

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 *Harbinger of Light* (July) contains an elaborate and valuable summary of the result of Mr. Spriggs's sésances, which have been going on for eighteen months. The results have appeared from time to time, and my readers have more than once had their attention directed to them. I ventured to urge that some such summary should be compiled, and I am quite sensible of the value that attaches to such a record, where the conditions of observation have been, as I believe they have been in this case, satisfactory. One of the great advantages that such a summary possesses is the focussing of evidence which would otherwise be out of view. It is desirable to premise that the investigations were conducted under conditions that admitted of accurate observation. Many materialised forms were weighed and measured, and various methods were adopted to prove (1) the "building up of visible, tangible, and ponderable human forms distinct from the medium." (2) The distinct and separate intelligence animating these forms. (3) Their several and separate identity as departed human beings.

The evidence is classed under various heads. In respect of the broad fact that such forms were built up, maintaining a separate existence for an appreciable length of time, and being eventually resolved into their component parts, we have proof of the substantiality, and ponderability, and tangibility, of these materialised forms, as well as of their muscular development. One of them, for instance, held out a piece of rock weighing 14lbs. at arm's length. Another lifted a man weighing 12st. in his chair, and then walked out of the circle-room into an adjoining shop, and returned bringing back a book.

These forms were weighed and measured, and it was shewn that the weight varied,—e.g., on a given occasion from 139½lbs. to 33lbs. 10oz., the medium's weight being 148½lbs. The height in ten different forms varied from 5ft. 7½in. to 4ft., the medium's height being 5ft. 6½in. On another occasion a figure measured 5ft. 11in.

These forms were apparently structured as the ordinary human body is. They had a pulse that beat normally, as tested by Dr. Mueller on September 30th, 1881, "the medium being shewn sitting on his chair immediately afterwards, and while the form was outside the curtain." Some of them ate and drank in view of the investigators. They manifestly possessed flexible features. They spoke in an audible voice, and the intonation, pitch, and quality of the voice varied in various forms. They were observed under light sufficient for exact observation; "in full glare," "in a light which rendered every detail of form and feature visible," "in the full glare of light held so as to strike directly on the form."

The separate individuality of the forms was demonstrated by the fact that the medium was repeatedly seen at the same time as the forms; that more than one form was visible at once; and that the difference between the various forms themselves, and between them and the medium, was clearly established. We have, for instance, a tall male figure rapidly followed by that of a little black girl, thirty-six or forty inches high. The child Lily is followed by the figure of a lady full-grown, and, finally,

on one occasion we read of a male figure shewing himself and retiring, to be succeeded in twenty-five seconds by a lady, who was replaced in twenty-five seconds by a tall male form, and he in thirty-eight seconds by the shorter form of Peter.

The separate intelligence animating these forms is evidenced in various ways. Not only is the voice different, but the idiosyncrasy is maintained in each case. As other observers have testified, so Mr. Terry shews that the voice, handwriting, and personal characteristics of each form are invariably maintained. They are possessed of information which, so far as could be ascertained, was unknown to the medium. They give information also unknown to any human being present, which information is subsequently verified. And lastly, while all possess the distinguishing characteristics of humanity many were definitely recognised as departed friends of some person or persons present. One was simultaneously and independently recognised by five different sitters "as an old colonist and well-known energetic pioneer in the cause of Spiritualism who passed away five years before." Among those who recognised him were his "son, daughter, and grandson."

Now, what is the value of this evidence? It is a deplorable fact that the evidence which reads so well on paper becomes of less value, or of none at all, when submitted to accurate scrutiny. How many times have I endeavoured to sift some record only to find it flawed in some way or other, and so, however prized by the recorder as personal evidence, useless to the investigator! In the record from which I have been quoting, it seems that fair precautions were taken, and that the results are *bonâ fide*. We know that the sésances were held on the premises of a responsible body of investigators. We are repeatedly told that the light was sufficient, and it is impossible to conceive that the recorded results can have been got by unfair means. I am not able to refer now to a file of the *Harbinger*, but I have watched the records carefully, and am impressed with a belief that the observations were made under conditions that admitted of exact investigation. If I am right in this conviction, the presence of a confederate would be impossible, and the only way of accounting for such variation in make, height, weight, and general appearance in the forms is disposed of.

For, since medium and form were more than once or twice seen together, the separate existence of the form is established. And not one confederate, but many, would have been needed to produce the results that are recorded. Whether these could possibly have been introduced into a room "in the Library of the Victorian Association of Spiritualists," or whether they could have successfully played their pranks in such a room "on the solid ground floor, with no cellar or apartments beneath," with no cabinet, but only two curtains suspended from a rod extending from wall to wall in one corner of the room; the only door being completely cut off from that part of the room where the materialisation takes place, by the chairs of the sitters," is matter for debate. I should think not. At any rate, till some pin is stuck into it, Mr. Terry's narrative is one of the best records of prolonged investigation of these phenomena that I have met with. I see no reason whatever to doubt his conclusions, and have submitted them to impartial analysis in the full belief that they will stand it.

I am indebted to the Rev. A. T. Atwood, who dates from Knayton-in-Leake, near Thirsk, Yorkshire, for a curious narrative which is almost exactly parallel to that of the Swaffham Tinker. But it is related about a man who lived in the village of Upsal, near Thirsk, whereas my tinker lived at Swaffham in Norfolk. No date is given in the Upsal story. The Upsal man found three pewter vessels; the tinker two chests. Both vessel and chest had a legend in an unknown tongue, which was

deciphered, the one by a schoolboy outside the tinker's forge ; the other by a learned pedlar. But this only increases my perplexity. Was Swaffham Church restored by this historic tinker, in consequence of his dream ? Is his monument really authentic ? And who is this nameless and dateless Upsal person who imitated his legendary success ?

Here is the narrative. It is entitled

"A LEGEND ABOUT UPSAL IN THE PARISH OF KILVINGTON,
NEAR THIRSK.

"Anyone passing the new garden wall lately built by Captain Turton may notice over the archway of the entrance adjoining the road a shield with a carving on it of a spade of antique shape and three vases brimful of something. The legend symbolised by this carving is as follows :—'A man living in the village of Upsal dreamed three times successively that if he went up to London, and took his stand on London Bridge, he would be told something which would make his fortune. He went and prowled about the bridge for some days, but to no purpose. At last a man who had noticed his wanderings up and down asked him what he was in quest of. The other told him, but got laughed at as a fool for his pains. 'Why I, too, dreamed that under a buttery tree in a village in Yorkshire, called Upsal, was buried a quantity of gold.' The Yorkshireman took the jeering very quietly, kept his own counsel, returned home, found the buttery tree, dug, and discovered a pewter vessel full of gold. The vessel had an inscription on it in a language he was ignorant of. He hung it up in his kitchen, and a stranger—a learned pedlar—came one day, and saw, read, and deciphered it for him. It was in effect as follows :—'Beneath lies a better.' The Upsal gold-finder dug accordingly, found three vessels in all, and made his fortune."

M.A. (Oxon.)

MR. S. C. HALL ON SPIRITUALISM.

The *Western Daily Mercury* reports a very interesting gathering of Spiritualists held in Richmond Hall, Plymouth, to meet Mr. S. C. Hall. The chair was occupied by Mr. Micklewood, who gave Mr. Hall a cordial welcome. On the motion of Mr. Sloman, seconded by Mr. Pine, and supported by Mr. Husson, the thanks of the Plymouth Society were tendered to Mr. Hall for a very kind donation towards the harmonium fund.

Mr. Hall spoke at great length in response. He averred that Spiritualism was a source of the greatest comfort and happiness. He had been a Spiritualist for more than a quarter of a century, and was firmer in his belief now than he had ever been before. Spiritualism had been taught him for a high and holy purpose. For twenty-five years he was in a great measure a materialist, but it had pleased God to give him the light of Spiritualism, and thus to lift him out of a very "Slough of Despond." He became a Christian because he became a Spiritualist. All his life he had been imbued by religious principles, but there had always been a lingering doubt left upon his soul, but by Spiritualism this doubt was entirely dispelled, and he was now as certain of a future life for the soul as he was of the present existence of his body. He had very lately lost the companion of his life, his dear and darling wife—his wife for fifty-six years. She had gone to Heaven, but could she be happy if God, permitting her to retain memory and intelligence, refused to allow her to come and comfort him while he remained on earth ? As certain as he was capable of moving and thinking, so sure was he that she was with him every day of his life, and that [she communicated with him and counselled and advised him hourly. And for what would he part with this boon ? For nothing the world could give ! Every night he communed with his wife, and he looked, not with hope merely, but with certainty, to joining her and continuing to do God's will when he left the earth. He hoped, indeed, that at no distant period both his wife and himself would return and communicate with the friends at Plymouth, to strengthen and stimulate them in the cause of which they were advocates, the cause which they were enjoying, thereby encouraging hope, faith, and trust in Divine Providence, and a strong and firm belief in the mediation of Christ.

Some appropriate remarks having been offered by Mr. J. J. Morse, the proceedings were brought to a close.

The premises of the C. A. S., 38, Great Russell-street, are closed for repairs. They will be re-opened on September 17th.

IS IT MEDIUMSHIP ?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been much interested by the article signed "E. T. B.," in a recent number of "LIGHT," called "Is it Mediumship ?" It deals with a subject in which I have had some experience. I heartily agree with the late Miss Havergal's statement that, when a new poem flashes across the brain, it appears to come from some source altogether external to oneself—to be "given" as she said. I know the exact feeling she described. But the inference which she sought to draw from that feeling, and which is commonly drawn from it by Spiritualistic writers, has always appeared to me very dubious and peculiarly hard to establish. I do not think that it at all follows that because the action of the brain in creation is so swift as to appear almost unconscious and automatic, therefore there is some external inspiring agency at work. I would much rather believe that it is still our own personality which is using the brain as an organ ; but that the selective process going on within the brain has become, at the time, so swift and so unerring, that it really does appear to the poet or orator as if the thoughts and words were "given" or "impressed," as the saying is, from without.

I distrust all these "impressions." More than half of them I believe to be purely subjective, and they are all likely to mislead. When Miss Lizzie Doten, for instance, comes forward with a very poor poem indeed, and tells us that it was inspired by Shakespeare, and that "the sense of his presence was so overwhelming that she could hardly bear it" (see preface to Miss Doten's "Poems," well-known to Spiritualists), I have great faith in Miss Doten's sincerity, but no faith at all in the objective accuracy of her impression. I think she is deceiving herself, and that this sort of self-deception does a great deal of harm. I do not believe that Shakespeare wanders about in this way from London to New York and back again, "impressing" the brains of mortal singers ; and I am sure that if they would cultivate their own special gifts to the full, and develop their own talents honestly, without such constant imaginative reference to "inspiration," they would do much better work.

For my own part I am not content with the idea of being merely a piano or an Æolian harp, to be strummed upon by the breezy fingers of dead singers, great though they may have been. I would rather, at all costs, develop my own originality, than be indebted for inspiration to the greatest poets of the past. It is such an uncomfortable idea—to my thinking—to be perpetually open to the influence of all the unnumbered dead in this way ! Miss Doten may be proud of being a sort of vase which the dead poets may for ever be filling with the flowers of their thought and passion. Miss Havergal may have loved to dwell upon the idea that she was a mere "passive" instrument in the hands of lyric spirits greater than she. But, however this matter may commend itself to women-singers, to me it will always seem that to inspire is a greater and nobler thing than to be inspired ; and to widen and augment the strength of one's own personality than to cling piteously to the skirts of numberless inspiring and impressing agencies.

These thoughts—which are merely tentative—occurred to me on reading "E. T. B.'s" article. There is nothing easier than to claim inspiration : there is nothing harder than to establish the truth of your claim. Of course it is possible that the suggestion thrown out by "E. T. B." may be the correct one—only, if so, where in the world, or out of the world, are we to stop ? We should be compelled to believe that our living poets are inspired by spirits—and that these again are inspired by higher spirits, and these also by spirits higher than they—through a continual chain of ascension, till you reach what ? Till you reach God, the Central Spirit of all, the answer, perhaps, may be : but this idea of a constant river of spiritual influx is, as I have said, uncongenial to me, because it makes every created spirit a mere secondary and passive instrument, and leaves, in my opinion, no room for that strong personal development of the individual soul of each which I look upon as the highest prize of being, and the one goal of all others to be most passionately and ardently pursued.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

GEORGE BARLOW.

ERRATUM.—By an unfortunate error of the printer's I am made in your last issue to assert, "It is a necessary assumption that all our teachers from beyond the border 'ought to know,'" whereas, I hold an opposite belief, and intended to query, "Is it a necessary assumption ?" &c. Your kind publication of this correction will oblige.—GEORGE G. GILL.

"ISIS UNVEILED," AND "THE THEOSOPHIST' ON RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your paper of June 8th I called attention, under the above heading, to what seemed a glaring inconsistency in the teachings of the two authorities cited, on the question of Re-Incarnation, following immediately on a statement that the "Adept Brothers" were the authors of both. In the August *Theosophist* my article is referred to and quoted, an explanation is given, and I am challenged to notice the reply in "LIGHT." I must therefore trouble you again upon the subject.

It may, perhaps, be remembered that the inconsistency alleged by me was that in "Isis Unveiled" Re-Incarnation on this earth was expressly denied (with some very rare exceptions) whereas in the *Theosophist*, of June last, a writer of peculiar authority (Reviewer of "The Perfect Way") had declared that it "takes place over and over again till the highest condition of humanity, as known here, is attained." I also quoted the passage from "Isis" at length, but I need now only repeat the first sentence, in order to do justice to the reply:—"Re-Incarnation, *i.e.*, the appearance of the same individual—or rather, of his astral monad—twice on the same planet is not a rule in nature; it is an exception," &c.

The explanation and reply of the *Theosophist* depend entirely on the words "or rather of his astral monad," in the above sentence. I am reminded that the astral monad is not the Spiritual monad—not the true Ego, that is—and thus that what is denied of the former is not therefore and thereby denied of the latter. And the editor remarks that "where that even 'seeming discrepancy' is to be found between the two passages—except by those who are entirely ignorant of the occult doctrine—will be certainly a mystery to every Eastern Occultist who reads the above and who studies in the same school as the Reviewer of 'The Perfect Way.'" Again, "Therefore, in the face of the statement from the very correct and excellent review of 'The Perfect Way,' we say again that Re-Incarnation—*i.e.*, the appearance of the same individual, or rather of his astral monad (or the *personality* as claimed by the modern Re-Incarnationists) twice on the same planet is not a rule in nature, and that it is an exception." As the developed doctrine of our Eastern instructors will probably be more interesting to your readers than the mere question whether their teachings have always been consistent, I will further extract the following from the same article. After repeating the summary of the seven principles of the human constitution which we have already learned from "Fragments of Occult Truth," in the *Theosophist* of October last, the writer proceeds:—"There is a mighty difference in our occult doctrine between an *impersonal* Individuality, and an individual *Personality*. C. C. M. will not be re-incarnated; nor will he be in his next re-birth C. C. M., but quite a new being, born of the thoughts and deeds of C. C. M.; his own creation, the child and fruit of his present life, the effect of the *causes* he is now producing. Shall we say, then, with the Spiritists, that C. C. M., the man we know, will be re-born again? No; but that his divine Monad will be clothed thousands of times yet before the end of the Grand Cycle, in various human forms, every one of them a *new personality*." Now, I call that rather hard; not, of course, upon "C. C. M.," but upon your unhappy correspondent, who is compelled, for the present, so to subscribe himself. The Reviewer of "The Perfect Way" gives every one at least a chance of escape at every incarnation, and translates one to a better world as soon as the highest condition on this earth is attained; to say nothing of the orthodox Buddhist teaching of exemption from *all* re-birth as the result of Arahatsip here. Without dreaming of that, I had hoped that a few hundred or so of future incarnations in this world might, in the case of any ordinary mortal, satisfy the more moderate requirements of the Reviewer. But it seems that my individual case is more desperate; I must drink the cup to the bitter dregs, and go right on to "the end of the Grand Cycle." Such is the evil *Karma* accumulated by doubting the infallibility of "Isis"! But was I right, or must I apologise and retract? Certainly I was quite aware of the distinction between the astral and the spiritual, and I have repeatedly and long ago—before the publication of the "Fragments"—maintained that the personality is not the immortal man, and have, chiefly on this account, always discredited what may be called the orthodox belief of Spiritualists. "A. P. S.'s" statement about the "shells," and their relation to Spiritualism, in your

last number, expresses exactly what has long been my opinion almost conviction, on the subject.

If, therefore, there was no real inconsistency between the two teachings contrasted, I, of all people, was least excusable in imagining one. Well, I can only say that after a careful re-reading of the passage in "Isis" I am astonished at the confidence and coolness with which the inconsistency is denied! Had the statement simply been that "the individual or rather his astral monad" is not re-incarnated, we might pass over the strangely misleading character of a denial which is accompanied by not the slightest hint of the far more important affirmation. Yet even then, should we not feel justly indignant with a teacher who knowing all the while that "the individual" is re-incarnated should answer a question on the subject by saying "the individual—or rather his astral monad,—is *not* re-incarnated," as if, "or rather his astral monad," were merely a somewhat more correct description of the subject-matter of the inquiry? For "Isis," be it remembered, was addressed to Americans and English, not to "Eastern Occultists." But let that pass, and consider the reason which the writer in "Isis" goes on to give for the exceptional cases. "But when the new being has not passed beyond the condition of monad, or when, as in the idiot, the trinity has not been completed, *the immortal spark which illuminates it has to re-enter the earthly planet, as it was frustrated in its first attempt.*" (Italics mine.) It is the failure in such rare cases to form a true composite human being that is alleged as the sole reason for the "re-entry" on the theatre of this world of "the immortal spark" (the spiritual monad). And is this not inconsistent with the statement that that very monad will re-enter hundreds and thousands of times, building up hundreds and thousands of distinct and successive personalities? And what can be more explicit than the following statement, which I also cited from "Isis"? "*If reason has been so far developed as to become active and discriminative, there is no Re-Incarnation on this earth, for the three parts of the triune man have been united together, and he is capable of running the race.*" No doubt this passage is a part of the same exposition, and it will be said that the qualification with which the whole account commences, governs it throughout. I must leave it to competent and candid critics to decide. Let me say in conclusion that I should not have raised this question at all, impugning the consistency of friends to whose instructions I pay the greatest heed, but for the deep interest I take in this subject, my desire to see it cleared as far as possible from ambiguity, and my consequent impatience of any doubtful pretensions to positive knowledge with regard to it.

C. C. M.

THOUGHT-READING.

A. Eubule-Evans, writing from the New Athenæum Club, Suffolk-street, informs the *Spectator* that he has made experiments which convince him that the proper side from which the phenomena of so-called "Thought-reading" should be approached and studied is that of what (for want of a better name) he must call "animal magnetism." He seems to imagine that he has made a grand discovery, but his facts are of course familiar to very many of our readers. "It is known to me as a fact," he says, "that it is possible for one human being, by an exertion of the will, to throw another into a peculiarly normal condition, in which the latter becomes absolutely deaf to every ordinary sound, however loud and startling, and as absolutely insensible to pain, and yet is able, during this state of artificial coma, to hear the voice of the operator. *I do not know to what extent this fact is known or acknowledged, but it is one within my own experience.*" (The italics are ours.) "I have found that when a subject has been in this state and has then been partially awakened, he is, as might be expected, much more sensitive to the mental impressions of the operator than when he is in his normal condition. And it is clear to me that the human brain can in this manner be prepared for thought-impressions in a way which bears some dim analogy to the sensitising of a photographic plate. At the same time, it seems not unreasonable to suppose (though it has not fallen within my own experience) that there may be cases, especially amongst children, where any such formal preparation is unnecessary, where the mere effort of a strong will, or still more, of several such wills combined, would make at once the desired impression. Still, these cases are likely to be very exceptional, whereas I incline to the belief that, with a little trouble in the preparation of subjects, the phenomena of thought-reading (or, as I prefer to call it, will-impressions) could be readily produced in a vast number of persons, and become the subject of systematic study."

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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 sances.

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

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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.

"MISS WOOD'S MATERIALISATIONS."

[A very lively interest has been excited by the questions mooted in Mr. Podmore's letter which appeared in our issue of the 19th ult.—and the result has been that many more letters have reached us than we can possibly afford space for. All our correspondents assert their confidence—derived from personal experience—in the genuineness of Miss Wood's mediumship. This is so far satisfactory; but as we understand Mr. Podmore—after a careful re-perusal of his letter—this he has never called in question; his sole object apparently being to point out that, at the particular sance at which he was present, the conditions were not such as to afford reasonable grounds of satisfaction to an outsider; and if the discussion should lead to the adoption of improved methods he will have done good service, for which we must all be grateful. Though in this respect the following letters do not quite take the direction we could have wished, they are nevertheless exceedingly interesting as records of facts, and as contributions of very valuable suggestions on points which are eminently deserving of careful consideration.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having been present at all but two of the series of sances given at the Central Association of Spiritualists with Miss Wood, I should feel greatly obliged to you if you would allow me to make some observations on Mr. Podmore's letter published in your issue of August 19th. I have only very lately been associated with any Spiritualistic circles or read any special works on the subject of Spiritualism, which yet in a wide sense is a subject which I have studied for years, the theories I evolved being suggested, supported, and corrected by careful observation and collation of numerous phenomena, both moral and physical, which have from time to time come under my notice as occurring either in my own experience or in that of persons intimately known to me and trustworthy, as also by the study, more or less continued, of various sciences; nor until I sat in a circle with Miss Wood had I ever witnessed a materialisation.

On this first occasion the materialisation was very imperfect, but the fact of its being so rendered it to me particularly conclusive. It began like a wisp of white mist, having no more apparent substantiality than those wreaths of vapour which any early riser in a hot climate must have noticed wavering upwards from some damp spot; or like the undulating column of minute insects which is so often seen towards the close of day in India, arising from some almost invisible fissure in the soil. For a few seconds the figure would become fairly defined, then melt away, until, after this had been repeated two or three times, all that remained was a small mass of white about the size of a pigeon, which slowly disappeared. Since then the figure of "Pocha" has touched me and kissed me, and a tall figure, which I believe is denominated "Benny," has touched my hand; but even when "Pocha" kissed me I did not consider the reality of the form so conclusive as its previous unreality.

This brings me to what I wish especially to remark upon in Mr. Podmore's letter, and in all that system of observation of phenomena to which it alludes—i.e., the system of tests. It appears to me that this entire system is so unphilosophical that any science admitting of such a system of study discredits itself thereby, and I conclude that I am one of a large majority amongst Spiritualists when I call Spiritualism a science as well as chemistry or physiology. No person who has witnessed the inexplicable performances of jugglers and has considered even transiently the lessons which they teach, can reasonably affirm that because he is in no way able to account for how a thing can

happen without the natural laws he is acquainted with being overruled, therefore it cannot happen. His must be a frivolous mind that does not arrive at this conclusion after witnessing the performance of an European conjurer, but the conclusion is strengthened when that of Indian jugglers is considered; the latter being men almost naked, having no paraphernalia further than what can be carried in a small bundle, and being generally called upon to exhibit at a moment's notice in the open air. Once this is admitted, any test such as is usually applied becomes quite valueless, and there only remain one or two which have any weight. One is for the materialisation to take place in good light with the medium present in the circle; the other for the medium to be shut into a closely secured room or cabinet, the only entrance to which should be locked and be visible to the circle during the whole sitting, which should be held in good light. If materialisation took place under these conditions I think the strongest sceptic, if an honest inquirer after truth, would be convinced of the genuineness of the manifestation; but here the following considerations present themselves:—Materialisation must commence by a peculiar species of germination: germination in the animal sphere always takes place in the dark, and in the vegetable sphere we know that light is antagonistic to the process. Is it not, therefore, reasonable to give credence to what is told to us through mediums, and presume that in what may be called the Spiritual sphere the same law obtains? If this be admitted we must be prepared to encounter great difficulties in obtaining materialisation in the light, and it appears reasonable to accept as probably true that which is communicated to us by mediumistic means—i.e., that the formative Spirit or Spirits require a carefully selected circle to have many sittings with the same medium so as to assist the spiritual efforts at controlling a physical law and causing a deviation in it.

Now what is generally called a test is a condition prepared for the satisfaction of a person who desires to be convinced speedily of either the truthfulness or deception of the manifestation, and all such "tests" present the same objection, i.e., they never can reasonably attain their object. There are persons who may be convinced by them, but they are unreasonably convinced, and there is no real strength in their conviction. In Spiritualism, as in any other science, conviction of the correctness of the conclusions arrived at can only come through patient and toilsome study. Even in more familiar, and what may be termed coarser sciences than that of Spiritual Physics, no person intent on research ought to admit a conviction of the truth of any discovery to his mind, until he has not only tested it carefully as a new fact, but has watched the results of treating it as the basis for the next step forwards in discovery; for the crucial test of the truth of a discovery is its forming a firm basis for further research. If Spiritual Physics were studied like any other science there would be an end to such puerile tests as are now imposed. No merely emotional person would present himself as a student in the Spiritual any more than in the chemical laboratory, nor could a dishonest medium long remain undetected.

It is the not unnatural craving on the part of many who think that in this unstudied science they detect the possibility of confirming the wavering faith in immortality held by themselves or by those they are interested in, to achieve this end speedily, which lies at the root of the evil. There is a constant demand for the appearance of forms under conditions which are varied, or are attempted to be varied, to suit the amount of scepticism of A, B, or C; these individuals being brought to see the experiment without having studied the subject of it.

Now I would ask whether this is not a most unphilosophical proceeding. Take an analogous case. When, not long ago, a telegraphic station was opened in Pretoria, a very intelligent old Boer farmer, an acquaintance of mine, said that she was certain that telegraphic communication was an imposture, for that it was against all the laws of nature, and she was so much interested in proving the truth of her assertion that she undertook a thirty-mile journey in an ox-wagon to go to "test" it. She went to the office, and having stated that she meant to test the truth of communication by telegraphic wires, she directed a certain message to some friends of hers in the Cape Colony. She waited till the message came back, and was shewn the mechanism in the office in the mean time. When the answer arrived correctly she still shook her head; she did not understand how she had been imposed upon, but she was unconvinced:—the thing seemed quite too improbable for her to believe in. She said it was very curious, and that she would try

and test it further, and with that she went home again. This old farmer was not more ignorant of the long series of experiments and tests which had led up to the experiment she witnessed, or of the vast superstructure built upon the truth of that and similar experiments, than many of those who witness Spiritual experiments are of their antecedents and sequela. She and they are reasonable in refusing to believe at once in the truth of any assertion based on one or two experiments, but she and they are unreasonable in imagining that conviction can come to them without prolonged and progressive study.

In the same way, if a reasonable person utterly ignorant of chemistry is shewn a chemical experiment, what does it teach him? He says that it is very curious, but he does not say that it convinces him of anything. It may be a test experiment to the student of the science, because it may be the outcome or the basis of some other somewhat similar experiment, but the utmost effect it can produce on the ignorant man is to make him determine to study chemistry by exciting his curiosity. In short, there is no test worth calling a test except what must follow in the course of patient progressive study. No impostor could stand the test of a determination, on the part of those who use him as a means of research, to progress logically, but any research entered into with a view of arriving at any special conclusion is certain to foster imposture and delusion. Those persons, however well-meaning, who attempt to use mediums as a means to convince themselves or their friends of any particular fact, not only do injustice to themselves and their friends, but to the science of Spiritualism. If the study of the various phenomena observable by those frequenting séances is to be attended with any useful or durable results, then it appears to me that those who recognise that Spiritualism is a science should band themselves together in circles, from which those who care only for witnessing certain special manifestations ought to be excluded as rigorously as the chemist would exclude from his laboratory any person who desired only to see chemical experiments, or the astronomer from his observatory those who wanted to take peeps at the moon and stars through a big telescope.

It is well that there should be popular lectures on sciences which are already well established, but the science of Spiritual Physics is in too undeveloped a state for any good to arise from popularising it. Its students, many of whom are mediums, are groping in the dark, and are constantly liable to fall into error; such mistakes are inevitable, and those who know the difficulty of progression are neither alarmed nor dismayed by them, and are on the alert to turn their teachings to good account; but those who know nothing of the difficulties such students are contending with, are certain to see the ludicrous side alone of these errors, and the feeling of being exposed to open derision is very discouraging to most minds. If any person offering himself as a candidate for membership in such a circle as I allude to were called upon to undergo some preliminary examination in the history of Spiritualism, there would be some ground for hoping that the subject would be studied in a more scientific manner than it now is, and that the results arrived at would be more conclusive. Further than this, such a plan would give reasonable scope, and yet assign just limits to a desire I remark amongst some of the more advanced students of Spiritualism, namely, for a species of concealment, and this appears to me a very important point for those to consider who are anxious to see the science progress, for any attempt to establish secrecy in science is liable to distort it.

Before concluding I wish very explicitly to say that although I deplore that any attempts should be made to use the study of Spiritualism merely as a means to confirm, or convert to, any special belief, I feel convinced that no branch of knowledge can be studied scientifically if its moral as well as its material aspect be not constantly regarded. The fault of most modern study is that it is purely materialistic; the fault in the study of Spiritual Physics is that it is mainly Spiritualistic. Science and religion are two names for one aspiration of the human mind. Any attempt to foster the one at the expense of the other is unscientific and immoral, and must result in partial if not total failure. An anatomist who disregards the moral teachings of the wonderful structures his pincers, knife, and microscope reveal to him is not a scientific man although his labours may assist others to become so; and a Spiritualist who disregards the physical problems suggested by the various manifestations he witnesses, is discrediting the very facts he is striving to prove. Before ending I would suggest that it seems to me that the term "Spiritualist" is eminently misleading. When a man has obtained a smattering of chemistry or physiology he does not

call himself a chemist or a physiologist, and there are very few persons who can lay claim to more than a smattering in the study of Spiritualism.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

S. HECKFORD.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am sure there are few persons in this world, if any, more sceptical than I am naturally. You are aware of the exceptional opportunities I have had for verifying Spiritual phenomena. For years, one of the best and most undoubted mediums in the world, W. Eglinton, has been a member of our family. When I had not known him a week, he asked permission to call me mamma, which he has since done invariably, when speaking to me. Our entire confidence and intimacy has given me every opportunity for investigation, which at first I carried on with great doubt of the verity of the manifestations. I have seen the materialised forms by their own light and by our light, and I have seen a full form stand a light of great brightness. This was when the form was sealing a package with sealing-wax, which took fire and flamed with great brilliancy. The form did not shrink, or appear to be troubled with the light, that I could see. I mention these facts to shew that I have experience, and am to be trusted.

Miss Wood called on me some weeks ago with a friend who was protecting her in her séances. I saw her alone. I was convinced of her honesty, and proposed that she should sit with me in our séance-room. She spoke of her friend being with her. I said, "You are not afraid of me?" She replied, "Certainly not." So my husband and I sat alone with her, partially darkening the séance-room. In less than five minutes after we sat down there appeared at Miss Wood's back the form of a tall man. She could not see it, but she seemed to know who it was. The light was good enough to see her and the form, which soon vanished. He, or it, spoke, and said to me, "I see a lady beside you." I asked, "Who is it?" but the Spirit did not know. After various communications from him and "Pocha," when I had forgotten about the lady he saw by me, he burst out, "I have got her name—it is ———" giving two familiar names, and shewing that he saw my friend as clairvoyants and Spirits are sure to see her. I then arranged for a séance with Miss Wood, which I had some weeks later. She came with two friends, who wished us to have test conditions. I vetoed these, and Miss Wood was seated in a corner, with a black curtain suspended before her. Her friends sat, one on one side, the other on the other, of Miss Wood. I held the hand of the male friend, who was nearest the medium. A great sceptic held my other hand. The light was not good, but we could see forms by it. I was speaking in a low voice to the gentleman friend of Miss Wood, whom I will call F. He was speaking of his development as a medium, and said the Spirits counselled great temperance. I said, "Do the Spirits allow you tobacco?" He replied, "A little." We were speaking very low, but at his answer "Pocha" cried out from the cabinet, "You are never no more to have any tobacco." "Never no more tobacco!" said he, in a surprised tone, and she repeated "Never no more." "Well," he said, "I love you, Pocha, so well, I will give it up if you say so." "No—not give it up for me, but it good to give it up."

After some further talk on the subject in her broken English, and in his then submissive spirit, the members of the circle began singing. After several hymns were sung, a small form appeared, dressed in white. She came to me and put her hands on me—very clumsy, unpleasant hands, not a bit like Miss Wood's. She kissed me with a bad breath, made up evidently of some things the medium had eaten at dinner, and though she was unmistakably not a well formed child, she was just as unmistakably a child, about three feet high. To me she seemed a little monster, from her little waddling form, and clumsy hands, and bad odour—though what a bad smell has to do with making a monster, I do not know. My sceptical friend, who sat next me, had his sharp eyes open, and he was fondled and kissed by "Pocha," as were all present. She asked us all if it was not nice to be kissed. My stomach did not reply in the affirmative. Others, I found afterwards, did not think "Pocha" nice, but all, so far as I know, thought her a genuine Spirit form.

She lay down on the floor near my feet, and became about as large as a goose, and two tall figures came at the same time, and at last Miss Wood came and stood close to me, and the two figures and the small goose-like appearance, all were visible at the same time.

The first time I was embraced by a Spirit the medium had

not been eating onions, and the form was beautiful and sweet, and it was in a good light. But the next time the same Spirit embraced me the breath was like "Pocha's," and from the same cause. On this second occasion the medium lay beside me on a low couch. I put my hand down on her, while in front of me and above a table the form embraced me, kissing me, with the dread odour of her medium's soup, or salad, or both.

Now would not an ordinary and inexperienced observer be sure that a Spirit-form could not smell of onions, or have blackened hands if the medium had? My investigations have convinced me that Spirits have to use body and soul of the medium, and moral and immoral conditions. I believe that a strong, good Spirit uses the highest and best possibilities of the medium, such as he or she would be with culture and training. I have known mediums who gave wise and true communications when they were in fidelity to their highest conscience, and who were the mediums of untruth when they had fallen into evil. I would not trust the Angel Gabriel as a medium if he took tobacco when his conscience was enlightened against it.

I repeat, the Spirit uses the body and soul, or spirit, of the medium, partially or wholly; sometimes there appears to be no mixture of the controlling will of the medium with that of the Spirit; again, there is a very apparent union of the two wills. I have been told by a Spirit that the best mediumship was in the case of a developed medium who was fully prepared to do the best he or she knows, in such rapport with the Spirit that the medium does not distinguish the volition of the guardian Spirit from his or her own. The Spirit uses a medium as we use a telegraph operator or a messenger—with differences that all skilled investigators will see and understand.

I cannot pursue the subject farther now. I could not consent to have doubts and worse thrown at the honest, genuine medium, Miss Wood, without stating what I know. I have not crawled through a lace-work of thread or string. I have better evidence than I could get by tying the medium, and thus hindering manifestation. W. Eglinton has submitted to many tests with us when we first knew him. Joey has talked when Willie's mouth was full of wine or water, and also when his lips were sealed with postage stamps. This was in the dark, and as darkness is required for several manifestations, such as speaking, shewing the Spirit lights, photographing by the Spirit light, &c., &c., perfect tests are very desirable in the case of darkness. These we have had often enough to extinguish the last spark of doubt. Genuine mediumship may be very different from desirable mediumship. I do not like clammy forms, with ill-odour, though I know them to be genuine. I have seen a medium thrown on the floor in what seemed genuine catalepsy, because his guides said that he had done wrong. They stuffed tobacco in his mouth, till he was deathly sick, and ended by saying that he had been smoking, and that he would get ill and be very badly off if he continued to do so. This I should own to be desirable mediumship; but when a chair is pulled from under an inoffensive person, or one's hair is pulled, or lies are told, these manifestations are not desirable to me. A bad Spirit may as truly demonstrate "life beyond the grave" as a good one; but I like good company, truth, fine forms, good odours—in two words, SWEETNESS and LIGHT.

MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

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

August 25th, 1882.

P.S.—Mr. Eglinton was not present at the séance above referred to, and knew nothing about it. Some days afterwards Miss Wood's friend F. called at Mr. Eglinton's office, and Mr. Eglinton's partner offered F. a cigar, which he took, when Mr. Eglinton heard a voice say, close to his ear, "He is not to have any more tobacco." Mr. Eglinton repeated what he had heard, and then F. remembered his promise to "Pocha."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Beyond a personal conviction of Miss Wood's honesty, I have not the slightest interest in writing in her defence. Previous to her arrival in London I never met her, and since, excepting at her séances, I have met her privately but once. It seems to me, however, that a somewhat striking case of identification of a materialised form given through her mediumship at the rooms of the C.A.S., on August 23rd, should in justice to her be recorded. Before proceeding to give any account of what took place, I would express my regret that some of Miss Wood's friends, previous to her arrival, thought it well to exclude Mr. F. Podmore from the séance. I was absent at the time, or

I should have expressed an adverse opinion at the moment. Further consideration has, however, convinced me that they were right; for experience of many sittings has shewn that sensitives are peculiarly susceptible to antagonistic influences. This being so, had Mr. Podmore been present, we should in all probability have sat in vain. Of course, in writing thus, I do not expect Mr. Podmore to accept this explanation for his exclusion.

The conditions imposed were different from those formerly used. Miss Wood volunteered either to use the network or to submit to be searched by two ladies appointed by the meeting. As it has been suggested that Miss Wood conceals about her clothing the means for impersonation, I proposed, with the consent of the meeting, that the search test should be applied. The blame, if any, of the insufficiency of the consequent conditions of the séance primarily attaches to me and not to Miss Wood. The search was carried out by two ladies, Mrs. J., a well-known Spiritualist, and a friend whom she had introduced. At least, I believe this to be the case, but I am unacquainted with the lady's name, and do not know if she be a Spiritualist. The search concluded, it was announced by Mrs. J. that not only was it thorough, and thoroughly satisfactory, but that Miss Wood had been re-dressed, not in the clothing she had brought with her, but in articles belonging to another lady. Miss Wood then went into the cabinet fully attired, with her hat on. After a long interval—and here I am bound to say that the light was much lower than could have been wished—several forms were seen in succession. Among others, of course, was "Pocha." At her request, I knelt and kissed her. She placed her arms twice round my neck, and touched me on the face, the feeling of the fingers being quite distinct. They were small and child-like. The touch of her cheek was also distinct, and, a curious point, the sound of the chirping of the lips as they touched mine was clearly audible. The feet of the figure were not visible to me, therefore I cannot affirm that the appearance—which was visible at several feet from the curtain and came and touched more than one member of the circle, taking a packet of sweetmeats from one sitter—was not a clever impersonation on the part of the medium. But towards the end of the séance a form appeared, apparently several inches taller than Miss Wood. In saying this I am making every allowance for the difficulty of judging of the size of a draped figure in comparative darkness. This figure advanced into the circle quite eight feet from the curtain. It seemed to desire to communicate with some member of the circle. One hand was stretched out. It pointed at length to me. I released my hand from the grasp of my neighbour. It was seized in a moment by the form, and I was nearly lifted from my chair by the violence with which the grip of a secret society of which I am a member, was given to me. Not only was the grasp of the hand substantial, but the fingers were visible through the drapery. Now, of course some people can never be convinced by evidence; but I put it to any reasonable person that this form could not have been an impersonation on the part of the medium. In the first place, it was taller than Miss Wood. It was, secondly, not on tip-toe, for the feet were distinctly visible through the drapery, walking on the soles. Thirdly, it gave me the grip of a society of which I am certain no one present was a member, and of which, as few members exist in England, Miss Wood could have no knowledge, and still less have learnt its secrets.

Now, by way of clenching the matter. Three years ago a friend of mine, a medical man, died in Australia. He and I, both Spiritualists, were long friends. Shortly previous to his death, from phthisis, we became acquainted with the fact that we were both members of the ——— Order, a thing not usually spoken of even between intimate friends. He had been initiated, like myself, on the Continent of Europe. He then said, "If the facts of Spiritualism are facts, I will meet you again if possible as a materialised form"—we both knew he was rapidly dying—"and as a proof of my identity I will give you that grip which has united us here in a bond only dissoluble by death." Now, this may read like a romance, but the editor of "LIGHT" has, I think, sufficient confidence in me to know that on such a subject I would not state anything but the truth. When the grip was given to me by the figure I was perfectly passive, and had not the slightest idea or thought of seeing my friend. Miss Wood had no knowledge of the agreement between us, and I may add that it is utterly impossible that she could have succeeded in imitating that grip, even to a heated imagination, which mine was not. To relieve the minds of members of Friendly Societies, I may as well mention that my deceased friend was

not a member of any such association, and that although a Freemason, the Order to which I refer is not directly associated with Masonry, further than that many foreign members of the craft and a few English brethren belong to both.

I must apologise for trespassing so much on your space. In conclusion, let me say that I by no means affirm that the form was that of my friend; but I do emphatically say it was an intelligence altogether independent of the medium. How it came, who or what it was, I do not venture to say. I fully agree with "M.A. (Oxon.)" and Mr. Collingwood, that séances should be held in the light when possible. I wish they could always be so. But until we better understand the relative connections of matter and spirit, we must take what we can get.

T. S. P.

THE THEORIES OF MODERN PHYSICS.

"Modern physical science aims at a mechanical interpretation of all the phenomena of the universe." This is the opening sentence of the introductory chapter of a newly published volume of "The International Scientific Series."* This plain and comprehensive statement the author supports by quotations from authorities illustrating the progress of thought. It may be interesting to select a few:—

"There can be no cause of motion in a body but in another body contiguous and moved."—*Hobbes*.

"Everything in nature is effected mechanically."—*Leibnitz*.

"In true philosophy the causes of all natural effects . . . must be conceived mechanically."—*Huygens*.

The writers of the present century become more emphatic:—

"The highest object at which the natural sciences are constrained to aim, is . . . the reduction of all the phenomena of nature to mechanics."—*Kirchhoff*.

"The object of the natural sciences is to find the motions upon which all other changes are based . . . to resolve themselves therefore into mechanics."—*Helmholz*.

"These data lead to the inference that all the phenomena of animal life are consequences of the simple attractions and repulsions resulting from the concurrence of these elementary substances."—*Ludwig*.

Coming down to the last few years:—

"The view that has now become dominant (in physiology), and is ordinarily designated as the mechanical or physical view, has its origin in the causal conception long prevalent in the kindred departments of natural science, which regards nature as a single chain of causes and effects, wherein the ultimate laws of causal action are the laws of mechanics. Physiology thus appears as a branch of applied physics, its problem being a reduction of vital phenomena to general physical laws, and thus ultimately to the fundamental laws of mechanics."—*Wundt*.

Yet more explicitly, and distinctly inclusive of man, Haeckel says:—

"The general theory of evolution. . . assumes that in nature there is a great, unital, continuous, and everlasting process of development, and that all natural phenomena, without exception, from the motion of the celestial bodies, and the falling of the rolling stone, up to the growth of the plant and the consciousness of man, are subject to the same great law of causation—that they are ultimately to be reduced to atomic mechanics. . . . This is the only scientific theory which affords a rational explanation of the universe, and satisfies the craving of the intellect for causal connections, inasmuch as it links all the phenomena of nature as parts of a great unital process of development, and as a series of mechanical causes and effects."

Professor Huxley speaks of "that purely mechanical view of the universe toward which modern physiology is striving."

The writer of the volume before us says:—

"With few exceptions, scientific men of the present day hold the proposition, that all physical action is mechanical, to be axiomatic, if not in the sense of being self-evident at least in the sense of being an induction from all past scientific experience. And they deem the validity of the mechanical explanation of the phenomena of nature to be, not only unquestionable, but absolute, exclusive, and final. They believe that this validity is not conditioned, either by the present state of human intelligence, or by the nature and extent of the phenomena which present themselves as objects of scientific investigation. Thoughtful men like Du Bois-Reymond have at times suggested that it is not unlimited; but the only limits assigned to it are those of the general capacity of the human intellect. Although they concede this, there is a class of phenomena—those of organic life—which, under their characteristic aspect, are wholly irreducible by the mere aid of mechanical principles. It is, nevertheless, insisted that these principles constitute the only intellectual solvent that can be applied to them, and that the

residue which resists the solution is to be relegated for ever to that endless array of facts which are proof against all the re-agents of scientific cognition. It is claimed that if it is impossible theoretically to construct a living organism out of molecules or atoms, and mechanical forces under the guidance of the principle of the conservation of energy, the laws of electric or magnetic coercion, the first and second laws of thermodynamics, &c., the attempt to frame a theory of life in harmony with the laws controlling ordinary material action must be utterly abandoned."

Let us invert this last sentence, taking its essential clauses, and we shall see more distinctly the writer's definition of the position assumed by science. It would read thus:—

"The attempt to frame a theory of life in harmony with the laws controlling ordinary material action must be utterly abandoned, unless it is possible theoretically to construct a living organism out of molecules and atoms under the guidance of mechanical forces."

Our author says:—"Such a claim ought not, in my judgment, to be admitted without a careful examination of the grounds upon which it is made," and states that his purpose is "to inquire whether or not the validity of the mechanical theory of the universe, in its present form, and with its ordinary assumptions, is indeed absolute within the bounds of human intelligence, and to this end, if possible, to ascertain the nature of this theory as well as its logical and psychological origin."

It will be seen that we here reach the fundamental questions which lie at the root of the controversy between what in broad and popular phraseology may be called the materialistic and spiritualistic philosophies, and which are therefore of deep interest both to the "psychologist" and to the "Spiritualist." In the course of his treatment of the problems which arise, the author of the book we have quoted from refers to the views of the late Professor Zollner and others in regard to four-dimensional space, and to the experiments with Dr. Slade, and travels into somewhat similar regions of thought to those entered upon in a recent number of "LIGHT," by "M.A. (Oxon.)," in his able and suggestive notes on "Time, Space, and Eternity."

We propose to return again to J. B. Stallo's work, and endeavour to give the outline of his arguments in as clear a manner as the nature of the subject will admit of.

E. T. B.

THE "OPEN VISION" OF DEATH.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The story in Miss Cobbe's "Peak in Darien," where the first intimation of the death of a brother was given by an apparent vision of the departed to a dying sister, is the same with that which I sent to the *Spectator*.

The only difference (in a completely unimportant circumstance) is that Miss Cobbe's informant spoke of the dying girl as having recognised in the first instance the presence of her three dead brothers, instead of sisters, as they really were.

The coincidence with the story told by Dean Plumtre in the *Spectator* of the 26th August, is truly astonishing.

H. WEDGWOOD.

To the two narratives supplied to the *Spectator* by Miss Cobbe and Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, Dean Plumtre, of Wells, adds another which came within his own knowledge. The mother of one of the foremost thinkers and theologians of our time was lying on her death-bed, in the April of 1854. She had been for some days in a state of almost complete unconsciousness. A short time before her death, the words came from her lips,—“There they are, all of them,—William and Elizabeth, and Emma and Anne;” then, after a pause, “and Priscilla, too.” William was a son who had died in infancy, and whose name had for years never passed the mother's lips. Priscilla had died two days before, but her death, though known to the family, had not been reported to her.

The London correspondent of the *Western Morning News*, after quoting the above story, recounts an experience of his own. He says:—"When I was a child, I remember a Nonconformist minister of a provincial town coming into my father's house on a Good Friday, rather early in the morning, and saying, 'My brother Tom is dead.' 'Have you heard?' 'No,' was the reply, 'but I was awakened by him this morning, and know that he died at ten minutes to three, which was the hour at which I awoke. I looked at my watch.' After church I went with my father to the house of the minister. The first news brought by the daughters of the house was that a message had

* "The Concepts and Theories of Modern Physics." By J. B. Stalls. London: Kegan Paul and Co.

been received, in which it was announced that 'Uncle Tom died in London this morning at ten minutes to three.' The death had been expected, the brother was anxious, and the hour may have been a coincidence; but his firm conviction that he had been awakened by the dead, and its verification, made a strong impression upon me; and whatever it may be worth, here is the story, and it is absolutely true."

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday last, Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Nottingham, occupied the platform of this hall. In the morning the subject of his discourse was "Spirit Communion" on which he gave a splendid lecture, which was followed by several questions from the audience, which were met with ready and satisfactory replies. In accordance with a suggestion at the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Wallis's control "Lighthouse" took possession of the medium to try and give some psychometric readings, but he had scarcely gone half through his first experiment, when, to our great surprise, one after another of those whose experience ought to have taught them better, broke the conditions of the circle by leaving their seats and going out. In the evening the guides of Mr. Wallis discoursed to a very good audience on "Spiritualism, as a Religious Solvent and Moral Teacher." The discourse elicited warm applause from the audience. Mr. Wallis prefaced the lecture by a fine recitation, "Is it True; or, the Telephone," a topical composition by an American divine. Mr. Wilson made a splendid chairman, and in a few well-chosen remarks expressed the satisfaction he felt on receiving so much corroboration from the guides of Mr. Wallis in favour of "Comprehensionism."—RES-FACTA.

QUEBEC HALL.

A very crowded audience assembled on Sunday evening to hear Mr. MacDonnell give his experiences in Spiritualism. In an address of much over an hour, the speaker related his acquaintance with mesmerism in Dublin; the formation of a Society for its study and practice; the opening of an infirmary for its application; his course of public lectures and demonstrations; his acquaintance with the Davenport Brothers, and conviction of their honesty; his "exhibition" of them in Belfast; his formation of a series of circles, and ultimate thorough conviction of the truth of the leading pretensions of Spiritualism. He valued this science for its solution of the problem of existence; for its exposure of hideous delusions on the subject of futurity; and for its rational and comforting propositions, which were in harmony with sound reason and with the well-known constitution of nature. The address was listened to throughout with great interest, and brought out an animated speech from a sceptic present.

HULL.

WRITING ON CLOSED SLATES.

We have great pleasure in again having to report successful results from the mediumship of M. E. Bovine. We have had three more sésances with him in our rooms, in two of which, with other manifestations, we have had direct Spirit-writing with pencil upon paper, the medium being placed under strict test conditions. The first was written in English, and the second in the French language. We may here state that the medium is of English parents, born in the neighbourhood of London, and has no knowledge of the French language; but what we wish to draw the attention of your readers to is a sésance held on Wednesday, August 16th, when we had been previously promised writing on slates, sealed and tied, on which occasion Mr. J. B. Wright, M.C.E., prepared himself with strips of paper gummed and his name printed on the strips. Mr. Richard Ruffet, M.E.E., brought two new slates. These were carefully examined by all persons present. A small piece of pencil was placed between the two slates; they were then gummed, sealed, and tied, and a seal put upon the knot. Mr. Nichol, C.E., then placed the slates in a most obscure position in the cabinet, the medium having been corded to the chair as securely as could possibly be done, the knots gummed with the prepared strips, and a seal put upon each strip. The curtain of the cabinet was then lowered, and we sat patiently waiting the result, having all our attention fixed upon the legs of the medium, which were distinctly seen by all of us. Other phenomena were produced as on previous occasions, and at the end of one hour and fifteen minutes we raised the curtain, found the medium just as he had been placed with every seal perfect, and the slates gone from their original place of concealment. When found they were on a sideboard outside the cabinet, as securely tied and sealed as when placed in the cabinet, with one exception—the pencil was gone. We all examined them, and were satisfied that they had not been tampered with. Mr. Ruffet then carefully cut open 11 the fastenings, and on the inside of one of the slates "Good-night" was clearly visible; but where was the pencil? A search was then made, and after some time it was found above two yards away from where the slates had been opened. Is this a case of matter passing through matter? How was the writing done? We are keeping the slates as they were left after being opened, and shall be happy to shew them to anyone who may feel dis-

posed to call upon us at our rooms, when the position of the medium in the cabinet will be described to all parties interested.—J. L. BLAND, Secretary, Hull Psychological Investigation Society, 22, Prospect-street, Hull.

The following persons bear testimony to the above facts by their names, out of those present, ten in all, outside the cabinet:—R. Ruffet, H. Ernest Nichol, J. W. Blyth Wright, W. E. Salisbury.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—The platform of the N.S.E.S. this last week or two has been admirably supported by speakers of good standing. Mr. T. P. Barkas spoke on Sunday, the 19th, upon "The Future Life," with great effect, to a fair audience, and on Sunday last Mr. T. M. Brown, the well-known trance medium and clairvoyant, lectured to the friends at the same place to a good audience. This Society at Newcastle might be of great benefit to the cause of Spiritualism in the North if its influential members were to exercise a liberal spirit in regard to those who have the misfortune to disagree with them on matters of belief. The last few weeks has found a leading member sounding the friends upon the advisability of establishing a test of admission to membership, which runs thus:—"I believe in God Almighty, the Creator of the universe." This, to say the least of it, is a piece of arrogant presumption, for though few of us may dispute the point, yet we should consider ourselves to be far exceeding the province of our duty and authority in dictating to our fellows what they should believe in.

GATESHEAD.—Last Sunday the Society at this town held a very interesting promiscuous meeting, at which Mr. Martin and others officiated. Mr. W. Picking occupied the chair. There was a good audience, and the short speeches were much appreciated.—NORTHUMBRIA.

WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

LONDON.

Sunday, September 3.—Goswell Hall. 11.30 a.m., Lecture, Mr. Wilson. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. J. J. Morse.
 ,, September 3.—Quebec Hall. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. MacDonnell.
 Tuesday, September 5.—Quebec Hall. 8.30 p.m., Lecture, Wilson.

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 advertisement page.

FARTHER HORIZONS EVERY YEAR.

(RALPH WALDO EMERSON.)

"Farther horizons every year."
 So he by reverent hands just laid
 Beneath, O trees, your wavering shade,
 Climbed as you climb the upward way,
 Knowing not boundary or stay.
 His eyes surcharged with heavenly lights,
 His senses steeped in heavenly sights,
 His soul attuned to heavenly keys,
 How should he pause for rest or ease,
 Or turn his winged feet again
 To share the common feasts of men?
 He blessed them with his word and smile,
 But, still, above their fickle moods,
 Wooing, constraining him the while
 Beckoned the shining altitudes.

"Farther horizons every year."
 To what immeasurable height,
 What clear irradiance of light,
 What far and all-transcendent goal,
 Hast thou now risen, O steadfast soul!
 We may not follow with our eyes
 To where thy further pathway lies;
 Nor guess what Vision fast and free,
 God keeps in store for souls like thee,
 But still the sentry pines which wave
 Their boughs above thy honoured grave,
 Shall be thy emblems brave and fit,
 Firm rooted in the stalwart sod;
 Blessing the earth while spurning it,
 Content with nothing short of God.

—American Paper.

MR. DAVID YOUNGER writes:—"After an exhaustive season in London I have been enabled to thoroughly recoup my magnetic power at this delightful and healthful retreat, and shall be glad if you will announce my arrival for next Tuesday in London, where I shall be glad to treat patients at their own homes, or at 23, Ledbury-road, Bayswater.—Felixstowe, Suffolk."

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—GATESHEAD: September 10th and 11th.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.—[Adv.]