

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOATH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

No. 213.—Vol. V.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1885.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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[The Editor of "LIGHT" desires it to be distinctly understood that he can accept no responsibility as to the opinions expressed by Contributors and Correspondents. Free and courteous discussion is invited, but writers are alone responsible for the articles to which their names are attached.]

"KNOWLEDGE," "TRUTH," AND THE PHENOMENA OF SLATE-WRITING.

BY HON. RODEN NOEL.

Mr. Procter has long been known and honoured among us as a very successful populariser of modern scientific results. But he would appear lately to have added a new laurel to his wreath, one still more distinguished: so, at least, I conclude from the recent paragraph in *Knowledge* anent the little book edited by Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell, in which some of us added our testimony to that of other innumerable witnesses concerning the slate-writing, which occurs in the presence of Mr. Eglinton. From this paragraph I gather that Mr. Procter must henceforth be regarded not merely with the respect due to a successful populariser and lecturer, but also with the reverence due to the discoverer of a new method in philosophy. He would appear to have become dissatisfied with that common-sense Baconian method usually termed inductive (the method now for some years affected by scientific investigators), and to be ambitious of introducing, or restoring, that *à priori* method, which since Bacon has fallen into much disfavour. I am constrained to draw this inference because he sets aside the published testimony of recent witnesses to certain phenomena with the remark that it is beneath his notice, and that the book is only an advertisement of Mr. Eglinton, the medium. I am not sure if I understand the latter observation. Does he mean that Mr. Eglinton bribed us? That would seem to be his meaning, unless the words are mere nonsense. If so, I can only assure him he is mistaken. But it is very indifferent to us whether he believes us or not. Now if the witnesses are known by Mr. Procter to be incapable—habitual drunkards, idiots, or persons without the normal furniture of senses—or if the conditions under which their observations were made were evidently insufficient and irrelevant for the purpose of establishing the genuine, or fraudulent, character of the phenomena in question,—then I can quite understand the attitude of Mr. Procter as a scientific man. But he does not urge these objections, and I think that any impartial reader of the book will probably decide that they do not apply to the evidence offered in it. Such is the nature of the phenomena attested that a very subtle and trained scientific investigator is not required here; though, of course, for certain other kinds of phenomena specialists might be needed, and the mere testimony of witnesses not proved to be abnormally stupid, credulous, or dishonest would count

for little. But under the various and varied conditions of our respective observations, as detailed in the book, the simple question whether a slate was written on by Mr. Eglinton in broad daylight or not (written on, that is, in any way at present known to science, and fraudulently), or whether it was written on previously in a normal way, is one quite capable of being decided by men without any special scientific training. Yet, in fact, the testimony of other scientific men, almost as eminent even as Mr. Procter (together with that of the most celebrated professional conjurers), is passed over in contemptuous silence, or derided with insolent contempt, by members of the so-called scientific confraternity, who have not happened to observe the same things, or have even refused to observe them when they had the opportunity of doing so. Our testimony is but a link in a long chain, and has value as an element in a cumulative argument. While the names of Wallace, Crookes, Zöllner, Fechner, Butlerof, Wagner, Barrett, Varley, Dale Owen, Edmunds, De Morgan weigh probably (to say the least of it) as much in the scales of evidence as those of Ray Lankester and Procter, however illustrious these may be; though possibly if the former luminaries of the scientific and judicial world had but thought them of calling at the editorial sancta of these oracles, before they so rashly published their testimony, they might have been put up to a trick or two, and prevented (poor "credulous dolts" that they are!) from making so lamentable an exhibition of their credulity! They would have learned in a couple of minutes "how the thing is done," for is not my old friend, the editor of *Truth*, good enough in a recent number of his paper, to give us the whole mystery of Spiritism in a nutshell?

Testimony, therefore, evidently counts for nothing with Mr. Procter. Accordingly, one has to credit him with the discovery, or rediscovery, of a scientific method. Yet, since the *à priori* method, as it has been heretofore known, became generally discredited after age-long trial because of the utter unprofitableness of its practical result, one must suppose that the learned editor has hit upon some new application of it all his own; and if so, one awaits his disclosure of the same with keen interest, seeing how much long and arduous labour will be saved by a formula, or process, that dispenses entirely with the necessity for patient observation, and cautious inference from experience. For certainly if the homely significance of facts is not to be scouted as altogether beneath the regard of a philosopher, it can scarcely be pretended that he may exercise the privilege (hitherto reserved even by strict Calvinists for Deity), of arbitrary election or reprobation amongst them. If a certain experience does not happen to suit the Materialism or Agnosticism of any Mr. John P. Robinson, why *tant pis pour les faits!* This really would appear to be the extraordinary, and scarcely conceivable, posture of mind which some of our popular scientists think it neither unbecoming, nor indecent to adopt. This would indeed appear to be their crude and barbarous notion of the scientific spirit! For in these days of immeasurable detail, and enforced division of labour, even the originality of a Procter can scarcely be found equal to original research in every department; hence it would seem likely that even he must accept some portion of his scientific creed at second hand; in other words, on testimony. Or does he know these articles of it

à priori, by intuition, while other men of science have to spend years of toil in arriving at the same conclusions? Else why does he accept testimony, say, concerning the recent researches of M. Pasteur, and refuse it concerning the alleged phenomena of Spiritism, as attested, say, by Wallace, Crookes, and Zollner? For to criticise testimony is one thing, and to refuse to pay any attention to it is another. On what plea does he justify his arbitrary excommunication of so considerable an assemblage of phenomena? They want to speak to him, but he will have nothing to say to them, and puts them into a corner as if they were in disgrace. What *à priori* canon in his mind, and that of Mr. Lankester, induces these gentlemen to treat so considerable an array of human experience in so very cavalier a fashion? Are there aristocratic phenomena the scientist may nod to, and plebeian facts he may hold himself free to cut?

But are these alleged occurrences "miraculous"? The only relevant question is: *Do they occur?* If they do, then their explanation is yet to seek. But "facts are stubborn things." The truth is, these good people have made up their minds, and don't want the trouble of unmaking them; don't care to eat their own words and confess that they have been a little rash and over hasty in framing their compact little systems of materialistic dogma. But with all their assumption of superior knowledge, this new hierarchy is fully as bigoted, insincere, and arrogant as the old, steeped in prejudice, impervious to unpalatable new truth as the crassest, least cultivated boor, the most superstition-ridden inquisitor, the most arrogant ecclesiastic. But alas! it is no novel experience. The State-paid astronomer refusing to look through the telescope of Galileo lest his own theories should suffer disturbance, the Church flinging the same Galileo into prison for maintaining the correct theory of planetary motion; all that is an old story. Only when we men-monkeys play these pranks, while styling ourselves apostles of "freethought," the sorry spectacle becomes, if possible, still more lamentably ridiculous. Whenever men win the highest places as accepted leaders or teachers, they invariably assume those very proud looks, and airs of infallibility, which they had indignantly reprobated in their predecessors, till the great advancing tide sweeps them too and their fine theories away. Truth will not be stereotyped. So long as she lives, she grows. When a system refuses to do that, it means death. Consider well the position these individuals assume. Virtually it is that they themselves, having by exhaustive survey completed their little official ordnance-map of this infinite universe in which we live, any alleged feature of the country not to be found noted there can only be regarded as a palpable fraud, to be clamoured down by cat-calls, while the reporters of it are provided with jeers, imprisonment, or a horsewhip. There may be more things in Heaven and earth than were dreamed of in the philosophy of Horatio, but assuredly not more than are set down with the imprimatur of authority in the text books, or popular lectures of some new Thomas Aquinas, who, in the character of his own Pope, furnishes also his own credentials. "I am Sir Oracle, and when I speak let no dog bark." And yet the revelation of science is itself constantly shifting and changing its message!

Alas! shall Truth indeed perish with the editor of it? As for Knowledge, we know that "it shall vanish away."

There is, however, some justifiable presumption (as well as no little unjustifiable presumption) in the minds of certain scientists against the class of events in question, because these may appear to them miraculous, and the orthodox definition of a miracle is rightly held to be discredited by the course of scientific discovery. We can no longer believe in a "violation of natural law." But no believer in the genuineness of such occurrences—unless he be a very foolish person—holds them to be "miraculous"

in this sense, or thinks of them as violating law. Yet every new discovery in science, until it has been classified, and reduced to law, appears to violate known law. Careful investigation proves that it is only another instance of law—of law crossing and modifying law. Much indeed must be within the compass of such mighty minds as those of Ray Lankester and Procter; dumb awe is doubtless the attitude most befitting us of the laity in contemplating them; yet can they really compass the knowledge of all laws? That is a large order! Are they then Himalayan Mahatmas? If the truth of the matter herein ought to be decided, however, as these gentlemen seem to opine, by Billingsgate, it cannot be difficult for us to find verbal missiles as good as "vermin," "skunk," or "credulous dolt," though this may be a "very pretty derangement of epitaphs." *Wisecrumskull* is one I pick up at a venture, and shy back "in the direction of" such pseudo-scientific roughs. We will find more if they want them. Donnybrook Fair may not prove much, but it isn't bad fun. It seems a pity, however, that Mr. Ray Lankester prints glaring misstatements about the Slade case, and, convicted of error, refuses to own himself in the wrong. That is worse than flinging dirt about. Such—and the torture of dumb animals—are some choice fruits of the vaunted scientific spirit!

But if what these gentlemen are really afraid of is that, our facts once admitted, the probability of a life after death (because the possibility of intelligence without brain) might become too palpable, one must admit that it is rather hard on them, when they had made up their minds to lie comfortably "in cold obstruction, and to rot," to have to face the old question once again, which they had supposed dead and buried long since, whether after all they may not find themselves alive yonder, "brought to book" for their behaviour here, and expected, moreover, to do some really useful work for their fellow-creatures—say, for the poor dumb animals they have so persecuted.

"The quaint old cruel coxcomb in his gullet,

Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it,"

(as Byron says of Izaak Walton). No interminable holiday of idleness after all! But, perhaps, by wishing very much to be annihilated, they might get a special dispensation, authorising them to shirk their share of whatever business may have to be done by somebody over there. There have been thinkers who thought such a thing not impossible. Only they say one ought to begin with self-effacement here; and some people don't seem in a hurry to do that! Spiritists, I suppose, would not be sorry not to meet their old enemies again! They might want to prosecute "for palmistry or otherwise" the mediums on the other side. And they will infallibly go about like the professorial ghost in Heine's story, demonstrating from chapter and verse in Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason," the self-contradiction inherent in the very notion of a ghost. In short, they will be as insufferable as Goethe told Eckermann the literary bore Tiedge would surely make himself in the after life, for he would buttonhole his sceptical acquaintances, with that tedious book of his on immortality in hand, asking, "Didn't I tell you so? Wasn't I right? Are we not immortal?" And poor Goethe half wished *he* might not have to live again, lest he should be condemned to meet this (spiritistic) friend in Heaven.

On the whole, indeed, it is more likely the Spiritists who will be so cock-a-whoop and tedious there, and lead the poor Positivists a life! I heartily hope they will. One must pay some penalty for such "cussedness," and why not this? Won't they have to listen then to plenty of "echoes of our gossip behind the veil"?

MATTER THROUGH MATTER.—Mr. Read, of Boston, has a solid ring of iron which has often been put upon my arm when his hand has been firmly clasped in mine. The experiment has succeeded as well with rings brought by investigators on my own arm and on theirs.—*A Correspondent in "Facts."*

PROFESSOR ELLIOTT COUES' DEFENCE OF SPIRITUAL INVESTIGATION.

The name and reputation of Professor Elliott Coues is well-known in the world of science, but our readers will remember him better in connection with his recent visit to England, and the interest shown in his book, "Biogenesis," an English edition of which, in conjunction with "M.A.(Oxon.)," he hoped to see through the press before leaving our shores. The accident, however, which has caused our contributor to cease active work, has, unfortunately, also indefinitely shelved the carrying out of this project.

Professor Coues, since his return to America, has strongly urged the necessity of research in psychical science; and he has, in addition, taken up the glove in its defence. The letters which we reproduce here from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* were, as will be seen, originally contributed to *Science* and the *New York Post*. They speak for themselves, but we may remind our readers that *Science* is the same magazine which has lately earned what will, some day, prove an unenviable notoriety for a hastily-expressed *à priori* judgment on Spiritualism.

The *New York Evening Post*.

I beg to send you, with request for publication, a letter recently addressed to the editor of *Science*, which has been declined on the ground that "it is made up entirely of assertions to which no evidence is attached, and which are at the same time contrary, as far as is generally known, to the accepted laws of matter."

The operations of the London Society for Psychical Research have already placed certain obscure phenomena in a novel light, and have excited widespread interest. The fact of telepathy has been established, in my judgment, and now engages public attention through the medium of the Press. You have published several articles upon the subject; and *Science* is printing a correspondence between Mr. Gurney, Honorary Secretary of the London society, and Professor Newcomb, the distinguished astronomer. The latter asks, "Can ghosts be investigated?" I reply, "Yes," stating how these objects can be and are being investigated, and offering my own investigations in evidence. *Science* declines my letter on the above-mentioned grounds. My inference is, that *Science* thus prejudices the whole question, virtually proceeding upon the very premise that I guarded against, viz.: a preconceived theory of what is naturally possible and what is naturally impossible. If *Science* only publishes that which is "generally known and accepted," what service can it render to the progress of science? To decline my letter is to set itself dead against even a statement of what is to be investigated by the Society for Psychical Research, whose object is to examine things not "generally known and accepted." I must, therefore, characterise the attitude of *Science* as one eminently unscientific, and I will add anachronistic. Under these circumstances will the *Evening Post* do the subject justice?

ELLIOTT COUES.

To the Editor of *Science*.

SIR,—The simplest, safest, and most complete reply to this question, asked by Professor Newcomb in *Science*, No. 97, is, that thousands of the things called "ghosts" have been and are being investigated annually, monthly, weekly, daily, and perhaps hourly by thousands of persons of every grade of intelligence, from those who are most vulgar, ignorant, and credulous up to the most learned, intellectual, and sceptical of scientists. What these things are, is another question I do not here touch upon.

"Ghosts" can be, have been, and are being investigated by the several kinds of people indicated above, by the following methods:—

(a) By the natural exercise of the physical sense of smell. "Ghosts" frequently (not usually) emit a perceptible odour, sometimes very strong, sometimes fragrant, sometimes the reverse, nearly always peculiar to themselves.

(b) By the natural exercise of physical sense of sight, in the same way that the objectivity, reality, solidarity, size, shape, motion, &c., of other objects are perceived by the eye.

(c) By the natural exercise of the physical sense of hearing. Sounds proceeding from "ghosts," whether those that cannot be distinguished from the sound of the human voice, or those that result from contact with other objects, can be heard; (b) seeing "ghosts," and (c) hearing them talk, being the usual methods of "investigation" especially suitable for beginners in this line of experimental research.

(d) By the natural exercise of the physical sense of touch. "Ghosts" can frequently (not always, nor even usually) be felt and handled in any way that would be reasonably decorous in the case of a living person.

To recapitulate: "Ghosts" can be "investigated" by smelling, hearing, seeing, and touching them. There are also other methods, as follows:—

(e) By weighing these objects on any suitable platform scales, in the same way that any other object, as the investigator himself, might be weighed.

(f) By the physical, chemical, or microscopical examination of detached portions of them, as hair, nails, or pieces of any substance which may envelope them more or less completely.

All of which methods I myself, personally, have repeatedly and successfully employed in my own investigations, excepting (e), and I am ready to give the results of my experiments to any scientist, or to any other creditable person or body of persons who may wish to have them.

Among some of the "conditions" most essential to successful experiment in this difficult line of scientific research, I will mention—

1. Freedom of the mind of the investigator from any preconceived theory of the "natural possible" and the "natural impossible."

2. The constant co-operation of the object to be investigated.

Since Professor Newcomb has justly insisted upon the importance of mutual understanding in the use of words, let us see if we can agree upon a definition of that thing which each of us calls a "ghost" in our respective articles.

If, for example, Professor Newcomb and I should together see rise up out of the floor, immediately in front of us, a luminous vapour; if we should watch it intently and see it gradually condense and take the definite form of a human being, occupying say three minutes in the process; if then it should move about the room like a human being, and talk and act in all respects like one; and if we together touched and handled it; and if, during conversation with it and while our hands were upon it, the object should disintegrate itself, dissolve, and vanish; and if, upon comparing notes subsequently, we found that our observations tallied exactly—would Professor Newcomb agree with me to call that thing a "ghost"? That is what I mean by "ghost" in this letter; and I have investigated that kind of a thing, by the methods above stated, on many occasions, more or less satisfactorily and conclusively, sometimes with results in perfectly substantial accord with the hypothetical case I cite in illustration.

The term "ghost" is objectionable enough in this connection, for obvious reasons, one of which is that "ghost" ordinarily means an alleged apparition of a dead person; in short, a "spirit" in the concrete. To call the object I have described a "ghost" or "spirit" is to prejudge and pronounce upon what kind of an entity it is: this is unscientific. A better name is "veridical phantom," or "phantasm." Respecting such objects of investigation I will here say further:

(a) A veridical phantom is a substantial or material thing; an objective reality, possessing size, shape, solidarity, gravity, and capacity for spontaneous motion and locomotion—qualities readily observed by the physical senses.

(b) The process of its gradual integration and disintegration may be watched, and the phantom may be handled during the process.

(c) The process of the gradual excretion or excrecence of a veridical phantom from the body of a living person, and its subsequent reabsorption into the body of the same person, is one which may be watched, and the phantom may be handled during the process.

(d) Some persons, to my own most positive and unequivocal knowledge, have the power of causing a veridical phantom to issue from their own bodies, of their own conscious volition, and to measurably direct the movements and other actions of this phantom, producing visible and tangible effects at a distance

from the place where their living physical bodies are at the time, and constituting a phenomenon known as "projection of the double"—one of the two principal kinds of what are called "phantasms of the living," the other kind being the issue of a similar phantom without the knowledge or volition of the individual.

The "investigation" of the above-described phenomena is as open to any one, of course, as it has been to me, during the several years that I have conducted my experiments with various persons both in Europe and in this country; the verification of my statements, or the proof that they have no foundation in fact, should be comparatively easy, by the methods I have indicated, or by others which a trained scientist like Professor Newcomb can readily devise.

Distinctly, I decline to commit myself now to any explanation of these phenomena. I decline at present to say even what I think, or believe, or suppose, their real nature to be. I simply assert and declare the objective reality of the things I have described; to answer the question, "Can ghosts be investigated?" Emphatically, and without reserve, I say "yes; veridical phantoms can be investigated."

ELLIOTT COVES.

1726, North-street, Washington, D.C.

SOME EXPERIENCES OF A MEDIUM.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* calls attention to an interesting sketch of the experience of Mrs. Burns, a medium resident in Chicago. The following is a summary:—

As with many others, my path as a medium has been not unstrewn with thorns; but I have, under trials and privations, striven to live down the thought in the public mind that a medium is less worthy of respect and esteem than other people.

When I came to Chicago I knew only one family resident in it, and my prospects were, for a time, dismal. I and my two young boys had a full share of nothing except faith. I have had my share, with all mediums, of bad names. An elder of a church here once used most insulting language to me. Only recently some ladies sent for me to give a materialisation séance, and when I came away some men of the party told me that their opinion was that I was a fraud. This was a thorn; but I brought away a rose also, in the recollection of having seen and caressed a sweet child materialised, and heard some delightful singing by a materialised spirit. Once an old man came: he said, "I'd give ten dollars to be told my mother's name; nobody in this country knows it but myself." In a few moments a name appeared on the slate. He looked at it; then he looked at me, saying, "There must be something wrong here; that's her name; but it came a little too quick." A lady came—a perfect stranger—wanting a test. On the slate appeared a message to her, addressing her by name as daughter. Then came communications from various members of her family. She said it was too wonderful; she supposed that I had, by some means, privately ascertained her name and family history; but was "not to be taken in." These are thorns. Others have not been satisfied because communications are not to their mind. Some came under the misapprehension that I can "call up" or "raise" their fathers and mothers. Such have to be borne with in charity.

My development as a medium was not like "getting religion." The independent slate-writing came only after sitting daily for it for three years.

I have never sought for what are called high controls. I have been satisfied with simple, faithful guides, such as the spirit of my brother, who—in earth-life—was most quiet and unpretending; he has always proved true, and has cheered me in hours of distress. On several occasions he has acted quite providentially.

Let us work with a will; let us try to develop into higher and purer mediumship, to show the world the truth of Spiritualism.

132, De Kalb-street, Chicago. JULIA E. BURNS.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is preferable that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

Money Challenge.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I suppose that many, like myself, who are interested in the public recognition of occult phenomena, read with inexpressible dismay the letter from Signor Damiani which was published by the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the 20th inst. I forbear comment upon it, for the objections to it are only too patent, and must have been felt by nearly every one for whom "LIGHT" is a representative organ. But you call on your readers for their opinions, with an object that can be easily understood. You wish that the disavowal of Signor Damiani's latest "challenge" should be generally and emphatically expressed and recorded in the interests of Spiritualism, or, as I should put it, of the scientific recognition of the phenomena, be they what they may.

It is difficult to understand upon what principle the *Pall Mall Gazette* has regulated its admission or rejection of letters on this whole subject. There is an attack in its columns on mediums generally, and on Mr. Eglinton in particular. The first letter in reply from this gentleman—a letter creditable alike to his intelligence, honour, and temper—is very properly published. It is not directly answered; but the torrent of abuse flows on. According to all journalistic usage Mr. Eglinton, as the person principally concerned, and as his character was assailed, was entitled to a rejoinder before the correspondence was closed. Yet his thoroughly pertinent and temperate letter of the 20th, which you published last week, is not allowed to go before the public in the columns of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Then with regard to Slade. We must be grateful to the *Pall Mall* for publishing Mr. Sinnett's forcible and telling retort upon Professor Lankester; and personally, I am obliged to the editor for even the partial publication of a letter from myself correcting certain misstatements by Mr. Labouchere. But why strike out just such facts—quite briefly stated—as are most important to be known for Slade's justification? Why forbid even the most summary reference to the experiments of Zöllner and his scientific colleagues, and to the evidence of the distinguished conjurer, Bellachini? When Slade's character as a medium is virulently assailed in a paper professing to let both sides be heard, surely those who, in a sense, represent Slade in this country are entitled to a somewhat fuller hearing. And then there is Signor Damiani, with his terribly compromising "challenge," adopted apparently by the editor as a representative of us all, none of us being allowed to protest in the same columns against that character. (I tried, for one.)

Upon the general question of money challenges in regard to the verification of these phenomena, I have not much to say. They seem to me peculiarly futile and imprudent. Futile, because in the end nobody knows exactly which side has backed out, by attempting to impose or by objecting to conditions. Imprudent, because every experienced investigator knows that the phenomena, even such as psychography, are not to be commanded on any given occasion or set of occasions; and because none of us know at all fully or accurately what are the conditions of success. As to "materialisations," we have usually to take them on the credit of the witnesses forming some specially select and confidential circle. In nine experiments out of ten at which I have been present in more miscellaneous assemblies, the physical identity of the form with the medium has been scarcely doubtful, though in many or most instances I believe the latter to have been unconscious of the deception. But that is too large a question to enter upon now.

C. C. M.

P.S.—I think it should be publicly stated that Mr. Eglinton was not a party to Signor Damiani's offer to exhibit our deceased friends in their "beautiful garments."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was very glad to observe your firm criticism of the proposal made by Signor Damiani to Mr. Labouchere to demonstrate to him the reality of materialisation phenomena for a wager of £1,000.

Both proposals are injudicious, viz., the demonstration and the

wager. These phenomena are not matters to be gambled about; they are facts for serious, scientific examination.

Signor Damiani, as a long continued practical investigator, knows perfectly well that spiritual phenomena of any kind cannot be commanded at will; he also knows that the more delicate the phenomena, the more sensitive and occult are the conditions. He also knows that many materialisations that are perfectly genuine are not conclusive to inexperienced investigators, and that not more than 10 per cent. of those ordinarily observed are under such conditions as to be absolutely conclusive.

All materialisations from cabinets have an element of doubt about them; and the only perfectly conclusive development of psychic materialisation is when the medium is visibly among the sitters, when the psychic forms grow up in the middle of the room from apparent nothingness, walk, speak, write, and shake hands with the sitters, and gradually become invisible, and when all present clearly see and hear the phenomena as they occur.

Experiments of that kind are not at the direct command of any one; they require much patience to witness them, and a judicial mind to interpret them, and I shrewdly suspect Mr. Labouchere has not either.

I have witnessed many materialisation and slate-writing experiments, and have no more doubts of their reality and genuineness than I have of the folly and prejudice recently displayed by the editor of *Truth*.—I am, &c.,

Newcastle-on-Tyne,
January 23rd, 1885.

T. P. BARKAS.

The Cry of the Hungry.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I willingly join in your protest against any course of action which would tend to stifle investigation. But, none the less, I agree with the editor of *Truth* in thinking that it is high time that Mr. Eglinton were taken in hand. Only I would not choose Professor Ray Lankester as the investigator. His method lacks delicacy even for the mere qualitative analysis of psychical phenomena.

What puzzles me is this: on the one hand, we have a gentleman professing to be able to exercise almost at will a marvellous power quite out of the range of known physical forces; and on the other hand, we have a Society which exists for the express purpose of investigating, according to scientific methods, the alleged manifestations of such a power; but yet these two, the medium and the Society, have not yet managed to hit it off together.

I should very much like to know the reason of this. Which is shy of the other? Is the force afraid of scientific method, or is the Society unequal to grappling with the force? It is these little hitches that are so perplexing in connection with the occult. We are inundated with Spiritualistic literature which would all be very interesting, if we could just get our little modicum of fact to start with. But, whenever I have hungrily asked for a fact, I have been given—a dark séance; and now, just when it seemed as if Spiritualism were at last emerging into the light, and one could get something solid to work upon, there seems, after all, to be something wrong about it.

Of course, I shall be told that I may go to Mr. Eglinton and convince myself. But I would rather the investigation were conducted scientifically. Seeing, even in broad daylight, is not necessarily believing. So far, the Society for Psychical Research has done its work well. It has been rigorous in its tests, and for this reason its work, unlike that of most former investigators, will stand. And I should prefer their opinion *in re* Mr. Eglinton to my own, especially as I have no reason to expect that I should be allowed to secure certainty by special tests.

In fine, if Mr. Eglinton can really command an occult force, it is a thousand pities that the fact is not, once for all, scientifically demonstrated. When demonstrated, it would be no proof whatever of the interference of spirits, but in itself it would be a priceless addition to human knowledge.—Faithfully yours,

New Athenæum Club, S.W.

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

[Our correspondent is somewhat in error. Mr. Eglinton does not claim to "exercise at will" a marvellous power. He is merely a passive agent. Further, Mr. Eubule-Evans would, like many

others, be allowed perfect liberty to "secure certainty by special tests." Mr. Eglinton refuses no request in moderation preferred in a truth-seeking spirit. The "fact" has been over and over again scientifically demonstrated, and yet the world is credulous: so they would remain, even if the Society for Psychical Research reported in favour of psychography. The truth is, these matters cannot be generally received on authority.—Ed. of "LIGHT."]

The Public Discussion of Spiritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Podmore's criticism of my remarks on this subject, and of the Greek sentence written by a spirit in my study, upon marked paper and under fairly good test conditions, has had my attention. I presume both of us wish to be accurate in our statement of facts, irrespective of preconceived opinions. In my paper, to which Mr. Podmore calls the further attention of your readers, I recorded certain facts—all I knew—relating to this Greek writing, but Mr. Podmore says:—

"Mr. Theobald has omitted to mention that the spirit ascribed the quotation—which is *prose*, and could not be mistaken by the veriest tyro in Greek for anything else—to the first book of the *Odyssey*. Now the *Odyssey* is a *poem*; and the first book of the *Odyssey* contains no allusion to Ulysses' encounter with the Cyclops."

It would have been very surprising, considering my anxiety in all such narrations to be accurate and to give your readers all that can throw light upon these phenomena, if I had made any such statement, for the simple reason that the idea exists nowhere but in Mr. Podmore's imagination! I can explain how this misapprehension arose. When I wrote to Mr. Podmore thereon, I asked him to look into the first book of the *Odyssey* (it should have been the 9th), somewhere about lines 366-410; but he was entirely wrong when he drew the conclusion that the *spirit* referred me there. It was from a Greek scholar I had that reference. He was clearly mistaken. All the *spirit* has said is to be found recorded in the P.S. of my paper. What the "other facts," elsewhere referred to by Mr. Podmore, are, I know not.

As I have said before, I am not a Greek scholar. Had I been one, any inaccuracy in my transcription would not have occurred; but as I wished Mr. Podmore's criticism of the Greek also to be passed under review, I took it to a friend whom Mr. Podmore knows and would consider equally able to form an opinion of the writing as he is. This friend is not only a Greek scholar but a Spiritualist, and the result of an hour's crucial examination of the original, of which I am glad Mr. Podmore has a copy, is to convince me that a *Spiritualist* who knows Greek will look upon the writing

"With larger, other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all,"

and for the conditions under which these writings are done. My friend reads the word I have deciphered *Outo as Outin*, and with the aid of his "other eyes" I can take this reading and thus make it correct: it can clearly be so read, and therefore we can give the benefit of the doubt on the side of accuracy. He also reads *proton*, as I have printed it, correctly. He agrees with my note on the word *Odussea*. He considers some of the letters of antique form and Mr. Podmore's criticism thereof unimportant, and in one case wholly wrong.

But whether the Greek is correct or not appears to me of small import by the side of the phenomenon itself—a Greek sentence written between eleven o'clock at night and eight in the morning, on marked paper, in a house where no one could have written it, excepting, perhaps, myself (who could have copied it, as I wrote Greek when at school). But as, according to Mr. Podmore, *men* stands first, in an impossible position, he probably may have other facts to explain how it was done. He must, however, be more careful in his statement of facts than he has been in this instance.—Yours faithfully,

January 25th, 1885.

MORELL THEOBALD.

Spiritism has lost one of its best disciples in Colonel Devolut, a commander in the Legion of Honour. In anticipation of his departure, he had prepared the customary notes of invitation to his funeral, but without the usual broad, black border, ending with the words: "The departed asks for your affectionate remembrance." This departure from antiquated custom is quite in accordance with our sentiments, and we hope to see the example followed in the families of all our co-disciples.—*La Lumière*.

All Communications to be addressed to

THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"

4, AVE MARIA LANE,
LONDON, 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 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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Light :

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31st, 1885.

INVESTIGATION AND INVESTIGATION.

There are a few persons in this world who profess, in some degree, to have investigated the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, among whom, without intended offence, may be classed Huxley, Tyndall, Carpenter, and Lankester.

Their investigation has consisted in attending less than half-a-dozen experiments, and their conclusions, some of which have been published, consist of crude and manifestly prejudiced inferences, deduced from a very limited number of sances, at which the phenomena appear to have been of a very elementary kind, and in which the skill of the quartette of scientists has been displayed in attempts to thwart the manifestations rather than to give psychics and phenomena a fair field, and after careful observation to arrive at any decision, favourable or unfavourable, legitimately proven by what they observed.

Dr. Carpenter, in his Eozoonal researches, places his own phenomena and facts before his critics. He gathers his own specimens, employs his own lapidary, prepares his own sections, uses his own microscope and modes of illumination, solicits his critics to examine his preparations in his own way, and despite their affirmation that his specimens give no satisfactory evidence of organic structure, continues to affirm his protozoan theories.

Professor Huxley, in his scientific controversy with Professor Owen and others, on, say, the structure of the brain of the chimpanzee and that of man, procures his own chimpanzee, takes the bony case from the brain, places the brain in normal *situ*, and in that way demonstrates to his brother professors that the cerebrum in the chimpanzee covers the cerebellum as does the cerebrum in man.

Professor Tyndall, in his celebrated experiments on biogenetic phenomena, does not trust his experiments to the manipulation of any conceited stranger with a foregone conclusion in his inexperienced brain, but provides his own

animal or vegetable fluid infusions, sterilizes them himself by high heat, places them in absolutely pure air, carefully hermetically seals them under his own inspection, and, after years of patient experiment and observation, arrives at the conclusion that living forms, at present, only spring from living matter, and that under test conditions non-living matter will never produce living organisms.

Dr. Lankester, in his more youthful, and, probably, more impulsive researches, tests the phenomena of nature, and having found certain conditions necessary for their production declines to accept the non-validity of his conclusions, except by processes which he himself has conducted, and in which he has observed contrary results.

In every case the four above-named scientists are indisputably correct, but when their attention is directed to a series of occult phenomena which they have not carefully examined, and respecting which they are practically ignorant, they demand their own conditions, refuse to accept the reasonable experimental conditions of psychics and their friends, and in their crass folly refuse impartially to examine phenomena with which they are unacquainted, and of the laws regulating which they know nothing; unless such phenomena are produced under their own conditions, and at their personal dictation.

What would Professor Tyndall say to the conceited dogmatist who declined to witness his electrical experiments unless he produced them freely in a damp room? He, if not in a mild and placable mood, would order him out of his presence, or have him conveyed to an insane asylum. Why should electrical experiments and psychographic experiments be treated differently? Both are produced by occult, invisible, incomprehensible forces; both require certain conditions; those who have investigated the conditions best understand them, and the duty of an honest, unprejudiced and judicial investigator is to observe the phenomena under the conditions in which they have been produced, and ascertain if they remove all reasonable chances of error or deception.

If psychical phenomena be thus reasonably approached, the result is not difficult to predict. Phenomena are the laws of Nature; they are the modes in which she speaks, and the language of psychographic phenomena waits for rational interpretation.

TRANSITION OF MRS. MARY E. RICH.

Just as we go to press, we learn from our American exchanges that on the last evening of the old year, surrounded by loving friends, the beloved young wife of Mr. Isaac B. Rich, of the publishing house of Colby and Rich, passed to spirit life from the Revere House, Boston. A devoted husband, a sweet little daughter of six years of age, a father and five brothers and sisters, together with a wide circle of friends, mourn her departure. In the name of our readers, and all English Spiritualists, we tender our profoundest sympathy to the bereaved family circle.

NEW BOOKS.—A short list of recent publications will be found in another column.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—It is proposed to hold the next conversazione of this Society on Thursday, February 26th. In the course of the evening an address will be delivered by Miss Rosamond Dale Owen. Full particulars will appear in due course.

"M. A. (OXON'S)" ILLNESS.—There is a steady improvement, with some relapses and paroxysms of pain. On the whole, the progress is well marked, and the strength is sustained, the appetite having returned. The patient still keeps his bed, and must do so, from mere weakness, for some time to come. But the violence of the disease is spent.

THE truest love is the truest benevolence; it acquires an infinite patience out of the very excess of its suffering, and is content to merge its egotism in the idea of the beloved object. He that does not know this, does not know what love is, whatever he may know of passion.

MATTER THROUGH MATTER.

When Galileo discovered by means of his telescope that there were satellites circulating round Jupiter, the scientific men of the day refused to look through his telescope, but sitting down in their cells wrote elaborate treatises to show how Galileo must be a deluded being, if not an impostor, as mathematically such satellites were impossible.

Now, I feel a little as if Mr. Gurney were placing himself in a like position with these critics, for while some members of the Society for Psychical Research have called on me to question me fairly on my ring experiment and to inspect my ring, Mr. Gurney, on the other hand, has hitherto in this matter, not seen either myself or my ring, but has preferred freely to exercise his critical faculty. Now, had he examined me and my ring personally I think he would not have written either of his late criticisms.

Mr. Gurney still calls in question my ability to judge as to the identity of *my own* ring, and says, "I do not see the difficulty of imitating [successfully] 1,000 minute marks [on my ring], for a person who has a pin and a few hours at his disposal."

It is quite unnecessary that I should characterise this sentence verbally, but I will now offer Mr. Gurney £20 if in "a few hours," with a pin, he successfully imitates any *one* minute mark I shall indicate, such, for instance, as the indentation caused by the blow of a hammer, out of the 1,000 existing marks on my ring, provided he will give me, should he fail, one shilling!

Mr. Gurney objects to my describing my experiment as a demonstration. But I maintain that to myself it was a demonstration both to my senses and to my reason, and to others a logical demonstration. As thus—

1. I have a ring made of hammered iron, and of a special size and form, so as to render its passage over Mr. Husk's hand, so far as one could judge by measurement and by experiment, impossible.

2. I grasp the medium's hand, and am absolutely certain I never for an instant relax my grasp during the experiment, which lasted altogether only about, apparently, one minute.

3. I then examine the medium's wrist and forearm, and satisfy myself that there is no ring thereon.

4. Immediately afterwards I find a ring on the medium's wrist.

5. I call for a light, and on minute examination, find all my (all but invisible) private marks on the ring, and am absolutely certain the ring is my own ring, and is intact.

I think, therefore, I am entitled to describe my experiment as a demonstration, complete and without flaw.

I will now add the supplementary evidence I obtained on the evening of the 22nd inst., and again at the house of Mr. Stuart-Menteath; Captain James, the Rev. Mr. Newbould, myself, and other friends being present.

At the end of our séance, "Irresistible" said, "If Mr. Newbould will now hold the medium's hand, I will try and give Dr. Wyld more evidence."

Accordingly, having obtained permission to light a candle, *all present saw* Mr. Newbould, with his right hand, take a firm hold of the medium's left hand. After he had done so, I, having during the whole of the séance kept my ring in my breast pocket, now produced it and put it into Mr. Newbould's left hand, and, he being now urged not for a moment to relax his grasp, we extinguished the light. "Irresistible" now went to work, and having asked Mr. Newbould to rise from his chair, placed on Husk's wrist not only a ring, but the frame of the chair Mr. Newbould had just risen from.

Light being now produced, I examined the ring on the medium's wrist and was absolutely certain it was my own ring, and is intact.

Having now both hands free, I pulled up the sleeves of Mr. Husk's shirt and coat and found that it was impossible to urge my ring beyond the *beginning* of the thick part of his arm. This was an important observation, because it proved that my ring, during the first experiment, could not possibly have been higher up the arm than the part I examined.

This brief experiment is so far more satisfactory than the first experiment inasmuch as we were permitted light to satisfy *all present* as to the *status quo* immediately before the act.

We asked Mr. Newbould if he was certain he never relinquished his grasp of the medium's hand, and he replied: "I am not more certain of my existence than I am that I did not relinquish my grasp for an instant."

I admit, however, that "the passage of matter through matter" is a fact which can scarcely be received by thoughtful minds on testimony however strong, except there be preliminary experiences of a cognate character. And I confess that although I have had a great many of these experiences, I am only now able to say, "I know that 'the passage of matter through matter,' is a fact."

But if we grant the fact, what is the possible interpretation?

The scientific view is, that matter is composed of ultimate atoms of infinite smallness, held in close proximity by the cohesive force, which force probably is the attraction of magnetic polarity. But although these atoms are more or less in proximity, the theory is that they do not touch but are free to move with unknown velocity in all directions.

If so, then all that may be required still further to separate these atoms from each other is to reverse the polarity, or perhaps only to relax the electric tension.

Spiritual beings assert that they have the power of controlling magnetic forces, and can thus disintegrate and reconstruct matter. True, the beings who thus speak, do not generally impress us with the idea of their superior wisdom or knowledge; but as they all are unanimous in asserting that the will of spiritual beings can control the forces of magnetism, and as this assertion is accompanied by a demonstration that they can pass "matter through matter," as if said matter became liquid or gaseous, their assertion, with the facts, demands the sincerest examination of scientific minds.

Theosophy teaches that the external universe is only an objective reflection of the Divine Will. It teaches further that man in his innermost essence is identical in substance with the All-Spirit. If so, then logically, he should, as a spiritual being, be able, by concentrating his will on a limited portion of matter, to control the attractive force, and thus to increase or diminish the interspaces between the atoms of an iron ring.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

In saying of the ring experiment "it *seems* to me that either the arm or the substance of the ring must have been temporarily disintegrated, merely because we have no other means of explaining the mystery," Mr. Keulemans overlooks the fourth dimensional hypothesis of Zöllner. According to that there would have been no passage of ring *through* arm, or *vice versa*, because for four-dimensional space the arm would not be a solid body. The operation could then only be *seen* by a four-dimensional vision, to which it would appear as simple as possible. What *we* could conceivably see of it would be just this: The ring or part of it would become suddenly invisible, such part immediately re-appearing on the inside of the arm. It is, to my mind, not only possible, but probable, that there exist beings which have not evolved the sense, or rather the judgment, of the third dimension. As Zöllner shows, we should simply have to raise an object and pass it across a line to perform what,

for such beings, would be the "stupendous miracle" of matter through matter. Nor in our case are we obliged to credit the "Irresistibles" with a knowledge of the fourth-dimensional process. "It is by no means necessary," says Zöllner—"nay, not even probable—that such beings should have a contemplative consciousness of these actions of their wills." He illustrates that by our own experience. We ourselves execute movements in the third dimension, instinctively, but we only attain to a *conception* of the third dimension by reflection according to the law or function of causality. Anterior to this most primitive reflection, mere sense can give us no intimation of more than one plane. The child sees its hand; it stretches it out. The feeling of the hand remains the same; there is therefore for it an identical *object*. But the visual *appearance* of this object is now different. That is a problem for the child's *thought*, and it is solved through the subjective necessity of the causal law giving the *conception* of a second plane to account for the phenomenon. The judgment becoming instantaneous by habit is confounded with sense perception. The same process is made evident to mature experience by the example of the stereoscope. "The representation of the corporeality—*i.e.*, of the third dimension—springs up in our mind when the task is presented to our intellect to refer at once two different plane pictures, without contradiction, to one single object." We are not actually conscious of this process, just because it is a *necessary* intellectual act, an *à priori* function brought into play by sense.

We should first explain "Irresistible" before we call on "Irresistible" to explain his or its performances. If the fourth dimension is for ourselves only an affair of evolution, that means for the *personal* consciousness; the larger, deeper, Subject underlying that, which in the case of mediums projects effects, but not explanations of them, above the threshold of consciousness, can act from another space than ours. But obediently to the law of causality, the *personal* consciousness will have its hypothesis; an hypothesis not wrought by self-conscious reflection, but which is the concept of cause concentered by the mental ideality of the medium, clothing itself by an unobserved spontaneity in a ready-made category of personality, and springing at once, like any other dream image, into apparent life and reality. We owe to Du Prel the observation, that dream, *though of transcendental origin*, from below the threshold, *must* for consciousness *above* the threshold take on the imagery to be found there. The illusion is thus in the *form* of the phenomenon, not in the phenomenon itself. The transcendental Subject passes its knowledge into the personal consciousness in the only way it can, by the assumption of an illusory personality. And I do not see why the same should not occur in relation to transcendental acts; or rather, given such acts by our own Subject, the causal necessity of our understanding demanding an actor, the latter must be such for it as it can represent, a distinct individual, or "spirit."

But descending from these speculative heights, I owe it in candour to Mr. Gurney to admit that, to my mind at least, he has hit a blot in the evidence—at least, a defect—unless Dr. Wyld can further reassure us. Was the ring which fell down after the séance, and which is now available for examination, the same ring that was on the wrist? That is a question which does legitimately arise on the evidence as it stands. For I must doubt, with Mr. Gurney, whether the solidity of the rim of the ring could be conclusively tested while it was on the wrist. In my own mind it is not at all a question of doubting the phenomenon; I would lay 100 to 1 that it was genuine. But we must not confound subjective judgments with objective ones. I have seen the ring in Dr. Wyld's possession, and if the general appearance of the one found on the wrist was the same, though Dr. Wyld had no photographic chart

to go by, I can easily suppose that his familiarity with all those old dints and rust-marks makes the suggestion of a *fac-simile* to his mind very absurd. It is rather absurd to my own, but we have no right to call it impossible.

C. C. M.

I should like to suggest a simple experiment which, if it could be brought to a successful issue, would conclusively demonstrate the possibility of the "passage of matter through matter"—that is, matter as cognised by our present senses.

Take a piece of chamois leather and cut out of it two rings, one within another; if they are rather irregular and jagged so much the better. It can always be shown that these rings must originally have formed one piece of leather, for no art could imitate the continuous texture of the natural skin when the rings are placed so that their edges coincide. If some powerful physical medium, in the habit of producing ring phenomena, succeeded in linking these leather rings together, it would be evidence that Professor Ray Lankester, Mr. Labouchere, the members of the Royal Society, and the entire fraternity of conjurers could not upset. No darkened cabinet, or mystery as to the *modus operandi*, would make the slightest difference with regard to the fact of the solid rings having been passed through each other. What the explanation might be would still remain an open question—whether the disintegration and reintegration of matter, a fourth dimension of space, or some other hypothesis not yet propounded.

Another conclusive experiment would be to tie a knot in an endless cord of soft leather, such as Slade tied in a cord the ends of which were fastened with sealing wax.

LOUISA S. COOK.

ON CREDENCE TO SPIRITS.

(Extracted from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.)

Spiritualists should be careful to discriminate between sensitiveness and mediumship. Mediums are, of course, always sensitives; but it does not follow that sensitives are mediums. Neither are those who are really mediums always in such a condition as to enable spirits to manifest themselves through them; if they, then, urged by importunity, and perhaps by their needs, hold séances, they serve only as mirrors to reflect what comes to them from their immediate mundane environment.

Mediumship, if not conjoined with disciplined will, cannot but lead to error and disaster. Sensitive mediums who do not discipline the will, maintain self-respect, and lead an orderly life, are in constant danger of passing over the boundary line of sanity.

If any of our friends would consult a spirit upon any religious, literary, or business question, let them not be guided except under test conditions. Let what comes through one medium be compared with what comes through another, or others. If it is found that the assumed communicating spirit maintains his identity, that he gives expression to the same ideas, that he repeats through one medium what he has said through another, or others, it may then be reasonably believed that a spirit has really communicated, and his communication is worthy of just that deference which would have been given to his words when in the earth-life, and no more.

THE *Beacon Light* is the title of a new publication, at a dollar a-year, edited by a medium, Mrs. M. E. Williams, of Boston. The editor of *Facts* calls it a jewel, and says it ought to succeed well.

On the question of supporting mediums, M. Helleberg, of Cincinnati, U.S.A., writes: "We have a medium here, a young man named Swannberg, who was a blacksmith, but who, under spirit-guidance, has relinquished his business to be a professional medium, receiving small fees in payment for the time he devotes to séances. It is said that he has converted hundreds who belonged to his Church—the Roman Catholic."—*La Lumière*.

ON THE URGENCY FOR INVESTIGATION.

(Extracted from the *Philadelphia Press*.)

A large sum was bequeathed by the late Mr. Henry Sybert to the University of Pennsylvania, on the condition that it should cause a full scientific investigation to be made of Spiritualism. The University has now appointed for that purpose a committee of prominent literary and scientific men of Philadelphia. And not too soon. It is high time that Spiritualism should receive a full irradiation from the cold, searching light of science. For nearly forty years it has been an increasingly active element in our social and religious world. The journals promulgating it are numbered by the hundreds, and its adherents by the hundreds of thousands. If it is all error, it is not to be dissipated by sneers; if there is a truth in it, it is neither becoming nor judicious to treat it with heedless disregard.

The possibility of the return of the dead—the key-note of Spiritualism—appeals to the tenderest feelings of men and women; people come to the consideration of it blinded by grief and hope. These feelings have, no doubt, been traded upon by tricksters who have called themselves mediums; but this is not, as the world goes, very surprising. But are there phenomena which such tricksters only imitate? Is the mediumship which they pretend to be endowed with a real natural endowment in some individuals?

The belief is extending that under the haze of Spiritualism, Animal Magnetism, Clairvoyance, Telepathy, &c., there is something beyond trickery, but which—whether it be some hitherto uncomprehended physical force, or psychical force—calls for conscientious research similar to that which is given to the other natural phenomena.

The present is an age when all things are proved and reduced to scientific classification. A century ago men shuddered, or jeered, at the notion of ghosts; educated men now neither shudder nor jeer at anything. They will not be startled nor astonished at any disclosure of an invisible world about them; but they will insist that it must be conformable with law and rational system.

Whatever of definable truth there is in Spiritualism will be elicited when scientific men take its investigation in hand. In England a beginning has been made; a Society for Psychical Research has been formed, and has already accumulated a mass of facts for scientific investigation and classification.

That there are invisible beings in the universe reaching up beyond us, just as the ranks of created beings stretch downwards from us to the microcobe; and that the mysteries which now and then touch us, "striking the electric chain with which we are darkly bound," should be making efforts to communicate with us, does not appear absurd to the majority of men and women. It should be for scientists to demonstrate its absurdity—if such it be—and brush such mental cobwebs out of the way. It is they only who can do it. And there ought to be no difficulty in the matter. Unseen powers would, doubtless, be glad to meet science half-way in the inquiry; and honest mediums would be glad to meet every test. If Spiritualism is falsity and delusion, let us have it proved; if there is truth in it, let us have it, be the result what it may.

THE *Echo d'Ostende* reports that last Sunday the De Rots Society of Spiritists opened a new hall in the Chaussée de Thouront, due to the liberality of one of its members. Among the eighty persons present were some of our best-known citizens. After the business opening, the prayer used at opening séances was read. Then communications were written through mediums, and read to the audience. Some addresses were delivered, and the ceremony was closed by the reading of the prayer used for the closing of the séance. In an adjoining room was a collection of spirit-drawings, which was visited by many, and was to remain open for a week.—*Le Messager*.

THE *REVUE SPIRITE'S* RETROSPECT OF 1884

The *Revue Spirite* says, in its retrospect of the past year, that the signs of extension of the spiritual movement are manifest all over Europe. Even in obscurantist Rome a spiritual journal has been established. The movement now includes Athens, in Greece, and Alexandria, in Egypt.

In France its expansion is augmented by the organisation of a movement for the delivery of lectures. The year has been prolific in works published in many parts of Europe, bearing indirectly, when not directly, upon the spiritual philosophy; pages might be filled with the enumeration of them and their contents. Forty new ones are on sale at the offices of the *Revue*. It comments on the fact of some prominent men of science at Nancy having reported to their society the results of a conscientious investigation of "The action of the mind of one individual upon another; and upon cures by magnetisation and the use of magnetised water."

The *Revue* again calls attention to the tendency to federation indicated by the formation of "Spiritualist Alliances" in England and America, with both of which the French Spiritists are in friendly relation. It gives a full report of Major-General Drayson's address to the London Spiritualist Alliance, translated by Professor Cassal.

HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

The following extracts are from *Le Spiritisme* of January:—

"Last May the widow Somerfeld, at Villette, had been suffering from acute sciatica for two months, against which medical treatment had been totally ineffective. By spiritual magnetisation, through me as medium, in four sittings she was entirely cured.

"The widow Lang had suffered for nine years from abdominal tumour, and latterly also from vomitings, which prostrated her for days together. Of the latter she was, by the same means, at once relieved, and in six weeks of the tumour also.

"I state these facts in the hope that the knowledge of them may help to spread the spiritual doctrine.—M. A. DIEN."

Madame Agullena writes: "I had been suffering seriously for six years, and the Bordeaux doctors could do nothing more in my case. Through the kind treatment of Madame Colignon and M. Brisse I was quite restored, and continue well after a year. My husband wanted to make remuneration, but M. Brisse said that the only remuneration that he asked for was that I would help him in the cure of others; for while treating me he had ascertained that I was a clairvoyante, with the gift of healing. This I willingly agreed to. Our latest cure is of a man who had been a sufferer for fourteen years from sciatica, and could not walk without help. His cure was complete."

At the civil funeral of M. Guichard, Dean of the French Chamber of Deputies, M. Spuller, one of its eminent members, in his oration said that the departed had desired that his remains should be laid in the tomb with civil rites only, not as an anti-religious manifestation, but because he believed that when a man was conscious of having lived a well-ordered life here, he should, at its close, declare the principles which had inspired him. He then read the deceased's last testament, which was drawn up on the anniversary of his wife's death a year before. It concluded thus: "I believe in God, supreme intelligence, sovereign rule of life; in the continuance of life after death; and in the providential recompense of those who live in the love of their fellow creatures, and of their duty. I desire, in accordance with the law-guaranteeing freedom of religious opinion, that no minister of any denomination whatever may officiate at my funeral; and that these lines may be there read, in order that it may be known in what faith my beloved wife and I lived and died."—*Revue Spirite*.—The *Revue* adds that M. Guichard was ever at work in the spirit of his profession of faith, and that there are many other deputies and senators, silent friends of modern Spiritualism, who might make a similar declaration.

THE MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS ON
SPIRITUALISM.

The "London Correspondent" of this provincial daily wrote as follows on January 16th:—

It is to be regretted that Mr. Labouchere, and equally with him his friend Professor Lankester, cannot discuss the question of Spiritualism without making use of expressions which are not usual in well-conducted society. To call an opponent a "scoundrel," a "swindler," and a "rogue," may be hard hitting, but it is not good manners. The failure of negotiations between Mr. Labouchere and Professor Damiani for a test of Mr. Eglinton's spiritualistic powers leads many people to think that the former gentleman is not quite so confident in his anti-spiritualist views as he would have us believe. Anent this matter I heard a story from the best authority which, perhaps, is worth repeating. A short time ago Mr. Eglinton held a séance, at which some eight or ten gentlemen, including Professor Damiani, were present. One gentleman took his own slates with him, two hinged, forming a double slate, and two unhinged, which were stamped with his own name, and he made what he considers to be a conclusive test. With his own hand he wrote upon one of the hinged slates an inquiry to his deceased father—no one else in the room knew what the question was. A piece of slate pencil, far too small for human fingers to write with, was placed between the double slates. The slates were then put upon the table, the gentleman kept his hand upon them and never allowed them to leave his presence. After a while they were opened and a short reply was found written upon the opposite slate to that containing the question. This reply was not so specific as the gentleman desired, and, accordingly, the question was again written on one of the common slates, a piece of pencil put upon it and then the other slate bound over it with tape. Mr. Eglinton never manipulated the slates at all, and they never left the sight of the operator and his witnesses. Presently the pencil was heard moving, and when the slates were untied there was a specific answer to the question, which question was not known to anyone in the room save the person who wrote it. Mr. Eglinton, when it was over, said he had scarcely ever done anything which had exhausted him more, and his appearance, after the second question had been answered, was that of a man thoroughly prostrated by fatigue.

The gentleman who submitted Mr. Eglinton to this test, considers it to have been conclusive, inasmuch as it was impossible for there to have been any tampering with the slates, which never left his sight or possession. I may say that he is a pharmaceutical chemist, highly educated, and a man who has travelled about the world a very great deal. Certainly he is not one upon whom it would be easy to impose.

The only circumstance connected with this experiment which, to my mind, is open to objection, is the nature of the question asked. It was to the effect that, inasmuch as the questioner, being an elderly man, could not, in the course of nature, hope to live much longer, was it probable that he, on his entrance into the spirit world, would be met by his father and mother, who had preceded him thither? The answer to this was a general affirmative, but he was not satisfied with it, and desired a more specific reply. The second reply gave a definite promise that both his father and mother would meet him directly on his entrance, after death, into the spirit world. The objection to questions of this kind is that there exist no means of testing the truth of the answer. It would have been better if the question had been one relating to some mundane matter known only in the questioner's private family, the truth of which could have been easily ascertained.

THE *Reformador*, Rio Janeiro, September 15th, says: "In ours of July 1st we spoke of the Jesuit Father Curci, once a high dignitary of the Church, having, at eighty years of age, published his 'Il Vaticano Regio,' in which he renounces the errors of Romanism. We looked for the Vatican theologians pulverising his book with their logic; but no! Instead of this being attempted, Rome has risen in its antiquated pomp, and commanded its subjects, under pain of excommunication, to burn Curci's book, and not read it! Well, this method of dealing with a book is convenient, but it is not effective in these days. This excommunication—once a really formidable business—now makes men smile and shrug their shoulders." It is pleasant to see a Portuguese-speaking people, once so docile in the hands of Popes, so radically changing, as the article in the *Reformador* implies.—*Le Messager*.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XIV.

"One Thousand Pounds Reward" is an attractive heading to an advertisement, but whether it should be used to call attention to the facts of Spiritualism may be a matter of taste. Every bet is the offer of a reward depending upon some contingency. Financial and commercial speculations have much of the same character. Men back their opinions—but the question arises whether it is ever justifiable to make a wager upon a fact which you know, and your opponent denies without knowledge. Is it right to mulct a man for his ignorance? If you *know* which horse will win the Derby, would not every bet you make be a theft?

* * *

Something is to be said on the other side, no doubt. If a man, who ought to know better, persists in denying well established facts, carefully examined by, and well known to, many creditable persons, he deserves to be punished a little for his unwisdom. A man who shuts his eyes in the street will not be pitied if he run against a lamp-post. A man who stupidly denies a fact of scientific interest deserves to suffer whatever such folly may inflict.

* * *

After all, these matters settle themselves better, perhaps, than we could arrange them by any calculation or effort. A life to come has its interest for millions. "Modern Spiritualism" is not forty years old; and it is as well known in Australia as in America. No really intelligent person doubts the reality of its phenomena. If some people, full of prejudice and conceit, choose to deny its facts without taking the trouble to examine them, why not let them enjoy their folly and their wilful ignorance? Why propose wagers or offer rewards?

* * *

I do not go the length of some who throw up the subject in disgust because ten or a hundred seek pleasure in this life for one who will take any trouble to learn the truth about another existence. The excuse for this neglect that every one will know all about Spiritualism when they pass to the life to come, and therefore they need not bother about the ignorant and wilful who deny it, does not commend itself to me.

* * *

That kind of logic may do for the Laboucheres and the Lankesters, the Huxleys and Tyndalls. Their ignorance is wilful, and they deserve all their "hardness of heart and blindness of mind." People who shut their eyes and fasten them in darkness with a pitch plaister of prejudice deserve just what they get by it; but there may be some further punishment—some bitterness of remorse for using their influence to keep others in darkness. When "the blind lead the blind and both fall into the ditch," the one who might have seen if he had opened his eyes may have some compunction.

* * *

Mr. Labouchere says that the best judges of the genuineness of spirit manifestations are the conjurers. The natural reply is that several prestidigitateurs of repute have frankly borne testimony to the reality of the phenomena. But there are conjurers and conjurers, even as there are investigators and investigators; and there is no disinclination on Mr. Eglinton's part, or for the matter of that, on the part of most mediums, to meet any honest inquirer, whether he is conjurer or not. All I say is that the conjurers to be excluded from a jury to try the manifestations are those who have made a business of exposing Spiritualism. Of course the Andersons, the Maskelynes and Cookes, the Bishops and Cumberlands, could not sit on it. But any honest conjurer would be a good judge because he knows the limits of his own art.

* * *

So of ventriloquism. Its possible illusions are comprised in a narrow limit well known to those who practise it. Conversations with materialised spirits have no relation to them. When a materialised spirit comes to you in your own home, takes you by the hand and talks with you, no conjuring or ventriloquism can account for the manifestation—for what you see, and hear, and feel. How is a conjurer and ventriloquist to personate your departed friend or relative whom he never saw, and of whom he could have no knowledge? The husband talks with his departed wife, the father with the son or daughter, whom the medium never knew, and of whose personality no one present except the husband or father had any knowledge.

* * *

All we Spiritualists have to do is to give the knowledge we

have gained of the other world to those who are ready to receive it. The testimony to the reality of spiritual phenomena is completely overwhelming. I do not see how any one can read the statements of such men as Crookes, Zöllner, Wallace, Dunraven, Balcarres, and a score of similarly scientific and distinguished witnesses, without at least coming to the conviction that there are facts in Spiritualism worthy of their attention.

* * *

Further, we may say, without giving reasonable offence, that any one who is not convinced by the testimony within his reach,—the phenomena he may observe with little trouble—is not worth convincing. The beliefs of numbers of persons are of no more importance than their understandings. The man who cannot see that two and two make four may as well give up the exact sciences.

* * *

There is now the possibility of getting some news from Thibet—as the first official communication for one hundred years has lately been made to the British Government, with an application for a dictionary phrase-book. The infant in whom the Tashu Lama is born will soon be identified, and our Government will naturally send an embassy with congratulations in the interests of trade; in which case we may possibly hear more of Koot Hoomi, and other personages known to Theosophists.

* * *

The *Messenger* (January 15th) records a proposed *exposé* of Spiritualism at Brussels on the 7th and 8th inst. M. Charles Bellini, it appears, announced two séances in which he would appear as an anti-Spiritualist, to unmask the tricks of the mediums. He was to guess numbers which the audience had thought of, find hidden pins, disentangle himself from the most secure cabinet bonds after the manner of the Davenport Brothers, and emerge unassisted from a sealed sack. All these tricks he would fully explain and demonstrate on the last of the evenings. The *Belgian Chronicle* of the 8th reports that the first part of the programme succeeded admirably. "M. Bellini uses no aid but the hand of the spectator who has hidden or moved the objects, and holding it on his forehead, or manipulating it in a sort of fever, he went blindfold among the audience, finding various objects which, during his absence, had been hidden among their garments. Whatever may be the secret of M. Bellini's proceedings, the result which he obtains is surprising in the extreme." As to the second part of the entertainment, it was done cleverly enough, but—he never explained his tricks. "This is the wrong which he has done the public which he attracted to the hall by the promise of the explanation and solution of various experiences attributed to the intervention of spirits. Now M. Bellini gave neither solution nor explanation. Numbers of persons retired in great displeasure, considering themselves duped, *et ma foi, ils n'avaient pas tort.*"

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

BIRMINGHAM (Oozells-street).—On Sunday, January the 18th, Miss R. Dale Owen gave an address morning and evening to the Birmingham Spiritualists. The subject in the morning was "Spirits as Mentors," and in the evening, "Where Spiritualism has led me." Mr. E. Tyndall took the chair at the morning meeting, and Mr. Turner in the evening. Miss Owen in speaking of spirits as mentors showed how she had been guided by them physically, mentally, and spiritually, and how her spirit guides have directed her in every detail of her life. The evening address was a continuation and sequel of the morning's, and gave a minute account of some of the truths her spirit guides had taught her. The whole discourse teemed with novel and important matter, and was a living comment on Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Miss Owen scarcely glances at her scanty notes, and her style is simple, fluent, and clear, though the thoughts are often subtle. Her manner and language have a wonderful charm. Questions were asked and wisely answered by Miss Owen, and keen interest was excited. A drawing-room meeting was held in the Frederick-road, Edgbaston, at which Colonel Phelps presided, on the following Friday, when Miss Owen's address was again followed by an animated discussion. These meetings for the educated and wealthy are most important, for it is almost the only way in which they can be reached out of London. They will not attend the Sunday services or read the literature of Spiritualism; indeed, they have small chance of doing so as the libraries will not circulate its works.

GLASGOW.—The Glasgow Association of Spiritualists held a soirée and concert on the evening of Friday last, 23rd inst. ("Burns Night"), partly to commemorate the 126th anniversary of the poet's birth, and partly to aid the funds of the Society. It was the suggestion of an "anonymous friend," who generously offered to contribute the edible requisites and defray all incidental expenses, in order that the proceeds from the sale of tickets might go entirely to the benefit of the Society. The Hall, 2, Carlton-place, was unfortunately packed to discomfort, many late comers having to be catered for in an adjoining room. The entertainment, nevertheless, was hearty and joyous, the hall having been tastefully decorated with appropriate mottoes and snatches of song from the immortal repertoire of Burns. The programme was ample and varied, and the vocal efforts of the ladies and gentlemen who volunteered their services were, on the whole, successful. A dance followed, which was kept up with vigour by the younger members till an advanced hour in the morning. Mr. Wallis last week paid a visit to Dundee and held meetings there; and Mrs. Wallis was ministering a few days before to the spiritual necessities of inquirers in Aloo, a picturesque spot at the foot of the Ochills, in Clackmannanshire. Last Sunday the subject selected by the guides of Mr. Wallis was, "Man: His Nature and Needs." The treatment was able and exhaustive and evoked a considerable amount of applause. Miss Owen addresses the Society on Sunday and Monday, the 8th and 9th February. Mr. Morse has been engaged for 29th March.—ST. MUNGO.

STONEHOUSE.—SAILORS' WELCOME.—On the evening of January 25th, at 7 p.m., the controls of Mr. W. Burt discoursed on "The Second Death" in their usual powerful and convincing manner, showing that the passages of Scripture—"Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever"—were to be understood only in their symbolical signification. Death: a life contrary to the will and laws of the Great Creator; Hell: the consequent reward, so to speak, of such a conduct of unholiness, bringing remorse of conscience and the sting of guilt. The lake of fire was the dark spheres, where a full expiation has to be made, and the last farthing has to be paid. The necessity of a life of holiness was urged upon all present, so as to attain to the first resurrection in which the second death shall have no power.—W.B.

EARLY DEATH.

"It is not the custom of the Germans to put on mourning for the young who die under twelve years of age."

'Tis well to mourn for infants lost,
And wear the sable signs of woe;
Yet still I prize the feeling most
Which deems that Death is not a foe
To those who early quit the world,
In sweetest innocences divine;
While yet the morning hours shine,
Nor gathering clouds obscure the sky,
'Tis happy then, 'tis good to die.

For then the young Immortal wakes,
So blithely on the shores of Life;
Of Life so real and so fair,
Where softly angels greeting bear
Their spotless charges to their bowers,
And tend with love their opening powers.

Oh, 'tis a bright prerogative,
No brighter lot the Heavens can give!
'Tis childhood's own ideal,
There poets' dreams are real;
There seek for youth's enchanted spring,
With mirth and play those sweet spheres ring.

Hence do the Germans, sage and deep,
Grief's trappings and the suits of woe
Not care to don, when infants sleep,
Not die, for swift to Heaven they go,
Where music strange, and seraphs' eyes,
Give joyous welcome to the skies.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

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 sances, 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 sance.

The first indications of success usually are a cold 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.

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. Elliottson, 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. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavaire, 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 medianistic 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.