which was not in harmony with the sentiment and science of the time. Most people, he said, were content to wait for further knowledge in these matters, but there were always a number of impatient and fanatical people, and it was a very useful work to put these impatient and fanatical people to silence. This was Mr. Stuart Cumberland's object, and he was glad to be able in any way to assist him in it. "Spiritualism" and "Thought-reading" were two parasites on modern thought; he might call them parasitical superstitions. Mr. Cumberland had entered upon a crusade against them. It had been said—Why not leave them to decay naturally? But he (Dr. Crichton Browne) did not think it would do to trust to their dying out. Parasites breed fast, and just now, when science has removed or weakened some of the old landmarks, the time is peculiarly favourable for pseudo-scientific beliefs. Such beliefs must not be allowed to occupy the ground. He introduced Mr. Stuart Cumberland to the meeting.

Mr. Cumberland said that the object of the experiments he proposed to lay before the meeting was to prove that there was no need to call in the aid of "Spirits," or of supernatural powers, to produce the results he hoped to shew them. He could not guarantee success, as it depended as much upon the power of concentration of the subject, as it did upon his own power of perception. But he would proceed with a few experiments, and afterwards give some explanations. He invited three or four of the audience on to the platform.

Monsignor Capel, Rev. Haywood Joyce, Mr. Lucy, and Mr. Burnside responded.

*First Experiment.*—Mr. Cumberland asked Monsignor Capel to select someone in the audience, and to tell Mr. Joyce whom he had selected, Mr. Cumberland and the chairman withdrawing into an ante-room while the selection was being made. Mr. Cumberland then came in, tied a handkerchief over his eyes,\* and requesting Monsignor Capel to keep his mind fixed on the individual chosen, Mr. Cumberland put Monsignor Capel's hand to his forehead, and endeavoured to lead him to the individual chosen. This was done successfully with very little hesitation.

*Second Experiment.*—Mr. Cumberland handed Monsignor Capel a small article, and requested him to hide it in the room while he retired to the ante-room with two of the committee. Monsignor Capel came down into the body of the hall, and after walking about, returned on to the platform and placed the object under cover almost close to the chair. Mr. Cumberland, on coming in, led Monsignor Capel a long round of the room, in and out several times among the rows of chairs, and seemed puzzled, continually asking Monsignor Capel if he was really keeping his mind fixed on the spot. Finally, he said:—"I will try for a few moments longer, and if I do not succeed I will give it up." At this point Mr. Cumberland invited any gentleman who had seen where the object was hidden to come forward and give his hand instead of that of Monsignor Capel. The latter asked that before this was done he himself might be permitted to place his own hand on Mr. Cumberland's forehead; this was accorded. Monsignor Capel did so, and as he subsequently explained, mentally willed or ordered Mr. Cumberland to go and pick up the hidden thing. Immediately Mr. Cumberland made a sudden dart, went to one end of the platform, got on to it, and went straight to the right spot, and said, "Here it is."

*Third Experiment.*—Being asked on to the platform myself, two pins were taken, one given to me and the other to Mr. Lucy; and during Mr. Cumberland's absence with one of the committee, as before, we were to hide them in the room. I fixed mine in the waistcoat of Dr. Wyld who was sitting in the middle of the hall, and he buttoned his coat over it. I did not know till afterwards where Mr. Lucy placed his. Mr. Cumberland took Mr. Lucy first, but after considerable exertion and dragging about the room, failed to find the pin. He then said he would try me. I kept my mind intently on the spot. I was dragged in various wrong directions for some time, but finally, as it were by a sudden impulse, was taken to Dr. Wyld. Mr. Cumberland in a convulsive manner began unbuttoning Dr. Wyld's coat, and took out the pin from near the left-hand waistcoat pocket, where I had placed it. He then returned to Mr. Lucy, and at last found the pin in Mr. Lucy's overcoat, that being where he had put it. Mr. Lucy afterwards explained that Mr. Cumberland had, before finding the pin, actually taken him exactly over the ground he had traversed whilst Mr. Cumberland was out of the room. This adds materially to the value of the experiment.

*Fourth Experiment.*—Mr. Cumberland produced a large card with the alphabet. Professor Lankester was invited to choose a short name of a town, and give it to another gentleman. He then went up on to the platform, and Mr. Cumberland, taking his hand, with but little hesitation chose the right letters—R U G B Y.

*Fifth Experiment.*—A similar experiment with Dr. Simpson, who chose the word M A T.

*Sixth Experiment.*—Mr. Cumberland offered to try to find the month and date of Dr. Simpson's birth in the same way. He was immediately successful as to the month—January; but he was not successful as to the day. He first fixed on the 12th, then on the 18th, but this was on the card very near to the 24th, which was the right date. One finger was actually resting on the 18th and another on the 24th. Mr. Cumberland directly said, "It is either here or hereabout."

*Seventh Experiment.*—The seventh and last experiment was this:—A gentleman from the audience was requested, in Mr. Cumberland's absence, to touch two particular spots in the room in succession with a coin, and then to conceal the coin in a third spot. After considerable effort the first spot was correctly fixed upon, and after a great deal more effort the second spot also, but the attempts to find the coin itself were fruitless.

A final experiment of rather a complicated character was attempted, but had to be abandoned on account of Mr. Cumberland being too tired and exhausted.

Mr. Cumberland then gave what he described as an exposition of the way in which "Spirit rappers" make the raps; that is, by movement of the joints in the toes, and dislocation of the fingers. He produced in this way moderately loud noises. Dr. Wyld asked for the raps to be produced in different parts of the room. Mr. Cumberland said he could do this; or rather, he said, that this was only due to the imagination being acted upon. In order to shew how difficult it was to tell the direction from which sound came, he asked a gentleman to sit blindfold on the platform, and making clicks with two coins in various places round him, asked him to point out the direction from which the sound proceeded. The answers were in most cases ludicrously inaccurate.

In explanation of the way in which the experiments had been performed, Mr. Cumberland stated that the result in each case was due to the faculty of perception. By this he meant that the person who was thinking, gave, unconsciously and involuntarily, a number and variety of minute indications which he, Mr. Cumberland, was able to perceive. He entirely disclaimed anything of the nature of thought or mind reading. He said the causes of his success were all outward, and not in any way inward, and he asserted that contact with the person thinking was absolutely essential. In reply to an assertion from Dr. Wyld that the same results could be obtained, and had been obtained, without contact, he denied the possibility, and challenged Dr. Wyld to proof. He said that these phenomena could be explained, without calling in the aid of occult powers, or of "Spirits," by means of this delicate perception of movements, and pressures and changes of temperature. He should be able, at other opportunities, to explain all the other phenomena of so-called "Spiritualism."

Dr. Crichton Browne, as chairman, said that he thought the evening had been as successful as any so-called thought-reading

\* Mr. Cumberland explained that, in this and subsequent experiments, he was not blindfolded in the proper sense of the word; the handkerchief was only to lessen the distraction caused by the light and by external objects.



experiments which had been seen in London. Some scholar in the North had made use of what he thought was a very happy phrase, in describing the mode of operation as the "quintessence of twig." For himself he did not believe in any occult force or power of any kind being brought into play. It was in accordance with both sound reason and science to accept the simplest explanation of facts, and his belief was that this was afforded by attributing the results merely to quick perception, and to an acute use of ordinary powers.

Monsignor Capel called attention to the fact that Mr. Cumberland had not explained any of the phenomena of the Spiritualists. He said he was not a Spiritualist in the ordinary sense of the word, but he wished to point out that Mr. Cumberland had only offered an explanation of his own experiments.

The meeting concluded with votes of thanks to Mr. Cumberland and to the chairman.

In reference to the experiments of the evening, a few points appear to be worthy of remark. In the first place, there seemed to be an entire absence of anything approaching to trickery or collusion. Secondly, excluding the last experiment, there was only one decided failure, and that was when Mr. Cumberland was tired and exhausted. This altogether excludes, as an explanation, any theory of accidental coincidence. Mr. Cumberland constantly appealed to the audience to be as quiet as possible, as conversation and noise distracted him. It is a curious fact that in more than one of the experiments Mr. Cumberland followed the course which the "hider" had previously taken round the room before fixing upon a place for the object to be concealed. Mr. Lucy, who concealed the pin in his own coat, said, as has been mentioned, that this was remarkably the case with him. But on the other hand, this was not always so. When I hid the pin in Dr. Wyld's waistcoat, I went straight from the platform to where Dr. Wyld sat; while Mr. Cumberland led me frantically in several directions, where neither I nor my mind had been, before he finally pitched upon the right one. It is all very well and very true for Dr. Crichton Browne to remark that the simplest solution should be accepted. But then it is necessary to take care that it is a solution which really covers the facts. The whole of Mr. Cumberland's experiments were of a kind which it is conceivable might be covered by his own explanation of them. But if a similar series of results could be obtained without contact, the explanation given would be wholly inadequate, and it would then be illogical and contrary to sound science to conclude, without further investigation, that Mr. Cumberland's explanation is the true one, even of his own experiments. It would therefore be very important that Mr. Cumberland's challenge to Dr. Wyld should be taken up, and that similar results should, if possible, be obtained under similar circumstances and before a similar audience, without contact. If this were done, I cannot doubt that such men as Dr. Crichton Browne, Professor Ray Lankester, and others who were present would give their attention to them.

Venturing on a personal opinion of my own, and knowing how carefully I endeavoured to avoid giving the least external clue in the experiment in which I took part, I cannot accept, as a satisfactory and reasonable solution of Mr. Cumberland's success, that I involuntarily led him, by external movements and indications, to Dr. Wyld's waistcoat in which I had fixed the pin. The experiment which Monsignor Capel made is also very interesting from a different point of view to that which Mr. Cumberland takes. It, therefore, appears to me that Mr. Stuart Cumberland's explanation of the results obtained is conceivably true, yet it is highly improbable, and it requires great effort to believe that acuteness of the ordinary senses is capable of accomplishing so much. One point more: Dr. Crichton Browne, and Mr. Cumberland several times spoke as if the "Spiritualists" attributed every abnormal occurrence to the direct action of "Spirits," whereas many of them consider that whole groups of phenomena are explicable by the exercise of powers of the mind, which, though not hitherto recognised by science, are just as natural as the ordinary powers of perception through the external senses. The real question is—Is there evidence of the existence of such hitherto unrecognised faculties of the mind?

EDWARD T. BENNETT.

[Nothing is more amusing to an experienced Spiritualist than to see how readily scientific men are duped. The very people who seem to fancy that they have a sort of prescriptive right to

label all who differ from them as credulous fanatics, are themselves steeped in credulity from head to foot; and we can fancy Mr. Stuart Cumberland, when he has bowed the "sages" out, enjoying to himself a very hearty laugh at the alacrity with which they allow themselves to be taken in by his pretended demonstrations. If Mr. Stuart Cumberland is not himself grievously ignorant of the very subject with which he presumes to deal he must know that the noises which are spoken of, amongst Spiritualists, as Spirit-raps are *not* caused by movements of the joints of the toes, or by dislocation of the fingers, or by any physical contact with the object upon which the noises are produced. A few friends were present last week at our own residence when a gentleman took the top off a porcelain vase and, there being a medium in the company, asked that raps should be given upon it as he held it in his hand, no one else touching it. This was in *broad daylight* and the raps on the porcelain were distinctly heard; and yet Mr. Stuart Cumberland, as above narrated, sought to induce his audience to believe that darkness is a necessary condition; and blindfolded his subject to shew that the direction of the sound could then be easily mistaken. Even under such conditions, if the noises had been of a more familiar character than that of the clicking of two coins in the air, the person so blindfolded could not have been deceived. Let Mr. Cumberland, for instance, allow the company to speak, or to rap on the furniture in different parts of the room, and he must be a dense "subject" indeed who cannot at once designate the spot at which the noise was caused. But the whole fallacy arises from the assumption that the raps are produced at Spiritualistic séances invariably in the dark, and by some one of the persons present. There is abundant evidence, which many scientists eagerly ignore, that this is not so; and the incident which we have just narrated is a single instance out of thousands within our experience. Many a time in our own house, objects have been struck, and we have seen the vibration caused by the blow; and yet that blow was most certainly not given by any person present in the flesh. It would be far more becoming if men who wish their opinions to be respected, would make sure of the facts before they give heed to pretended explanations.—Ed., "LIGHT."]

#### THE STRANGER CHILD.

The soul of a saintly woman  
Went in by the crystal bar,  
With the breath of the morning twilight,  
By the light of the evening star.  
A band of the waiting angels  
Came down like a snowy cloud,  
As she entered over the threshold  
And looked at the shining crowd.  
The faces of her beloved,  
Lost out of her years of pain,  
Came, glowing in guise angelic,  
To look in her eyes again.  
But clothed in the mystic samite,  
With palm in its busy hand,  
Lo! close in the ranks a stranger,  
At home in the linked band,  
Came close with a cry of welcome,  
Came close with a child's caress;  
Whilst the saintly woman wondered  
From whence it had come to bless;  
Till the voice of a waiting angel  
Came back with a tender tone,  
"Make room for a lonely stranger,  
O! motherhood, claim thine own;  
"Recall a dark night of wailing,  
A dawn out of bitter pain.  
The eyes of a baby opened,  
Then shutting for aye again.  
"So brief was the mortal sojourn  
It seemed hardly worth thy woe;  
The shadow of Death's dark valley,  
Through which thou wast called to go  
"Take back to thy tender claiming  
The jewel re-set for thee;  
And the feet, too weak for the earth-land,  
Set firm in the crystal sea."

E. L.

MRS. ANNA KINGSFORD, M.D., will read a paper on Monday evening next, at half-past seven, at the rooms of the B.N.A.S., 38, Great Russell-street, on "The Systematisation and Application of Psychic Truth." Members and friends will be admitted free, and a large attendance is expected.



## SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

## SECOND SERIES.

This series of Spirit-Teachings, like the former, is made up of selections from a great mass which have been automatically written during a series of years. They are selected on no other principle than that of printing what has been valuable to the person for whom they were originally given, in so far as this can be done without trenching on what is merely of personal and private application. The latter consideration excludes a great mass of what would otherwise be interesting and valuable matter. The phraseology has been preserved, as far as possible, intact, names only being omitted. The series follows directly on the first, from which, indeed, it is separated only by the accident of its publication in another journal, and after some considerable interval of time. The publication is resumed in deference to many repeated requests.

M.A. (Oxon.)

## No. XXI.

[I had been conscious of great spiritual depression and of the presence and assaults of Spirits who were evidently antagonistic, and who vexed me in various ways, and especially when I was alone. I grew to regard this experience as a form of temptation and trial, and to fight very earnestly against my spiritual foes.]

*I want to know what is the meaning of this horrid spiritual atmosphere.*

We wished to speak with you, and did not come when you first asked, because we were unable to command the conditions under which a reliable message could be given. Ask nothing now, but allow us to speak. You have been for a long time now influenced by the power which the Adversaries have been able to throw around you and which we have not power enough to drive away completely. The power of the Adversaries has been increased of late, and you see the effect in your world in the disturbances they have been able to produce. Although we have been able to guard you from the immediate attack, we have not been able to prevent you from feeling the disturbance which they have been able to produce. Your ideas are coloured by it, and it is with extreme difficulty that we are able to give a reliable communication at all. We write even now in fear that the influence, temporarily averted, may return. We can answer no questions, and can but give you directions for your governance. Seek no communion with us unless under impression. Do not attempt to ask any questions or to engage in any argument with us. Accept our statement, for we know what we say, that such is fraught with risk. You will hear of similar feelings to those which beset you from all who are sensitive to Spirit influence. If you wish to keep yourself from harm, avoid all attempt at communion with us. We shall not the less minister round and protect you. When safe, we will ourselves open communication. Do not anticipate. It is in your mind to ask about the sittings with X. You have planned them contrary to our wish: but we do not know that any harm can come to you in the present conditions that might not come without. Do not attempt any meetings while the influence of another medium is upon you. [*I mentally asked if X's influence would be bad.*] No, it is not bad; but any other avenue opened may be a means of approach of those whom we dread. Above all, keep in view what we say. These are times of perplexity and distress such as you must needs pass through; but perhaps severer than you will have again. It behoves you to be careful. You are strong willed, and may disregard what we say. If so, you do it at your own peril. Do not lay too much stress on ideas that pass through your mind now. They suffer much through the spiritual disturbance of which we speak. It is not the time now for origination; rather for prayer and reticence. You do not know the risk. All must feel it who are sensitive to such influences. You are reading a book now that provokes in your mind a feeling of disputation: remember that you read it under very adverse circumstances. Keep that in mind. You are not fitted now to enter into a field of argument and controversy. It is at your own risk that you do so. We have not much more power that we dare use, and we use that in prayer that the Eternal and All-Wise will protect us all and keep us stayed on the rock of truth until the time of distress be past. May He keep and guide you.

## No. XXII.

[The above was the first monition of a period of spiritual distress which is hardly now beginning to lift. There have been rifts in the darkness, but no clear shining spiritual sun from that close of 1875, when the above was written, to the close of 1881, that special year of doom. On the eve of 1876 the following message came unsolicited.]

The blessing of the Blessed One be on you. We have come that you might not feel yourself to be alone, and to lift, if we may, the feeling of lonely depression that is settling down upon you. We have already told you that you suffer from an attempt of the Adversaries to overthrow the faith that we have implanted in you. They are now especially active, and the evil effects of their influence are apparent to all. They have availed to get partial influence over you through the direction of will towards you: and this through the plots of antagonists both in your world and in ours. One day we shall be able to tell you who these are that you may know and avoid them. We have no power to ward off this influence so projected upon you, because it is impersonal. We can only strengthen you against it, and warn you of it, that you may not lay too much stress on the feelings and attitude of your mind. This, good friend, is a season of dire distress, both for us and you. It is one in which you would do well to meditate and pray much, and do little. It is not the time for action: rather for seclusion. It is not the time for throwing open the gates of communion between us and you: rather for guarding every avenue of approach with tenfold care, lest the enemy enter unawares. The danger will pass, as we are assured, but not yet; a conflict will rage and the year on which you are soon to enter will be a year of trouble and perplexity and distress. Endeavour, so far as may be, to keep a clear and calm mind, and to preserve a sound and healthy state of body. Do not seek communion with any other than ourselves, and with us only when we desire it. All objective manifestations of our power must cease for the present. They are fraught with risk. We will meet you regularly day by day, so long as you are here alone, and will converse on such subjects as are needful or instructive for you. Prepare beforehand the questions you wish to ask, and write them so that we may know of them; and avoid all argument and contention. Active bodily exercise is very useful to throw off the feeling of depression which the Adversaries infuse into your mind. We will do what can be done to keep the spiritual conditions pure. May the All-Wise guide and guard us and you.

[A letter from Mrs. H. gives expression to the same nameless fear, and consciousness of adverse spiritual presence. She says she dare not write for fear of attracting the influence. Mrs. A. wrote to me specially to say the same. I cannot describe the intense feeling of depression, the horrible anticipation of something about to happen, the consciousness of malignant presences about me, and the total mental disorganisation that has settled down upon me. I have heard others describe it, but I never realised it, nor can any one at all understand it who has never felt it. "Imperator" refers it to direct malign influence projected from antagonistic Spirits, who would seem to use somebody in this world to aid them.]

*Many very serious questions are raised by the fact that the Adversaries have such power as they seem to have. Have they the same power when we do not voluntarily open the door to Spirit communion? And when invited by such means can they be checked?*

We told you not to raise questions of dispute. It is imperative that you do not argue. Regard our answer as final. The Spirit-world cannot operate on you to anything like the extent unless you place yourself in rapport with it. That is known to you. You may if you please cut yourself off from both the good and the evil (as you call it), but you cannot have one without the other. + IMPERATOR.

## THE "NATIONAL REFORMER" AND FREE INQUIRY.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I feel obliged for your insertion of my letter, and for Mr. H. G. Atkinson's reply. The reason assigned by Mr. Atkinson why the *National Reformer* did not insert my letter is very different from the reasons given by the editors of that paper. Consequently, his apology for their arbitrary conduct loses its force. I notice that Mr. Atkinson does not furnish the explanation of slate writing asked for by me, and that his remark about "calling up the Spirits of the dead" shews a limited acquaintance with the subject of Spiritualism out of harmony with his claim to have fully investigated the whole question.

I would like to remind Mr. Atkinson that the important question of the day is not so much the nature of the information from the "other world" as whether our friends really survive the change called death, and whether they can, under any conditions, communicate with us. In answer to these questions, the producers of the phenomena claim to be the Spirits of the departed. Can Mr. Atkinson invalidate their claim?—Yours respectfully,

THOS. MCKINNEY.

New Fletton, Peterborough,  
May 13th, 1882.



## 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 séances.

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

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

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

## THE UNCERTAINTIES OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

We all owe thanks to "J. P. T." for his communication in "LIGHT" of the 6th inst. Experiences like his are, I believe, by no means infrequent amongst Spiritualists, but they are generally passed over in silence. And yet such a narrative as "J. P. T."’s is of more value than a hundred, or a thousand, successful "tests." It is in the hope of throwing some light upon a very obscure subject that I venture to draw attention to two cases coming within my own knowledge, which appear to me to present considerable analogy to "J. P. T."’s. A full account of the first of the two cases referred to was originally published in one of the Oxford local papers. It was thence extracted by Mr. St. George Stock, and republished, with some further evidence and comments of his own, in *Human Nature*, somewhere about the year 1874. A Baptist minister, living at Eynsham, near Oxford, received, through the hands of his children, written communications purporting to come from his dead wife. The messages thus given offered him religious consolation, and abundant "proofs" of personal identity. For some time the minister was satisfied that he was actually holding converse with his wife, and receiving from her help and comfort. Without referring to the account, which I am at present unable to do, I cannot now recall under what precise circumstances the character of the communications changed. But it did change, whilst still, apparently, proceeding from the same source. Suddenly, and without apparent cause, Biblical texts and affectionate counsels gave place to blasphemy and obscenity, and the unhappy husband was driven to the conclusion that he had been duped all along by a malicious fiend. For fuller details of this case, which is a very striking one, I would recommend readers of "LIGHT" to refer to *Human Nature* of about the date named. The second experience referred to, which is almost an exact parallel to this last, was related to me by the gentleman who was the subject of it. Shortly after the death of his wife, a near connection of my informant’s, a little girl of twelve, began to write psychographically. The writing professed to come from the Spirit of my friend’s wife, and bore strong internal evidence that it did so come. Frequent allusions were made to incidents known only to the man and wife, and to conversations held in the privacy of their own room. But wishing to obtain full proof, my friend proceeded to question the communicant further. He then found, to his astonishment, that the memory, or the knowledge, of the Intelligence which inspired the messages extended no further back than a period of some six weeks previous to his wife’s death. All before that was a blank. On taxing the Spirit with imposture, he was horrified by an outburst of the foulest abuse and imprecations—all written, be it remembered, by the hand of a little child, who could scarcely have heard, much less understood, the words used. It is, I understand from many sources, a frequent experience with Planchette writers, that messages proceeding apparently from deceased friends will, after a time, suddenly and inexplicably degenerate in the same way.

There are two lessons to be learnt from such incidents as these. And, perhaps, the most important is, that there can be no proof, in the strictest sense of that word, of personal identity. Not that we really needed such mournful experiences to teach us this; for it is obvious. But we have been accustomed to

rely, not merely upon such indications as are afforded by handwriting, mode of expression, and reference to private conversations—things which it is manifestly not impossible for some deceiving Spirit to counterfeit; but upon the absence of any apparent motive for deception. And we have thus been led to believe, on evidence which at most amounted to a strong presumption, that we were actually holding converse with some deceased friend. We have been, as we say, *morally certain* of this. But "J. P. T."’s narrative should warn us against holding any such moral presumption in lieu of proof; the absence of any apparent motive for deceit is no guarantee, it would appear, against deception. After all, this is no more than we knew, or should have known, before; but to have it thus painfully thrust upon our notice is disheartening.

And the other point is that if, in such experiences, we are mocked by personal Intelligences other than our own, they are not always, as we have been accustomed to suppose, of low intellectual development. I say "if," for it seems to be at least possible that such communications may be but the echoes of our own hopes, and fears, and aspirations, driven back from the blank wall that shuts us in, or refracted from some shadowy, unsubstantial "Geist," such as the authors of the "Perfect Way" tell us exist in that other world as the sorry relics of what were once human intelligences. But assuming these messages to have proceeded from veritable disembodied personalities, and accepting "J. P. T."’s narrative as substantially accurate, we see that the intelligence manifested is by no means of a low order. That during eighteen months of constant intercommunication these Spirits should have made but one mistake, and that a deliberate one; that they should during all that time have given no indication, by turn of expression or misstatement of fact, that they were other than what they professed to be; that they should have successfully simulated, not merely the handwriting, but the style of their prototypes; and that neither in counterfeiting the language of cheerful and affectionate intimacy, nor that of religious exhortation, they should have betrayed the deception—all this indicates their possession of intellectual qualities above the level of ordinary cunning; and increases our bewilderment that beings of such a relatively high organisation should perpetrate a fraud so base and so utterly purposeless.

It is to be hoped that others will consider the subject of sufficient interest to come forward with analogous experiences of their own; for such another narrative there are some of us who would gladly exchange a year’s accounts of "remarkable séances" and other Spiritual legerdemain.

Sedburgh, Yorkshire,  
May 14th.

FRANK PODMORE.

The interesting narrative of your correspondent "J.P.T.," showing the unreliability of Spirit communications, is enough to deter many inquirers from having anything to do with Spiritualism, and is likely to provoke the inquiry, "Of what use is Spiritualism when no reliance can be placed upon the so-called communications?"

The experience of your correspondent is certainly puzzling. I have gone through a very similar one myself, as described by me in the introduction to "Life Beyond the Grave," and I apprehend all mediums have similar unfortunate experiences. I was obliged to give up writing mediumship entirely for a long time, and I have since quite discontinued it for any communications of a personal nature. I venture to think that all persons who seek repeated tests of the reality of Spirit communion will be in the long run deceived, and have their faith shaken. For a time they will be in a state of despair, or at any rate of semi-scepticism; but ultimately their belief will be re-established.

I believe that Spirit communion should only be used for the purpose of learning spiritual truths, and then only under carefully guarded conditions, excluding strange sitters who bring unknown Spirit influences with them. Prayer should precede the séance, or at any rate Spirit communion should be sought in a prayerful spirit and an entire absence of frivolity.

By kindness and love, deceitful Spirits may be persuaded to leave the circle, or their hearts may be changed; but threats and words of contempt will avail nothing.

I have known the most disastrous results follow the constant seeking for tests. When once conclusive proof is obtained of the existence of Spirits, we should merely seek to learn what they have to teach us of the other life, and judge of its truthfulness apart from tests of the identity of the Spirit



communicating; whilst communications of a personal nature should never be sought for.

The object of Spirit intercourse is not to amuse us, or to save us trouble in the performance of our daily duties, but to teach us how to live so that we may be happier here and hereafter. Many Spiritualists never seem to understand that they are called upon to "live the life"—to become unworldly, unselfish, and live as if they fully realised that they are always in the presence of unseen friends.

There are Spiritualists of many years' standing as selfish, sensual, worldly-minded, and egotistical as the grossest Materialists. Their Spiritualism seems to be confined to attending physical séances, and, in the long run, they are sure to be deceived by "unclean Spirits." I do not make these remarks in any way as explanatory of "J. P. T.'s" case, but merely as suggestions from my own experience and what I have seen in the case of others.

Spiritualism must be followed for unselfish ends entirely; otherwise we cannot attract truthful Spirits. Only the earth-bound, deceitful ones are drawn to those who abuse it and verily they have their reward.

FRITZ.

#### THE SALVATION ARMY.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I attended two meetings of the Salvation Army assembled at the Oxford Circus Rooms on Sunday, and felt much interested in the proceedings. Ray Lankester, like a fish out of water, was among the audience!

The Salvation Army is commanded by the Rev. General Booth, who has under him some 700 male and female Captains and 15,000 practised speakers, and he controls a revenue which last year reached £57,000.

It will thus be seen that the organisation is very powerful and that the work is immense.

The male Captains have a neat blue uniform resembling that of some volunteers, and the female Captains are plainly dressed in black straw bonnets, and gowns. They might, I think, with advantage to themselves and the cause be better dressed, by the addition of neat white collars and cuffs, and better-made clothes, as their present appearance too much resembles those in the uniform of the poor's-house.

I observed many fine faces and heads among the officers, and there was a genuine expression of simplicity and earnestness.

The music was accompanied by brass and stringed instruments. The lady who sang solo did so with much sweetness, and the chorus was often very fine.

The hymn-singing was alternated with extempore prayer by men and women, during the utterance of which the speakers seemed sometimes to rise almost to ecstasy.

Other speakers described the history and process of their conversion, and others spoke generally on the conversion of sinners.

One middle-aged woman especially spoke with intense dramatic effect, and many handkerchiefs might be seen applied to many eyes; and it was impossible not to be convinced of the entire earnestness of the speakers, as torrents and paroxysms of emotion were poured forth.

The doctrine taught was "Holiness to the Lord by the indwelling of Jesus Christ in the soul."

By the invocation of Jesus they do not mean a mere *nom de plume*, but a personal being who speaks to them, and through them to the world.

Spiritualists will see in this description that the Captains of the Salvation Army are so far mediums, with this distinction, that whereas mediums are supposed to be controlled by the Spirits of various departed human beings, the Salvationists believe themselves to be controlled exclusively by Jesus; and Christian Theosophists will see in the claims of the Salvationists a disorderly and chaotic exhibition of their philosophy, namely, that the illumination of the Word, or Logos, or Christ in the centre of the soul is the salvation of the three-fold man, body, soul, and spirit; but the Salvationists are entirely ignorant of Theosophy, and they would doubtless abhor the idea of Spiritualism. They are simply like children who believe in a father and desire to keep his commandments.

The world may laugh at their claims, and smile at their delusions, and yet wherever they go they tend to empty the public-houses and to purify the public streets.

The great danger is in reaction from one extreme to another, and many of the converts arise no doubt abruptly "out of stony

ground, and there being no depth of soil quickly wither away." But I can advise my Spiritual and Theosophic friends to pay the Oxford Circus Rooms a visit on Sunday at 11, 3, or 6.30 o'clock. They will find a form of Spiritualism, noisy indeed and chaotic, not quite so orderly as the services at a West End chapel, but they will hear stirring music, and touching and infectious words and narratives, and they will find many people deeply in earnest, and many who profess to have found "the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

G. W., M.D.

#### A "SITTING" WITH MRS. KATE FOX JENOKEN.

Narrated by Mr. S. C. Hall, F.S.A., &c.

If persons of reliable repute would publish results of "sittings" (I do not like the French word "séance") they would greatly aid the upward progress of Spiritualism. But to do so requires moral courage; for although Spiritualists are not now, as they were a few years ago, generally subjected to the charge of co-partnership with Fraud, they are not unfrequently condemned to undergo sneer and contempt arising out of belief that they are victims of gross delusion; in brief, that they are *not* rogues but they *are* fools.

I have more than once stated that the education of my very long life has been a study to discriminate between right and wrong; specially to distinguish truth from falsehood; but invariably to examine closely that upon which I was required to pronounce a verdict; to take nothing on trust until it had passed through such examination; and then to determine according to the power of judging—according to the intelligence with which God has gifted me, sustained by my senses wherever and whenever they could aid in arriving at decision. (I have been an editor during more than half a century.) This has been my governing rule in all interviews or "sittings" with mediums, no matter what was the extent of my regard for, or confidence in, the person with whom I was for the time associated. I claim, therefore, to be accepted as a witness to be relied upon, when and where I tender evidence. I would tender none in cases where I could not do so distinctly and righteously. I may not, indeed, be "on my oath," but as I have written elsewhere—

"No man a doit is worth,

Whose bond is any better than his word."

Surely I should shrink from tendering evidence on matters I did not understand, and of which I had little or no experience. What would be said of, and to me, if I delivered opinions concerning the origin of man, atmospheric influences, the power of electricity, or any one of a hundred subjects of which I know next to nothing? I bow in submission and confiding trust to those who have made such matters their studies.

But that which I give I have a right to receive. I once protested to my friend Sir Charles Wheatstone that I declined to inquire as regards that which I knew to be an *impossibility*,—that I would not waste my time in such inquiries—namely, the power to send a message to Paris and bring me an answer in an hour.

When he turned from me with a sort of sneer amounting to disgust, I said, "I am merely treating you as you have treated me: presuming to question your authority on a subject to which your life has been devoted—electricity. I have devoted many years to the study of Spiritualism, and you refuse to listen to my statements as regards it; while at the same time you concede to me love and advocacy of Truth. You think I fancy I see and hear what I do not see and hear, and am simply the victim of a delusion. You are only as just and fair and reasonable to me as I am to you, when I deny that you can send a message 500 miles, and bring to me the answer to it in less than an hour, and will not accept evidence that you can do it."

I do not think I presume, then, in demanding to be heard as a witness, above suspicion, as regards Spiritual manifestations; either because of my antecedents, my general capacity, or by—I hope I may safely say—my love of truth as shown by the many books I have written and published.

I lay no stress on the absence of any conceivable motive to mislead or delude; but I do lay some stress on the conviction I profess, that Spiritualism is a mighty boon, God sent and given, to confute and destroy Materialism, to remove all doubts concerning the "Hereafter," to strengthen belief and trust in a superintending and directing Providence, and to uphold the teachings of Scripture as the revealed word of God.

I suppress, or, at all events, postpone, much more I would fain write under this head.

If, therefore, I did not strive by all the means in my power



to extend the belief which I know to be pregnant with blessings, I should not only be a craven but a worse sinner against conscience than a physician would be who fails to prescribe a medicine he believes will cure his patient, and uses, instead, that which he is sure is deleterious and may be prejudicial to life.

Following this introduction—which has extended to greater length than I meant it to do—I ask you to print in your excellent journal some account of a “sitting” I have recently had with Mrs. Kate Fox Jencken, the only medium with whom I have “sate” for the last three or four years.

On my birthday, the 9th of May, 1882, a meeting was held at my dwelling, 3, Sussex-place, Kensington, W.

The medium Mrs. Jencken : present, Mr. and Mrs. Stack, a lady friend of theirs, Mr. Edwin Hill, of Bath, and myself ; in all six persons.

Many interesting and touching messages were conveyed to me by the usual writing of Mrs. Jencken. We were directed to put out the light. Then commenced a series of manifestations such as I have not often seen equalled, and very seldom surpassed.

I had been, at a previous sitting, directed to place two of our photographs on the table and an “empty” chair at my side.

I removed a small hand-bell from the table and held it in my hand ; I felt a hand take it from me, when it was rung in all parts of the room during at least five minutes.

I then placed an accordion under the table, whence it was removed, and at a distance of three or four feet from the table, round which we were seated, tunes were played.

The accordion was played and the bell was rung in several parts of the room, while two candles were lit on the table. It was not, therefore, what is termed a dark sitting, although *occasionally* the lights were put out.

During all the time, Mr. Stack held one of the hands of Mrs. Jencken, and I held the other—each frequently saying, “I have Mrs. Jencken’s hand in mine.”

About fifty flowers of hearts-case were placed on a sheet of paper before me. I had received some hearts-case flowers from a friend in the morning ; but the vase that contained them was not in the sitting-room ; I sent for it and found it intact. The bouquet had not been in the least degree disturbed.

In what is called “direct writing” I found these words written by pencil in a very small hand, on a sheet of paper that lay before me :—

“I have brought you my token of love.”

At a sitting some days previously (when alone with Mrs. Jencken) I had received this message :—“On your birthday I will bring you a token of love.”

It is hardly needed to say I had marked the sheet of paper, first with my initials, and also by tearing off one of the corners in such a manner as to insure recognition.

Our two photographs were removed from the table and placed, side by side, on the “empty” chair which I had placed close to mine.

All the persons present were repeatedly what is called “touched by Spirit hands.” I had received a hurt in the foot by an accident in Bath. At a previous sitting I had a message,—“I will magnetise your foot and soothe it.” On the 9th, I distinctly felt a hand go over the foot at least twenty times ; and to-day (the 10th) the foot is free from pain ; I have walked up and down stairs without aid from the bannisters.

To doubt that the beatified spirit of my beloved wife was present with us on that evening would be equivalent to doubting the presence of the persons whose names I have mentioned in this brief statement of the several facts that occurred.

I need write no more.

I have witnessed and recorded many wonderful manifestations ; I doubt if I have seen any more convincing than this ; certainly none more refined ; none that gave more conclusive evidence that pure, and good, and holy Spirits alone were communicating : cheering, comforting, consoling—teaching, by the merciful sanction of the Lord and Master. The “messages” I do not print : they are not for the public eye ; it must suffice to say that when I retired to rest, on my knees, with my Bible in my hand, I thanked God for them, and I also thanked my beloved wife, who was His messenger.

I have consented to be Mrs. Jencken’s “banker,” and although I have much other work to do, and would, if I could, avoid the responsibility, I fervently hope my office will not be a

sinicure. Her two orphan boys are well placed in a school at Oxford, and I feel confidence approaching certainty that, in all respects, she will so act as to increase and not lessen her power as a medium while retaining the friendship and trust of the many who cannot but feel for her a regard in some degree resembling (as arising from the same source) that which the New Church accords to Emanuel Swedenborg, and the Methodists render to John Wesley. Assuredly Spiritualists owe to this lady a huge debt for the glad tidings she was largely the instrument, selected by Providence, to convey to them.

S. C. HALL.

#### GLEANINGS FROM A SPIRIT CIRCLE.

The writer, having attended a series of séances held with a trance-medium, proposes to give a few notes of phenomena observed.

It is remarkable how little difference there is between the life which we see and the life which the lower or earth-bound Spirits seem to experience ; and these earth-bound ones constitute, unfortunately, the great bulk of those who pass away from this life to the next.

Again and again the medium (a young woman) has been controlled by Spirits who did not seem to realise that they had passed into the Spirit-world at all. When speaking to us through the organism of the medium they have been quite unconscious that they were using the body of another. One man, who seemed to belong to the working classes, and said he had been knocked on the head [in a drunken fight, could only be convinced that it was not his own body he was controlling by making him put his (or rather the medium’s) hand up to his (i.e., the medium’s) ears and feel the ear-rings which the medium was wearing. These puzzled him considerably. He could not make out how it was they came in his ears. At the same time, to his own eyes, he seemed to be wearing his own clothes, for he pulled some invisible cigars out of an invisible pocket and offered one to a gentleman in the circle and could not believe that the latter was unable to see it. When told that he had passed into the Spirit-world—that he was “dead” in fact—he refused to believe it. He called to him an invisible friend whom he addressed as “Bill,” extended his hand to him, and appeared to be shaking the hand of his friend. When we told him we could see no “Bill” he was very much puzzled. Addressing “Bill” he said, “Now, Bill, they tell me this is not my hand that I’m giving you to shake. Isn’t it my own hand ?” What answer “Bill” gave we could not hear, but the Spirit controlling the medium seemed satisfied that he had got the best of the argument. When asked if he remembered his friend “Bill” dying, he said “Yes.” I then asked him how he came to be shaking hands with his friend “Bill” if “Bill” had died ? This seemed to astonish and puzzle him more and more, and at last he was bound to admit that “it was very strange.” He explained how he came there by saying that he came with a large number of others to the circle and was looking on when a big man asked him if he would like to say a few words, and he stepped forward and there he was. That was all he knew. When asked if he noticed what had become of the medium, he said, “Well, there was a bit of a lass here just a bit since, but I can’t see what’s become of her.” All the while he was controlling the medium, or, as he called her, “the bit of a lass.”

Once when the medium was under control she broke a plate. The Spirit at the next sitting said he had brought me another plate to replace the one broken. Of course the plate he had brought was invisible to me, being only a Spirit counterpart. Other Spirits have frequently brought us invisible flowers, and begged our acceptance of them, and appeared to be astonished that we could not see them. One Spirit flourished an invisible cane and pulled an invisible locket from his breast pocket, gazing at it fondly and kissing it. He could not understand why we could not see either stick or locket.

When one of the higher Spirits controls the medium it appears to the other onlooking Spirits as if the medium were enveloped in, and concealed by, a bright light or cloud. The higher Spirits—that is, those not on the earth-plane—are lighter and more ethereal than the latter, and usually invisible to those below them, although they may be all attending the same circle. The higher Spirits seem often to be unable to speak to the lower ones except through a medium. Hence the use of sitting in circles with a trance medium is quite as much for the purpose of benefiting and raising unhappy Spirits, who are out of the flesh, as for improving and instructing mortals. We have been told again and again that there are very many more Spirits present at our circles than mortals, and the good done to the Spirits is incalculable.



The world of Spirits is filled with the unhappy darkened ones who are raised and comforted by what they hear at well-conducted séances. It seems to give them especial relief to be allowed to unburden their minds through the medium, and tell us their life histories; and many a touching story has been thus communicated. Whether confession is or is not good in this life, one thing is certain, that confession is regarded as a great privilege in the other life, and evidently greatly relieves the Spirit. This may be owing to the fact that the confession excites the sympathy of the sitters, and it is this *sympathy* which is so precious to them.

As all Spirits are invisible to us it follows that we can have no means of identifying them, or forming any mental picture of them, or feeling any sympathy for them until they have described their inner state by a confession through the medium. After this they are always welcomed as old friends, and come to tell us how they are progressing. Progress seems to be attended with the increased brightness of the Spirit. The more unprogressed they are the blacker and darker do they appear to the clairvoyant, whilst the higher ones appear correspondingly bright. The brightness of the higher ones is, however, only *relative*. They appear bright to those beneath them—sometimes of such dazzling brightness as to be painful to look at—but to one another on the same grade they appear as ordinary human beings do to each other. Even the blackest and darkest only look black and dark to those above them. To those on their own level they too are as ordinary human beings. Again the brightness of the higher ones is not perceived until they penetrate the lower spheres, whilst in their own spheres their brightness is not apparent. This law is merely analogous to similar laws in our own world.

FRITZ.

Manchester, May, 1882.

## FAREWELL!

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I leave England for America on the 18th inst., by the "White Star" steamer "Celtic," and shall, therefore, be far on my homeward voyage when this farewell message, with your kind permission, shall have reached your readers. My son, who came from America just in time to receive me in his loving arms at the end of my twelve months in an English prison, will take me to my husband, my parents, and the dear friends who await my coming.

I find that I cannot leave England without desiring to thank the friends who in my adversity have proved so faithful to the cause to which, through good and evil report, my life has been devoted.

Nothing in my recent experience has surprised me more than this golden fidelity, which has risen above all obstacles in those true friends who have not counted the cost, but have been true to the truth, and held me more closely to their brave hearts as the shadows deepened around my path.

I have first of all to thank you for publishing the generous words of some who have both known and trusted me. I can never be too grateful to the editors of the *Banner of Light*, who have been my firm and generous friends from the first day they knew me as a Spirit-medium; and my thanks are also due to *Mind and Matter*, *Miller's Psychometric Journal*, *The Voice of the Angels*, and, I believe, with one insignificant exception, the entire Spiritualist Press of America.

I have also to thank, as I have not hitherto been able to do, the friends who have written kindest words to me, and the societies which have sent me resolutions of sympathy and confidence, and telegrams of welcome at my release. I thank also those in England and America who have sent memorials on my behalf to the Right Honourable the Home Secretary. Though they gave the most convincing proofs of my innocence, I had never the least hope. A government, as a rule, stands by the results of its own prosecutions. It is slow to admit a failure of justice. Almost the entire English Press hailed the conviction of a Spiritualist as if it had been a national victory. "The Spiritualist Frauds" was a sensation heading. Had a member of any one of England's hundred religious denominations been accused of a fraud, would the case have been headed "Methodist," or "Baptist," or "Swedenborgian"? But Spiritualists, as Spiritualists, are persecuted now as Dissenters and Quakers were in the days of Bunyan and Fox,—as Christians were in the days of Nero, when they were "a pestilent sect,"—"everywhere spoken against." And the pillory of our day, as one of my friends has said, is the newspaper.

And yet I wish in these, my parting words, to thank my enemies, and the Press that has, I think, gone out of its true road to load a helpless woman with unmerited reproach. Had I been anything but a Spiritualist, my case would never have been honoured with leading articles; and but for these, and the injustice of all my trial and treatment, I could never have known, as I now know, the difficulties of my position. I thank my enemies, then, for this experience, though my heart has been bruised and sore. I may have thought it a cowardly thing to strike a defenceless woman, who has not yet, but soon hopes to have, the opportunity to tell her own story; whose mouth was shut by English criminal procedure; whose witnesses are yet unheard. I know, however, that journalists are sensitive to every passing excitement, that some women must talk, and that all men are not Christians; and I forgive all the evil that has been said of me, and all the wrongs that have been done to me, as I hope to be forgiven.

Honour to those who have waited to learn the truth of this unhappy business. My time will come; my story is yet unheard. It was not given to the jury. One of my most important witnesses was included with me in the indictment, expressly to shut out his testimony, which he crossed the Atlantic to give. It was not the fault of my solicitor that other witnesses were not called. I have nothing but thanks and praises for the zeal, fidelity, and generosity of Mr. E. Dillon Lewis, who did all that was in his power to do, and who has helped me to the means of soon making my appeal to public opinion—to those who need only to know the facts of my case to do me speedy and ample justice.

I feel that this revolution has already begun. I do not expect justice to Spiritualism from the English Bar, or the English Press. I do not see that I can appeal to a criminal court, or place any person in the prisoner's dock where I stood with my lips closed, only to receive a harsh and cruel sentence. My cause is the cause of the people—the cause of religious liberty. Had I been anything but a Spiritualist I should never have been prosecuted as a criminal. The fact of my professing to be a Spiritualist medium was with the Court, the Press, and a great majority of the public, equivalent to a confession of fraud and imposture.

I am preparing a statement of my whole case, with all the omitted evidence. It will be the story of my life, my mediumship, my so-called trial, and my twelve months in an English prison, with a full account of the Spiritual manifestations which attended the whole course of my imprisonment, some of which have been published in "LIGHT."

It was held by the Government prosecutor, who passionately pleaded with the jury for a verdict against me, that by my conviction they would give "a death-blow to Spiritualism;" but the events that transpired during my imprisonment will shew that, before that is done, the Spirits themselves must be annihilated. When my case was put upon that ground I felt honoured as a chosen representative of the Cause, and went to my cell—as worthier martyrs have gone to rack, and scaffold, and flames—the humblest of martyrs, but yet a martyr to a noble cause, for which I have been found worthy to suffer. To crush out the "pestilent heresy" of Spiritualism was the real animus of the prosecution, and from that persecution was born into my soul a renewed purpose to devote all my life to fill as worthily as I may the position I have been compelled to occupy.

It may be well to say a word here of the prison manifestations of which I hope soon to give a fuller account. You have published the fact that letters have been taken almost instantaneously from London to Calcutta. I have to say that a materialised Spirit friend, known to many of my friends, brought light and writing materials, letters and flowers, into my locked cell, and took letters from me to friends in London, in Boston, U. S. A., and in Calcutta. I have the letters so brought to me—they have mine to them. The facts are beyond all question.

Some of my friends have thought I ought not to have come from America to meet my "trial" and its results. In doing this—in coming in mid-winter, knowing I should be arrested on the steamer—I had but one thought, one purpose. The cause I love had been assailed through me; personal considerations were of no account. I had a duty to do. It was to lay myself, and all I loved in life, upon the altar for the cause I love. I doubted if I could have justice, but resolved to do my duty and leave the event to God. There has been temporary failure; there has been to me, and those who love me, some suffering;



but I am conscious that I have tried to do right, and I can look into my own eyes without self-reproach.

Thanks and farewell to my friends—and my enemies. Of the latter I have perhaps earned by suffering—unmerited suffering—some little right to say, "*Father, forgive them; they know not what they do.*"

One last word of gratitude. I have to thank every officer of police and prison whom I have encountered, for personal consideration and kindness which I can never forget. The men and women who have had me in charge from my first arrest to my release, could not have treated me with more kindness and affection had they been my nearest relatives or dearest friends. I have nothing but gratitude for all. Mr. Montagu Williams was professionally zealous for my conviction, no doubt. Those who read the terms of the sentence pronounced by Sir Henry Hawkins, will form their own opinions of the severe words with which he accompanied the sentence he thought proper to inflict. I have to thank him that he did not award me the five years of penal servitude he might have given. He may have foreseen the probable effect of a harder sentence.

I think my experience has not been too dearly bought. The sympathy that has come to me from both hemispheres is of inestimable value. I hope also to be of some use to suffering women—the greater part "more sinned against than sinning"—more oppressed than guilty—my fellow prisoners, whom I would gladly serve.

I deeply regret that my physical condition, the result of a long confinement in a very unsanitary prison, has made me unable to receive or return many calls, or even answer letters. Friends will please accept my apologies and thanks.

I have not attempted to express my gratitude to those who stood nearest to me through all my trial—the men who were my bondsmen; the men and women who stood by my side at the Old Bailey. Words are too weak. For the rest I can say, in the words of Coleridge:—

"And if thou watchest from thy dim recess  
Old friends burn low like lamps in noisome air,  
Love them the same, nor love them less  
Because to thee they are not what they were."

When I think of the sufferings of others I feel that my own are of little value, and that I have only blessings to rejoice in and be grateful for, now and for ever.

My future is marked out for me, but not fully revealed. I shall obey my guides, whatever may befall me. I trust it may be my lot to return to England and do the work for which I have had here on English ground such preparation.

Once more, thanks and farewell.

SUSAN WILLIS FLETCHER.

May 15th, 1882.

## SPIRITUALISM ON THE CONTINENT.

(Items selected from the "*Revue Spirite*.")

### Anniversary of the Death of Allan Kardec.

There was a large gathering of continental Spiritualists around the tomb of Allan Kardec in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, Paris, on the occasion of the recent anniversary of his death. Speeches in honour of him and his work were delivered by prominent disciples. One of the floral crowns to decorate his tomb was brought from America. Madame Kardec was present, and received the sympathetic salutations of the assemblage.

In the evening many were present at a banquet and concert. About three hundred brothers and sisters in belief met at the rooms of the Society for continuing Allan Kardec's work, in the Rue des Petits-Champs. The rooms are now too small for the growing Society. The evening was devoted to oratorical, poetical, and musical tributes to the memory of the venerated founder.

Among other items of interest in the current number of the *Revue* are the following:—

At Florence a medium named Gino, quite untaught, has written a volume of verses under inspiration, which are pronounced by critics worthy of Dante. He has a sister, also a medium, who, under similar inspiration, and quite untaught in music, sits at the piano and through her are played choice pieces of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, &c., with finished execution.

The correspondent of a circle at Dijon writes that one of its members, a very honourable person, spoils manifestations simply from the irharmony of his magnetism; he has, therefore, will-

ingly consented, at the wish of the Spirits, not to sit at the séance table. He speaks of others who are conscious of being similar impediments, and who agree to the table being surrounded only by those through whom the Spirits present can act.

A lady in private life, living in Algiers, a medium, opened some time ago, under Spiritual direction, an asylum for unprotected children, without regard to whether they were of Christian, Mussulman, or Hebrew parentage. The Government makes an allowance to it. The General Council and also the Municipal Council help with funds.

Dr. Sainte-Marie writes to the *Revue* that the Spiritualists of Agen, near Paris, have now with them the medium Honorine, about whom we gave information some months ago. The circle has manifestations through her of a very marked character, including the apparition of Spirits materialised to the degree of giving various signs of ordinary vitality. A successful séance in this respect was held in a house at Montaubon, reputed to be haunted.

The *Deutsche Zeitung* reports the case of a girl under twenty years of age, of unknown parentage, who during the last five years has made four attempts at suicide; once by eating phosphorus paste, at another time by hanging; whilst in a hospital at Vienna she jumped out of a first storey window, but was not hurt; on leaving the hospital she went and threw herself into the river; she was got out undamaged. She is wanting of her right arm, and has a strange physiognomy; her eyes are greenish in daylight, but of phosphorescent brightness at night. The correspondent of the *Deutsche Zeitung* ascertained that she came to Vienna from Pesth, where she was medium to some Spiritualists. The *Revue* suggests that in that capacity this poor one-armed girl, otherwise a burthen to herself and society, might be valuable under right direction.

## OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

### "The Medium and Daybreak."

The opening contribution is entitled "Paul's Spiritualism," the subject matter having been communicated through the mediumship of Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool. The following extract represents the real relation between Christianity and practical Spiritualism:—

"The Resurrection is the pith of Christianity: without it it is shorn of its beauty and of its power. To awaken once again the pristine vigour of the Church, it will be necessary to call back again these angel-visitors to daily intercourse and loving sympathy. The domestic circle under such a blessed influence would acquire a charm which it has not enjoyed before. The gloom of the grave would be dissipated. The foot of the spirit on the threshold would bring the glad tidings of peace. The sorrowing heart of the bereaved one would be pacified. The communion would give the exaltation which so charmed the disciples in days of old. In every house would be a shrine in which would be expressed the best and the happiest thought, counsel, and encouragement for those needing such; sympathy and love for those who need them to rest upon the warmer side of nature. The coming of spirits is as possible now, and the immortality is as morally efficacious now as it ever has been. Let us press on to a realisation of this great fact, and the soul will feel in the valley of tribulation that the sympathy of an angel is near, and that in all affairs of life man is surrounded by a mighty host of witnesses from which nothing in human life can be hid."

The very curious visions of Mr. J. Thomas are further elucidated; Mr. Alex. Duguid gives an interesting narrative of the locating of a farm in California, through his clairvoyant faculty; the editor offers some interesting remarks upon "work and prayer," and a variety of interesting items make up a very readable issue.

### "The Herald of Progress."

In describing "Orthodox Christianity," Mr. John Enmore Jones writes:—

"We, as orthodox Christians, sacredly accept as true:—1st. The Historical narratives. 2nd. The Miracle narratives. 3rd. The Precept narratives. These three are the concrete foundation on which the mansion of orthodox Christianity is built."

Mr. Jones also says:—

"I have often been asked why Spiritualism has not been accepted, defended, and publicly supported by the Churches. The reason is obvious. In 1848—thirty-four years ago—the influence of the Christian families where Spiritualistic phenomena were seen, was overwhelmed by the virulent abuse of Atheists, Deists, and Nothingarians. Up sprang, through the after-phenomena, a crowd of anti-Christian Spiritualists, using the sorcery powers obtainable; and many in fraudulent transactions and manifestations for the making of money, were controlled and attended by whisky-drinking devils, as they boastfully acknowledged themselves to be, both in America and England: (see the sad, sad exposures time after time in the



Spiritualistic newspapers of America, and even in England). Earnest Christians, whose names are an honour to the Cause, therefore, have refused to continue to be identified with it in public, till a change takes place. Let the bugle of Spiritualism give the recognised sound of Orthodox Christianity; and at once, as if by miracle, an army will appear on the battle-field of Christendom, willing and ready to fight against Materialism, in whatever form it presents itself."

#### "The Banner of Light."

The following incidents occurred through the mediumship of Mr. J. Frank Baxter, a clairvoyant medium and lecturer of singular precision and ability. The "tests" here narrated were given at a recent public Sunday service in Brooklyn, and are vouched for by Mr. S. B. Nichols, the president of the Spiritual Fraternity, meeting in the above named city.

"The spirit of a young lady twenty-seven or twenty-eight years of age, light complexion, came and gave the name of Sarah G. Patterson; another spirit came with this young lady and gave the name of Adgate P. Sidney, and another name came in connection with these names, Dr. R. O. Sidney, 1668 Atlantic Avenue. The spirits whose names were given passed to the spirit-world some years ago, and the lady was an aunt of the boy. The name of Lucy P. Sidney was given as the mother of the boy Adgate P. Sidney. The spirit said that his mother was a Spiritualist. March 13th, 1872, was given as the date of the entrance of Sarah G. Patterson into the spirit-world, and April 2nd of the same year as the date of Adgate P. Sidney. Recognized. 'A spirit comes and gives the word "Poughkeepsie"; a very old lady, a Quakeress, eighty-four or eighty-five years of age; I see P.H.K., March 6th, 1876—Phoebe H. Kipp; I also see Vineland.' This spirit was recognized as a Quakeress who formerly lived at Poughkeepsie, N.Y., moved late in life to Vineland, N.J., and died there as stated. 'A man comes here now, a little beyond middle age, with a feeling of great solemnity; some church matter; Deacon Avery Bill, some fifty-five years of age; passed to the spirit-world six years ago last month, a deacon in the Baptist church. Says "the people of Hanson-place Baptist Church, and the 6th-avenue Baptist Church will know me." This spirit says he was bitterly opposed to Spiritualism in this life, and his friends would say that if he did come at all it would be to his friends or to the church. He says it is Deacon Bill, and that many who pass to the spirit-world do not know that they can come and manifest themselves, or do not care to come. He comes to say "Spiritualism is true."

"A gentleman in the audience testified to the correctness of the facts as stated by this spirit. A spirit who gave his name as Dr. Wm. G. Oliver, Buffalo, N.Y., was the next; said that he died at the home of his brother-in-law in Brooklyn; that all of his friends were Orthodox, and that when he passed to the spirit-world he requested that a Spiritualist should take part in the funeral services, which request was not complied with, and that since his death his friends said that he had died a Christian, but he said he was a Spiritualist, and requested that a public record should be made of his coming, and the fact that he was a Spiritualist, and that his last request was not carried out."

### SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES

#### GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday morning last Mr. Wilson again took up his subject of "Comprehensionism," which on this occasion was especially interesting. In the evening Mr. S. Goss occupied the platform, and delivered an instructive and interesting lecture on "Spiritual Truths for Orthodox Teachers." It is to be regretted that a gentleman of such marked ability had so small an audience, but I suppose, as usual, the genial weather tempts the friends to enjoy a breath of pure air in the parks. Next Sunday Dr. T. L. Nichols will lecture in the above hall.—RES-FACTA.

#### QUEBEC HALL.

Mr. J. J. Morse gave a trance address on Sunday evening last, the 14th inst., before a large audience, on "The True Religion," and contended that that form of thought which induced us to gain, and to do, all the good we can is the truest, as it brings most happiness to man. The duty of teaching the young the dignity of human nature, instead of its depravity, and the love of God instead of His vengeance, was ably put, and closed an eloquent address of about eighty minutes. A vote of thanks to the "guides" and the instrument, was cordially passed.

#### CROYDON.

On Monday evening, May 8th, Mr. Stuart Cumberland was in Croydon, as he said, to expose Spiritualism. I leave you to guess with what success from the three cuttings I send you from the local weekly papers. Bishop Tufnell, vicar of Croydon, was his chairman, supported by several of the lesser clergy. The audience was small, but very select, being just that class that would follow a bishop anywhere simply because he was a bishop; but especially in a town like this where the clergy are everybody. During the week previous to the "exposure" I sent the Bishop and others copies of "LIGHT," the *Medium*, and some small books, through the post, and I hope enlightened many people as to what Spiritualism really is.—JOHN ROUSE.

#### MIDDLESBROUGH.

The cause is making rapid progress here. On Sunday, the 14th inst., we had Mr. J. G. Grey, of Newcastle, who gave us two inspirational addresses. In the afternoon the subject (chosen by the audience) was "Experience of the Spirit immediately after leaving the Body." It was a grand, soul-inspiring address. From beginning to end it was full of beautiful language and poetic thoughts. At the close he gave a poem on "Cavendish," chosen by the audience. There was a very large attendance. In the evening the address was on the difference between a good man and a bad man on their entrance into Spirit-life. I think I may say that two such addresses have never been delivered in this town before. Next Sunday we have Mr. T. M. Brown.—CHAS. COATES, Secretary.

#### NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—Last Sunday evening the platform at Weir's Court was occupied by Mr. Pigford, whose guide lectured to a fair audience in his usual semi-political fashion. The address was characterised by a good deal of spirit and earnest declamation. Mr. Jno. Hare occupied the chair.

GATESHEAD.—On Sunday evening, May 14th, Mr. Edmonds, of Sunderland, lectured to the friends at Gateshead upon "The Divinity of Man." The lecture was really an able and philosophical treatise, which clearly and concisely elaborated the basic truths of Spiritualism. Mr. Burton occupied the chair.

CONSETT.—During the past week Mr. T. M. Brown, the well-known test medium, has been labouring most efficiently in the neighbourhood of Consett, Blackhill, and Benfieldside. His labours, we are glad to say, have met with a good deal of appreciation, and on Sunday evening last he gave much gratification to the friends at Chester-le-Street.—NORTHUMBRIA.

### WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

#### LONDON.

Sunday, May 21.—Goswell Hall. 11.30 a.m., Mr. Wilson, "Comprehensionism." 7 p.m., Dr. T. L. Nichols, "An Account of some recent Manifestations of Spirit Power."  
" " West London Society. 11 a.m., 7 p.m., Meetings.  
" " Christian Spiritualists' Mission. 7 p.m. Séance for Spiritualists only.  
" " Quebec Hall. 7 p.m., Mr. MacDonnell, "Europe in 1900."  
Monday, May 22.—B.N.A.S. Fortnightly Discussion Meeting, at 7.30. Address by Mrs. A. Kingsford, M.D.  
Tuesday, May 23.—B.N.A.S. Annual Meeting, 6.30 p.m.  
" " Quebec Hall. 8.30 p.m. Trance Address, Mr. J. J. Morse, in aid of Mr. W. Haxby.  
Friday, May 26.—B.N.A.S. Members' Free Séance, 8 p.m.

#### PROVINCES.

Public meetings are held every Sunday in Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Leeds, Bradford, Gateshead, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leicester, Nottingham, Belper, &c., &c. See our list of Societies on p. 2.

Societies advertising in "LIGHT" will have attention called to their advertisements, as above, without extra charge.

Oh, if we had spiritual organs to see and hear things now invisible and inaudible to us, we should behold the whole air filled with the departing souls of that vast multitude which every moment dies—should behold them streaming up like thin vapours heavenward. . . . Truly the soul departs not alone on its last journey, but with spirits of its kind, when not ministering angels; and they go in families to the unknown land! Neither in life nor in death are we alone.—*Longfellow's "Hyperion,"* 1839.

An elaborate report has just been issued concerning the work of the Essex County Lunatic Asylum. The chaplain, the Rev. Joseph Sowter, gives some examples of his intercourse with the patients. One female persistently refused to go to church. "It is useless," she said; "I can never be pardoned. I use such dreadful words I cannot pray." The chaplain recommended her to say the Lord's Prayer. "Oh, I tried that," she replied, "and then I tried it in French, but it would not do; I could not get beyond *Notre Père*." The chaplain asked what were the dreadful words that rose up to prevent her; she replied, "They are horrible—such dreadful expressions—such as *resurgam*, *Nunc Dimittis*, water out of Essex marshes, Dombey and Son, Confucius, and things like that. How can I be forgiven?"

MR. J. C. WRIGHT'S APPOINTMENTS FOR MAY.—LIVERPOOL: 28th and 29th; BELPER: 21st and 22nd; DERBY: 23rd; WALSALL: 24th. Mr. Wright cannot undertake any more meetings than those already bespoken.—11, Towerlands-street, Liverpool.—[Advt.]

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—KEIGHLEY: May 21st; LONDON: May 28th; GLASGOW: June 4th; GATESHEAD: June 5th; BIRMINGHAM: June 11th; NOTTINGHAM: June 18th. For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.—[Advt.]



## TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H.J.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 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.