

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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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.]

"MATTER THROUGH MATTER" AND MR. MASKELYNE.

My ring No. 2 has now been on Mr. Husk's wrist since the 28th January, and has been examined by about 500 people, including doctors, engineers, and practical mechanics.

As yet, no natural explanation of any weight has been attempted; but being anxious to get the most scientific opinion I could obtain on the matter, I applied to a distinguished engineer on the staff of one of our railways, to name the man whose opinion would be most valuable on this subject.

His reply was, "I know of no engineer who could give you so important an opinion as Mr. Maskelyne, for he is the most expert mechanic in London."

As this opinion coincided with my own, I wrote to Mr. Maskelyne, and he immediately replied; that my statements much interested him, and he would be happy to see the ring in its present position.

Accordingly we waited on him at the Egyptian Hall on Saturday, at two o'clock, when he, assisted by two other gentlemen, carefully inquired into the case, and minutely examined the ring with a magnifying glass.

Of course, he expressed his views with reticence, but from what he said to me, I believe he will have no objection to my giving the substance of his words thus formulated.

1. The ring is solid and without joint.
2. Apparently it could not be removed from the wrist intact without injury to the hand.
3. It could not have been hot welded in its present position.
4. Possibly it might have been cold welded, but this would be a process requiring a long time.
5. The fact of the ring being in its present position, was certainly the most puzzling thing he had seen in Spiritualism.

As to cold welding, I have consulted with an expert, who said, "I have seen your ring, and it has not been cold welded, and if it were, it could easily be severed, as cold welding does not bite like hot welding."

The reader will perceive that these admissions are very important, considering the quarter from which they come, and are equivalent to a reverse judgment on the verdict passed by the Committee of the Society for Psychical Research.

Surely that Society cannot refuse to re-investigate the matter, unless, indeed, it is determined not to recognise any spiritualistic phenomena which transcend the powers of the telepathic theory to explain.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

I beg to say that the result of a careful examination of the ring upon Mr. Husk's wrist enables me entirely to concur in the opinion expressed by Dr. Wyld as to the verdict of Messrs. Barrett and Gurney, respecting the phenomenon in question.

May I add that some years ago I, in company with "M. A. (Oxon.)," paid an impromptu visit to one of the then best known mediums in London? He showed us a ring upon his wrist, similiar in all respects to that on Mr. Husk's. To attempt to remove it by natural means was clearly an absolute impossibility, as it could not even be forced over the carpal extremities of the radius and ulna. The medium expressed his determination not to have it removed, except by the same means by which he averred that it had been placed there. We proposed to try a séance, and, sitting down, we each grasped a hand of the medium; I myself holding the hand above which the ring was placed with a grip which would have done credit to a drowning man. While doing so I heard the sound of metal falling on the table below my hand, and on requesting "M. A. (Oxon.)," to turn up the gas with his disengaged hand, we found the ring, which I need scarcely say we had carefully examined before sitting down, lying upon the table. No other ring was to be found upon the arm from wrist to shoulder. Other phenomena occurred which it is not essential to my present purpose to mention.

St. Leonards-on-Sea, S. T. SPEER, M.D., EDIN.

April 3rd, 1885.

Dr. Speer has read to me his account of the séance, in the course of which a ring was withdrawn by abnormal means from the arm of a medium. My memory entirely corroborates his account. I examined the ring carefully before the sitting, and advised the medium to have it filed off if he wanted to get rid of it. There is no doubt in my mind that the ring was withdrawn by abnormal means. I tested it by ringing after the sitting was over, and examined it thoroughly. It was a sound iron ring, through which the medium's hand could not pass.—"M. A. (Oxon.)"

"ANGELIC REVELATIONS."—The fifth volume of this work is now ready for private circulation. Any of those friends who have the four preceding volumes and would wish to have the fifth will please to communicate with William Oxley, 65, Bury New-road, Higher Broughton, Manchester. The enclosure of sixpence in stamps for postage will save time, and an acknowledgment of receipt is requested.

SOME of the American scientific periodicals are giving articles on spiritual phenomena which remind us of the truly philosophical researches of our own scientists: Crookes, Wallace, Zöllner, Barrett, and the other eminent men whose names are a tower of strength and a refuge from ridicule. It may be a pity to need such a refuge—but when fools are throwing mud, a wise man may ward it off with his umbrella.

FAITH healing, it appears from a letter in the *Standard*, occurs among the Buddhists. A girl, whose foot had been twisted in childhood so that she could not walk upon the sole, was cured by a visit to the Pagoda Bethshan, and an English officer sent to investigate the matter reported that the cure was established on evidence as good as would be required to sustain a criminal conviction. We have often said that the testimony to the verity of spiritual manifestations would be considered good enough to hang a man by any jury.

TELEPATHY AND THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

I beg to thank Mr. Gurney for his brief and clear statement of what he considers the Society he represents implies by the term "telepathic."

He says: "The term is applied by us to all effects produced by one mind on another, otherwise than through the recognised channel of sense. It no more implies any sort of physical affection than does the word sympathy."

On this I would remark that the word sympathy is popularly used to express mental or spiritual affection, but the word telepathy has been framed to express an occult theory; and it seems to me, after reading the article, "A Theory of Apparitions," in Part VI. of the Proceedings of the Society, that the word and theory have a physiological rather than a psychological basis and import.

When it is said the word telepathy is applied to the action of mind on mind, it is signified that minds in the flesh are meant, and that the Society has not yet recognised the action of spirits on mind, and still less the action of spirits on matter.

It is quite legitimate that the Society, in deference to the materialism of the age, should progress by careful steps; but, on the other hand, members of the Society should not, without prudence, attack the evidence for spiritualistic phenomena.

They should not, for instance, rashly volunteer to imitate a thousand marks produced by fire and hammers on an iron ring, with a pin in a few hours; nor should they offer to imitate spirit-writing on a ceiling, with the assistance of a pencil at the end of a broom-stick; nor to remove an iron ring, measuring, say 8, without rupture, over an impediment measuring, say 9, if some one would lend them a hammer.

With reference to Mr. Gurney's criticism on my remarks as to the impossibility of brain waves produced by brain vibrations penetrating the nine coverings of the brain and then creating like vibrations and thoughts by penetrating the nine coverings of another brain, namely, eighteen substances of various densities and various refracting powers, I would reply;

True—light passes through glass, but not through wood, and sound passes through wood, but not so well through glass, and electricity passes through other substances. But even electricity has a difficulty in passing through the various textures of the body, as is shown by the shocks received; and as brain vibrations must be physical, they must submit to physical law and be refracted and disjointed in passing through the various coverings of the brain.

But mind, in its spirit condition, can pass through all substances without shock, and travelling, possibly, by a magnetic wire, can convey its thoughts to a distance, and even at that distance create the objective forms of its imagination.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

The presentiment of approaching death is not uncommon—but it is often vague and unreliable. A boy, ten years old, at Colesville, New York, wrote on a piece of paper: "Within twelve days after to-day, on Friday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, something remarkable will happen." He was in perfect health when this was written—but his funeral took place on the day and hour.

MR. EGLINTON'S VISIT TO ULVERSTON.—We referred last week to the efforts of a Mr. Gowland to discredit the results of Mr. Eglinton's work at Ulverston. On reconsidering the whole matter, it seems to us Mr. Gowland is not worth powder and shot. He gives certificates, and withdraws them when convenient, alleging as an excuse for such an extraordinary course that he "did it for a purpose!" In another quarter, he says he did it to show "how easy it is to gull people in that way." Well, if a man likes to tell a lie he can hardly be surprised if the character sticks to him. Above all, Mr. Gowland's methods and tricks are flimsy. He attended one séance only, and thereupon seeks a little notoriety by professing to show "how it is all done." We simply remind Mr. Gowland of the old adage about the fowls and the angels.

PHENOMENA OF MATERIALISATION.

We extract the following from a letter bearing the signature of Hiram Gregg, an old Spiritualist, in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*:—

I have just returned from a visit to John Campbell, a wealthy farmer near Winchester. I met old friends under his hospitable roof, partly with the view of being present at a séance with Mrs. Mendenhall, the medium of Winchester. A goodly number assembled, nearly filling the spacious parlour. A little adjoining room was converted into a cabinet by suspending thick, dark curtains over the door-way. In this the medium, Mrs. Mendenhall, took her seat alone, and the light in our parlour was subdued to a bland twilight.

The friends then engaged in singing. After a little the curtains parted, revealing the form of a man: after several attempts, as if against the action of the light, he came before the curtains, and was recognised as the son of a lady present, who was much affected!

Upon his retiring, another male form, of different stature, appeared, after similar hesitancy. He was also recognised.

After more singing, a voice called out from within the cabinet, "Massa Gregg's son." The curtains parted, and the form of my dear son, Clayton, was well recognised by several who knew him.

At his withdrawing, the same voice called out "Massa Gregg's daughter is coming out." We continued singing, and presently a female form emerged from between the curtains, arrayed in a flowing robe of dazzling white; her angelic mien thrilled all. My daughter would be now twenty-eight years of age.

Other spirits, male and female, seven in all, of various ages and forms, came out and were recognised.

Next evening the same friends met, with some additional ones, bringing with them a musical accession in the form of two harps and a violin. After the preliminary hymn, several spirits came out successively, with less hesitancy. Among them was Lydia, daughter of my friend Mrs. Haynes, present with her mother. Lydia passed away three years ago just as she, a bud of promise, was blossoming into womanhood. She appeared in flowing gossamer drapery of silvery white, with a dark scarf of lace-like material, richly embroidered. She looked bright and gay; with angelic hands she threw back her golden tresses, and moved with graceful steps to lively music from the instruments. She threw kisses to her mother, and, as she withdrew, gave farewell waves of the hand to the friends. Her mother, overcome with emotion, asked, "Is little Gertie here?" A voice behind the curtain said, "She is trying to materialise." Gertie was another daughter, who passed away in her ninth year. The curtains parted, and there stood a little angel, radiant with grace and loveliness, standing at the curtains as if waiting for aid to enable her to reach her. She gazed fondly at her mother. This seemed impossible. At length she retired, throwing kisses to her and her grandmother, and bowing a farewell to the friends.

Thus went on the manifestation of one spirit after another, all being recognised except one, a brawny form in regimentals, until ten had appeared, making, with those of the previous evening, a total of seventeen.

These séances have marked an era in my life, fraught with more exalted revelations and tangible demonstrations of the indestructibility of the human soul, and the return of our loved ones, than any before in my previous thirty years of investigation.

MR. LOCKERBY advertises on our front page for books for the purpose of forming a free Spiritualist library. We shall be glad if any of our readers can help him in his endeavour.

REVIEWS.

SYMPNEUMATA: OR, EVOLUTIONARY FORCES NOW ACTIVE IN MAN.

Price 10s. 6d. Edited by Lawrence Oliphant. Edinburgh; Blackwood and Sons, London; may be obtained of the Psychological Press, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

The peculiar character of the celebrity achieved by the author of "Piccadilly," will cause this book to be received with no small curiosity. After being—according to "Kosmos," in the *World* for July 4th, 1883—in great part simultaneously member of Parliament, diplomatist, mystic, and votary of fashion, *Times* Paris correspondent, financial expert and religious enthusiast—in which two last-named capacities he started a company to assist the fulfilment of Divine prophecy by enabling Jews to return to the Holy Land; and eliciting from Lord Houghton the remark that he was habitually in doubt as to whom he ought to serve, God or Mammon, Harris or Delane,—Mr. Oliphant has at length settled down in the haunts of the Prophet Elijah, namely, upon the slope of Mount Carmel in Palestine, there to formulate, and thence to promulgate the results of a thirty years' study of Spiritualism, or, to use his own words, of those forces in nature which have their manifestation in psychic phenomena, nearly twelve years of which period were passed in the United States under the spiritual direction of the arch-mystagogue of the Pacific slope, Mr. Thomas Lake Harris. Not that Mr. Oliphant is himself the immediate author of the present book, or professes to enunciate in it Mr. Harris's doctrine. He appears but as its editor, having acted as amanuensis to take it down from the dictation of one "who, shrinking from publicity, desires to remain unnamed." But it none the less embodies his own convictions and experiences. Nor is any reference made to Mr. Harris, saving only to indicate him as a co-believer with Swedenborg in the fundamental tenet of the book, a reticence for which no motive is assigned. We have reason to believe, however, that it embodies, with a few and not very important differences, the teaching of the Western prophet: in which case that which we have before us may be defined as the system of Mr. Harris as modified by Mr. Oliphant, and expressed by his unnamed collaborateur, being, we are led by internal evidence to suppose, dictated in trance or some allied abnormal condition, by a sensitive of a highly refined and probably feminine organism.

Such, however, is only the human and secondary agency concerned in the production of this book. Its real source is transcendental, as its writers understand the term; and its first object is to expound the nature of that source and exalt the entities concerned. These belong to no category recognised either by Spiritualists or by Theosophists, since they are neither departed souls nor living Mahatmas. Neither are they elementals or elementaries. Nor are they, again, the interior and higher Egos insisted on by "The Perfect Way" as the only channels of Divine communication, although on this point and on certain others the language and the doctrine bear a verbal resemblance to those of that book. The differences between them are, nevertheless, radical and fundamental, as will be seen as we proceed.

Respecting the class of experiences upon which this book is based it is, we are told, the normal phase "of which we have had from time immemorial abnormal antitype in magic, mediumship, Spiritism, and cognate phenomena"; and which, "like physical malady, is a malady of the spirit representing the effort of nature to escape the greater harm, while at the same time its character has been distinctly that of disease." But since it has its use in reminding man of the spiritual nature of existence, the "presence of such phenomena in the past is regarded with leniency, and dogmatic judgment is not passed upon them as consisting wholly either of inspiration or of infestation." They are, however, altogether behind the present times, since they are incompatible "with any advanced degree of the new volume and quality of consciousness which we describe as sympleumatic," and in which it is "impossible to stand without being aware that in time the universal consummation of this development will expose every mystery issuing from the sub-surface degrees to the broad daylight, and leave the whole range of the spirit, or sub-surface, world as an open book, old and disused. For the life of the future in all its experiences will pivot upon a more solid and deeper foundation" (pp. 209-13). When man has rebuilt himself upon this foundation, he will "open the doors of moral sensation to the higher regions of active force," and "obey the fundamental law of nature in him. . . the law of seeking only always the good of all the world." "A finer quality of nature broods above the earth at this fresh crisis hour, and penetrates the race. The sensible sign of this life infiltration lies for each individual in

his increasing faculty for deepening and enlarging the field of consciousness, until it opens up the spaces where the lost delights of biune entity make play and inspiration" (p. 216). "The whole historic life of our planet thus resolves itself into inspiration and obsession; inspiration in and through that which is real in man; obsession, in and through their earth-borrowed outer organism" (p. 220).

Not to multiply citations, this book indicates a keen appreciation of the fact that the world is entering upon a new era, and of the change as consisting in a vast enhancement of the spiritual consciousness. It claims to be written from a standpoint at once ethical, philosophical, and religious, and is redundant of passionate lamentation over the world's unhappy condition in the present, and of aspiration towards a blissful future, the path to which it describes as consisting in the regeneration of the race by means of such equal development of the masculine and feminine qualities, as will make each individual a representative of the whole humanity. Thus far no one can fail to sympathise with the theme of the book, and to recognise the high qualities which have concurred in its production, as well as to respect the courage involved in its publication and in the avowal of its authorship. We specially emphasise this last point, since the book really does contain, as stated in the preface and introduction, "much to excite criticism, ridicule, and aversion," and even "scorn and contempt," from the vast majority of persons. Even we ourselves, although awarding it a meed of praise, are compelled to restrict this to but certain features of it; and to visit the rest with condemnation. But the last thing we should think of doing would be to blame the expression of any confessed "immense conviction," however mistaken we might think its grounds or mistaken its nature. This is because we believe, first, that men ought to have the courage of their opinions; next, that freedom of opinion and expression are indispensable to the correction of error and ascertainment of truth; and lastly, that the prevalent crass ignorance, concerning man's nature and destiny, is mainly due to the intolerant repression of personal testimony by the dominant orthodoxies, religious or scientific, wherever the experiences concerned have been considered likely to conflict with vested interests. Hence in framing our indictment on this occasion we shall be careful to maintain an attitude of sympathy and respect for the writers, and where we find them mistaken regard them not as the authors, but as the victims of their error, not as the misleaders, but as the misled. And we shall do this all the more readily that we recognise the reality of their experiences, and believe their error to be one only of judgment as to the nature of those experiences, and due to a too restricted range of study and the lack of a sufficiently fine sense for the apprehension of spiritual things.

The doctrine, briefly stated, is as follows: There is nothing in the universe but matter and God: the former subsisting under two broad divisions, the solid and the fluid; and the latter, who is the actuating energy of matter, being personal and bisexual, in the physiological sense of the term, and generating man directly in His own image. Wherefore, instead of representing the return of spirit from matter by orderly and gradual ascent through the unfoldment of his potentialities from the lowest forms of life, "the original human creature was a pure and creative form of the Divine humanity of God," at once androgynous and fluidic, consisting "of men-women and women-men." "Its absorption into itself, by acts of its free-will, of elements from the subordinate animal world, caused the initial disturbance of pure order on the planet," by "precipitating the period of reproduction," through the "wilful and conscious opening of the human nervous organism to influences originating in the lower animal degrees of creation." The result was that his "outer casing became relatively solid"; "the consciousness of the inner processes of his life became closed, while his dominant consciousness began to reside in the activities displayed in that overlying system, by which the lower creation now claimed affinity with him," and "he drew into himself the forces of brute sexuality" (pp. 4-7), and all "those positive qualities of ferocity, rapacity, cruelty, jealousy, stupidity, filth, and scortation, whose foul fumes then began to percolate the fine spaces of human beings" (p. 113). And "so the reproduction of the coarse flesh-form followed, after the fashion of the lower creation, and resulted in males and females, and not in the biune man" (p. 111).

The fault, however, was neither that of the animals, who were but passive agents in causing it; nor was it altogether

that of the biune man himself. For the "first influences of evil to which the race fell a prey in its infancy, did not form a part of the original individuality-consciousness of the race, but approached it from without, as from regions beyond its own proper sphere of activity, and through avenues which it had inadvertently opened" (p. 54); and it is probable that "the intelligent beings, who, from the outside, first established a disastrous influence on this earth's infant humanity, were some of those whose perverted will-activity had brought about a physical dissolution of that previously existing globe in our solar system, whose untenanted orbit science has vainly endeavoured to account for" (p. 51).

But "when or how, or in what individuals or races of this earth's humanity, the change" occurred which resulted in the lapse of mankind from a "fluent" to a "solid" state, and the "severance of the external form into appearances exclusively male or female" (p. 106), such fault as there was on the human side, lay with the woman; for it consisted in the "self-banishment of the woman part of man from her own place and function. Her defection of old was in truth the beginning of sorrows, as her abnormal position remains to this day the pivot of the world's distress" (p. 107). It was, however, nothing to the credit of the man that he was not the one to blame, since humanity was so constituted that its fall could occur only by the first failure of its feminine side.

Thus parted into two and become solidified, and the consciousness of biunity lost, "there is no manner of uniting the male and female forms of beings externalised as halves after the fashion of the earth's inhabitants, so as to produce a combination that will be biune, and that can absorb the biunity of full life-currents. The external contact of two mutilated images, devoid of the faculty by which particles mutually inflow, can neither produce nor reproduce the biune human form. . . . Men, despite the solid imitation of manhood that they make in their garb of flesh, are empty throughout the fine spaces that pervade them. Women, beneath their fanciful array of unlasting charms, are nude of the enveloping strength that should complete them. This is a state of things during which, so long as it continues—based upon the 'sex-nature of brutes'—there is no hope, nor vestige of a ground of hope, for a satisfying change of circumstances among the Divine children here" (pp. 143-4). The tokens of the advent of the being, through whose instrumentality the race is to be reconverted into its proper condition of fluidity and androgeneity, are rapturously greeted, and the nature of the process and advantages of the change profusely expounded, its organic and physical character, and the sensuousness of its effects being strenuously maintained. Termed by Mr. Harris the counterpart or counterpart angel, it is termed by Mr. Oliphant the Sympneuma—an equivalent compounded from the Greek. And whereas according to Mr. Harris it is separated from man by difference of place, and waits, in its paradisaical home, the time when by his regeneration man shall be fitted for reunion with it; according to Mr. Oliphant it lies, latent and unformulate, in man himself, being constituted of the fluid—meaning not liquid but ethereal—matter which occupies the spaces between the grosser particles of his body, being in virtue of its interiority of place and mobility of substance, the immediate residence of Divinity. Its reunion with man "is effected solely by virtue of his organic reception of the Sympneuma's organism within his own," and brings to him "sure power and outgrowing from pure and perfect sensational delight of sex" (pp. 145, 147). "He craves not now the commerce of the dis severed sexes, nor the production of fresh peopling in their forms: for he lives now in the expanding chambers of his own sub-surfaces, where the Sympneuma's presence pervades and satisfies sensation" (p. 149). And when a man "has once experienced by repetition the unerring tendency of delight, intense, sensational, to visit him spontaneously, the painfully-acquired enjoyments that he knew before, of body, intellect, or spirit, fade and grow valueless" (p. 273). As if in order that there may be no mistake about the material nature of the experiences thus described, it is further stated that "the immanence of God in man now becomes a physical fact; as physical as marital affections, as maternal emotions, but more absolutely and unmistakably physical; and acting upon the surface with an intimacy superior to that of any other known sensation." For "what happens when . . . the man opens himself, purified, to the reception of the Divine elemental fire of sensation, is, that he finds its quality is of sex" (p. 26). And "he who feels God thus . . . finds that this quality is of sex duality" (p. 29).

The condition of attainment of her proper completeness by woman involves not only her total separation from the other sex, but also from all external activities. She must renounce the "mad career" upon which in the present age she has entered, by withdrawing "from the stage-boards of publicity, independence, and self-gratification, upon which she has scrambled; and, shrinking alike from the immodesty and the anxiety of a false position, sink back into the home of her inner self, into the sweet quietude of absorption there" (p. 15). Such is the "first call of the Mother-Father now to the earth-daughters" (p. 157). Doing this she will lose indeed the satisfactions of wifehood and motherhood; but she will be freed from the anxieties and self-sacrifices attendant upon them, and even already in case of those "men and women who begin to know themselves as biune, and who rule their lives by the clear intuitions that arise in their biunity. . . no provision is made for the continuance of earth-peopling after the fashion of the past, the instinct for it having fallen utterly away." But although there will thus be a "partial suspension of race production," "human beings will have the power of greatly extending the length of the terrestrial career" (p. 181-2), by continuing to inhabit the earth as fluent, androgynous entities unseen of its still solid denizens.

It would naturally be supposed that having thus lost all attraction for and need of each other, through the expulsive power of the new affection for their respective Sympneumata, the separation between men and women would be complete. We are assured, however, that the contrary will be the case. "As yet," indeed, "the masculine and the feminine natures confront each other in stupid misapprehension or mistrust, mitigated only by their mutual dependence for services or for entertainment. Even among the higher specimens of either sex, it requires on one side or the other, a daring of confidence that is not often upheld in long experience, for them to risk devotion to one another's existence." But under the new conditions, when instead of men and women there are men-women and women-men, and each individual is biune and complete in *themselves*, we are told, "men"—by which is meant those whose interior sex is feminine, "will not fear to trust in women"—or those whose interior sex is masculine—"when their impetuous impulses spring forth at the call of the human need; woman will no longer fear to give an absolute devotion to the careers of men, when these cleave by their lives the ways to the whole human happiness." But they will be able, when the fulness of the time shall have come, "by joining hands throughout the earth in clasp of perfect comradeship, to grow abreast into the full development of their time" (p. 159).

(To be continued.)

MELCHIOR. By Mr. W. G. Wills. London: Macmillan and Co., or may be obtained of the Psychological Press, 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C.

This is a poem, of which a very distinctive feature is its complete originality in almost every respect. It is in blank verse of such beauty and rhythm as has rarely been written since the days of Shakespeare, of whom Mrs. Browning wrote, "He is the most wonderful artist in blank verse of all in England, and almost the earliest." "We do not even say what we might, that his hand first proved the compass and infinite modulation of the new instrument; but we do say that it never answered another hand as it answered his. We do say that this fingering was never learned of himself by another." Whether Mr. Wills has learned from Shakespeare or not cannot be said here, but indubitably, not only in this poem, but in many of his dramas, we have "this fingering" of such excellence as none since Shakespeare have displayed. Moreover, the language and the wonderful painting in every line show the author to have a gift such as Keats has shown in "Endymion," and the "Eve of St. Agnes." The poem opens with the description of a quaint old town on the Rhine, of which the following lines may serve as a specimen:—

"The convent walls rose from the river bank
Beyond the bridge tower of the Upper Town,
And, as if fusing in the fleeting water,
The red old walls are doubled down again,
Breaking and wavering, weaving a red tissue;
Now seems a writhing fragment floating off,
And then it joins again the spectral wall.
This was the very confine of the town,
Save for a desert garden 'neath its shade,
Encircled by a fence of weed-grown rubble.
Here basked and roosted meek conventual heirs,
And sipped at the green pool; after each sip
Upturning piously a grateful beak."

In the description of Melchior's garden is the following :—

"Tall queenly lilies towered in scented ranks,
White troops of spirits looked they, rapt and waiting
For some disciple of the olden time,
Or martyred saint to come and raise the hymn
Which slumbered on their curled and marble lips ;
White gossip butterflies, flirting mid-air,
Now flapping on a flower at radiant whim,
Now gadding on the wind without a goal,
Haunted the place—and slightly knew each flower."

These are by no means the best examples of such delicious word painting as has previously been seen only in the poetry of Keats, who, had he lived in this world for half a century, might have given us, out of his ripe experience, joined to the poetic gift, such a poem as "Melchior."

What will, however, be of greater interest to the readers of "LIGHT" is the remarkable spiritualism of the poem. Melchior, who for years had been visited by visions of holy saints, is recalled to earthly life at length by the love of a woman, and seeing her die, is almost instantly comforted by the palpable presence of her spirit, who continues to be near him during the brief remainder of his earth-life. His friend who comes to sympathise with him finds that—

"His sighs suppressed were burden to a psalm.
It was as if a man should lift his hat
To jovial wedding rout that passed his road,
In solemn faith a funeral went by ;"

"But Melchior's secret heart was in a summer,
Mute with the joy sublime of young immortal
A joy so intimate that asketh not
For envy's incense, in itself complete."

And when Melchior gives back to his friend the portrait he had painted, his friend says :—

"How can I take it ? 'tis thy last memorial.'
'Nay, friend,' said Melchior, 'she is with me still,
And bids me give it back, and say to thee,
'Be comforted—shed no more tears for me'
Ah, Hans, she is more lovely—lovelier far.'"

When the priest urges him to pray for deliverance from these delusions, Melchior says :—

"I am at peace.
But call not fantasy this visitation
Of one I knew, I know, and I have seen
Daily since her release, as palpably
As thou see'st me, clasped as my hand clasps thine.
Her soundless step I feel, when she glides in,
Her gaze, the pretty wistful gaze, I greet
With lulled delight, all yesterday 'twas on me."

To extract yet finer passages than are here given, and there are many such, or to give here an outline of the story told in the poem, would be to do the utmost injustice to the author and to his work. Beautiful as the jewels are, they must be admired in the harmony of their setting, and the web of silk and gold which binds them, exquisitely true and lovely as it is, cannot be laid bare of rich and necessary growth of adornment so deftly interwoven. Enough to say that the web of life displayed in the poem is wonderfully true, and conveys deep instruction to those who will seek beneath a surface, which is of itself of such beauty as to allure even the chance gazer.

There is a completeness in the work which would have been wanting had the writer stopped short at the earth-life of humanity. But while he puts before us humanity in various phases he goes beneath the surface, as few can do, and proceeding further he takes us beyond the grave to the absolute reality of the after-phase of our existence, and of the communion of the freed spirit with those yet in the flesh. Probably few books on Spiritualism will do so much to spread its truths among cultured readers as is likely to be accomplished by "Melchior."

THE TRIUMPH OF TIME. Mystical Poem. By Ella Dietz. A Sequel to "The Triumph of Love." London : E. W. Allen, 4, Ave Maria-lane. 1884. Price 4s. 6d.

Many who remember with pleasure "The Triumph of Love" will turn with interest to the present volume by the same writer. We shall not attempt to explain the "mystical" idea which is intended to run through the book, nor can we criticise to any great extent the way in which the authoress has carried it out. There is no more difficult task to the artist, whether in word, in colour, or in form, than to take the symbols of the earthly, the sensuous, and so to infuse them with the spirit that no trace of discord or incongruity remains. The difficulty is perhaps greatest when the symbolism chosen introduces the highest truths of the Christian faith.

We do not wish to quote special poems and verses in which the writer appears to have failed in her endeavour; and in which the result seems deficient in that dignity and power which justify the attempt.

The charm of the book lies in the exquisite songs interspersed through its pages, and in verses here and there, which are in themselves beautiful little pictures. The following lines from an "Interlude" entitled "Winged Sleep," are almost perfect, both in conception and in execution :—

"Lo ! in the night with my arms wound around thee,
I carry thee far to some clear limpid stream,
There where my love hath recaptured and bound thee,
I kiss thee at will in thy deep mystic dream."

"Child of the lotos, and pearl of the ocean,
Queen of my bosom, and queen of the air,
I call thy deep soul to receive my devotion,
And whisper delight to thy spirit most fair."

"Day may divide us, but night-time unites us,
Dreams shall restore us to music and love,
A dream of enchantment that lures and invites us
To groves of sweet spices, the home of the dove."

"What though our feet tread the earth on the morrow,
To-night we are winged, to-night we are free,
Let me drink deep of joy, forget earth and its sorrow,
And bask in the love-light of Heaven and thee."

Occasionally, but rarely, a more heroic strain is attained. In the "Valediction," at the close of the volume, the muse dwells upon the immortal theme of all true poets—"The yearning for the beautiful denied them," as Mrs. Barrett Browning describes it :—

"Who builds the Temple of Eternal Beauty,
With colour fair, inlaid with precious stones,
Lays down his life before the feet of duty,
And cares not where shall rest his weary bones ;
To seek and find that kingdom of great worth,
With scrip and staff content he fares him forth."

"He feels not pain, he feels not body's fasting,
His joyful spirit heavenly visions sees,
Enamoured is he of the everlasting,
And worshipful he bends upon his knees ;
On noble deeds his mind is fixed intent,
In frequent prayer his head and body bent."

Such a book as this will, of course, strike different minds very differently, according as it harmonises more or less with their own feelings ; but to ourselves "The Triumph of Love" would seem to have deserved a more vigorous, and, if we may use a commonplace word, a less sentimental "sequel." B.

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.]

The Resurrection Body.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The statement made by "Lily" as to the resolution of a human body into its original elements and gases is one that is so startling that I think it would be well to have chapter and verse for it. If true it is a most important fact in its bearing on the investigations of Spiritualists. It is obvious that the statement, as made at present, has no value as exact evidence. Can "Lily" put us in the way of verifying what she alludes to ?
April 6th, 1885. A SPIRITUALIST.

A Deserving Case.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Through your columns I beg to tender my sincere thanks to those philanthropic and benevolently-minded friends who, at Mrs. Everitt's appeal on my behalf, have forwarded contributions towards my support. I can assure them that these have proved an important relief in my circumstances. But it is employment that I am really standing in urgent need of ; and most respectfully, but not less earnestly, I implore the many friends who may be able to assist me in that way, to try and rescue me from the painful position in which I have found myself placed for these last three months. Confidential servant, gentleman help, assistant correspondent, or travelling companion—any one of these positions would be in harmony with my abilities and educational gifts.

I have Mr. S. C. Hall's authority to mention my being personally known to him, and I can show excellent testimonials.

I am, sir, yours respectfully,

JOHN H. POLLEN.

145, New North-road, London, N.

All Communications to be addressed to
THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"
4, AVE MARIA LANE,
LONDON, E.C.

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NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

Subscriptions for 1885 are now due. Subscribers will oblige by forwarding these at once to "The Manager of 'LIGHT,'" 4, Ave Maria-lane, E.C. Post Office Orders may be made payable to Henry Barnes. All Editorial Correspondence to be addressed to "The Editor."

Light :

SATURDAY, APRIL 11TH, 1885.

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION.

In August, 1860, there appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* an elaborate article written by the well-known *littérateur* Robert Bell, entitled, "Stranger than Fiction." The article consisted of minute and carefully-prepared details of a series of phenomena witnessed by the writer, and vouched for by him as a bald statement of incontrovertible facts. So marvellous were the records that Thackeray, who was editor of the magazine at the time, appended with proper caution the following note:—

As editor of this magazine, I can vouch for the good faith and honourable character of our correspondent, a friend of twenty-five years' standing; but as the writer of the above astounding narrative owns that he "would refuse to believe such things upon the evidence of other people's eyes," his readers are therefore free to give or withhold their belief.—ED.

Spiritual phenomena in their modern form had been before the world for examination about twenty-five years, and prominently for twelve years at the time of the publication of the *Cornhill* article. Since that date a quarter of a century has passed away, and during the whole of that period the strange phenomena of modern Spiritualism have been urging their claims for recognition on a reluctant and Sadducean world. Facts similar to those recorded by Robert Bell have been over and over again investigated by some of the most critical and judicial minds of the civilised world, and by all who have fully and carefully examined them they have been acknowledged to be genuine. There is, certainly, not an absolute consensus of opinion as to their origin, but there is complete conformity of opinion as to their objective reality and genuineness.

The following names of sceptical investigators who became finally believers ought to command respect even from men so prejudiced and Bohemian as are Dr. Lankester and Mr. Labouchere:—Prof. Hare, Judge Edmonds, Dr. Dexter, Epes Sargent, Charles Beecher, President Lincoln, Lloyd Garrison, Wm. Howitt, Benj. Coleman, Dr. Ashburner, Dr. Elliotson, Prof. de Morgan, R. Chambers, Robert Stephenson, Andrew Leighton, Prof. Crookes, Alfred Russel Wallace, Dr. G. Wilkinson, S. C. Hall, C. Varley, Profs. W. F. Barrett, Zöllner, Weber, and Butlerof, and hundreds of well-known literary and scientific men. Many of those named are yet living on earth. Why, instead

of scorn and virulent abuse, do not some representative organisations, say the Royal Society, or some other learned and recognised society, depute intelligent and representative investigators to examine, and ascertain the facts, as committees of the House of Commons search for facts, through the examination of competent witnesses? There are hundreds of cases in which the facts are accepted though they have not been investigated and proved by a twentieth part of the competent witnesses who have for many years tested and proved the reality and genuineness of what are termed spiritual phenomena.

It may be freely admitted that, with the opinions respecting natural laws that are at present generally held, it would be in the last degree absurd to accept the alleged phenomena of modern Spiritualism without overwhelming evidence from numerous competent and credible witnesses, or the personal evidence which is the result of long and patient investigation. To accept the generally recorded phenomena of Spiritualism without one or both these phases of evidence would be indicative of considerable credulity; whilst, on the other hand, to reject them without examination, notwithstanding the abundance and quality of the evidence offered in their favour, would be indicative of a conservative bigotry and prejudice not excelled by the theological prepossessions of the Middle Ages.

We affirm with Huxley that the "assertions that outstrip evidence are not merely blunders, but crimes," and that the *littérateurs* who contribute to their respective papers the absurdly ignorant diatribes against spiritual phenomena and Spiritualists, are simply ignorant, prejudiced, criminal blunderers who dare not honestly look well-accredited facts fairly in the face. They constitute a combination of cowardice and ignorant bigotry, or something worse, which need not be named.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO INQUIRERS AND INVESTIGATORS.

For a long period we have devoted a considerable amount of time and trouble to answering the inquiries, and endeavouring to set at rest the difficulties, of investigators. We can do so no longer. There has come a limit when it is impossible for us to keep pace with all the demands upon our time, and we must now rigidly confine our attention to the editorial duties connected with this journal. These, to tell the truth, are in themselves more than enough, without clerky help, for one pair of hands. We regret we cannot continue to do as heretofore, but we hope some one else will undertake this service. As such work comes rightly within the sphere of the London Spiritualist Alliance, we have little doubt that the secretary of that body will cheerfully do what is necessary. We can, from experience, promise him plenty of work.

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.—The next conversation of the Alliance will be held on Friday, April 24th, in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, when Mr. T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., of Newcastle-on-Tyne, will deliver an address, his subject being "There are more things in Heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." We hope members and friends will take note of this engagement, and hold themselves free to be present on the occasion.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.—A general meeting of this Society will be held on Friday, April 24th, at the rooms of the Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, London, S.W. The President of the Society, Professor Balfour Stewart, F.R.S., will take the chair at 8.30 p.m. The meeting, which will be partly of a conversational character, is open to members and associates, who are at liberty to invite friends. Papers to be read: (1) Mrs. Sidgwick—Notes on the Evidence collected by the Society for Phantasms of the Dead. Part II. (2) Edmund Gurney, Esq., and Frederic W. H. Myers, Esq.—Some Higher Aspects of Mesmerism. Note.—Members and associates will be admitted on writing their names at the door. Persons who do not belong to the Society will be admitted on the production of an invitation card, duly filled in and signed by a member or associate.—EDWARD T. BENNETT, Secretary, 14, Dean's-yard, Westminster, S.W.

TRACES OF SPIRITUALISM IN RECENT WORKS.

By "M. A. (Oxon.)"

II.

PAGANINI'S GHOST.

In Karoline Bauer's *Memoirs* the following story of Paganini and his ghostly violin is gravely told.

"Paganini died in Nizza on the 27th of May, 1840, after long and fearful sufferings: but the restless when alive was not to find rest even in death. The clergy refused him a Christian burial because he had not received the last Sacrament. The unhappy son had to take his father's body by sea to Villafranca, then to his country house, Polcevera, near Genoa; but the Bishop of Genoa also refused his consent to the interment, and the coffin stood for years above the earth in the villa. There, night after night, heartrending violin tones were heard, till the son arranged for a splendid mass for the peace of his father's soul, and made large bequests to the church. Then the spectral wailings of the violin were no longer heard at the coffin of Paganini, and the Bishop of Parma at last permitted the body, after five years' wanderings, to be taken to Parma and buried in the neighbourhood of the villa Gajona in May, 1845."

[*"Memoirs of Karoline Bauer,"* Vol. I., pp. 219-20.]

THE GOLDSMID FAMILY.

Lucy, in his most amusing "*Diary of Two Parliaments*," gives the following account of Kabbalistic influence on the Goldsmid family, which many a living Occultist would readily accept as true:—

"I heard a weird story in connection with the private history of the Goldsmid family. It is a tradition in the family, and generally with the Jews settled in England, that for nearly 100 years a fatal spell has overhung the Goldsmids, and facts show that in a manner, doubtless due to coincidence, but nevertheless remarkable, the spell has not failed to work throughout several generations. During the latter part of the eighteenth century there lived in London a Jewish Rabbi, alleged to be gifted with magical powers. This seer was known as the Rabbi de Falk. When he died he left to Aaron Goldsmid, great-grandfather of that Sir Francis who was killed in a railway accident at Waterloo Station, a sealed packet, with strict injunctions that it should be carefully preserved, but never opened. By way of enforcing this request, he informed the old Dutch merchant who founded the Goldsmid family in England, that if his instructions were obeyed he and his descendants would bask in the sun of prosperity till the coming of the Messiah. If his instructions were disregarded, ill fortune would finally overtake each successive representative of the race."

Old Aaron Goldsmid kept the packet, holding it sacred for some years (the story is too long for exact quotation, and I give in my own words the important facts), but his curiosity overcame him, and he opened the packet. A few hours afterwards he was found dead. Near him were the contents of the packet—a small piece of parchment covered with Kabbalistic characters.

Aaron Goldsmid had amassed a large fortune which he divided amongst his children. Two of his sons—Benjamin and Abraham—entered into business as money-brokers, and gathered together a colossal fortune. But the Kabbalist's curse worked, and on April 15th, 1808, being then fifty-five years of age—rich, honoured, powerful, and esteemed—he died by his own hand.

Abraham now carried on the business, and in 1810 joined the house of Baring in contracting for a Ministerial loan of fourteen millions. On him the curse seemed to rest. He vacillated, hesitated, and blundered. He became despondent, and finally, a sum of half-a-million being due on a particular day, he knew not where to put his hand on the money. At the hour when the sum was due it was found that Abraham Goldsmid was dead.

After an interval arose Isaac, a nephew of Benjamin. He was a great financier, amassed a large fortune, and was one of the principal founders of University College, London. He retired at sixty years of age with an English baronetcy and a Portuguese peerage, and spent the declining years of his life in childishness and vacuity.

His heir it was—Sir Francis—who was killed in the accident at Waterloo Station.

[Lucy's "*Diary of Two Parliaments*," pp. 393-4.]

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XXIII.

[We shall esteem it a favour on the part of our readers if they will forward us, for use in this column, any allusions to Spiritualism and Psychological Research they may come across in the course of their reading. We see a great many of these ourselves, but it is obvious that there must be many references to the subject which do not meet our eyes.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

I see but one difficulty in the very remarkable statement of Mr. Barkas, of Newcastle. It is a possible theory of thought-reading. Did Mr. Barkas know the answers to his questions? Were they photographed, so to say, on his brain, where, though unconscious to him, a clairvoyant might read them?

Naturally, as any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, I lay hold of what I did not believe in yesterday, with which I belabour what I am unwilling to believe to-day. So mesmerism was absurd until we found it could explain some things in Spiritualism, while the mesmeric healings of the Bethshans explain the miracles of the Acts of the Apostles.

What we have to recognise as a living fact is, that the embodied spirit can sometimes display the same powers that it possesses when freed from the body. Most of us are tied up too tightly in matter for that, but a clear vision comes to some, and spirits can make good use of others.

The iron ring on the wrist of Mr. Husk, though seen and examined with more or less care by hundreds, has not, I am sorry to learn, been satisfactorily authenticated. If it still remain upon his wrist, there should be secured the sworn testimony of surgeon and engineer. We are careless of wonders when they become familiar. Then few persons can trust the oaths any more than the words of the witness of a fact that seems incredible. The Americans say: "I would not believe it if you swore it on a stack of Bibles!"

People with large "approbativeness" and "caution" shrink from telling what they know to be true. They "keep probability in view." It required moral courage and conscience in Crookes, Zöllner, and Wallace to give public testimony to the facts of Spiritualism. Many a man would rather fight Arabs in the Soudan than incur ridicule by telling what he knows to be true.

And telling the truth is not always a safe operation. A man's will might be set aside after his death, or he might be put into a lunatic asylum. These perils, as well as the lighter ones of ridicule and suspicion, swell the numbers of the Nicodemus Club.

"Faith has well nigh perished among us, and we are reaping the results in all the evils that are thickening around us," says the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Faith is fighting against us in the Soudan, and for us, with General Booth for a leader, in London. On the whole, we prefer knowledge to faith. Doubtless it is a comfort to many to believe in immortality, but it is scarcely conceivable that an absolute knowledge of the fact of a continued existence should not be more satisfactory than hope or expectation.

The vote of the whole Bench of Bishops for keeping the public picture galleries and museums closed on Sundays was quite *ex-officio*, and a matter of course. Looking at the works of God might interfere with "the foolishness of preaching." But the Bench of Bishops only made a tie, which leaves a handsome majority in favour of science and art, in the non-episcopal, unconsecrated Lords. Well, Hampton Court and Kew Gardens are open on Sundays to everybody—and the Crystal Palace and Zoological Gardens to a great many. When the Bishops have digested the Wife's Sister Bill they may, perhaps, be ready to swallow the British Museum.

The Rev. Sims Paine, a veteran New York preacher, says:—"About fifteen years ago, riding on horseback, I plainly saw Joseph Phelps, some eighty years old, whom I well knew, at my side on foot, keeping up with my horse whether he went fast or slow. He told me when and where he had died, and soon disappeared. In about ten days I got news of his death, which occurred just before the hour of the day on which I saw

him." In a similar case Mr. Paine was told of the death of an old friend, and also who had preached his funeral sermon.

* * *

Sardou, the most famous of French dramatists after Victor Hugo, is a Spiritualist, and believes that he writes his plays under spirit guidance. This may be a delusion, but what can be said of the following account of the production of an exquisite engraving of Molière's house on copper? "Seated one day at my table," he says, "I fell into a reverie. Unconsciously I took up the graver, and, impelled by secret influence, let my hand follow its own direction over that plate. The engraving you see is the result of several hours of purely mechanical toil. I could not of my own will make such a picture to save my life."

* * *

Here is a bit from an account of a materialising séance in Indiana, U.S.A.: "The medium having taken her young son into the cabinet for better manifestations, the doors were suddenly thrown open by some unseen power, displaying an assembly of seven persons, large and small. They were all dressed in garments that shone like burnished silver, set with gems; while a most brilliant light shone upon them above. It formed the most brilliant and beautiful spectacle I ever beheld. When the doors were closed, they were immediately reopened and the medium and her son were found entirely alone as before."

* * *

Madame Blavatsky has converted an English clergyman, the Rev. C. W. Leadbeater, to Buddhism. After voyaging in the same vessel with Madame Blavatsky, he landed at Colombo to consummate his conversion to Buddhism. An eye-witness saw him seated at the feet of the yellow-robed ministers of Buddha, repeating after them, "I take my refuge in Buddha, in the Law, and in the Order." "The *Pansil* was administered by the High Priest, the Rev. H. Sumangala, Principal of the Vidyodaya College, assisted by the Rev. T. Amaramoli. There were present many of the prominent native citizens of Ceylon."

* * *

When our English missionaries go to convert the Buddhists to Christianity what will they do with the Rev. Leadbeater? Or is it an even chance that they get picked off by Madame Blavatsky?

* * *

Twenty-three years ago, March 22nd, 1862, the following delightful paragraph appeared in the *Illustrated London News*: "We regret to see any implied encouragement extended, in any influential quarter, to the ridiculous quacks who call themselves 'spirit mediums.' Surely such impostors and their follies may be left to the patronage of semi-hysterical ladies with more money than brains, and who, weary of the ordinary dissipations of a silly life, and not able to find sensation in visiting their poorer neighbours or other works of charity, resort to the 'spirits' as a means of excitement. Such persons will always be committing some folly, and, except that the medium séance is a mixture of vulgarity and profanity, we do not know that a silly woman is doing much harm in spelling the alphabet she ought to be teaching. But nothing should be written that intimates any approbation of these wretched jugglers. They do their work exceedingly ill, blunder eight times out of ten, and are 'sold' with the most perfect ease, and their only success is obtained in a darkened room, and among persons from whom disbelievers—that is, people of sense—have been carefully removed. We send the gipsy to the House of Correction—these quacks may keep beyond the letter of the law: but their vocation is not at all more respectable than that of the brown beggar who wheedles the servant girl to steal the spoon in order to raise money to rule the planets."

* * *

The world does move, after all—slowly if you please, but it really moves; and the cry is now that men of science should investigate Spiritualism—as many have done and are doing.

* * *

My friend, Mr. E. T. Bennett, sends a capital ghost story to the *Richmond and Twickenham Times*. A lady, walking with her husband, in an avenue on the Surrey side of the Thames, from Richmond to Twickenham, saw a man, dressed as if he had stepped out of an old picture, in a costume of two centuries ago. Both saw him, and spoke of his queer way of dodging about as if spying on them—then, as if he had been shot from a gun, both saw him at a considerable distance. He then gradually

became transparent so that they could see trees and river through the spectre form—then completely vanished. A very good old-fashioned ghost, but how account, on the illusion theory, for two persons seeing it?

* * *

A correspondent of the *Methodist Recorder*, considering that the facts of Spiritualism are proven to be true by many competent scientific witnesses, believes that it is a revised form of witchcraft and a device of our great spiritual adversary. He says if witchcraft did not exist, why the command to slay wizards and witches? The editor hopes the phenomena can be explained as either trickery or some occult force pretending to be a departed human being. If not, then it is Satanic. He admits, however, "certain appearances, especially those occurring at the moment of, or immediately after, the departure of the spirit from the body, of which the instances are too numerous and well attested for them to be wholly unreal." Now, why not do one of two things: find out by personal examination what is real, or set it all down as humbug, practised by knaves on fools?

* * *

And why is it that Christian editors who believe in a devil created by God, who foreknew that he would lead men to perdition, find it so difficult to believe in a ghost or other spirit manifestation? The writers of the Pentateuch and of the Acts of the Apostles had no such difficulty. Why go on blindly leading the blind, when a few hours' serious investigation would settle the case as to the facts, and enable the able editor to have some idea of what he is writing about?

* * *

The case of the Witch of Endor is curious and interesting, no doubt—but it happened a good way off and a long time ago. Why not imitate the open-mindedness of the Prime Minister, and have a séance or two with Mr. Eglinton, Mr. Husk, or any reputable and accepted medium? Why preach or write of what one knows nothing about and will not have the fairness to investigate?

* * *

The *Whitehall Review* still advocates a jury of conjurers for the trial of Spiritualism. Individual conjurers, such as those whose testimony is published in every number of "LIGHT," do not satisfy it. Empanel a round dozen and it will be satisfied with their verdict. But would Professor Huxley or Professor Ray Lankester be satisfied? Not one atom. They would say conjurers are professional mercenary liars, and the jury has been packed and bribed.

* * *

But in what way is a conjurer a better judge of what he cannot do than any man of sense? For example, I hold the hand of Mr. Eglinton, and one of my chairs is found threaded on my arm. All in the room examine it. No conjurer can do such a trick, and no one, of course, can tell how it is done. Maskelyne and Verbeck are equally impotent. One clever conjurer, in such a case, would be as good as a dozen. Rewards of from £50 to £500 have been offered for years to any conjurer who would do one of a dozen things commonly done in spiritualist séances, and no one has ever claimed such rewards. Conjurers, indeed!

* * *

The *Whitehall* wants to know why spirits prefer to use slate pencils for writing, and whether they are prepared to write their answers on a sheet of paper sewn in between two folds of carpet? Well, I can show this anxious inquirer spirit writings with lead pencils and with pen and ink, done in closed books, closed boxes, between two slates firmly fastened together, and other seemingly impossible situations. In nine cases out of ten no conjurer in the world could tell how it was done better than the simplest of clodhoppers.

* * *

Mr. Cook, in the prelude to his 172nd lecture, says the notorious Mr. Slade, whom Professor Zollner employed, has been before the Seybert Committee and has somewhat puzzled them. Nevertheless, Mr. Kellar, the distinguished magician, has agreed to parallel whatever Mr. Slade has done, and to explain how he did "it." Of course he did. When did a professional conjurer ever fail to give himself a good advertisement or to boast of what he could do? It is his trade, and he works at it. If conjurers can do what is done daily in spiritualist séances, why don't they?

DISSENT AT ROME.

FROM *Le Messager* (LIEGE).

In Italy the most prominent topic in home affairs, and soon to affect the entirety of old Christendom, is just now the Dissent in the Church. It furnishes an additional proof that Pio Nono, by his Syllabus, his dogmas of Immaculate Conception and Papal Infallibility, dealt a fatal blow to Catholicism.

We extract the following comments upon the subject, so exciting to Catholics throughout Europe, from our Spanish Spiritualist contemporary, the *Revista de Estudios Psicológicos* :—

"The excommunicated founders of the dissentient 'Italian Catholic Church' have issued an encyclical in reply to that of the Vatican. It is signed by the dissentient Church dignitaries and priests—Monsignor Lavarèse, Monsignor the Count Campobello, and the priests Luciano and Capuo.

"In their encyclical, which separates them definitely from the Orthodox Church, they say, 'If the hearts and minds of Italians are to be eternally oppressed by the Vatican superstition, they must renounce reason, science, liberty, and all evolution of political life, and they must sink into degradation in the midst of progressive civilisation. We hold that harmony between the Papacy and progressive civilisation is impossible; at the same time, we maintain the possibility of harmonising such progress with the Church as founded by Jesus Christ.' They say, 'The Romish Church, according to St. Paul, is not, as he thought in the early time of his conversion, the root, but a branch; and this branch, not even a natural one, is sustained by the sole trunk, the Redeemer, and which, when injurious to the tree, He may cut off.'

"Among the many points in their encyclical is their insistence that the prayers of the Church should be in the language of the people, and not in obsolete Latin. It concludes: 'Our watchwords, as priests of religion, and as citizens, are, to honour the august head of the nation, and to cherish love of our country, in which, by God's providence, we were born men and citizens before being children of the Church.'

"The dissentients—the orthodox call them schismatics—thus openly declare war against the Vatican; so we may expect to hear its thunder rolling over their bold heads. Monsignor Lavarèse announces as being in the press a book entitled 'The Excommunication of Ideas: a reply to the Cardinal Vicar of Rome;' intended, no doubt, to be another arm in the conflict."

We have been asked to insert the following :—Dr. J. Comodore Street (recently arrived from Boston, Mass., U.S.A.) has kindly consented to give a discourse at Cavendish Rooms, 51, Mortimer-street, Langham-place, W., on Sunday evening, April 12th, at seven o'clock. His remarks will bear on the recent spiritual and psychical researches, now so popular amongst the educated classes in Boston; embracing psychometry, and "metaphysics" or the powers of the mind over the body. The steps that have been taken in these investigations will be pointed out, also the general results arrived at, with such practical hints as may be gathered from the dangers and advantages attending the investigation. This lecture will be a general introduction to a course of private classes about to be instituted, in which students will be introduced to a knowledge of the nature and properties of their psychical surroundings, and the spiritual relations to which these give rise. Instruction will be given in each individual case, how to control these unseen conditions so as to improve their quality, leading to the spiritual elevation of the individual, and the development of his latent mediumistic gifts. It is that form of psychical research which enables man to know himself, as the basis whereon to investigate the manifold wonders that surround him. Private classes will be formed, for a course of seven lessons, when twenty students come forward. Address: 16, York-street, Portman-square.

MESMERISM AS A CURATIVE AGENT.

(Translated from the *Londoner Zeitung Hermann*.)

There are extraordinary phenomena exceedingly difficult to explain, but which admit of proof beyond doubt or refutation. Amongst these may be reckoned the curative methods of the celebrated Spanish specialist, Mr. F. Omerin, who, by the application of his system of vital force unaided by medicine, has cured diseases which have baffled the skill of some of the most eminent medical men. That this statement is no idle assertion is proved by the testimony of numerous persons of undoubted integrity, who have been cured by him after having tried every other remedy in vain—persons who reside in London, and whose social position precludes all doubt as to the perfect veracity of their statements. And to these testimonies we can add our own experience; for Mr. Omerin has not only cured us of rheumatism in the right shoulder, but has also cured one of our intimate friends of a liver complaint of many years' standing, which none of the doctors whom he consulted were able to accomplish, whilst the complaint, as well as a throat disease of long standing, from which he suffered, yielded to Mr. Omerin's special treatment within a very few days. The diseases which Mr. Omerin so successfully treats, comprise, mainly, affections of the nervous system, and derangements of the digestive organs, the disturbed function of which he restores, imparting to the patient renewed life and strength, and thus re-endowing him with nature's most precious gift, which makes life dear to man—health!

According to the testimonies before us, Mr. Omerin has cured cases of neuralgia, sciatica, gout, rheumatism, epilepsy, headache, pains in the back and in the joints, failure of muscular power, paralysis, ophthalmia, and numerous other diseases, some of which had been treated in vain by experienced medical men, and in most cases the cures were effected in a very short time, although the complaints were often of long standing.

We publish these facts solely in the interest of suffering humanity; and are convinced that Mr. Omerin's method will, in the course of time, be more and more appreciated, although doubtless he, like all innovators who have to strike out a path for themselves, will have to struggle against opposition, to overcome many prejudices, and to disprove all kinds of antiquated theories. Truth is, however, stronger than prejudice, and facts appeal more eloquently to the senses than theories, and there is no doubt that he will ultimately succeed in overcoming all obstacles, and continue to relieve the afflicted, in spite of any opposition he may encounter, however powerful such opposition may be.

AN INQUIRY.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Am I right in concluding that there is no place in London (is there in England?) where I can find files of the various Spiritualist newspapers and magazines published in different parts of the world?

I am frequently away from this city, and upon my return I desire to look up what has been taking place during my absence; yet I am given to understand there is no possibility of reference of any kind owing to the want of a spiritualistic library. I am informed there is a society in London called the London Spiritualist Alliance, but that it has not a home nor even an address, and is consequently useless for the purpose I, and doubtless many others, desire. There used to be, I believe, a very fine library in Great Russell-street, to which, I understand, it was possible to get admittance upon the payment of a small fee. Is that library still in existence? for I have failed to find it at the old address. In the large towns of the United States I have always found Spiritualistic libraries, where files of newspapers are kept for reference, and it seems extraordinary that here in this vast City of London there is no institution of the kind, despite the continued assurances of Spiritualists I meet that their movement is making vast headway. There must be many others (I certainly know some) who have similarly to complain, and their impression must be as mine is, that if between them the Spiritualists cannot support a library or reading-room, they must be a very poor community or else a very apathetic one.

I write, sir, not in the spirit of offence, but with a desire to obtain the information I seek; and if this letter calls attention to the matter—of course, supposing I am correct in my information—the Spiritualists will have reason to thank

Charing Cross Hotel.

AN INQUIRING STRANGER.

April 4th.

P.S.—I am nothing if not practical, and do not wish it to be understood I am seeking an advantage at the expense of others. If there is a library, I will join it immediately, and pay double the annual subscription, as an evidence of my contrition in having troubled you with this letter.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE PROVINCES.

EDINBURGH.—Spiritualism, as far as public advocacy is concerned, has been at a standstill in this city for some years past. But the recent visits of Miss Rosamond Dale Owen, to lecture to the Secular party, has given a little stir to the subject, she on her last visit having advocated the cause in a lecture, and Mr. Lees, an active member of the society, having given one or two addresses on it from a Secular standpoint. On Sunday, March 29th, Mr. Gilmour, of Glasgow, also lectured on "Modern Spiritualism," prefacing his address by remarking that a man who stated that he investigated any subject with a perfectly unbiassed mind did not, to say the least, tell the whole truth; and he freely confessed that on the present subject, he was not free from prejudice. Still he would be as fair as he could, and began by giving a short description of the disturbances in the Wesley family, and in connection with the Fox girls of America. He then, in some detail, criticised the "Dialectical report" and spirit photos, which, singularly, were always very indistinct; he would like to know more about how they were taken. Rapidly passing over the "Katie King" affair in America, and Mr. Crookes' work, he finished up with comments on "Hafed" and Mr. Duguid's drawings, which he described as indistinct and in utter violation of all rules of art. "If spirits would save children from death by burning, and miners from explosions, and come and pour some sweet celestial music into the homes and hearts of humanity, it would be more practical than saving the heads of bald-headed old gentlemen from fire and strumming on banjos and guitars." Dr. Bowie, in reply, stated that he did not think there was any probability of convincing the lecturer; he had supplied us with an extraordinary number of facts; he confessed to an unseen intelligence on the part of the mediumship of the Fox girls; the séance attested by fourteen witnesses was quoted from "LIGHT." Yet because the lecturer had not seen such things they were met by denial, and it was asserted that they could have no existence outside the brain of a simpleton. What right had the lecturer to speak for the rest of the world? Surely, the testimony of such men as Crookes, Zöllner, Wallace, and many others who have investigated the subject is worthy of credence? Of all men Secularists, as free-thinkers, ought to be the first to investigate the facts of Spiritualism. Mr. Rhodes spoke also in corroboration of the reality of spiritual phenomena, which he had witnessed over a period of some years. After a few remarks had been passed by others, the lecturer summed up by observing that it would be presumptuous in him to attempt to instruct Spiritualists; but if Spiritualism was a science it must be experimental and capable of being brought under the rules of all other experimental sciences. He was afraid, however, that if he were to see all the phenomena described by Wallace and others it would not be sufficient to convince him. One of the committee intimated to Mr. Rhodes that the Secular Society have three Sunday evenings vacant during the next three months, and that they would be glad to have a lecture on the subject from the Spiritualists' side of the question.

GLASGOW.—Sunday, April 5th. At both morning and evening services the guides of Mr. E. W. Wallis ministered to the spiritual necessities of the occasion. It being the first Sunday in the month, answers to written questions took the place of the ordinary discourse at the evening meeting. The questions covered a wide range of subjects, theological, scientific, philosophical, &c., and the guides of Mr. Wallis showed excellent form in handling them. Mr. Harper, of Birmingham, being present, the chairman placed the platform at his disposal for a brief space, when he (Mr. Harper) delivered one of his characteristic and eloquent tirades against the abuses which exist in the social and commercial conditions and relations of life. His remarks were attentively listened to, and elicited an appreciative response from the audience. A new experiment by way of extending the influence of the association through means of the services of Mr. and Mrs. Wallis and their guides is about to be tried. It has been arranged that divisional meetings of the members of the society shall be held once a week, i.e., week by week in the northern, eastern, southern, and western divisions of the city, consecutively, and that either Mr. or Mrs. Wallis shall visit each the purpose of carrying on the work. The members residing in the various districts will thus have an opportunity of bringing their friends or neighbours to a meeting which is held close at hand. The first divisional meeting is being held this week (Wednesday evening at eight o'clock) in the house of Mr. Drummond, and it is an understood thing that all members and inquirers in the East End are cordially invited to hear the guides of Mr. Wallis and put questions to them, with a view to eliciting counsel and instruction in matters pertaining generally to the subject of Spiritualism. Next Sunday Mrs. Wallis will occupy the platform. Subject: "Practical Thoughts for Daily Life."—ST. MUNGO.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—The Editor of "LIGHT" cannot, save in exceptional cases, undertake to answer correspondence through the post. All inquiries reaching this office not later than Wednesday morning, will, as far as practicable, be answered in the ensuing number of "LIGHT."

- W. OXLEY.—Thanks. The notice is repeated.
 MRS. WESTERN.—Letter was forwarded as requested.
 R. H. FRYAR.—Not admissible except as an advertisement.
 H. G. GARRATT.—Your name has been entered as a subscriber to P.D.P.
 N. C.—Your request will have been complied with by to-day (Saturday).
 F. OMERIN.—Glad to oblige you; the publication of such facts is also valuable.
 C. B. HANKEY.—The crystal is unsold. The terms you mention are quite agreeable.
 A. DARLING.—Apply to Secretary of London Spiritualist Alliance, 62, Granville-park, Lewisham, S.E.
 "CHAMELEON".—Your communication is hardly suitable for "LIGHT." Do you wish the MS. returned?
 F. EVERITT.—Your notices came too late for insertion last week. They appear in this issue. We believe the ring is still on Mr. Husk's wrist.
 GEO. FORSTER.—We were glad to receive your letter. It came to hand too late, however, and now the matter to which it refers is out of date.
 L. COLBY.—As far as we can remember, the poem of Professor Brittan's to which you refer was returned to him. It was not quite suitable for our columns.
 REV. E. P. LARKEN.—We intend to issue shortly a series of articles calculated to assist investigators in their researches. Why not visit Mr. Eglinton?
 J. S. CRISP.—Will appear next week. You have been entered as subscriber to P.D.P. You need not remit the subscription until the book is published.
 J. T. RHODES.—Thanks for communication. Kindly continue the good service. An announcement with regard to the chromo-lithographs will shortly be made.
 GENERAL CAMPBELL.—Order cancelled as requested. MS. shall be returned in a few days. We had asked a friend to complete its revision. "LIGHT" shall be sent as directed.
 W. H. BROWNE.—Inquiries and requests of the nature of that sent to us by you should be addressed to the Hon. Sec. of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 62, Granville-park, Lewisham, S.E.
 W. NEWTON.—We will call on Mr. Jacobs if opportunity serves, but our hands are already very full. The alleged confession appeared in "LIGHT" for August 12th, 1882. Kindly excuse a personal reply.
 J. C. BUNDY.—"Earth's Earliest Ages" was reviewed in "LIGHT." We send you a copy. If after reading that you wish for the book, we will send it, but we think it is not worth anything. Pray excuse an answer in this column instead of writing direct.
 JOHN H. POLLEN.—Your letter appears in this issue. We went to press early last week in consequence of holidays; hence its exclusion. Why, however, should you jump to the conclusion that we "deny" you its insertion? You could not have been surprised if, after what you wrote, we had consigned it to the waste-paper basket.
 L. S. BROWN.—The MS. entitled "The Uses of Pain and Evil" has been returned to you. The delay, which we regret, was unavoidable. It has not been possible sooner to spare the time necessary for hunting the MSS. up. Pray convey our apologies to your relative, and if you can make peace with her for us, please do so.
 H. SWAN.—In the matter of such an obscure question as materialisation, careful investigators work from what they know to what they do not know; you desiderate the opposite course. As a matter of fact, however, all the really important conditions you would impose, have been observed. Read current and past records.
 S. W.—It is not any use arguing upon proved frauds. Despite your experience (which, alas! is that of many others also), there are numerous instances which show that "fraud" will not cover the whole ground. Our duty is, therefore, to sift the false from the true, and base our conclusions on the latter.
 W. T. BOWEN.—The investigation of Spiritualism requires care; and above all, great patience. Some obtain results speedily; others, only after a considerable time. You cannot do better than follow the instructions given in "Advice to Inquirers," a column which often appears in "LIGHT." You might also use the Psychograph. Read also "M. A. (Oxon's)" works, and other works which will be found advertised in our columns. Write again if there is anything you do not understand.
 JOSEPH D. HALL.—We do not encourage the style of writing you mention, but we never yet refused to insert an article because of any fear that it might cost us subscribers, few or many. "LIGHT" is thoroughly independent of any man or set of men. But so far as we are able to do so, we strive to meet the demands for publicity of the various "schools of thought," if we may use such a phrase, into which students of the occult are divided in this country. It is true we do not always succeed in pleasing everyone, and every now and then receive letters threatening all sorts of penalties. These, however, we can afford to pass by.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butlerof, 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-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

IS IT CONJURING?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See *Psychische Studien* for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the *Spiritualistic* order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also the individuality of the spirit 'in spiritual manifestation.'"

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have *not in the smallest degree* found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butlerof, in St. Petersburg, to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The first indications of success usually are a 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.

WHAT CONJURERS SAY ABOUT PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

Mediums, who are the instruments of an external agency, have, more than once, been confronted with conjurers who deceive by sleight of hand; and in the same manner that no man of science who has thoroughly and fairly investigated the phenomena has failed to become convinced of their reality, so no conjurer who has been confronted with the same facts has been able to explain their occurrence by prestidigitation. Houdin, Jacobs, Bellachini, Hermann, Kellar, and others have already confessed their powerlessness to produce under the same conditions what occurs without human intervention in the presence of a medium.

Testimony of Robert Houdin.

The Marquis Endes de Mirville published during the lifetime of Houdin two letters from the latter, in his "Mémoire adressé à MM. les membres de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, sur un grand nombre de phénomènes merveilleux intéressant également la Religion, la Science, et les hommes du Monde," in which the conjurer confesses his inability to explain the phenomena he witnessed in the presence of Alexis, the clairvoyant. A circumstantial account is given of M. de Mirville's visit to Houdin for the purpose of engaging him in this investigation, of the latter's confidence in his own ability to detect the trick, and of what took place at the séance, the conditions of which were entirely under Houdin's control. This account extends over twelve pages, and its accuracy is confirmed by Houdin in the first of the documents now translated:—

"Although very far from accepting the eulogies which M. — is good enough to bestow upon me, and especially insisting that I am not at all committed to opinions, either in favour of magnetism or against it, I can, nevertheless, not refrain from declaring that the facts above reported are entirely correct (*sont de la plus complète exactitude*), and that, the more I reflect upon them, the more impossible I find it to rank them among those which belong to my art and profession.

"ROBERT HOUDIN.

"4th May, 1847."

A fortnight later, M. de Mirville received another letter, in which the following, referring to another séance, occurs:—

"I have, therefore, returned from this séance as astonished as it is possible to be, and persuaded that it is utterly impossible that chance or skill could ever produce effects so wonderful! (*tout à fait impossible que le hasard ou l'adresse puisse jamais produire des effets aussi merveilleux*).—I am, Monsieur, &c.,

"(Signed), ROBERT HOUDIN.

"May 16th, 1847."

Testimony of Harry Kellar.

Harry Kellar, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, investigated the slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, at Calcutta, in January, 1882, and on the 25th of that month he addressed a letter to the editor of the *Indian Daily News*, in which he said:—

"In your issue of the 13th January I stated that I should be glad of an opportunity of participating in a séance with a view of giving an unbiassed opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional prestidigitator, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid.

"I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Eglinton, the spiritualistic medium now in Calcutta, and of his host, Mr. J. Meugens, for affording me the opportunity I craved.

"It is needless to say I went as a sceptic, but I must own that I have come away utterly unable to explain, by any natural means, the phenomena that I witnessed on Tuesday evening. I will give a brief description of what took place."

After describing several successful experiments, Mr Kellar proceeds:—

"In respect to the above manifestations, I can only say that I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed anyone who described such manifestations under similar circumstances. I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but

I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand."

On the 30th of the same month Mr. Kellar addressed another letter to the *Indian Daily News*, reporting some experiences of another kind with Mr. Eglinton, and regarding which he said:—

"In conclusion, let me state that after a most stringent trial and strict scrutiny of these wonderful experiences I can arrive at no other conclusion than that there was no trace of trickery in any form, nor was there in the room any mechanism or machinery by which could be produced the phenomena which had taken place. The ordinary mode by which Maskelyne and other conjurers imitate levitation or the floating test could not possibly be done in the room in which we were assembled."

The Testimony of Professor Jacobs.

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:—

"Spite of the assertions, more or less trustworthy, of the French and English journalists, and spite of the foolish jealousies of ignorant conjurers, I feel it my duty to show up the bad faith of one party and the chicanery of the other. All that has been said or done adverse to these American mediums is absolutely untrustworthy. If we would rightly judge of a thing we must understand it, and neither the journalists nor the conjurers possessed the most elementary knowledge of the science that governs these phenomena. As a prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect.

"Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. If (as I have every reason to hope) the psychical studies, to which I am applying myself at this time, succeed, I shall be able to establish clearly, and that by public demonstration, the immense line of demarcation which separates mediumistic phenomena from conjuring proper, and then equivocation will be no longer possible, and persons will have to yield to evidence, or deny through predetermination to deny

"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.' I authorise you, dear sir, to insert this letter in your next number, if agreeable to you," &c., &c.

Testimony of Samuel Bellachini.

Samuel Bellachini, Court Conjurer at Berlin, made the following declaration in December, 1877:—

"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; Butlerof, 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."