

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOATH 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.]

## THE HARMONY OF SPIRITUALISM AND SCIENCE.

A REJOINDER TO MR. ALFRED RUSSEL  
WALLACE, LL.D.

BY FREDK. F. COOK.

Speaking after the manner of the world, I recognise in Spiritualism no voice equally authoritative with that of Alfred Russel Wallace. None, in my opinion, has brought to the investigation of Spiritualistic phenomena better disciplined faculties, a freer or less prejudiced spirit of inquiry, and, above all else, none has been truer to his lights. Behind the great scientist has always been clearly discernible the greater man—the lover of justice. Feeling thus, it is with considerable reluctance that I constrain myself to withhold unqualified approval from any public utterance or statement of his. While I may differ from him somewhat as to the relation subsisting between Spiritualism and science, no difference of opinion in that regard could induce me to utter a word of dissent, were it for no other reason than that it would not be becoming in one who is not a scientist, in the legitimate sense of that term, to enter the lists against so distinguished an authority in science. And even along lines of deduction and speculation (where the terms on which we might meet would be much nearer equal), I should still hesitate to take issue with him, were it not for what I trust is a pardonable concern, that Spiritualism and all that flows from it shall not be judged at less than its best, its profoundest revelations, its deepest and completest explanation of the mystery of being.

Spiritualism was never so live a subject in this country as at the present time, and, consequently, the article from the pen of Mr. Wallace, published in the *Boston Herald* some time ago, is attracting an unusual amount of public attention. The whole tone of the statement is admirable, the scientific presentation of the case is remarkably conservative in comparison with the "claims" usually put forward in behalf of Spiritualism by pseudo-scientific believers, and it is only when Mr. Wallace enters upon the deductive or purely philosophical aspects of his subject that he fails to be at his best. Nothing, for example, could be finer than this :—

"Modern science utterly fails to realise the nature of mind, or to account for its presence in the universe, except by the mere verbal and unthinkable dogma that it is 'the product of organisation.' Spiritualism, on the other hand, recognises in mind the cause of organisation, and, perhaps,

even of matter itself, and it has added greatly to our knowledge of man's nature by demonstrating the existence of individual minds indistinguishable from those of human beings, yet separate from any human body."

This is the true Spiritualistic position, and the line that demarcates it from the ordinary scientific point of view could hardly be more clearly drawn. If this statement of Mr. Wallace means anything, it must mean that spirit is superior to matter, was therefore before matter, and perforce possessed all that matter does not possess—the essentials of being. Yet, on reading further, I find that this is not at all what Mr. Wallace means, for he has this to say :—

"On the spiritual theory man consists essentially of a spiritual nature and mind intimately associated with a spiritual body or soul, both of which are developed in, and by means of, a material organism."

To my mind this is a plain case of spiritual suicide. And when he regards the idea apart from the particular application of it, Mr. Wallace thinks so too; for have I not already quoted him as saying "Modern science utterly fails to realise the nature of mind, or to account for its presence in the universe, except by the mere verbal and unmistakable dogma that it is the product of organisation"? Let us bear in mind that we are not now dealing with phenomena, but with an everlasting and eternal verity—with the essence of being. Has matter this essence? Obviously no. Is it then permissible for us to assume that it is the one thing in the universe that is able to go outside of its own nature, and impart what it has not itself, i.e., the essence of being, consciousness? Phenomena modify phenomena, but do they also modify essences? When we speak in terms of evolution of things-in-themselves, are we not bound to presuppose a process of involution freighted with all that evolution under the most favourable conditions is able to express? The case is plainly this: Either matter does it all, or matter does essentially nothing but call out what is already in. Now, what is it that rests at the basis of being? Obviously it is consciousness. Therefore, if spirit is the essence of being, it must be in and of itself conscious. When we say "man is a spirit," what do we mean? Does mortality give consciousness to spirit, or does spirit give consciousness for a limited period to mortality? Here we have plainly the whole distinction between Materialism and Spiritualism in a nutshell, and the day is not far distant when the terms in which the distinction is expressed cannot be juggled with. This new wine is not for old bottles. Immortal things are eternal things, eternal things are unchangeable things; what is called out of being into phenomena must not by any confusion either of terms or of ideas be put into being. From being nothing can be wrested—to being nothing can be added. However being may exhibit itself phenomenally, essentially it must ever remain unchanged. Potential energy in essence has nothing added to it through any phenomenal exhibit such as we have in active energy. And what is not potential can never become active—and, by a parity of reasoning, what is not in the spirit consciously can never be put into it by any process that is admittedly unconscious. Plainly, then, consciousness must be for us a yield of the spirit and not of matter. Man is neither more nor less than the momentary battle-ground between the two. Spirit informs matter for

the purpose of overcoming it. Matter resists. This conflict, realising itself in consciousness of spirit, gives us the phenomena called Man, and when the conflict is over there is an end of man—thereafter you realise yourself as spirit only, and what gives you the larger stature is that as spirit you realise yourself in your entirety—as a *complete consciousness*, instead of as a succession of states of consciousness. To express spirit in terms other than consciousness is to express it in terms of matter or in terms of nothing—the Unknowable of Unknowables.

Far be it from me to dogmatise about what is possible and what is not possible in the universe. Yet among thinking men, among men thoroughly grounded in the fundamental conceptions of science and philosophy, a few things are posited as fixed starting points, and one of these determinations is that time and eternity are not interchangeable terms, and that a time product can in no wise be translated, or transmuted, or transubstantiated into an eternal verity. Yet we have this passage from Mr. Wallace :—

“This world-life not only lends itself to the production, by gradual evolution, of the physical body needed for the growth and nourishment of the human soul, but by its very imperfections tends to the continuous development of the higher spiritual nature of man. In a perfect and harmonious world perfect beings might possibly have been created, but could hardly have been evolved, and it may well be that *evolution is the great fundamental law of the universe of mind as well as of matter.*”

I believe I am not in error when I assume as a fundamental position of science this: that nothing essential or indestructible can ever be added to or taken from the universe. Now we all agree that through the processes of evolution something is added to the phenomenal universe, and we account for it by assuming that the type or idea as an eternal principle exists in essence, and all that evolution means is that the principle is clothed with materiality or otherwise brought to outward cognition. The strength of the evolutionary idea rests in this, that it admits of an illimitable background of real and eternal verities, and hence is the widest possible gateway through which to make excursions into a world of ideas. But this vantage ground, this highway to spiritual realities, Mr. Wallace not only ignores, but in effect cuts away, when he gives utterance to the purely materialistic thought that “it may well be that evolution is the great fundamental law of the universe of mind as well as of matter.” So long as mind is conceived as merely a congeries of sensations, and the product of mind is assumed to be the ephemeral apprehension of external facts which we comprehend under the term knowledge, the evolution of mind is not only possible but an absolute necessity to thought. But when mind is conceived as an eternal principle (and nothing less than this can be predicated of it, if it be endowed with immortality) there can clearly be no talk of evolution. Even in this material world there can be no satisfactory, no complete understanding of evolution, except as it is conceived as working towards a definite reality—otherwise it is clearly a miracle. In some manner all forms must be eternal existences. Now mind is one of these eternal forms; and what distinguishes its form is *consciousness*; and it is nothing less than a materialistic vagary to hold or declare that consciousness, the one thing that constitutes mind, can be added to or subtracted from. That of which we have at any time been conscious, though outwardly forgotten, must for ever remain in consciousness, or it is eternally lost. Unless the soul is a conservator of consciousness by reason of its indestructibility, there can be no spiritual awakening in realms supernal. And consciousness in and of itself can be expressed only *in terms of consciousness*; whatever you may or may not be, the soul must ever know itself and all its belongings, and being immortal it can be conceived only as for ever in eternity. Mind may readily be conceived as the measure of the man, but to hold that the obverse of this proposition is also true, and

that man is the measure of his mind, or spirit, or soul, is to give the entire case to the Materialist. For the Spiritualist nothing remains, not an iota. That matter discretely being in time—*i.e.*, gives limitation to its consciousness—there is no denying; but to conceive that the outward product so established—a clear limitation, realising itself only under time and space conditions—shall be its form eternally, is an ontological conception so primitive that one may well ask in alarm if it is to this that Spiritualism is bringing us. Happily, the answer is far otherwise, and “the continued actual reception of teachings from it” (*i.e.*, the world of souls), to which Mr. Wallace so confidently refers as destined to work mighty changes in the world, is gradually but surely, pushing forward into harmony with the thought that life is not an accident but an eternal verity, and that man is but a temporary expression of that which in its fullness is an eternal background. The soul does not exist for man's satisfaction, but man exists for the soul's satisfaction. This is the order of involution in contradistinction to the order of evolution, and when they are set over against each other as complementary processes, then not only have we a perfect whole, but a philosophy of eternity that brings the idea within human comprehension.

So much for the metaphysical aspect of the contention. Now a word or two bearing on its moral relation. Mr. Wallace writes :—

“Finally, these teachings of Modern Spiritualism furnish us with the much needed basis of a true ethical system. We learn by it that our earth-life is not only a preparation for a higher state of progressive spiritual existence, but that what we have usually considered as its very worst features, its all-pervading din and suffering, are in all probability the only means of developing in us those highest moral qualities summarised as ‘love’ by St. Paul, and ‘altruism’ by our modern teachers, which all admit must be cultivated to the utmost if we are really to make progress toward a higher social state. [Then follows an admirable dissertation on the utter inadequacy of modern philosophy as an incentive to duty, after which Mr. Wallace continues,] But when men are taught from childhood that the whole material universe exists for the very purpose of developing beings possessing these attributes, [demanded by altruism] that evil and pain, sin and suffering, all tend to the same end, and that the characters developed here will make further progress towards a nobler and happier existence in the spiritual world, *just in proportion as our higher moral feelings are cultivated here*, and when all this can be taught, not as a set of dogmas to be blindly accepted on the authority of unknown ancient writers, but as being founded on *direct knowledge of the spirit world*, and the continued *actual reception of teachings from it*, then, indeed, we shall have in our midst ‘a power that makes for righteousness.’”

Mr. Wallace here starts out with an admirable premise, that this earth-life is a school of preparation for higher out-workings, that suffering and sin are the real things that make for progress, and that the characters developed here will make further progress towards a nobler and happier existence in the spiritual world; but when he adds as a necessary corollary that this progress towards a nobler and happier existence in the spiritual world is in “proportion as our higher moral feelings are cultivated here,” he not only slaps his premise (as to the office of sin and suffering) equally in the face, but destroys the entire ethical basis which he seeks to establish. From Mr. Wallace's position an ethical out-working is an utter impossibility. The ethical structure of Christianity is falling to pieces because it is not builded on the eternal principle of justice and equality, and Mr. Wallace's scheme labours under the same defect. If in consciousness of soul I choose a certain human expression, then the responsibility for existence rests with myself, and the principles of justice and equality are in-

volved in the very idea of being. But if my existence is due to purely accidental conditions in matter, there is, to begin with, no element of responsibility involved in any existence that goes to myself; all responsibilities are thus either imposed upon me, or voluntarily assumed by me, as may happen; and there is, furthermore, an utter denial of the element of justice or equality. The Christian scheme, while it fails to throw any moral light on the inequalities visible here, at any rate throws open the door to perfect equality in Heaven, if you are inclined to accept the terms on which it is granted; but the Spiritualism of Mr. Wallace cuts away justice and equality to the very root. What we are, in so far as we are known to ourselves through present consciousness, is the product of forces over which we have little or no control. If my parents are wicked and dissolute there is small hope for my being anything else—and however much this oppressive order of nature may be necessary to the up-building of the race, it cannot be applied to the individual, unless it applies equally to all individuals. But we know it does not so apply—we know that the difference in natural endowments is enormous, and if it be true, as Mr. Wallace affirms, that our “progress toward a nobler and happier existence in the spiritual world [is] just in proportion as our higher moral feelings are cultivated here,” then the injustice, the cruelty, the discrimination, is doubly refined, and the order of the universe a hideous mockery of any conceivable Divine economy. Obviously then, we must look deeper than that which we know as discreted existence for the harmony of the differences which we observe all about us. If you answer that all will be equalised in the end, I have a right to ask for an explanation of the difference in the beginning. I am not now discussing physical existence, but moral existence—and yet between the two there must be an exact correspondence. Whatever I suffer must be a necessity to my being, and, inevitably, to avoid invidious distinctions, it must be in one form or another, necessary to all beings. Yet the infant dies without any experience whatsoever. And the good man dies without any of those experiences that come to the bad man, and, broadly speaking, the good man is good because he cannot help it, and with the bad man it is much the same as to badness. Obviously the inequalities we here observe must have their moral as well as their physical meaning, and whatever happens to any one must be a necessity to him in his divine nature. If, however, our beginnings are here, if spirit is evolved into discrete existence through matter, then obviously no moral necessity can by any possibility be predicated of the human differences that we know. Eternal life will not permit itself to be conceived under the form of chance, yet chance it is, if evolution be not complemented by involution, if whatever goes to human experience is not the inworking of the sovereign soul for its own satisfaction, and if a moral necessity does not inform and impel each act toward the goal of transfiguration.

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**BUENOS AYRES.**—The president of the Spiritist Society, “Constantia,” and editor of the journal of that name, has translated M. Bonnesfont’s Spiritist Catechism for the use of children, into Spanish, with notes.

**PARIS.**—A lecture against Spiritism has been delivered at the Salle des Capucines, by M. de Fonvielle, and I was one of his audience. He assumed it to be a mixture of imposture, credulity, and delusion, enlarging cleverly upon the condemnations against various mediums, not a few seated before him loudly protesting. He passed in silence the published testimony as to the alleged facts of Spiritism. In my simplicity, it seemed to me that M. de Fonvielle, as a *servant*, was not treating worthily a subject based upon facts; some of which have been vouched for by men like Victor Hugo, by journalists like Vacquerie and Meunier, by literary people like Madame de Girardin, and Ennery, and by men of science like Zöllner, Weber, and Crookes, whose testimony was that, after four years’ study, he did not say “such things are possible—they are.”—*René Labrize, in the “Guttenberg Echo.”*

## 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.]

**Dr. Wyld and the Hermetic Society.**

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—Dr. Wyld’s letter of the 4th inst. reads so much more like the product of a desire to “bring a railing accusation” against those who presume to differ from him, than of a desire to elucidate truth, that were I to follow my own impulse I should leave it unnoticed. As, however, there may be among your readers some who imagine, that because a charge is unanswered, it is therefore unanswerable, I will indicate, as briefly as possible, its chief fallacies.

In the first place, there are in the Hermetic Society no persons whom Dr. Wyld is entitled to call its “leaders,” for the simple reason that the term “leaders” implies *followers*; and the members of the Hermetic Society are wholly unpledged and independent, and are not, therefore, followers of any persons whatever, but purely and simply of truth.

In the next place, Dr. Wyld has misrepresented the position of those whom he assails. We have neither “denied the historic Christ,” nor that “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh,” though we may differ from Dr. Wyld as to the sense to be ascribed to the latter expression.

Respecting this sense, it is necessary to remember that the fact that there was a difference of opinion in the Primitive Church—not whether Christ had come at all—but whether the manner of His coming had been such as to constitute the anticipated coming “in the flesh,”—shows that the phrase bore a meaning so subtle and occult as to be readily susceptible of misconception.

Had Christ indeed “come in the flesh” in the sense insisted on by Dr. Wyld, and been an altogether exceptional personage, miraculously engendered, a performer in public of numerous stupendous physical marvels, and so different in kind from other men as to be superhuman rather than a merely superior human, the fact would—we may well believe—have been so palpable and flagrant that no question could have arisen about it; and certainly it would not have been so depreciated by Paul. But so far from this being the case, there was a numerous party which held that Jesus was but an angelic or phantasmal appearance, unrelated to humanity, and that consequently no manifestation of Christ in and through humanity or “the flesh”—meaning thereby human beings—had occurred.

Dr. Wyld, however, not only assumes the right to be positive *now* about a matter concerning which there was doubt *then*, but takes a view which, as it seems to us, neither the Apostles nor their opponents held; and hastens to invoke anathema upon those whose respect for religious truth prompts them carefully to search the Scriptures for its real meaning and intention, instead of foisting upon it their own preferences and foregone conclusions. It is evidently but an ungracious reception that the promised “Spirit of Truth,” when He comes, will receive at the hands of the Dr. Wylds of the period, in case he ventures to differ from them. As it is, it may well be that in refusing to accept the mode of coming I have suggested as a “coming in the flesh,” Dr. Wyld incurs for himself the condemnation he seeks to pass upon us.

Even if we had made the denial ascribed to us by Dr. Wyld, the fault—if a fault at all—would, by his own showing, be a venial one, since he holds that “the historic Jesus, as a *bare fact*, may have very little influence on the souls of men,” and that notwithstanding His “full possession and transmutation by the Divine Word,” Jesus so slightly transcended the medium of the period that “a replica of almost every miracle attributed to Him may be found in modern Spiritualistic phenomena”! And, further, even if we had denied the “historic Jesus,” we should not therein necessarily have affirmed that such Divine possession and transmutation had never occurred to any human being on this planet, seeing that similar experiences are ascribed in the Bible to two other persons, Enoch and Elijah; so that Dr. Wyld, when he cites the transmutation of Jesus as an unique event, shows himself to be as slenderly acquainted with the Old Testament as he obviously is with the New.

The very paper on which Dr. Wyld mainly bases his strictures admits the probability of there having been some special figure which served as chief model for the character delineated in the Gospels. We have denied only the proposition that there is in

the Gospels anything that can, without an abuse of language, be called a history of such a person, or that is not true as mystically interpreted of every regenerate man.

As if despairing of proving his case by reasoning, Dr. Wyld betakes himself to assertion, and this in the most dogmatic fashion. "I assert," he says, "that there is not one discrepancy of importance in the four Gospels," but only "a few verbal discrepancies," and these such as to afford confirmation of their genuineness by showing that they were not fabrications. The hardihood of this utterance, extreme as it is, is not its only objectionable feature. As a direct unqualified contradiction of us it is also discourteous. There are plenty of ways of expressing dissent from an opponent without plainly implying that one considers him so unworthy of heed as to be best met by a flat contradiction. The presumption of it, too, is amusing, or, at least, would be so but for the melancholy proof it affords of the utter failure of its utterer to have followed the developments of modern research in these grave matters. Dr. Wyld evidently supposes that he will have settled the question to his satisfaction when he has succeeded in discrediting us; whereas he has, on the contrary, to deal with the vast array of competent and candid scholars who in the last half century have devoted themselves to the inquiry, with the result of demonstrating absolutely the hopeless discordance of the Gospels, both with each other and with contemporary history, and the large extent to which they are reproductions of legends, and compilations from literatures long pre-existent; and, consequently, their non-historical character. These are results irrefragably established for all who have carefully and candidly examined the grounds on which they rest. And yet they are to be disposed of by the simple *ipse dixit* of one who is so much of a tyro in the subject that little over three years ago, in a discussion upon it, he expressed surprise at learning, among other discrepancies—all of which have sorely exercised the orthodox—that the Gospels disagree as to the day of the Crucifixion! As he had taken their agreement in this and other respects for granted, then, so now. For his letter shows that he has not improved the interval by acquiring further knowledge of the subject.

To cite but a few of the contradictions to which a belief in the Gospels as historical and concordant commits its holder. He must believe both that Jesus was miraculously born of a virgin mother and the Holy Ghost, and was not derived from the house of David; and also that He was born naturally of Joseph and Mary, since only through Joseph could He have been "of the seed of David according to the flesh." He must believe both that Jesus did go down into Egypt, His parents having fled thither on the night following the visit of the Magi, in order to escape the massacre ordered by Herod; and also that He did not go into Egypt, but remained where He was born to be circumcised after eight days, and, after forty days, to accompany His parents to Jerusalem for His mother's purification, a visit which was repeated every successive year for twelve years, and consequently that there was no persecution or massacre by Herod. He must believe both that the mother of Jesus was so fully aware of His Divine nature and mission as to treasure in her heart every incident concerning Him; and also that she failed wholly to comprehend His allusions to His peculiar nature and destiny, and joined His brethren in an attempt to withdraw Him from a public career on the ground of madness. He must believe that Jesus was crucified both on the day of the Passover, and again on the day after the Passover; that the resurrection occurred under four different and incompatible sets of circumstances, a different set being detailed and positively stated in each Gospel; that the ascension occurred both, as described in the Gospel of Luke, on the same day as the resurrection, and also as stated in the Acts, which purports also to be Luke's, forty days after the resurrection; and that Judas both returned the money paid for his treachery and hanged himself, and also did not return the money but bought a field with it, and died therein of an accident. It is, of course, open to Dr. Wyld to plead that the parentage, birth, crucifixion, and ascension are not matters of importance, and I am quite willing to allow him this loophole for escape. But he cannot avail himself of this plea and still retain his belief in the historical character of the documents which thus differ respecting them, seeing that they, not to mention the system founded on them, treat them as of the utmost importance, and that, if not historical on these points, they are not entitled to be regarded as historical at all; but, if of serious import, must be regarded as we regard them, namely, as mystical.

As for the pretended doubts about Napoleon, Dr. Wyld forgets that there remains a very substantial residuum of indubitable fact in his case, while in that of Jesus there remains nothing after the doubtful parts are eliminated.

Had Dr. Wyld really desired to promote knowledge he would not have omitted to notice the striking demonstration given by me of the fact that so far from Jesus being represented as claiming for Himself an exceptional physical birth, He is represented as disclaiming anything of the kind, inasmuch as He is made to declare it necessary to every man that he be born again precisely as He Himself is described as having been born, namely, spiritually;—"Water and the Spirit," and "Virgin Mary and the Holy Ghost," being but symbolical formulas for the soul and spirit of which man when regenerate is "born again." But Dr. Wyld passes over this conclusive proof that the subject of the Gospels is really not a particular human personality, but the interior and spiritual personality of every regenerate man; and, as if under the impression that an assertion needs only to be repeated often enough to convert it into a fact, he proceeds to reiterate his disbelief in the doctrine of physical rebirths or "re-incarnation."

His remarks here are no less open to objection for their superficiality, their flippancy, and even their insincerity. The negative experience of a majority, however large, proves—as Dr. Wyld well knows—nothing as against the positive experience of a minority, however small. Nevertheless, he cites the non-experience of the majority as an argument against the doctrine. The reminiscence of past existences belongs, not to the *spiritualistic*, but to the *spiritual*, consciousness, and to an interior region of this; and it is therefore not comprisable in the order of experiences of which alone, as I am forced to conclude, Dr. Wyld has cognisance. Of the profound philosophy of the doctrine, and of the sanctity of the experiences on which it rests, he is obviously unaware, or he would not make contemptuous reference to the latter as by ascribing them to a process of "self-biologising." The reply of Jesus to His disciples concerning this doctrine, though it evaded the question, neither was scornful nor denied it.

Limited to a single earth-life, the experiences requisite to enable a "Captain of Salvation" to be "made perfect through suffering," would indeed be few!

Equally fallacious is his demand for "scientific proof" of the facts of the spiritual consciousness. As if the reality of a remote memory of any kind was capable of sensible demonstration! While his denial of there being any historic confirmation of the doctrine seems to imply that Plato, Pythagoras and Buddha are names as strange to him as those of Enoch and Elijah appear to be. As a student of such subjects he ought to know that the whole of the ancient religions comprised the doctrine of transmigration, and consequently of re-incarnation. But there are students and students, and Dr. Wyld's letter makes it difficult to class him with those who merit to be called serious.

One remark on what Dr. Wyld so warmly eulogises as the "testimony" of Mr. Roden Noel. The argument from the alleged necessity of a realised ideal of perfection in another as an aid to the pursuit of it in oneself, if valid at all, must be valid in cases other than that where the perfection in question is spiritual. Is it the fact that the belief in the existence of some transcendently physically-beautiful specimen of humanity is necessary to enable us either to aspire after physical beauty in ourselves or to form a conception of perfect beauty for ourselves? Assuredly not. We none the less recognise and desire beauty because we know of no one perfectly beautiful. And the artist is none the less able to devise a perfect type because he cannot find a perfect model. For all that is necessary for him is to have suitable subjects from which to compile the manifold excellencies he desires to combine into a single image. Greek art was a new revelation of the beauty of the human form. Yet it needed not that any one individual be transcendently beautiful; or even that there be more beauty than usual in the world; but only that there be an enhanced perception of beauty. Why may it not have been so with the inspired artists to whom the world owes the portraits of its Christs? It is none the less a "coming of Christ in the flesh" that His lineaments be distributed among many. But Dr. Wyld sides with those who say "Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there!"

Regretting the length at which I have been compelled to write, and trusting that any reply that may be made will in some degree tend to edification,—I am, &c.,

EDWARD MAITLAND.

**The Historic Jesus.**  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mrs. Kingsford writes that "she does not think Mr. Roden Noel and the 'leaders' of the Hermetic Society are so much in disagreement as Dr. Wyld seems to think": namely, on the question of the historic Jesus.

All that I say is, that Mr. Roden Noel and myself are in exact agreement on this matter, and in disagreement with the views expressed by the leaders of the Hermetic Society; for while I and others most entirely believe that Jesus Christ was not only an historic Person, but the most important historic Person this planet has known, Mrs. Kingsford, on the contrary, if she "has never denied the historic Jesus," yet says, "It does not matter to me whether the Gospels are true or not on the merely outer plane."

I cannot understand Mrs. Kingsford when she says, "No man can know any fact, and therefore cannot set it down; and I am quite sure there is virtually no such thing as history."

These are remarkable statements, and I would ask; Is it not a fact that  $2 \times 2 = 4$ , and can I not set it down? Are these not three facts, that food generally satisfies hunger, water quenches thirst, and fire warms? Is it not a fact that Mrs. Kingsford is president of the Hermetic Society, and that the president not only doubts the historic Jesus, but asserts that "No man can know any fact, and that there is no such thing as history"; and when her biography comes to be written will those facts in her belief not be set down and accepted as historic?

Mrs. Kingsford further says:—"I shall be glad to receive any really logical and scholarly rectification and explanation of the many serious and important misstatements and inconsistencies undoubtedly existing in the Gospels. These difficulties do not concern mere details but the facts of the life itself."

That there are minute and verbal variations in the Gospels I have already admitted, but I deny that these in any "serious" degree affect the grandeur and verisimilitude of the historic portrait, and I would ask the editor of "LIGHT" to permit Mrs. Kingsford to substantiate her statements in this respect.

True, the Innocents may not have been massacred, and certain taxes may not have been levied at a stated time, but if so, those details would no more detract from the grand truths of the historic representation, than similar historic inaccuracies would weaken our belief in the historic Cromwell or Washington.

My critic asks, "Does not Dr. Wyld see that he proves too much in proving the modern phenomena of Spiritualism to be identical with 'the mighty works' of Jesus?"

In reply, I say that I never thought or attempted to prove any such thing. I only said that the Agnostic who disbelieved in miracles has an excuse for regarding the miraculous life of Jesus as mythical; but that those who, like Mrs. Kingsford, believe in the phenomena of Spiritualism have no such excuse. I used the word replica as signifying a copy, so far by the same hand, in so far as it was spiritual; but the value of that copy is very small as compared with the original, and there is no identity between phenomena performed by earth-bound spirits and the mighty works of Jesus, which came from the fountain of the All Spirit, through the highest Incarnation of the Divine; and I marvel that one who so ardently teaches the grand mystic doctrine of the possibility of the Incarnation of the Christ in Man, should yet doubt or deny that this sublime idea, in its completeness, became a unique fact in the person of the historic Jesus.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

**Inspirational Speaking.**  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—For some years past the attention of Spiritualists in London appears to have been devoted mainly to the investigation of phenomenal evidences.

There must certainly be a large number whose experiences in this direction have been conclusive, and who have been convinced that such phenomena are the result of action by unseen intelligences, exerted with the direct intention of producing an educational effect on the minds of the human witnesses.

Such experiences must create a desire to learn something about these unseen operators, and the forces with which they work.

We have at present, in our midst, an instrument used by the unseen intelligences for imparting such information, the subject being hypnotised by the invisible operators, and in the trance state used to give expression to their will.

The trance state is, of course, well known to Spiritualists, who, in many instances, have witnessed this condition in members of their own families. It is unnecessary, therefore, to insist here on this phenomenon being *bona fide*. The instrument we refer to, Mrs. Richmond, is well known, as is also the important work performed by her in the past. Many Spiritualists will remember the meetings held in St. George's Hall in 1873, at which large crowds attended to hear her discourses, which were favourably criticised in the *Daily News*, *Morning Post*, &c., &c.

Has not the time again come round when support will be given to expositions concerning the Cause World and its laws?

Inquiry is the very spirit of the age in which we live. On all sides we see men bending in earnest endeavour to get at the truth of things; to sift and weigh; to discover the true value of all things, whatever may be the authority with which they may have been invested in the past, and in spite of the cost of such procedure, and the pain which the possible overthrow of cherished idols may entail.

Is this, then, not a time when men already satisfied by previous experience as to the source of the information to which they may be addressing themselves, shall come forward to "ask and question" concerning the unseen forces of the Cause World? We have the voice of the oracle among us. Are we to turn aside, and prefer to give ear to the discussions of the scribes in the temples?

The committee who are giving their support to the work being carried out by the intelligences who use Mrs. Richmond as their instrument would be glad to receive the names of any friends who may be willing to assist in furthering that work.

Letters to be addressed to Mrs. Richmond's Committee, care of Mrs. Strawbridge, 11, Blandford-square.

Yours faithfully,

"INSPIRATION."

**Concert at Cavendish Rooms.**

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The Cavendish Rooms Sunday Services have been so useful and successful in many ways, that I feel sure no apology is needed to introduce their claim to the attention of London Spiritualists. As they are conducted on a purely voluntary and self-supporting basis, there being no subscribers nor holders of paid seats, it is necessary to have a social gathering about this time, to secure funds to continue the meetings during the coming winter; and, in addition, to bring the friends together in a social manner, which is to a great extent the strength of a public movement. With these objects in view, I have pleasure in stating that Cavendish Rooms have been secured for a concert, to take place on Wednesday, August 12th, and a very excellent programme is in preparation. The tickets will be: reserved seats, 2s.; admission, 1s. That the funds may benefit as fully as possible, I am desirous of receiving subscriptions towards the expenses, in which good and necessary work a beginning has already been made. Friends in various parts of London will greatly oblige by applying for tickets on sale; and our well-wishers will assist very much by purchasing tickets, and if they can favour us with their presence they will receive a cordial welcome.—I remain,

41, Shirland-road, Maida Vale, W.,

A. F. MALTBY.

July 10th, 1885.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, MORTIMER-STREET, CAVENDISH-SQUARE, W.—On Sunday, July 19th, at 11 a.m., in the evening 7 p.m. In the morning Mr. W. J. Colville will speak on "The Sevenfold Nature of Man." In the evening on "The Bible of God and the Bibles of Men."

FAREWELL VISIT OF MR. J. J. MORSE TO NORTHUMBERLAND.—It is announced that Mr. Morse will pay the following farewell visits:—Seghill (Schools), on Saturday, July 18th, when he will lecture at 6.45 p.m. Newcastle (Weir's Court Hall), on Sunday, July 19th, at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; and on Monday, July 20th, at 7.30 p.m. North Shields (Society's Rooms, Camden-street), on Tuesday and Wednesday, July 21st and 22nd, at 7.45 p.m. On Thursday, July 23rd, the visit will terminate with a farewell tea and social gathering at Weir's Court Hall, Newcastle, under the combined auspices of the local societies. In the course of the evening a testimonial will be presented to Mr. Morse, in acknowledgment of his untiring zeal and devotion to the Spiritual movement during a long period of years, and the very able advocacy of our cause by his "guides."

All Communications to be addressed to  
THE EDITOR OF "LIGHT,"  
16, CRAVEN STREET,  
CHARING CROSS, S.W.

#### SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

#### ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Column, £2 2s. Page £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

Orders for Papers and Advertisements may be addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, S.W.

Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to HENRY BARNES, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

#### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

## Light :

SATURDAY, JULY 18TH, 1885.

### "FACTS ARE CHIEFS THAT WINNA DING."

Recent experiments with what are designated "homing pigeons" have fully confirmed the fact that the birds will fly, with great speed and the utmost precision, distances of hundreds of miles, and reach their respective homes after flying many hours at the average rate of forty miles per hour. The how of this marvellous feat is unknown, but the fact is undeniable.

Living organisms as small as flies or gnats are incomprehensible to the most learned; their mechanisms are as perfect in their degree as are those of man, but the complexity of the mechanism, associated with their minuteness, would, if the phenomena were not daily visible, be inconceivably marvellous; only less marvellous than are monads and bacteria, the length and width of whose bodies are the thirty-thousandth of an inch, and the vibratile flagellæ by which they swim being less than the two-hundred thousandth of an inch in diameter, and yet these almost invisible threads possess great vital activity. Careful observation alone will gradually reveal the marvellous mysteries of nature, and no alleged phenomena, however improbable, if testified to by many credible and capable witnesses, should be contemptuously rejected under the supposition that such phenomena are contrary to natural laws and of impossible occurrence.

All the common phenomena of nature, apart from experience and logical inference, would be thought impossible. Take for example gravitation, a property of all substances, and the influence of which, as far as is known, is instantaneous in its action at any distance, or, at least, if not instantaneous, its speed has never been calculated, as have been the speeds of light and electricity; a force not exhausted by incalculable space, which acts as certainly on objects a billion of miles apart as one mile; an energy that cannot by any means be intercepted either by vacuum or solid; that holds every atom in the universe in its relentless grasp, a dewdrop being equally under its control as a nebulous cluster containing millions of suns and systems.

Take light, travelling by undulation only, and not by progression, through a hypothetical boundless ether—this is unexhausted by distance, and is a form of force without being an entity; is produced by vibrations in a hypothetical something, the existence of which is only the necessity of theory. Luminiferous ether is theoretically denser than a diamond, and millions of times more elastic than steel, and yet offers not a phantom of resistance to the faintest and most attenuated gas.

These and myriads of other theories of science, are generally accepted by the learned as the most satisfactory

modes of explaining every-day phenomena, and yet there are scientific men who refuse to observe facts that can be made as palpable as that two and two make four, or that the moon is seen by the reflected light of the sun.

The latest, or rather the supposed latest triumph of science is photographing the invisible. Objects too faint to produce visual impressions on the human retina, leave distinct impressions on the sensitized dry plate, and gelatine and silver accomplish more than the most sensitive human eye. The practised eye of the astronomer, aided by the highest telescopic powers, observes millions of stars that are invisible to unaided vision, but a mechanically-arranged telescope, with a sensitized photographic plate as a retina, registers the existence of myriads more, too far removed from earth to produce visual impressions on the most sensitive human eye, aided by the most powerful optical instruments.

All this is very interesting, very wonderful, and possibly very true, but other facts probably more interesting, wonderful, true, and important, are turned from with open or ill-concealed disdain—more important because the former have special relation to physical and biological laws of terrestrial importance, whilst the latter not merely refer to the phenomena of this life, but point to a future sphere of existence of which this is but the transitory preliminary stage.

If the alleged phenomena of Modern Spiritualism be true, they appeal to precisely the same kinds of evidence as those by which ordinary mundane facts are established, and their solution is more important because they foreshadow, if they do not prove, a condition of existence the outcome of the present, and possibly, though not demonstrably, of limitless duration.

If psychography, which may be observed in the full blaze of daylight, and in any apartment, be genuine—and thousands of honest, credible, and competent witnesses affirm that it is so—why do not the leaders of scientific research, the men who profess to seek truth for truth's sake, carefully and courageously examine the phenomena, which may be had under conditions that render imposture impossible?

MR. W. EGLINTON leaves London on the 28th inst. for Lincolnshire, for a period of four or five weeks.

WE are in a position to state that Mr. W. Eglinton has been offered a Government appointment on the Gold Coast, by a prominent member of the present Administration, but that he has declined it on account of the deadly climate.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.—We have been unable as yet to read and notice several works which have reached us lately. We hope to do so in the course of a week or two. Amongst these may be named: "Whisperings: Poems"; "The Divine Love and Wisdom"; "Beyond the Valley," a sequel to "The Magic Staff," by Andrew Jackson Davis; "Karma," a novel in two volumes; "Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society," Nos. 4, 5, and 6; "The Virgin of the World."

MRS. CORA L. V. RICHMOND'S DISCOURSES.—The last address of the present series was delivered at Kensington Town Hall, on Sunday evening last, to a full audience, on the subject of "The Final Religion of the Earth." It was announced that the committee had arranged for a resumption of the series on the 20th September next, at the Kensington Assembly Rooms, the Town Hall unfortunately not being available. The length of the new series will be regulated by the amount of support received. Offers of assistance to be forwarded by letter to Mrs. Strawbridge, No. 11, Blandford-square, N.W.

THE CAMBERWELL AND PECKHAM ASSOCIATION OF INQUIRERS INTO SPIRITUALISM, of 81, Well-street, Camberwell, held their first Sunday evening meeting on July 5th, when an eloquent address was delivered by Miss Keeves, and listened to with great interest, after which several questions were put, and very satisfactorily answered. It is intended to continue these meetings on the first Sunday in each month, notice of which will be given in due course. The Thursday evening circle being now complete another is being organised to meet on Tuesdays at 8.30 p.m. Any friends wishing to join will oblige by communicating with the secretary.

## REVIEW.

## SHADOWS: OR, MR. JOHN WETHERBEE'S EXPERIENCES OF AND THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALISM.\*

"I am sure," says Mr. Wetherbee (and when he says that he means it), "there is a power, impulse, or force in nature not recognised as yet by science, or as something outside of the recognised domain of science. The best exoteric definition of it is Psychic Force. This power or force is certainly intelligent, even if ultra-human. It claims to be a force from 'over the river,' from departed spirits; it claims to be from the loved and lost, from those whose bodies are mouldering in the grave, assuring us mortals that they still live. This intelligent 'psychic force' has never claimed to be anything else but a departed human being, in a single instance, from the first manifestation in 1848 to the present time."

It will be gathered that Mr. Wetherbee occupies the same platform as myself. He is a Spiritualist "hard shell," as he might perhaps say. Readers of the *Banner of Light* are used to the quaint, wise remarks which he contributes from time to time to that journal. They have in this book something that they are used to, and a collection of opinion which is more ready to the hand than a mass of newspaper articles.

Mr. Wetherbee's own account of the way in which he became a Spiritualist is as instructive as anything contained in his book. Death had removed from his family a little girl of six years old. Mr. Wetherbee, at that time, was a Materialist; Mrs. Wetherbee had been brought into contact with some Spiritualists, and was urged to assuage her grief by endeavouring to open relations with her lost child through a medium. She did so, and her account of what took place did not impress her husband, "It seemed silly business," he said, "and made no impression on me: but I saw no harm in it, as it occupied her mind and gave her something to think of."

It chanced one afternoon, as Mrs. Wetherbee was going out for a walk, that she met her sister on the steps just coming to see her. The ladies agreed to go to a medium, a Mrs. Leeds, of whom Mrs. Wetherbee had incidentally heard. "On reaching the house in Carver-street, they found that Mrs. Leeds was absent on a visit to Judge Edmunds in New York." They were turning to go when they asked the girl who had opened the door if she knew any good medium. "She gave them the address of Mrs. Hayden, of Hayward-place, and the ladies went directly there."

Mr. Wetherbee knew nothing of all this, and this makes his narrative very striking. I continue it in his own precise words.

I was in my library up stairs, and alone. I had some writing to do, but the subject of spiritual manifestations was for the moment occupying my mind, and in their connection with my wife, who had just gone out, as I have described, and I began to cogitate. I said to myself, ought I not to look into this matter, and why is it necessary to go to a stranger to get a message from any of my departed friends? That has, thought I, an unreasonable look to begin with. I had forgotten, or it did not occur to me, that King Saul, when in grief and sore distressed, had to go in that way to the woman of Endor before he could connect himself with or get a message from his departed friend Samuel. In beginning this cogitation, it rather appeared to me that if my little daughter was alive, though invisible, or any spirit of my loved and lost relatives or friends had any message for me, here and now was the time and place for the manifestations. Here in this room is the old table, and on it the old Bible, printed in 1751, that old familiar faces of my youth sat at and turned the leaves of the book, and showed and explained the pictures in it, and I began to grow sentimental with the pleasures of memory. I seemed to grow hospitable to the idea, or rather to the images of these old faces that were as vivid, in my mind, as the old book was that had outlasted them to my senses. I believed everything was subject to law, and that it was possible that the room was then full of spirits though my intellect was infidel to the idea; still in my heart there arose a sacred voice which said it was a possible thing. Perhaps there is something wanting which I have not got, thought I, which, if I had, or was in the right condition, these old familiar faces, or some of them, might issue out of the silent air, or in some way manifest or reach me. Some remembrances of family love, that need not be mentioned now, but may be before this book is ended, had some effect upon me, and I began to dwell on it in my imagination,—build castles in the air, as some call it,—I did alone what I would have been ashamed to have done in any company. I said to the circumambient vacant air vocally, if there are any beings present who can hear me

(thinking then of my child, Hattie, and my sister), I wish you would be present when my wife attends any of these sittings, and will you send me a message? and remembering I had had messages now and then,—love-sending or remembrances which had no convincing character to them, and what anyone could say, and not be out of the way; so I said, send me this message,—which I then repeated. I will not repeat here the message I asked for; it was characteristic of me, and was religiously asked for, but it might be construed humorously, and in the connection seem frivolous, for though I am constitutionally light-hearted and cheerful, I have a very pensive undertone, and on this subject whatever may be my manner, I am at heart always serious.

It occurred to me, also, that spirits might see and not hear, and, having a pen before me, I wrote the message as well as spoke it, and folded up the paper on which it was written, and put it into my desk, where no one could see or get it. I certainly did not expect any response. I did not ask for it with any faith. I do not know as if I ever would have thought of it again, except that the subject, in its connection with my wife, was often in my mind, and this trifling circumstance would, therefore, not have been forgotten. I, however, had the feeling that I would give all I had in the world if there had been any foundation of truth in this matter, which, however, did not seem to me at all probable or possible.

I did not know, as I have already said, where my wife had gone. What I have said, thought, and done alone in my library was known only to myself. Late in the afternoon I went out, and on my return at tea-time, the first thing my wife said to me was: "There is a message for you from Hattie," handing me a small, rolled-up strip of paper, she looking at me, all alive with expectation, for she knew, under any circumstances, the message would please me, as a definitely characteristic one, of or for me. I unrolled, read it, and found a long string of letters not divided into words, but it was the message exactly, when divided off into words, that I had asked for a few hours before.

The sitting at Mrs. Hayden's is thus described:—

These ladies, when they reached the medium's house in Hayward-place, found there the lady, and stated what they had come for, and were invited to sit down at the table used for the purpose of spirit communications, the medium sitting at it also. The sister held the pencil,—she had been requested to by my wife before entering, to see if it made any difference. Raps were at once heard, the spirits answering yes and no to questions. Soon the alphabet was used, and as the letter wanted was reached a rap was heard, and thus some singular but very true messages were given intelligently in this way, but they need not be recorded here. After a little while the letters of a message read: "*Hattie is here.*" My wife said: "I am glad you have come; have you anything to say to your father?"—and three raps indicated "Yes." The alphabet was then used, and the letters noted down as the raps signified the right one; and, when finished, it was a string of letters, as I have said, not divided into words, but which were easily read, particularly by my wife, who saw that it was somewhat characteristic, and knew it would please me, and perhaps be a test. She did not know until she had got home and given it to me, and I had told her the facts, that I had asked the spirits to send the message, and the string of letters written down in that way,—the letter wanted being rapped at when it was reached,—and in their wholeness was the message I had asked for in the manner stated.

Mr. Wetherbee was, naturally, impressed by this experience, and under the assumed name of Johnson went off to see what he could get for himself. He thus narrates what took place:—

I came to this medium's house under the assumed name of Johnson, and hearing the raps was told they were the spirits, and that I could ask them any questions. I began by asking the invisibles if they knew me, and the reply being "Yes," I said: "What is my name?" and the answer was, "John Wetherbee." I was both surprised and interested, for, as I have said, I was entirely unknown to the medium, and though she sat very near the table, I could see she did not touch it, and if she had, under all the circumstances, it would have made no difference. I then asked: "Will you tell me who you are?" And the raps spelled the name of "Susan Gibson."

I was expecting it would have been Adeline, Hattie, or some other near spirit, and I did not know any Susan Gibson; and hoping to bring her to mind, among other questions, I said: "Where did you die?" The reply was: "Providence." That fact did not help any, but was interesting, as I had relatives in that city, and had visited it a great deal. I then asked: "When did you die?" And the reply was: "About nine years ago." This was interesting, for my sister was living there; had been married a year or more before that time. My unmarried sister was a guest of hers much of the time, and for the year or two prior to the nine years mentioned by the spirit, I was there near half of my time, and so I concluded that Susan Gibson might have been some person that I had met there that I had forgotten, though it seems she had not forgotten me. I then asked the spirit: "Do you know my sister?" The reply was: "Yes." "What is her name?" And the letters in

\*"Shadows." John Wetherbee. Colby and Rich, 8s. 6d. 1885. London: The Psychological Press, 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, W.C.

reply rapped out were, E. L. I. Noticing them thus, I thought to myself, she is mistaken; it is going to be Eliza or Elizabeth, and have no sister by that name. I said nothing, and the next letter was an O, then a T, and the rapping stopped. At first, I did not recognise it, but as quickly as I saw it read, Eliot, then I saw it was my sister's name, Elliott. The spirit had spelled the name in the usual way, but our Elliotts spelled it with two *l*'s and two *t*'s, and in the diminished form I at first did not recognise it. It was far better in the way manifested, for it showed the spirit was not getting it from my mind. I then saw that that was the name of my living sister; but I wanted the name of my dead one, or who was now a spirit, and the reply was "Adeline," which was correct.

Speaking of this to my sister in Providence, I found her no better off than I was; she could remember no Susan Gibson among her acquaintances, but in the early part of her married life—say ten or eleven years before this interview—she had a domestic living with her by the name of Susan: it might have been Susan Gibson, but she did not know whether it was or not. As the communication was so correct, even free from any mind-reading, it seems to me reasonable to suppose it was the Susan that was the domestic. Imagine the situation, and see how natural it is, on that basis. She was the family-servant of Mrs. Elliott, my sister visiting her, whose name was Adeline, and I was often there. I asked her, as a spirit, for my sister's name. I was thinking of Adeline, who was a spirit, but the spirit of the domestic said "Eliot," speaking of her mistress by the name she was known, and then of Adeline, as she would have been known in that household.

It seems to me that this case is good and sufficient to carry the superstructure that Mr. Wetherbee built upon it. It made a Spiritualist of him, and he has remained one ever since.

Our author was intimately acquainted with my friend Epes Sargent, and has some good narratives of experiences with him. Here is one with the medium Colchester, a name well-known in the earlier days of Spiritualism.

We were seated around a table at the pleasant home of Daniel Farrar, of Hancock-street, Boston. The table was about four feet by two, square. There were six persons making this circle, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Farrar, Mrs. Wetherbee, Epes Sargent, myself, and Colchester,—two on each of the long sides, and one each on the ends. I had an end seat, and the back of my chair was against the bureau that was on the side of the room, and Sargent was my *vis-à-vis*. We were having a very satisfactory time, with a variety of manifestations, and the circle was a remarkably good one.

Colchester said to me: "Take a few of those plain white cards" (they were on the table for the purpose) "and put them in one of the drawers back of you, marking them first so as to know them again." I did so, cutting a crooked piece out of the corner of each, and retaining them for the purpose. There were six in number of the cards that I took and put in the drawer. "Now, take a handful of those crayons," said he, "and throw them in, and shut the drawer." It may be well to say that the drawer was quite full of white, folded cotton materials, leaving no spare room, so that the cards and pencils were in tolerably close quarters.

We proceeded then with the manifestations as before, and in perhaps about half an hour, in which we had other manifestations, Mr. Colchester said to me: "Better now open the drawer, and see how the cards look." I got up, and had to, as before, in order to move my chair so as to open the drawer, and took out what were once the six clean white cards, and found a picture, artistically drawn on each of them,—flowers, fruit, landscapes, birds, &c.,—and the colours used in the pictures thus drawn were the colours of the crayons or pencils that were put in the bureau drawer. Those crayons that we left on the table were not expressed in the pictures. I hardly need to say that this was done in a brightly-lighted room, and nobody had any access to the drawer, and could not if they had desired to, as I was sitting so closely to it, and had to move my chair before I could open it.

One more piece of evidence—this time bearing on the question of spirit-identity—is all that space permits. J. S. Thrasher, a close friend of Mr. Wetherbee's, was known to him, and jokingly addressed in correspondence as "the Sage of Galveston." He rejoined by beginning his letter, "My Dear Philosopher." He was a man of wide experience, and had been for many years on the staff of the *New York Herald*, when he passed on to the next state. A large correspondence had taken place between these two friends. "He signed his name on his two or three hundred letters as I. S. Thrasher." The I was unmistakable, quite identical with that which represented the pronoun of the first person, quite different from the J in the address of the letter to John Wetherbee. This is important to a full appreciation of the evidence.

Mr. Wetherbee had gone (in the year 1881) to Miss Shelhamer's home circle, and after receiving some messages from

other spirits, there occurred what I will again allow Mr. Wetherbee to relate in his own way.

The control afterwards said, addressing me: "There is a spirit who comes to you and wants to be recognised; he died a good way off and many months ago." I said: "Who is he? what is his name?" "I will see if I can get it," said the control; and after some hesitation said something that sounded like Frasher, and John or James; but as I knew no James, and no Frasher, I said: "Cannot some of my spirit friends tell me his name?"

The spirit said he had tried hard to manifest, and had promised me that he would, and the control said he seemed disappointed and persevering. I said: "Tell the spirit to come to the *Banner* circle, and try to manifest there"; and the control said he would if he could. A little while after this, "Lotela" controlled the medium. She is an Indian spirit of a lively turn of mind, and she said: "Wetherbee chief, that spirit that knows you is here still, and wants to be recognised." I said I wanted the recognition as much as he did, and I was sorry I was so stupid. She then said: "I see four large letters right over him and you—S-A-G-E." "Oh," said I, "the 'Sage of Galveston,' my friend Thrasher. He died some months ago, and promised to manifest to me when he went over, if he could."

The spirit was delighted to be thus recognised, and I still more so,—for it was so impossible for our acquaintance to have been known by the medium, and the cognomen of "Sage" was wholly correspondential and private. This was an extremely interesting affair to me; but the climax was the message that came from him shortly after at the *Banner* circle.

I went to the circle. I do not go often; have not the time; was detained down town one afternoon to meet a friend late, and so went to the circle to pass the time, and the message published in the last *Banner of Light* was given. Very few people—not more than one or two—in this city knew Mr. Thrasher, or of our close correspondential relations, and I do not believe a living soul in the world knows that he was in the habit of addressing me as "My Dear Philosopher," and that makes it a test. He refers to me, as will be seen by his message, as his friend and philosopher, and I can show over two hundred letters from him, beginning, "My Dear Philosopher," or referring to me as his philosopher and friend, which is a feature in that message. The general contents, also, are such as to be unmistakably his to anyone who knew the tenor of our intercourse. Above and beyond this internal evidence is what I shall hereafter say of his message which frees the communication from any suspicion of mind-reading on the part of the spirit that would have made him, possibly, an *alias*.

Oh, how my heart died within me when he closed the message thus: "You may say it is from J. S. Thrasher, of Galveston, Texas, to his philosopher friend, John Wetherbee, of Boston." The J broke my heart. Everything else was perfect. I don't know what I would have given to have had that spoken an I, in giving his name, instead of a J. I felt and knew it came from my Galveston friend, but why spirits so often get twisted on some trifle that the man himself never would mistake if he were in the form, but a spirit often does, is one of the unaccountables.

There was no mistaking the message and the circumstances as being from my friend, the "Sage," but the J coming, instead of an I, led me into a careful investigation, and I spent three evenings carefully reading his letters, and, to my great joy, I found two of them out of the lot signed with a J. That settled all the other I's to be J's, and in one letter, where he was quoting something of mine, and putting his own version also, he put at the end of mine as author, J. W., and at the end of his J. S. T. Before I had discovered the fact, I wrote South to a friend for information, and have received a reply that his initial letter was J., as his friend writes me in reply to mine, that his name was John S. Thrasher. So it seems the spirit was right, and I was wrong. If, on the evening that I spent at Miss Shelhamer's circle, I had known this—that his initial letter was a J—I would probably have made my connection with him more readily; and when the spirit was saying John and James, and approximating to a Thrasher by saying Frasher, I would not have had to wait for the "Sage" suggestion before I recognised him; but in the end it was all for the best.

There is much in this volume of the highest interest to Spiritualists; careful narratives such as I have quoted; wise reflections quaintly phrased; bits of philosophical pondering and speculation very provocative of thought. The contents of the book are of varied, and perhaps unequal value; but almost every taste will find something of fact, philosophy, or exhortation to satisfy it. Its highest recommendation is, to my mind, the transparent sincerity of the author, and his even garrulous explanation of his own mental states, and of the effect made upon him at various times by the phenomena which he witnessed. I trust the book may be widely read in this country. It is sure to be welcomed in America.

"M.A. (OXON.)"

## THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XXXVI.

[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 Psychical 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."]

The *Whitehall Review* for July 2nd, quotes in its entirety the article from our columns, "on the recovery of lost property by spirit agency," and the "intelligent" criticisms of the editor of that journal will be read by the readers of "LIGHT" with much interest.

He says: "We have so often described miracles of this kind that we do not now purpose going into the conjuring tricks, which would readily account for such remarkable phenomena. All we wish to say is, that we are very suspicious about this slate business. We cannot, try as we will, make out what connection there is between a slate, a slate pencil, and an inhabitant of the unseen world. We should like to have the adventures of the Irish halfpenny carried on by a frying-pan rather than with a slate. When the spirits can do with a frying-pan or a toast-rack what they can do with a slate, we shall then believe in them. Until then, however, we shall be irreverent enough to consider Spiritualism to be a modern word for humbug. May we suggest—upon the hypothesis that our impertinent want of faith is erroneous and unwarranted—that the authorities at Scotland Yard should engage a few Spiritualistic mediums as detectives?"

When this brilliant editor's doubts have been satisfied by the employment of countless frying-pans, and the sensible suggestion has taken root among all classes of Spiritualists, I shall watch with interest all that may be said by the sceptical world of the "latest craze" of a believer. We are indebted to the Press for much, but we have special reason to be proud that the editor of "a journal of politics, literature, art, and country pursuits," circulating, we presume, among the educated classes, should have the inventive genius to suggest the use of frying-pans instead of the ordinary writing-paper of commerce.

Since writing the above another issue of the *Whitehall Review* has appeared, and "One Who Knows the Truth" writes as follows to the editor: "I have just seen a copy of a recent issue of your paper, and I much regret to find that you sneer, in an ignorant way, over the wonderful gifts that Mr. Eglinton has received from his Maker. I say 'ignorant' advisedly, because you have no right to sneer at anything that you know only by hearsay. Now I who write to you went to see Mr. Eglinton by appointment. I took with me my mother, my sister-in-law, and my wife. I bought two new single slates at a shop, and my sister bought a double slate. We four sat in Mr. Eglinton's drawing-room in full daylight, a common deal table before us, with no cloth on it. I wrote a question on one of the slates, and then fastened the two slates together face to face with a piece of string, putting inside a tiny piece of slate-pencil. Mr. Eglinton held the slate just under the flap of the table, in my full view. In about thirty seconds I heard—so did my friends—the gentle scratching of a slate-pencil, and then it ceased. I untied the slates very carefully, and there saw an answer written under my question, and the tiny point of pencil remaining at the last line of the last word. The same thing occurred with my sister, and her own double slate. She had an answer that the person she sought to find in the spheres could not be found at once, but that the intelligence or spirit would seek for him. Then came a test that would have satisfied even you. I lashed the two slates as before together, having previously cleaned the slates, and asked another question, and put in the same crumb of pencil. Mr. Eglinton then held the slate high up over the table with one hand, and my sister held the other end. Longer time was taken now before an answer came, and Mr. Eglinton seemed much distressed. In about two minutes the pencil began writing, and, as before, suddenly stopped. I opened the slates and there was a distinct answer to my question, written on closed and tied slates, held in the air by my sister as well as Mr. Eglinton. There has been, and will be, plenty of humbug in the Spiritualistic phenomena, but that does not the least affect the facts, absolute facts, such as I have just roughly laid before you, and you will make a strange mistake if you allow your paper to sneer at the marvellous, yet most simple, acts of

communion that are daily occurring between the spirit world and our own. The Bible is one long history of this communion between the heavens and the hells and earth. Why should this have ceased, or how can it have ceased? Our parsons' asseverations will not alter God's laws."

The illustrious Agnostic "Saladin" does not meet my challenge fairly, according to my notion of the fitness of things. Probably he may be better engaged in fighting Mr. Bradlaugh. He, like Mr. Huxley, Mr. Tyndall, Dr. Carpenter, and other illustrious men, is committed to certain opinions which it might be troublesome to change. Mr. Bradlaugh ran an awful risk when he sat on the committee of the Dialectical Society. Of course, I do not expect any free and accepted Agnostic to visit Mr. Eglinton.

I observe that a "prophetic conference" has been held in Exeter Hall, to compare notes as to the proximity of the Second Advent. Are spiritual manifestations fulfilling the prophecies? Is the Salvation Army a sign as well as a wonder? Are the "earthquakes in divers places" to be spiritual or material?

"Tremendous woes," the Rev. M. Baxter says, "must soon come upon the world which at present is slumbering and heedless of the bomb-shell that in a few years is to burst upon it." But we are always having tremendous woes—the Soudan disasters, for example, or the cholera now raging in Spain, or the dynamite explosions.

On the other hand, *The Christian* publishes a sermon by Rev. H. J. Gamble, Upper Clapton, who doubts if miracles are frequent, necessary, or even useful. There is not a trace of miracles in the 2,500 years of the Patriarchs. Mr. Gamble holds that miracles began with Moses and ended with the Apostles. In the present day they are not needed.

No: "not needed," and here comes the reason why. The greatest pretender to miraculous power has been the Church of Rome, and the evidence for many of its miracles is apparently as strong as that adduced by faith-healers. In the *Lancet* of June 21st, 1885, Dr. Buchanan, Professor of Clinical Surgery at Glasgow University, writes thus: "I have no doubt that some of the persons who went (to the Grotto of Lourdes) lame and crippled were restored to the use of their limbs, and were relieved of pains and aches." And Dr. Buchanan goes on to give an account of some of his own cures, which he considers quite as remarkable as either the Roman Catholic miracles or those of the faith-healers.

The Rev. Mr. Gamble's conclusion is that: "The supernatural is around and about us. Not all the rationalism or scepticism of the age, not the clear and penetrating light which science pours on every wonder, not the discovery of the impostures that have been palmed on the credulous, can effectually dispose of all the marvels which are recorded, and to which testimony that has not been shaken is borne. There are dreams, and visions, and magnetic forces centring in certain individuals, enabling them to perform wonderful things, and there is evidence for all this, so perfectly trustworthy that we are constrained to admit that there are more things in the world than our philosophy dreams of, experience verifies, or reason confirms."

But why not say, in so many plain words, that the facts of Spiritualism are beyond denial?

THE doctrine of re-incarnation is not commonly received in England, nor in the United States, where Mr. Jesse Shepherd makes conspicuous efforts to extend it; and we are informed that it is extending. The people speaking the Latin dialects, those of France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, South America, and Mexico, all accept it. We believe the doctrine strengthens the bases for the social reforms to which Spiritism tends.—*Le Spiritisme*.

BARON HUMBOLDT was present at some magnetic experiments by one of Mesmer's disciples, Dr. Wolfen, on a respectable lady, who communicated the fact to me. At the conclusion, Humboldt said, "I cannot deny the effects. I see in them a vast field for study; but I am too old and too much absorbed in other inquiries to engage in them." What so eminent a *savant* as Humboldt said of experiments in Human Magnetism ought surely to have weight with other *savants*, however eminent they may be.—RAGAZZI.

## THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE:

CHAMBERS: 16, CRAVEN STREET, CHANCING CROSS, S.W.

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purpose, primarily, of uniting those who share a common faith, and then of giving information respecting that faith to those who seek for it, has now occupied Chambers at the above address. There will be found an extensive Library of works especially attractive to Spiritualists; the various Journals of Spiritualism published in this and other countries; and opportunities of converse with friends like-minded. The Alliance holds periodical Soirées at the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, where papers on interesting phases of the subject are read, and discussion is invited.

Particulars as to Membership (minimum Annual Subscription, One Guinea) may be obtained from the Hon. Sec.,

MORELL THEOBALD,

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The following list, which will be continued by the courtesy of the editor until complete, will show what an important library is now available for use by members of the London Spiritualist Alliance. It is the desire of the Council that the books should be used by Spiritualists, and should not merely be available for consultation in our Chambers. To this end they have made arrangements for their being removed, under certain restrictions, for home reading. The publication of a catalogue in "LIGHT" will place at the disposal of every member a list which will enable him to select at his leisure what he may wish to read. Rules and regulations will be at once drawn up, so that the Library may be available without unnecessary delay.

W. STANTON MOSES, M.A., President.

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## 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 Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; \*Lord Brougham; \*Lord Lytton; \*Lord Lyndhurst; \*Archbishop Whately; \*Dr. 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 Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; 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.

## WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—"Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent."

PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—"I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me."

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.—"I have for many years known that these phenomena are real, as distinguished from impostures; and it is not of yesterday that I concluded they were calculated to explain much that has been doubtful in the past; and, when fully accepted, revolutionise the whole frame of human opinion on many important matters."—*Extract from a Letter to A. Russel Wallace.*

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—"Far from abating my confidence in the inferences respecting the agencies of the spirits of deceased mortals, in the manifestations of which I have given an account in my work, I have, within the last nine months" (this was written in 1858), "had more striking evidences of that agency than those given in the work in question."

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—"I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. . . . In short, the testimony has been so abundant and consentaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up."—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

PROFESSOR GREGORY, F.R.S.E.—"The essential question is this. What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? Although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel on some others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. I believe that if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to I should be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging of the truth of the spiritual theory."

LOD BROUGHAM.—"There is but one question I would ask the author, Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest

faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism."—*Preface by Lord Brougham to "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: "1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person. 3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications."

PROFESSOR BARRETT, F.R.S.E.—"I know and rejoice in the blessing Spiritualism has been to my own faith, and to that of several dear friends of mine. Moreover, I cordially recognise the fact that in bereavement and deep distress numbers have been cheered and consoled by the hope that Spiritualism has set before them. . . . So far from Materialism being true, I do not believe a single person has ever yet lived on this earth who has truly and heartily desired to know if an intelligent and personal existence be possible without our present bodily organism, and has steadily set himself to solve this supreme question with all the help he can gain from every source,—I say I do not believe any such earnest seeker after truth has ever failed to obtain a clear and definite answer in the affirmative."

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—"I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated 'magnetic,' 'somnambolic,' 'mediumic,' and others not yet explained by science to be 'impossible,' is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to."

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—"Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possibility of trickery and self-deception. . . . He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: "Other and numerous phenomena have occurred, proving the existence (a) of forces unknown to science; (b) the power of instantly reading my thoughts; (c) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. . . . That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late now to deny their existence."

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, F.G.S.—"My position, therefore, is that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are proved, quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences, and it is not denial or quibbling that can disprove any of them, but only fresh facts and accurate deductions from those facts. When the opponents of Spiritualism can give a record of their researches approaching in duration and completeness to those of its advocates; and when they can discover and show in detail, either how the phenomena are produced or how the many sane and able men here referred to have been deluded into a coincident belief that they have witnessed them; and when they can prove the correctness of their theory by producing a like belief in a body of equally sane and able unbelievers—then, and not till then, will it be necessary for Spiritualists to produce fresh confirmation of facts which are, and always have been, sufficiently real and indisputable to satisfy any honest and persevering inquirer."—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.*

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—"The writer" (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) "can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of (so-called) Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as, for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of any legerdemain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience, of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a mere narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil."—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—"No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, Homœopathy, and Mesmerism) deserve to be observed, recorded, and arranged; and whether we call by the name of mesmerism, or by any other name, the science which proposes to do this, is a mere question of nomenclature. Among those who profess this science there may be careless observers, prejudiced recorders, and rash systematisers; their errors and defects may impede the progress of knowledge, but they will not stop it. And we have no doubt that, before the end of this century, the wonders which perplex almost equally those who accept and those who reject modern mesmerism will be distributed into defined classes, and found subject to ascertained laws—in other words, will become the subjects of a science." These views will prepare us for the following statement, made in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1864, p. 336: "We have only to add, as a further tribute to the attainments and honours of Mr. Senior, that he was by long inquiry and experience a firm believer in spiritual power and manifestations. Mr. Home was his frequent guest, and Mr. Senior made no secret of his belief among his friends. He it was who recommended the publication of Mr. Home's recent work by Messrs. Longmans, and he authorised the publication, under initials, of one of the striking incidents there given, which happened to a near and dear member of his family."

### 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.

"4th May, 1847.

ROBERT HOUDIN."

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.,

"May 16th, 1847.

(Signed), ROBERT HOUDIN."

#### 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 unbiased 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.

"Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI."

### 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 deterring 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 a 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 twitchings 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.