

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOATH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

No. 247.—VOL. V.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1885.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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

## MISS ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS

AND THE

## SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

By "M. A. (Oxon.)"

The current number of the *North American Review* contains an article by Miss E. S. Phelps on "The Great Psychical Opportunity," which she "is tempted to call the Opportunity of the Century." Giving a substantial approval to the principles on which the Society was founded in England, and subsequently in America, Miss Phelps wants to know what is being done. Darwin, we are reminded, "was twenty-two years in collecting and controlling the material for 'The Origin of Species' and 'The Descent of Man.' He had in the highest degree the two things necessary to the discovery of a great principle: the power to attend, and the power to infer. We might add a third, the power to imagine. He observed and recorded as no other man of our day has done: his power of inference proved equal to his observing and recording power;" and as a result we have the doctrine of evolution.

Desiderating the employment of the same patient methods, Miss Phelps recognises, "with a keen sense of their wisdom," the appeal of the officers of the Society for Psychical Research to the public for co-operation in collecting and investigating alleged facts that lie hid in the recesses of human experience. It is "to the help of the unlearned that the learned have appealed." "Do we sneer or smile? If we are wise we shall do neither. These men know what they are about, and why they are about it. . . . The greater the weight the more the strands in the cable that hoists it. Nothing is too small for so huge a work as that which would lift the load of mystery, older than the Witch of Endor, terrified at her trick [where does the "trick" come in, Miss Phelps?] which had summoned what we should now find it fashionable to call a 'telepathic impression'—a load as new as the last poor creature, in fresh mourning, paying two dollars a sitting to a fifth story medium, to get 'communications' from her dead child. He who means to win in a charge on this mountain of mystery and misery can condescend—must condescend to the infinite drudgery of discovery."

There is no objection to be raised against this candid and cautious tone. The work is enormous; surrounded with difficulties; environed with prejudice on every side. The records available are in some cases emotionally related, and of no value as exact narratives. And even those which do relate, with some approach to scientific accuracy, facts that are really important, are not in themselves such as

the Society has hitherto deemed most suitable for its purposes. Miss Phelps makes some calculations as to the number of Spiritualists—two millions (she thinks) in America, and more than that number in Great Britain. "Here, let us say, to take the most modest figures, are two millions of our people, intelligent enough to conduct the affairs, and obey the laws, and bear the responsibilities of average civilised society" who testify respecting these facts. "Hundreds of people," she says in another place, "whose word of honour is as good intellectual coin as that of the reader of this page or the contributor to this review, have testified to the conveyance of thought, without visible, or audible, or tangible media, from embodied mind to embodied mind; to the tragic or trivial incidents of mesmerism; to the coincidence of dreams; to the prophecy of mental convictions; to the visual appearance of the distant living; to the sight or sign of what is thought to be the more distant dead." "Say what we may (and we ought to say it) of the nonsense, of the fraud, of the jugglery, the hysteria, the blasphemy mixed to a mush with the whole matter, the significant fact remains that here is a whole class, not of the lowest or most illiterate, while not yet, to any marked extent, of the wisest or highest, who believe themselves, in our highly illuminated times, to have found some means of access to the consciousness of the dead."

Or, perhaps with a passing word of warning not to be hasty in assuming fraud and hysteria too conveniently, it would be better to say that there is a compact mass of people, quite as capable of judging evidence as their critics, with level heads and clear minds, and with a block of experience to reason from to which these critics can make no pretence. who believe that the so-called dead have systematically communicated with them. To this it may pertinently be added that this compact body of thinking and reasoning people is not troubled with deserters from its ranks, but is constantly receiving accession from those who have examined for themselves, and find the Spiritualistic hypothesis the only one which covers the facts, in spite of the opposition with which science meets it, and, I may say, in spite of the tentative and often puerile efforts which some notable scientific folk have made from time to time to explain, or to explain away, that which they have not first taken the pains to understand.\*

I agree with Miss Phelps in her desire for Darwinian patience, as I also do when she defines the scientific basis of thought and action as requiring two paramount qualifications—"equipment and candour: the presence of equivalent ability and the absence of nullifying prejudice." We Spiritualists have had too much reason to complain that adequate intellectual equipment in our critics has not always co-existed with adequate patience in the study of our facts; nor have these qualifications been always illuminated by that candour and impartiality which springs most of all from the "absence of nullifying prejudice." Perfect candour is a rare gift. "The bigotry of the laboratory and the library is quite as robust as the bigotry of the altar and the creed. . . . We hear a great deal about the value of scientific evidence. We have a right to ask a great deal from the scientific attitude.

\* Vide Dr. W. B. Carpenter (*passim*), Prof. Lankester, Prof. Tyndall, and other leaders of scientific opinion, for instances of hasty, inaccurate, and insufficient generalisation.

What should it be? That which George Eliot would call one of 'massive receptiveness.' What must it be? That which will stand the test of its own primer and grammar. . . . An imperceptible jar of human prejudice may spoil the finest web of attention and inference that ever the human mind has wrought. . . . What is it, indeed, to be candid but to be *willing to see a thing turn out either way?* What is the scientific spirit but the honest spirit? What is it to be wise, but to be just?"

That seems to me to be a much-needed protest on behalf of an elementary qualification for dealing with these mysteries, which may be commended alike to the high priests of exact science, to the Psychical Researchers, and to the Spiritualists, which latter body, having what they confidently believe to be truth on their side, can, while recommending candour to their critics, afford to exercise themselves that measure of the same virtue which consists in being "willing to see a thing turn out either way." We have nothing to fear from candid, impartial, and exhaustive investigation; nor, indeed, from inadequate theorising for which the time has not yet come.

"It is not time yet" (says Miss Phelps) "for any 'working hypothesis.' It is too early to have assurances that one thing can, or another cannot be. We shall never have the truth by inventing it, but by discovering it. . . . I say, without hesitation, that no investigator is qualified to pass judgment on psychical phenomena who is not equally ready to admit—if admit he must—in the end that he is dealing with the physiological action of cells in the frontal lobes of the brain, or with the presence of a human soul disembodied by death."

Gradually Miss Phelps comes to apply her general statements to a critical examination of the methods of the English Society for Psychical Research. The passage formulates what, it must be admitted, is in the mouths of men expressed even more impatiently.

"In the work of the English Society, a close observer may already detect the danger of a mistake in the precise direction where the Society most deprecates mistakes in its coadjutors. It seems to us that a hypothesis is put to very hard play, if not to work, in the hands of the committees most interested in the telepathic theory. . . . Suppose that the telepathic theory might explain an immense proportion (I do not say all) of what are called the supernatural facts of Spiritualism; whether it does so we have not yet 'accumulated and reflected' enough to say."

That is temperately put, and true as far as it goes. We cannot say yet how far exactly the hypothesis will reach; but we can say that it does not reach so far as it is sought to stretch it. And, while substantially agreeing, as I do, in the methods of the Society for Psychical Research, it is open to me to say that it seems both illogical and wasteful of effort and of time to persist in applying a hypothesis to facts which it admittedly will not wholly cover. It is not necessary to urge the adoption of the Spiritualistic hypothesis, though it claims by right a hospitable reception; but it is open to us to point out that it is no new thing in the world, that it does cover all the ground, and that it should not be evaded through antagonistic prepossession, an attitude which I am thankful to find that some of the leaders of action in the Society for Psychical Research categorically disavow. Such distinct disavowal as Mr. F. W. H. Myers, for instance, has more than once given in most unequivocal terms must be accepted *ex animo* if any friendly or courteous controversy is to be maintained. I fear, however, from a perusal of the open letter of Mr. Farmer in last week's "LIGHT," that there is in some quarters, which I do not seek to define, a feeling which Spiritualists, as a matter of ordinary self-respect, must resent and disavow as unworthy and even insulting.

It will be very necessary to clear the air of these thunder-clouds before any candid and impartial investiga-

tion of subjects about which Spiritualists certainly know more than most people, can be hoped for. I have not discerned for myself all that antagonism to Spiritualism which I know many believe to exist on the part of the chief leaders of thought and action in the Society for Psychical Research. I have had much sympathy with the course of action pursued, though I have thought it slow sometimes. I have, indeed, regretted that facts lying at our thresholds should seem to be neglected, while the Society went far afield only to return empty. I have seen difficulties in the way of investigating Spiritualistic phenomena by committees; and also of the sifting of evidence in the way that the Society has hitherto employed. I was quite content to wait; but I am compelled to say, with pain and deep regret, that this unfortunate letter of Mr. Farmer's correspondent, with its most unfortunate language, comes just at a time when it will give colour in the minds of susceptible people to an idea which it is to the last degree desirable to avoid.

#### "PSYCHICAL RESEARCH."

The method of investigation pursued by the leaders of the Society for Psychical Research has before now called forth strong protests from Spiritualists and others, both outside the Society and within it, but it is pretty evident that the charges which have been brought against it cannot be ignored much longer, and that they will have to be met and answered fairly. The most recent adverse criticism from a member of the Society is that of Mr. G. D. Haughton, which appears in the August number of the *Journal*, and to which additional interest will attach through the strikingly inadequate reply of Mr. Frederic W. H. Myers.

No one will deny that the Society has done some very useful and important work, and that to some extent it has been clearing the ground. It stands midway between the Spiritualists and the outer world, or *profanum vulgus*. It is able, no doubt, to command a certain amount of attention from men who require, in regard to occult matters, to be treated gently and tenderly, and for whom the phenomena and teachings of Spiritualism proper are what Chemistry or Greek would be to a boor. It has collected a number of facts—most of them, it is true, of secondary value, and has appointed various committees for "investigation," and even for experiment, which, by the way, appear to be chiefly remarkable for the non-presentation of reports—but for all that, the criticisms which have been made are neither uncalled for nor unjust, and no unbiassed person who has studied the Society's *Journal* and its general method of procedure will be disposed to think that Mr. Haughton exaggerates when he says that the members have become wearied by "negative and abortive results," and that the energy of the Society has been misdirected by the digging up of "shadowy reminiscences of what occurred many years ago," when there are plenty of similar phenomena occurring at the present time to be inquired into.

It would probably not be inapt to compare the Society's method of study and of collecting facts to those adopted by the older and less scientific of the Alchemists, though the word "method" is, perhaps, hardly an appropriate one, for there is but little, if any, method in either case worthy of the name "scientific." The most serious and dangerous error of which those who are responsible for the Society's guidance have been guilty, is the invention of theories. Theorising from insufficient data is the curse of every science. The making of a certain class of theories is far more easy than the making of experiments and the planning of investigations, and the theory-maker accordingly crops up in every direction. He finds, or it may be invents, a big word or phrase wherewith to label his theory, and in nine cases out of ten becomes so firmly wedded to it that he will stretch it to the utmost limits that his mind can give to it, which is saying a good deal; and that he will ignore—generally unconsciously—any facts, however important, which militate against it. To this highly valuable class of hypothetical productions, the Society seems to attach the very greatest importance. "Telepathy" and the "unconscious secondary self" are both before an admiring world, the second, however, being merely a new label for Dr. Carpenter's threadbare "unconscious cerebration" theory, with which that great man for ever settled all the phenomena of Spiritualism.

It must be admitted that it is in the highest degree unscientific to start a theory based upon a few out of a certain

body of analogous facts, to refuse to look at the others which *might* altogether subvert the theory, and to proceed as if they had no existence. There is a distinct *petitio principii* in the manner in which the word telepathy has been used in the endeavour to account for such phenomena as the "death wraith," as well as in many other instances; and as to the "unconscious secondary self" it is pretty generally known that that most monstrous hypothesis was revived and republished in the face of large numbers of phenomena in themselves sufficient to render the theory untenable, and alleged by the most competent of witnesses to be true. Did the resuscitators of "unconscious cerebration" pause and proceed to investigate these phenomena, which, it was admitted, if they existed, were sufficient to modify or overthrow their theory? Not at all. The theory was published straight away, to remain and act as a stumbling block to future investigation and study, a proceeding which cannot but be considered as other than grossly unscientific.

As pointed out by Mr. Haughton, Messrs. Gurney, Myers, and their friends are vainly endeavouring to propitiate the Scientific Ogre. They have determined to be very "scientific" indeed, and have succeeded wonderfully in being the reverse. They are, perhaps, afraid of being "investigated" by Mr. Lankester, according to the superior methods so elegantly advocated and practised by him; and they tremble at the name of the Royal Society, which is really a very [harmless body after all. Mr. Myers shelters himself behind one of the Psychical Society's famous committees, which ought to have "reported" but has not done so. He has not entered into the Barkas case because the inaccuracy or absurdity of some of the replies "seemed to him to preclude the likelihood of a scientific spirit from guiding the medium." In other words, Mr. Myers thinks it easy to lay down the law [about the conditions attending such phenomena as these; they are all clear and simple to him; but he says nothing about those replies which were accurate and not absurd, and entirely outside and beyond the knowledge of those present, except that they were "interesting." We can expect no more since no theory with a high sounding name is yet ready to come out of the Society's forcing-room. Because a certain medium is supposed to have been guilty of fraud upon some occasion, Mr. Myers decides to have nothing to do with her or the phenomena that may occur in her presence. We know the value and the meaning of many of these so-called detections. Mr. Myers clearly does not. It would be well to know whether the evidence of this medium's alleged fraud has been subjected to that careful and rigid scientific and legal scrutiny for which the Psychical Society is so pre-eminently distinguished; but whether it has or has not, it would appear from Mr. Myers' statement that he considers himself incapable of distinguishing between fraudulent and genuine manifestations, of guarding against the former and of appreciating the latter, and that therefore he cannot very well rank as a "first-class witness."

The real *mot d'ordre* of the Psychical Society may be summed up in the well-known phrase, "Spirit is the last thing I will give in to," a position which involves some of the most wanton assumptions possible. There is the monstrous assumption that in view of the "well-known laws of Nature" the spirit hypothesis is the most difficult to accept; whereas, if the matter is to be argued from *a priori* grounds, it will be found somewhat more rational to accept the spirit hypothesis than, for example, the hypothesis of the "unconscious secondary self." Again, there is the assumption that Science is opposed to Spiritualism. True Science is not opposed to Spiritualism—far from it; it unquestionably tends in that direction. The whole Scientific world may be safely defied to prove—with the wretchedly small glimmering that we possess of a few fragments of some few of Nature's laws—that the teaching of modern Science is anti-Spiritual. None of the really great and true among men of science have ever finally thought so. It is but a few camp followers who have raised the cry, and who at the utmost have believed that they believed in it.

"Let us have facts first and theories afterwards," says Mr. Haughton. Let us hope that the leaders of "Psychical Research" will see the force of this. "*Les faits restent et les théories passent.*" And let us also hope that when at length these gentlemen descend from the pinnacles where they fondly believe themselves to be enthroned, and do us the honour of seriously investigating the present phenomena of Spiritualism, they may be imbued with the true scientific spirit, not with a grotesque imitation of

it, and with that single-mindedness, absence of bias, and humility which are the first necessities for the man who would seek and know the truth.

#### THYMOL.

To be happy in old age it is necessary that we accustom ourselves to objects that can accompany the mind all the way through life, and that we take other things as good in their day. The mere man of pleasure is miserable in old age; and the mere drudge in business is but little better; whereas natural philosophy, mathematical and mechanical science, offer a continual source of tranquil pleasure, the study of which, in spite of gloomy ecclesiastical dogmas, is the study of true theology. It teaches man to know and admire the Creator; for the principles of science are in creation, are unchangeable, and are of Divine origin.—PAINÉ.

**MENTAL TELEGRAPHY.**—Those who have lived in Asiatic countries, know that the natives can convey intelligence to each other with more than ordinary rapidity. This was done throughout the great Indian Mutiny, when the "Secret Mail" was known to long forestall the most rapidly-conveyed Government despatches. But the investigations of the London Society for Psychical Research and the New York Academy of Anthropology have well-nigh satisfied us that the Indian natives are in possession of a system of mental telepathy, or telegraphy, advanced beyond the stage of mere experiment.—*American Phrenological Journal*.

**PSYCHIC THEORY.**—The late Dr. Whedon called the departed "dead angeloids." He had a theory that the ramifications of the nervous system formed in themselves a figure corresponding to the visible external configuration of the body, the one being a perfect resemblance of the other; that this nerve-contour, at death, detached itself to become the external of the spirit. Others have advanced the theory of a still finer form underlying this of the delicate nervous organism, imperceptible to mortal sight, the spirit form of the being. It is as difficult, however, to conceive of the survival of any part of the nerve-system, as it is of the resurrection of the old and useless body itself.—*Golden Gate*.

**SINGING IN SPIRITUAL CIRCLES.**—The members of a circle should sing at dark séances; the spirits sometimes join in the singing, their voices vibrating clearly: if we stop to listen they often stop, as if for want of support. The singing of a circle promotes unity; it prevents the circle from being troubled by the noise of words which disturb concentration of attention. Singing has a magnetically harmonising effect upon circle, medium and spirits. During the operation of materialisation, and in the manifestation of the spirit voice, the singing of the circle is found especially useful. Spirits use the sound waves in their own speaking and singing; and the better the singing of the circle, the better for the spirit's vocal manifestation.—*La Lumière*.

**A DREAM.**—The wife of a prominent citizen of Chicago reports: "My husband handed me four new ten-dollar bills one morning, on leaving home for office. I put them in my note-purse. I went out, but made no payment. At night I found only three notes in my purse. I went to sleep thinking of my loss. In the morning I awoke with a dream of my talking with a lady in a store, and that on my turning to leave she called my attention to my note-purse, hanging at my wrist, being unfastened. I had folded the notes separately and loosely, and they had caused the purse to bulge, but I had thought it safe not to open without pulling. In my dream, I sent a servant to the store to ask if I had dropped the note there, and that he returned with the note. My dream revived in my mind the incident of the lady calling my attention to my open purse, and after breakfast I sent the servant. He brought me my lost bill, with the message that it had been picked up and handed to the cashier, who had put it aside to be claimed."—*Spiritual Offering*.

**DEVELOPMENT OF A MEDIUM.**—Louisa House, on recovering from an illness two years ago, had a vision; then she saw clairvoyantly; then she had attacks of unconsciousness for hours; on recovering she related scenes that she had witnessed in what she called "heaven." She was, although in ordinary good health, conscious of the attacks coming on, and would ask not to be disturbed in them; for the family had tried to rouse her to consciousness by rough handling and stimulants. Once, remaining unconscious for eleven hours, the family doctor was sent for, when she sprang to her feet and delivered a religious exhortation. The trance attacks then came on frequently, and spirits, evidently, spoke through her. Neighbours came in; one, a Dane, told me that he was addressed in his own language. Last winter one of these attacks lasted over two days. Fraud, hysteria, insanity, and the devil, were of course on the tips of the neighbours' tongues; but Spiritualists regarded her as under development as a medium. Her father was a materialist, but a deceased brother of his, through her, satisfied him as to his continued existence. Descriptions are now given through her of spirit spheres, corresponding with those through Swedenborg. She has a sister, Phebe, who is under a similar course of development; but her mediumship seems for tests and drawing in colours. The whole family is esteemed as honest, conscientious, harmonious, and benevolent.—DR. W. JORDAN, in the "*Spiritual Offering*."

## THE BLINDNESS OF SCIENCE.

In Paul Richer's "Etudes Cliniques sur l'Hystère Epilepsie" (Paris, 1881), a work which, for the rest, will well repay the reading of the enlightened Spiritualist, appears a striking example of the utter blindness of science when it is brought face to face with the supernatural. Three reports of cases are given side by side, of which two differ essentially from the third, in exhibiting characteristics perfectly familiar to most readers of our pages, but which have these essential particulars quietly ignored by the learned author.

We will give the three cases, that our readers may behold for themselves this deplorable hiatus in the scientific mind: we quote first the possibly purely pathological case.

"Mademoiselle S., aged forty-six years, believes that all the evils which happen on earth are caused by her. To hear her, she has committed every sin. God has withdrawn Himself from her and delivered her to the devil. This alienation, which manifested itself first merely in melancholy, now manifests itself by songs, recitations, monologues, poured forth with extreme volubility and tones exalted with passion. Mademoiselle feels how absurd all this is, and that it might make her pass for a mad woman, but she obeys an irresistible force which controls her. Nothing on earth can prevent this unlimited expansion, this terrible efflorescence. To these exalted states succeed hysterical crises. She struggles for a long time, violently convulsed. During these attacks the faces of the bystanders, for her, are transformed; she sees hideous phantoms, the devil appears to her, her ideas of possession are much more vivid, she utters piercing cries, praying to be delivered from these apparitions, bursts into laughter, and dissolves in tears. Then at the end of some hours she returns to her habitual state."

Now let the reader compare with this fairly normal case of what is usually, and perhaps rightly considered, in our days at least, solely as disease, the two following:—

"We read in Schurigius that the only daughter of Himpelius, a young modest lady, eighteen years of age, had frequently hysterical attacks. They were very violent, bending her body like a bow, and causing her to utter such loud cries that every one hearing them despaired of her life. However, with the close of the paroxysm, though a little delirious, intellectual capabilities returned to her. She sometimes called for pen, ink, and paper and set to work writing sacred verses and hymns, not without felicity and poesy, such as she would by no means have been able to compose in her usual condition. Sometimes, to the general amazement, she would extemporise a sermon, very eloquent, either in her native tongue or in other languages which before had been unknown to her, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and which, after the paroxysm, she knew no longer."

"Marguerite B., eleven years of age, of disposition a little violent, but having pious and Christian sentiments, was seized on the 19th of January, 1829, without previous illness, with convulsive attacks, which lasted for a couple of years, with only few, and those short, interruptions. As long as they lasted the child was unconscious, rolling her eyes, making grimaces, putting her arms through all sorts of fantastic movements. On the 21st a voice was heard several times by those around her, which said, 'You are being prayed for.' Immediately she came to herself, weary, exhausted, knowing nothing of what had happened, saying only that she had been dreaming. On the 22nd another low voice, quite distinct from the first, began to be heard also. This voice spoke almost without cessation as long as the crisis lasted (half-an-hour to an hour or more), being occasionally interrupted by the first, which always repeated 'You are being prayed for.' The voice evidently wished to be taken for that of a personality other than the sick girl. It spoke of her sometimes by the third person. It gave to itself an objective source. In all that it said there was no confusion, no incoherence; on the contrary, perfect consecutiveness of ideas, logical method of replying to all questions, even a tone of mockery in rejecting some."

But the distinguishing mark of these discourses was their moral, or rather immoral, tone. They expressed pride, arrogance, raillery, hatred against God, Christ, and Truth. "I am the Son of God, the Saviour of the world; bow down and worship Me," were the first words, often repeated, spoken by the voice. Then followed jests on holy things, God, Christ, the Bible, violent indignation against the lovers of goodness, the most fearful curses, boundless fury, a rage altogether indescribable, upon seeing anyone praying, or even clasping the hands. All this might have been considered as pointing to an external influence, if the voice had not of itself betrayed its origin by calling itself devil. As soon as the voice was heard the girl's countenance suddenly changed in the most astounding manner; her aspect became diabolic, so that to conceive it one must read in the Messiah the description of the devil offering Jesus a stone.

On January 26th, at 11 a.m., the very hour, so she said, in which an angel had announced to her that her deliverance would come, all these phenomena ceased. The last thing heard was a voice issuing from her mouth, saying, "Begone, unclean spirit; leave the child. Knowst thou not how dear she is unto me?" She then returned to consciousness.

On January 31st, the same condition reproduced itself with the same symptoms. *But gradually new voices were heard, till the patient had six of them, all different in timbre, or a choice of words, or the character of discourse.* Each represented the voice of a distinct person, and was announced as such to the patient by the first voice, so often heard. The violence of wrath, the curses, blasphemies, and reproaches of these voices reached the highest pitch in this stage of the disease; and the lucid intervals, in which, by the way, the girl preserved no recollection of what had passed in the paroxysm, but used to read and pray fervently, were shorter and more rare. The 9th of February, which again had been announced to her as the day of her deliverance, put an end to this miserable condition. As before, it was at 11 a.m., after the voice had repeatedly announced its departure, that the following words were heard proceeding from the mouth of the patient: "Begone, unclean spirit; leave the child; thy kingdom is at an end for ever." The girl then came to herself and has since had no relapse. (Kerner, Geschichten, Berenener. Stuttgart, 1834.)

Supposing, then, that our author has taken the trouble to verify his cases, which he has collected, apparently, from independent sources (and we confess that before the prestige of scientific reputation we are too much in awe and trembling even to suggest that he has not), what are we to say, what will twentieth century professors say to his putting these three cases in exactly the same category, and ascribing them all simply to hysteria followed by delirium with hallucinations? Can the force of a blinkered, fatuous, fixed idea further go? Can modest young ladies, by becoming delirious, acquire four languages? Can pious little girls chop logic and swear *ad libitum* to boot in six voices, by hallucination? We are sceptical.

Alas! M. Richer, your great grandchildren will have to discard the agreeable pages, their ancestral heritage, for others less delectable if they wish to pass the preliminary examinations of the future.

Forty thousand dollars are to be expended on a crematory near Philadelphia. It will be located at Manayunk, within an enclosure of eleven acres.

CHARLES E. WATKINS, the medium for slate-writing, writes H. Martin, invited, some months ago, correspondence with young mediums, to enable his guides to ascertain if they were mediums for slate-writing. I was one to respond. After a few letters I was invited to visit him at the restful home farm, where he is getting up his health after twelve years' work as a public medium. After his amiable wife had retired we had a séance, and his guides encouraged me in my development. I had delightful communications from some of my own spirit friends who promised help. Mr. Watkins proposes, with the aid of wealthy friends, to found in Washington Territory an institution in which suitable mediums may be developed, to meet the need for more mediums to demonstrate the fact of spirit-return, and for imparting the philosophy of Spiritualism. In the meantime he continues his work of helping to develop mediums for the slate-writing. He showed me a large basket filled with letters received by him in answer to his call for correspondence.—H. EUGENE MARTIN, DIMONDALE, MICH., in *Spiritual Offering*.

SUPERNATURAL phenomena have marked the close and opening of each dispensation in the past. What has been may be, and the signs are thick upon us that such forces are again in our midst. Mark the lesson; these show that the sands of time, as regards the present dispensation, are well nigh run out. Spiritualism has proved beyond reasonable doubt that it possesses a force and knowledge which is neither earthly nor human. Millions of persons, many of them hard-headed and sceptical men of science, are disciples thereof. It is neither reasonable nor wise to disregard this warning fulfilment of 1 Tim. iv. 1, and Rev. xvi. 14. In America, its centre being in Boston, a sect of "Christian Scientists" has been formed, who profess and practise healing by the "mind-cure." The healer and the patient sit opposite to each other, thinking intently on the desired cure, until the combined mental power produces what is termed "a chemical change in the fluids of the system that results in health." The Salvation Army has in its ranks members who profess and practise the gift of faith (or miraculous) healing. At St. Mary's Hall, London, N., June 1st to 5th, an "International Faith-Healing Conference" was held; morning, afternoon, and evening. Remarkable testimonies as to personal cures were borne, and on one day alone between forty and fifty persons professed to have been cured at the meetings.—*Glad Tidings of the Coming Age*, September, 1885.

## 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.]

## A Plea.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Now that Science has turned her gaze upon things psychical, so long left by her unexamined, and has deigned to regard them if only through a reversed telescope, it may be not unfitting to utter a special word of protest.

The investigation ought not to be accompanied by vivisection of the conscious subject.

It is one which, being undertaken, pre-eminently requires to be conducted with humanity.

The victims, when there are any, our weaker brethren, should not have their very seats of sensitiveness cut down upon by the knife of the critic; and their cerebral, moral, or intellectual insufficiency painfully revealed to themselves and to the world. The operation should be conducted privately under chloroform. The victim should be made aware of what has happened as little as possible. He should be treated as the subject of a lithotomy once was, whose feelings of property and of vanity were equally gratified by the present of a pretty glass marble; while the extracted phosphatic *débris*, perhaps representative of brain waste, was finally thrown away, and only referred to in dry analytical tables.

A properly educated Spiritualist or Occultist, of course, can front every investigation with fearless confidence. It is amusing enough to witness an encounter between the precluded *scepticist* and a Spiritualist of the first water. Vain is it to try to cut a diamond with steel, to pierce mail-proof with a barber's pole. I am thinking of that Recoil of the Broomstick. How infinitely just and amusing that was!

But if there are retailers of experiences who are palpably deceived (and I confess to have occasionally met such, though not among the *properly educated*), and if there is here and there, quite possibly, a medium (all mediums are not Eglintons) who may mingle fraud with his manifestations, it is sufficient for Science generally to bear in mind these negative discoveries, and allow them to have their due influence in her understanding and exposition of the positive. It is not necessary for her to descend from her estate, high above temporalities, to smite or to slay any of the erring fugitive race of mortals.

At least this is the fugitive opinion of, sir, your obedient servant,

B.

## "A Few Words on Spiritualism," from "Lily."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been reading with deep interest the admirable letter in your issue of the 12th inst., by the author of "Scientific Materialism," entitled "Relations between Spiritualism and Science," and as one whose experience of Spiritualism (for eleven years) has been in the strictest privacy of private life, perhaps you may consider a few words from me on this subject not irrelevant.

I have always studiously read and pondered over whatever has come in my way—scientific or otherwise—on the "Why and the Wherefore" of Spiritual phenomena, every phase of which, except the paraffin moulding, I have witnessed over and over again, and almost always in the privacy of my own or a dear friend's apartments.

But none of the manifold arguments or would-be explanations I have read, have ever moved me from the simple, common-sense explanation of the phenomena that I formed after due investigation (and which time and experience have only served to strengthen to the uttermost), viz., that they are the work of human beings, every bit as human as we are ourselves—like ourselves, men, women, and children—the only difference being that they are freed from the outer garment of flesh, which we still wear, and which renders us visible to the eye of flesh, as *they were, so long as they wore it*, and which they still are, when circumstances allow of their resuming it temporarily for our instruction.

Why will men surround God's choicest gifts—as religion and Spiritualism are—with difficulties, and dogmas, and mysticisms, that do not belong to them, and that only deaden and drown their grand and simple beauty and purity?

For the grandest truths are always the clearest and simplest, and most emphatically prove themselves to be such, to all who

will watch their workings with reasoning and patient earnestness.

As the whole of religion is comprised in those few sublime yet simple words, "Love God with all your heart and soul, and your neighbour as yourself," so is the whole sublime truth of Spiritualism comprised in equally few and simple words, "God's love to us, in sending His messengers (our fellow men) once more to earth, to teach and raise us spiritually, by a close and personal intercourse with us."

Fearing to trespass too much on your valuable space, I have confined myself to the barest outline of this most gracious ordinance of the Father, for the uplifting of His benighted children; for were I to attempt to illustrate it by my experiences, a large volume would not suffice.

I will, therefore, only say, as the result of these manifold experiences, that if the Spiritual Beings who now come to us are not men, women, and children, *neither are we*; for they are counterparts of us in all the essential characteristics of our humanity; and if those who elaborate such abstruse and far-fetched arguments in their endeavours to prove the contrary, would only seek for themselves the same experiences I have had for many years past (and which all may do) they must most inevitably come to the same conclusion.

Trusting to your kindness to allow this letter to appear in your columns,—I beg to remain, sir, faithfully yours,  
September 15th, 1885. "LILY."

## The "Electric" Girl at the Albert Palace.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue for August 15th there appeared a letter asking for an explanation of the above phenomenon, and, at the same time, indicating that the writer had indeed placed faith in the statement of the wily showman.

About this particular "Electric Girl" I have no information, but a knowledge of the *modus operandi* used in the production of other electric boys and girls, together with one clause in your correspondent's letter, leads me to believe that this girl is as great an imposition as the rest.

The visitor is placed on one side of a low barricade, on the other side of which are the showman and the girl in question. The floor in front of this barricade is, in some cases, covered with sheet lead or copper, in others with matting saturated with salt and water or dilute acid, and a similar covering of lead, copper, or moistened matting is laid behind, under the feet, usually bare, of the electric girl. These two pieces of matting are connected with the secondary coil of an induction machine (commonly known as a galvanic battery), which is situated so far off that the noise of its vibration is not perceptible.

On shaking hands, or in any other way making contact with the girl, the circuit is completed through the boots, body, and arms of the visitor, to the arms and body of the girl, and so to the floor. The current, which, owing to physiological formation, is only felt in the hands and arms when passing through the body, would not pass at all if the spectator wore goloshes or water-tight rubber boots, which was probably the case with the gentleman mentioned by your correspondent. This fact is taken advantage of by the exhibitor to still further strengthen his statements.

He frequently wears on one foot an ordinary boot, and on the other a rubber sole or covering; to show, as he says, that the electricity is not coming up from the floor, he lifts the girl off her feet, and the shock is still felt. Should the visitor hint that the current is still passing through him, the 'cute exhibitor lays down the girl, extends his hand, and the astonished investigator feels nothing.

"There is no deception, ladies and gentlemen,"—(aside)—"but you didn't see me stand on my insulated leg when I shook hands with you." The whole show is very amusing and interesting, and, if the showman would only stick to the truth, would be quite as lucrative and more harmless. But the gravest part is yet to come.

I have seen, day after day, week after week, a little negro boy, barely seven years of age, compelled to sit, practically naked, exposed to cold and draughts, continually pinched, squeezed, and tortured, by ignorant people (I suppose to see if he was alive), and ever and anon subject to the passage of currents of electricity, from which his poor little body seemed to shrink, and from which the thoughtless spectators did shrink. Such a method, I say, of foisting electric boys and girls on the public, is not only a barefaced, impudent swindle, but an infernal crime.—Yours in the cause of truth,

Edinburgh.

"KELA."

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

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## Light :

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1885.

### SPIRITUALISM IN ACCORD WITH TRUE SCIENCE.

Spiritualism is not antagonistic to *true* science, but simply to the opinions and prejudices of those who from their labours in particular fields of scientific research, have attained recognised positions as scientific men, to which they are no doubt entitled. But a truly scientific man has no prejudice; he is a philosopher, and never determines for or against a thing until he has tested it thoroughly, observing and comparing its manifestations by his highest reason, and testing his own observations, when practicable, by the experiments of others in the same field. This we know by experience that the scientific men of the day do *not* do. Because psychical phenomena enter occasionally into the domain of physics and produce effects which their previous experience leads them to assume are the necessary result of physical causes, they take up an antagonistic position, deciding upon *à priori* grounds that the asserted causes of the phenomena are fictitious, and that consequently those who make the assertion are either frauds or fools.

There might be some excuse for them in the early years of Modern Spiritualism, when but few of their own class had turned their attention to the phenomena, and the records of experiment were fragmentary and defective, but in the present day, after the recorded experiments of a long chain of eminent men of recognised scientific ability, extending over three decades, commencing with the great American chemist, Professor Robert Hare, and ending at the present with the well-known German astronomer, Friedrich Zöllner, their position is particularly unphilosophical, and nothing but the fact of popular prejudices being in harmony with their own, saves them from appearing ridiculous in the eyes of the community.

Sir David Brewster, when certain phenomenal facts were forced upon him, said he would give in to "anything but Spiritualism" as a means of accounting for them. And so it is with the majority of our pseudo-scientists of the present day; they have committed themselves by denying *in toto* the spiritual origin of the phenomena, and are too proud to retreat from their position by the straight road, so find some tortuous side line to get out of it; hence we have the phenomena of thought-reading and clairvoyance accepted by them under the name of Telepathy, and mesmeric-healing accepted by the doctors under the title of "Massage"! We have never seen the position of Spiritualism with regard to science more tersely put than in the following extract from a recent article by Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace:—

"Now Modern Spiritualism rests solely on the observation and comparison of facts in a domain of nature which has been

hitherto little explored, and it is a contradiction in terms to say that such an investigation is opposed to science. Equally absurd is the allegation that some of the phenomena of Spiritualism 'contradict the laws of nature,' since there is no law of nature yet known to us but may be apparently contravened by the action of more recondite laws or forces. Spiritualists observe facts and record experiments, and then construct hypotheses which will best explain and co-ordinate the facts, and in so doing they are pursuing a truly scientific course."—*Slightly abridged from "Harbinger of Light."*

### DR. E. VON HARTMANN ON "SPIRITISM."

The translation of this pamphlet, which is now appearing in our columns, will be completed in the issue of "LIGHT" for October 10th. We shall then be prepared to receive letters discussing and criticising Dr. Hartmann's views. Without in any way seeking to anticipate the lines of argument likely to be advanced in sustaining or refuting the position taken by the author of "The Philosophy of the Unconscious" with regard to the phenomena and theories of Spiritualism, it is at least open to us to point out that there are many *facts*, if not of common, of frequent occurrence, which will have a direct bearing on any reply Spiritualists and others may make. Additional interest is lent to the publication of this work for English readers by the fact that Dr. Hartmann's theory has a direct bearing on the "telepathic" and "unconscious secondary self" theories recently put forward by the Society for Psychical Research.

As it will be a clear advantage to have the case presented in a compact and handy form for reference, a small edition of the pamphlet will be issued immediately (on or about October 14th) after the completion of the translation in "LIGHT." Between forty and fifty copies have already been ordered, and those who wish to possess the work in book form will please not delay in making known their wish. The price will be three shillings, and we are now open to receive orders for 200 copies.

MR. W. EGLINTON has, we hear, been obtaining very successful results at his sésances since his return to town.

THE Rev. J. Ware, who has done excellent work in the provinces for Spiritualism, has removed to the Metropolis, and is now connected with the College Unitarian Chapel, at Stepney Green.

MRS. C. L. V. RICHMOND has been meeting with great success at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where she has lectured to large audiences.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE will lecture in the Psychological Hall, Leeds, on September 29th, this being his last meeting in England prior to his departure for America.

BARON LANGSDORFF, of Freiburg, Baden, is an excellent medium, and receives communications of a prophetic character, many of which he has been able to verify.

A LADY in Bournemouth would like to make the acquaintance of some Spiritualists in that town. Letters may be addressed to Mrs. W., 36, Northcote-road, Bournemouth.

WE much regret to have to record the passing away, in her seventy-fifth year, of Mrs. Elizabeth Lewis. The deceased lady was the wife of the President of the Cardiff Spiritual Society, Mr. Rees Lewis, and was much esteemed by all who knew her. The interment took place on the 12th, an appropriate selection being read from Mr. J. S. Farmer's "New Basis."

ALDERMAN T. P. BARKAS, F.G.S., will lecture on Sunday, September 27th, at seven p.m., in the Waterloo Rooms, 43, Waterloo-street, corner of Wellington-street, Glasgow. Subject: "Personal Investigation into the Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual." Questions invited from students of science at the close of the lecture.

*La Vie Posthume* is a new monthly, published at Marseilles. It proposes to occupy itself with all questions relating to Spiritual science. It defines Spiritism and Spiritualism as "neither a school nor a church: it is a truth for enlightening and solving hitherto unsolved social and moral problems."—*Le Rio's (The Rock), Ostend.*

## RECORDS OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

(Continued from page 415.)

[In this column will be given from time to time such accounts of psychical phenomena as seem to be worthy of permanent record. Beyond the general classification indicated, no attempt at tabulation will at present be made; that work will follow in due course. In furtherance of this object we shall be pleased to receive from our readers brief reports of phenomena subject to two conditions. (1) That a colourless statement of facts without comment is given; and (2) that communications are accompanied by the names and addresses of those concerned, not necessarily for publication, though we should naturally prefer to be at liberty to publish them. Amongst the phenomena referred to may be mentioned:—

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A.—Mesmerism.                           | K.—Spirit Identity.                                       |
| B.—Trance.                              | L.—Materialised Spirit Forms.                             |
| C.—Clairvoyance.                        | M.—The Spirit Rap.  |
| D.—Thought-reading.                     | N.—The Spirit Voice.                                      |
| E.—Previsional and Coincidental Dreams. | O.—Psychography.  |
| F.—Apparitions.                         | P.—Automatic Writing.                                     |
| G.—The Human "Double."                  | Q.—Movement of Material Objects without Physical Contact. |
| H.—Presence at a Distance.              | R.—Miscellaneous Phenomena.                               |
| I.—Haunted Houses.                      |   |

Friends having had experience of any of these phenomena will be doing us a service if they will report them to us, giving—

- (1) The names and addresses of the persons concerned.
- (2) The circumstances under which the phenomena took place.
- (3) A brief account of the occurrence.

Letters should be addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross.]

## CLASS M.—KNOCKINGS: HORS DE SEANCE.

Upon the evening of September 19th, 1885, Mr. and Mrs. Farmer, Mr. Eglinton, together with Messrs. Leonard, Cassal, and Downing were seated engaged in conversation, when knockings made themselves heard, sometimes apparently under the table, and sometimes upon the walls of the room, upon the doors, furniture, and on the floor, not under the table. Mr. Downing, who was seated opposite to Mr. Eglinton, can speak to hearing them apparently under his chair, and to feeling a certain accompanying vibration. The knockings, which in sound were of a dull thudding character, and varied in their quickness of succession, gradually forced themselves upon the attention of all. Without preparation of any kind, the light not being turned down, nor hands joined, questions were put to the invisible presence, and it was found that the sounds had special reference to Mr. Farmer, but that the nature of the communication to be made was not to be revealed until the next evening. Mr. Farmer was shortly after seized with a strong impression as to what would then occur, and having written this impression down he enclosed the paper in an envelope, which was immediately sealed and given into the custody of Mr. Leonard, signed upon the outside by every person present.\* In spite of the fact that the communication was only to be made the next evening, the knockings continued, and answers were given to some unimportant questions, as well as in number as requested. It may here be mentioned that as soon as the questioning began, nearly all present were more or less strongly influenced, and the party was adjudged by the presence itself to be exceptionally mediumistic in its constitution.

An experiment was now tried. A square piece of paper was held at the four corners by Messrs. E., C., L., and D. above the centre of the table, in full light. Under these circumstances tiny raps, such as might be made by the head of a pin dotted against the paper, were heard by Messrs. E., L., and C., apparently proceeding from its surface. Next a match was thrust through one corner, the match held in the fingers of Mr. E., and the paper thus suspended in full light over the centre of the table. The same tiny raps were this time heard by Messrs. E., L., C., and D. In each of these experiments the raps were given in number as requested. Upon the paper being afterwards held by Mr. D. in the same manner, he having Mr. Eglinton's hand, no result followed.

Some glasses having been brought in, by way of another experiment Mr. E. stood upon these, and in this, his insulated condition, the dull, thudding knockings still continued. He next stood upon a soft cushion doubled over on the hands,

\* A special communication was made to Mr. Farmer on the following evening. This did not refer to the impression here spoken of. It was intimated, however, that the communication was incomplete, and would be renewed on another occasion.—Ed.

placed on the floor, of Messrs. L., C., and D. successively. Knockings were heard, apparently from the floor, directly beneath him. To Mr. C. these were accompanied by a vibration felt as proceeding from the floor beneath his hands. To Messrs. L. and D. the accompanying vibration seemed rather to come from above, as if through the compressed cushion. Mr. L. further states that at the moment of the sound a tremor was felt by him, in his own hands, subjective in character, and seen by him in the feet of Mr. E. The tremor was not felt by Mr. E., but was considered by him to be of interest, and to be worth recording. Mr. D. perceived a tremor in Mr. E.'s feet only, not in his own hands. Mr. C. perceived neither. The experiment was varied by Mr. E. placing his hands beneath the cushion, and Mr. C. standing upon it. The sounds, upon this occasion, were not so loud and higher. In all these cases the raps given were in number as requested. Finally Mr. D. placed, not his feet, but his hands upon the top of the cushion, and requested raps to be given in number not as asked aloud, but as thought of by him. In two cases out of four the answer was correct, and Mr. D. was enabled to recognise a very faint vibration upward through the cushion.

It has only to be finally said that this account has been written by one of the party, and has been subjected to the criticism of, and endorsed by, all therein named.

## CLASS F.—APPARITIONS.

In John, Lord Campbell's Life of Erskine (born January 10th, 1750, died November 17th, 1823), in his "Lives of the Lord Chancellors of England" (Murray, 1847), appears an account of a supernatural occurrence, which, as part of his own experience, seems to have much impressed the great advocate.

"There being a round of ghost stories in a large company at the old Duchess of Gordon's, when it came to the turn of Erskine, then an ex-Chancellor, he spoke as follows: 'I also believe in "second sight," because I have been its subject. When I was a very young man, I had been for some time absent from home. On the morning of my arrival in Edinburgh, as I was descending the steps of a "close" on coming out from a bookseller's shop, I met our old family butler. He looked greatly changed—pale, wan, and shadowy, as a ghost. "Eh, old boy," I said, "what brings you here?" He replied, "To meet your honour, and solicit your interference with my lord to receive a sum due to me, which the steward, at our last settlement, did not pay." Struck by his look and manner, I bade him follow me to the bookseller's, and into whose shop I stepped back; but when I turned round to him he had vanished.

"I remembered that his wife carried on some little trade in the Old Town; I remembered even the "flat" she occupied, which I had often visited in my boyhood. Having made it out, I found the old woman in widow's mourning. Her husband had been dead for some months, and had told her on his deathbed that my father's steward had wronged him of some money, but that "when Master Tom returned, he would see her righted." This I promised to do, and I shortly after fulfilled my promise. The impression was indelible; and I am extremely cautious how I deny the possibility of such "supernatural" visitings as those which your grace has just instanced in your own family.'"

J. H. FICHTE, the German philosopher, wrote, when in his 83rd year: "Notwithstanding my age, 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 who knows it should keep silent."

A TYPHOLOGICAL SEANCE.—At a meeting of the Psychological Society of Paris some one spoke of the "Definitions in twelve words" related by Eugène Nus, in his "Things of the Other World," and it was asked if the spirit, who had just been dictating a communication, would help in an experiment of that kind. Assent was given, through the table provided, that the questions could be answered within ten words. A querist then said: "In six words then, what is Socialism?" The table foot was at once moved decidedly at different letters as the alphabet was called, but they seemed to convey no sense. By the same process the direction was given to "read backwards." The answer then read was: "The union of beings in solidarity." Other questions followed; one was "In seven words, what is love?" Answer, in the same inverse order of letters, "Union of souls rather than of bodies." Another, "In three words, what is woman?" Answer, "A charming being." A more gallant answer to the question could not be given in so few words.—*La Vie Posthume.*

## OCCULTISM IN INDIA.

(From "Occult Science in India," by LOUIS JACOLLIST, the Belgian Traveller.)

During my stay in Benares I was the guest of Peishwa, a Mahratta prince, who had a palace, like other rajahs and princes, in the "holy city." While there a religious recipient of Peishwa's hospitality was introduced to me, a Fakir named Covindasamy; he came from Trivanderam, near Cape Comorin, the southernmost point of Hindustan. This Fakir's mission was to bring to Benares the remains of a rich Malabar of the merchant caste.

The apartment in which I received him opened upon a terrace overlooking the sacred River Ganges. In the centre of the terrace, protected from the sun's rays by a thick awning, was a fountain. On this terrace Covindasamy and I sat together; I spoke of the marvels which he was reported to perform, and I ventured to ask him whether he experienced any particular sensation within himself during their performance. He replied that he was only an instrument in their production; that he invoked his *pitris*, ancestral spirits, and it was they who exhibited thus their power. I may here say that this was the answer given by every Fakir whom I have questioned on this occult subject.

Covindasamy commenced by extending his hands towards a large bronze vase full of water, into which the fountain played. In five minutes the vase, after gently rocking upon its base, moved towards him in regular alternating motions; as it came nearer I heard sounds emitted from it, as if it were being struck by a steel rod. At my suggestion and request, the vase moved backwards, forwards, or stood still; and the metallic sounds were emitted with slowness or quickness, and with measured exactness as timed by the second hand of my watch. On the table of the room behind was a musical box, so much liked by the Hindus: I had it wound up and started to play by my servant; and I asked the Fakir that the metallic sounds might keep time with the tune, and it was accurately done, whether the time was quick or slow.

The vase in question was so large and heavy that, if empty, it would have required a couple of men to carry; it was one of those used by Hindus for their morning ablutions, and was kept filled for that purpose by the water of the terrace-fountain falling into it. What was the force that moved such a mass? That is the question.

The Fakir, to enable me to be certain, consented to my witnessing a repetition of all the experiments; and they were repeated with exactness. All this time he had been seated, but now he stood up and placed the tips of his fingers on the edge of the vase. It soon began to rock from left to right in regular time, gradually quickening, its base making no sound upon the tessellated floor as it rocked. In all the rockings and movings of the vase I was astonished not to see any spilling of the water it contained; it maintained its level with the rim of the vase; and during the rocking the vase rose seven or eight inches clear off the floor, each time coming down without any shock.

Of all the experiments, repeated for accuracy, as I have said, I took minute notes at the time.

PSYCHOGRAPHY. — At Washington Hall, San Francisco, June 21st, there was a public exhibition of slate-writing, the medium being Mr. Fred Evans. The slates were washed, sealed together by a committee appointed by the audience, and remained in the committee's hands. While under their hands the sounds of writing between them were heard between the slates. On three taps coming, denoting the conclusion of the writing, the committee, in view of the audience, separated the slates, and exhibited them covered with communications, thirty in number, in different handwritings, and in patchwork order. They were addressed to each of the members of the committee and to various persons among the audience, and bore the signatures of departed relatives and friends. The exhibition was in daylight, before an audience of about 400, under conditions precluding trickery of any kind. The committee append their formal verification to the report of the facts as above given. — *The Golden Gate.*

## SPIRITISM.

BY EDUARD VON HARTMANN.

(Continued from p. 456.)

Du Prel goes still further, conceiving that thought-reading extends not only to representations actually present in somnambulant consciousness, but even to latent memory. (*Gedankenlesen*, p. 22.) As proof, he adduces the faculty of different individuals (of whom some are "possessed" persons, some Church dignitaries, some ordinary persons, like Zschokke) of seeing perceptibly before them the crises of another's life on first sight of him or hearing his voice. Du Prel here proceeds on the supposition that the actual somnambulant consciousness is at the same time the latent memory of the waking consciousness, and has thus only to meet the difficulty, how from the simultaneous medley of all important and unimportant memories in the somnambulant consciousness, the more important should be read out in orderly succession.\* As I ascribe to the somnambulant, as to the waking consciousness, only particular actual representations, and besides, a latent material of memory in molecular predispositions of the parts of the brain supporting the consciousness, I must suppose a clairvoyant transference of molecular brain-predispositions, unless there remains the expedient that the thought-reader, by his unconscious will to perception of character and fate, magnetically constrains the somnambulant consciousness of the other to recollection of the crises of his life, and perceives them thus actualised in memory.† This view is, in my opinion, always preferable, that the seer is excited by the *rapport* of sense established with the other person, clairvoyantly to restore out of himself the events of that person's life, with the scenes of some crisis in it.

The distinction between clairvoyance and thought-reading is that in the latter only present thoughts of waking, dreaming, or somnambulant persons are perceived, by a certain resonance of the percipient's own somnambulant consciousness, while in the former not only the contents of another consciousness, but real objective phenomena as such are perceived without normal mediation of the instruments of sense.‡ The exclusion of perception by the normal five senses by no means excludes every sort of influence upon sense, but this influence acts neither on sight, hearing, smell, taste, nor touch, but on the sensitive feeling, whose perceptions are then first changed by the somnambulant consciousness into representations of sight, or hearing, or thought. Most easily explainable is the sensitive feeling of the personal emanations of men or animals, perception of unobserved cats, designation among several glasses of water of the one in which a finger has been dipped (*Ps. St.*, X., 113, 114, 255-257), because here there need be no change into the perceptual form of one of the five senses, the idea immediately presenting itself. The explanation becomes more difficult when a somnambulant, by feeling, correctly names the time shown by a watch set at random and placed in a box, the somnambulant applying the object to the side of the head and then believing himself, as it were, to see (III., 532), or when he reads the mottos, enclosed in nuts shortly before bought, and known to none of the party (IV., 299). Still more complicated is the case when the magnetiser places a finger on a chance unknown word in a newspaper, and the word is given by the somnambulant;§

\* [For a full exposition of Du Prel's views, the reader should be referred to his "Philosophie der Mystik," my translation of which is now nearly complete, and will, I hope, before long be published.—T.R.]

† Zschokke: "Einer Selbsterzählung" (An Introspect), Aarau. Sauerländer. 1842. Vol. I., pp. 273-276.

‡ This distinction between thought-reading and clairvoyance has been already insisted upon by Gregory in his "Letters on Animal Magnetism" (1851), but up to the present has been insufficiently regarded. (Compare Wallace, "The Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural.")

§ [See Crookes' "Notes of an Inquiry into the Phenomena called Spiritual." "A lady was writing automatically by means of the planchette. I was trying to devise a means of proving that what she wrote was not due to 'unconscious cerebration.' The planchette, as it always does, insisted that, although it was moved by the hand and arm of the lady, the intelligence was that of an invisible

here, to escape true clairvoyance, it has to be supposed that the somnambulant consciousness of the magnetiser perceived the word through his finger, and that the somnambule received it by thought-transference. Yet further is the difficulty increased when a medium, by writing at a distance, copies a page, chosen at random, of a closed book laid under the table, although at mediumistic sittings a considerable extension of the medium's sphere of sensitive perception is to be expected.

Nearer again to true clairvoyance are the cases in which the sensitive feeling serves only to establish *rapport*, to direct the somnambulant consciousness to this point or object among an infinite number of possible ones, but not as substitute for sense-perception, *i.e.*, for transmission of the collective mental contents. When, for instance, a somnambule, from the feeling of a lock of hair, defines the particular pains and the character of the disease from which the distant and unknown person is suffering, or by a bit of elephant's tooth which had been found under lava, is excited to visions of troops of elephants and volcanic eruptions, or when a sensitive, disposed to hallucinations, is excited by the drop of coagulated blood lying under the flooring of a bedroom to visions of a suicide or murder, agreeing with the past facts, to him unknown, of this place, or when someone by involuntary writing sets down with substantial, if not verbal, fidelity the three hundred years old poetical dedication of a spinet, afterwards first discovered hidden in the clefts of the latter;\* in all these cases clairvoyance is at work. Yet in all these instances the possibility of unconscious sensitive reconstruction of causes from felt effects is still comparatively large; for we do not at all know to what degree of subtlety the traces of past events are stored up in their remains, and can be felt out by a highly sensitive person.

On the other hand, sense-mediation vanishes to an unassignable minimum, when instead of sensitive perception by feeling, an interest of the will takes over the establishment of *rapport*, *e.g.*, a strong love or friendship, or a mighty patriotism and home sympathy. The seeing at a distance of great natural events in a remote country (fires, earthquakes, war) might still, so far as simultaneous, be referred to thought-reading in the consciousness of persons present at them, and explanation of vision into futurity might be sought in unconscious inference from present circumstances known by thought-reading, since present circumstances contain as well the germ of the future as the deposit of the past. But this interpretation is very difficult with regard to events not within the single course of one train of causes, but arising through unexpected intersection of casual series seemingly lying far apart from each other.†

A corpse-seer, that is to say, one who dreaming or awake foresees cases of death among his acquaintance or at home, may also infer from feelings of serious illness known by thought-reading, that death is at hand, or from dispositions of a person in health known by thought-reading, that there is a tendency to suicide. But why, in that case, does not that which thought-reading immediately apprehends emerge into the waking or dreaming consciousness, why first an inference from that? And why are so often just the unessential details of the death or funeral foreseen? How, from the present contents of another consciousness, is to be got the fact, for instance, that just such a place in

the city will be chosen for the suicidal shot, or that this particular horse will shy, rear, fling off, and fatally injure the healthy rider? How is to be explained the case of a lady seeing from the window a funeral with well-known mourners drawn through her garden, never used for the passage of funerals, but which yet, some days later, in consequence of a flooding of the road, has to be opened in fact for the passage of the foreseen funeral procession? How can the knowledge of any number of people's thoughts help to prevision, in the place or neighbourhood of their occurrence, of impending fires caused by lightning, or by other events arising accidentally, *i.e.*, out of remote series of causes?

In such cases there seems to be neither mediation by sense nor a possible reduction to thought-reading, and the *rapport* seems simply conditioned by interest for friends or home. In such cases have we first undoubtedly to do with pure clairvoyance, which always appears in hallucinatory form,\* if also frequently with symbolical investment. Just this sort of "second-sight," however, is far more frequent than is supposed, and by confidential inquiry there will be found in a very large percentage of families a corpse-seeress or ghost-seeress, or the tradition of one. This true clairvoyance can therefore depend neither on thought-reading nor on any sort of sensitive apprehension of ether-vibrations, but must be recognised as a faculty of spiritual overleaping space and time. Thereby is the hallucination, which announces the future to consciousness, evidently only the last result of absolutely unconscious psychical processes, which as such need no sense or material mediation.

Confronted with such facts, either one concedes to the individual soul the faculty of absolute knowledge—that is, of knowledge unlimited by time and space, or one goes behind the individual soul to its essential root in the absolute spirit; in both cases no external and no intermediate assistance is any longer wanted, least of all by spirits of the departed, who also are still only individual souls.

In the first case, the monads or individuals are divided from their absolute ground, from which they yet necessarily must have sprouted, and a property is ascribed to them which only attaches to and becoms the absolute; the other case suggests the inseparable navel-string connecting every creature with its all-mother nature, and the reflection that also in this navel-string spiritual saps must circulate, of which consciousness has only no usual apprehension. If all individuals of higher or lower order are rooted in the Absolute, retrogressively in this they have a second connection among themselves, and there is requisite only a restoration of the *rapport* or telephonic junction (*Telephonanschluss*) between two individuals in the Absolute, by an intense interest of the will, to bring about the unconscious spiritual interchange between them without sense-mediation. The hyperæsthesia of the parts of the brain supporting the somnambulant consciousness makes inspiration from the absolutely unconscious (immaterial) psychical functions of the particular individual soul much easier than does the normal excitability of the parts of the brain supporting waking consciousness. The absolutely unconscious functions of the individual soul are, however, *eo ipso* again functions of the absolute subject as of one limited, and the strong interest of the will serves for motivation of such unconscious functions, which act inspirationally on the somnambulant consciousness.

In the absolute consciousness of the absolute spirit all the threads of causal series are ideally entwined to a single collective intuition, so that from it is predeterminable even what appears accidental in the events of the future. The omniscience of the absolute spirit comprehends implicitly as well the future as the past; therefore, can the individual

being who was playing on her brain as on a musical instrument, and thus moving her muscles. I, therefore, said to this intelligence, 'Can you see the contents of this room?' 'Yes,' wrote the planchette. 'Can you see to read this newspaper?' said I, putting my finger on a copy of the *Times*, which was on a table behind me, but without looking at it. 'Yes,' was the reply of the planchette. 'Well,' I said, 'if you can see that, write the word which is now covered by my finger, and I will believe you.' The planchette commenced to move. Slowly, and with great difficulty, the word 'however' was written. I turned round, and saw that the word 'however' was covered by the tip of my finger. I had purposely avoided looking at the newspaper when I tried this experiment, and it was impossible for the lady, had she tried, to have seen any of the printed words, for she was sitting at one table and the paper was on another table behind, my body intervening."—Tr.]

\* Owen's "Debatable Land."

† Compare Du Prel: "Second Sight" (Breslau: Schottländer. 1883, Preis 50 Pf.), pp. 13-18.

\* There can be hallucinations of hearing as of sight; *e.g.*, prevision of a conflagration may be by hearing of the fire-bells and alarms, or the foreknowledge may clothe itself in the heard words of a phantasm.

by means of an intense interest of the will draw unconsciously from the unconscious knowledge of the absolute spirit as well the details of future events as particulars of the present state of the world at distant points. In so far as the absolutely unconscious psychical functions of different individual souls are in the last resort only functions of the same absolute subject with relation to different organisms, from this concrete-monistic standpoint it is intelligible that the strong interest of the individual soul-will suffices to set free, irrespectively of distance, functions in the absolute subject which are directed upon the organism of another individual, and so far seem to be integrating constituents or functions of the individual soul pertaining to that organism. With the exciting or inspiring action upon the somnambulant parts of the brain of the functions thus set free, the transfer of hallucinations\* to the somnambulant consciousness of others is prepared.

This explanation of both clairvoyance and transference of hallucination from far distance seems to me the only possible one, while for thought-transference in immediate proximity I hold Barrett's explanation to be true. According to him, every brain vibration corresponding to a mental representation, produces a sphere of induction-vibrations in the ether, by which similar vibrations are induced in other brains. The first half of the supposition, according to our present physical conceptions, is almost unavoidable, and it can only be doubted whether the induction-sphere is strong enough for perceptible influence upon other brains, and whether the mode of this influence is such as to induce similar representations. The facts that the parts of the brain supporting the waking consciousness are not at all, but the sensitive somnambulant parts of the brain are perceptibly influenced by thoughts of others, that the strength of this influence rapidly diminishes with distance, and is disturbed by light, seem to establish the presumption that the supposed induction-sphere of ether-vibrations is really the reason of the occurrence of a similar complex of vibrations in an adjacent brain.†

The decision is more doubtful in the case of thought-transference from a far distance, Du Prel and Hellenbach here likewise supposing a mediation by ether-vibrations. I believe, on the contrary, that this case comes under the same explanation as clairvoyance. This points to a radical communication between individuals by *rapport* or telephonic correspondence in the Absolute. I infer this from the fact that in thought-transference at a far distance no difference appears to exist between greater and lesser distances, whereas thought-transference in close proximity diminishes rapidly with remoteness (presumably in proportion to the square of the distance), thus soon reaching a limit where the influence, even with greater intensity of an individual will, ceases. It is true we see light at remote distances, yet only with an organised sense-apparatus adapted to it, and even only then if no untransparent body intervenes; glowing balls of gigantic dimensions appearing as unextended points of faint light. If also gravitation and magnetism act through untransparent bodies, yet with diminution of force in quadratic proportion to distance, very powerful forces and correspondingly large masses are requisite for a considerable effect at remote points. The active force of vibrations, corresponding to an isolated thought, of limited parts of the brain, is quite incommensurately small as against the light and gravitation of the heavenly bodies. If, for example, the somnambulant consciousness were sufficiently sensitive to be affected across the ocean, or more accurately through a great part of the globe, by the induction-spheres of single detached brain-vibrations, on an

\* It will be observed that the word "hallucination" does not here denote mere baseless appearance, but a self-clothing of a true intuition with the form of sense, that form even often corresponding exactly, and in minutest detail, with the distant objective or future fact.—TR.

† This hypothesis is carried into more detail, and defended by Prof. Dr. O. Simony in his dissertation "On Spiritistic manifestations from the scientific standpoint." ("Ueber spiritistische Manifestationen vom naturwissenschaftlichen Standpunkt") Vienna, Hartleben, 1884.

individual so sensitive would continually stream in such a multitude of thousandfold stronger impressions, that consciousness itself would be overpowered by their mass and relative force, and life would be simply impossible. Therefore, I think that thought-transference at hand and at a distance require quite different principles of explanation, the latter having more affinity to true clairvoyance than to the former.

Accordingly it seems to me impossible to explain thought-transference at a far distance and true clairvoyance by physical mediation, and that recourse to a metaphysical, super-sensuous explanation is unavoidable. But this super-sensuous explanation introduces no new hypothesis, as, for instance, that by spirits does, but rests merely on the rooting (*Urstand*) of natural individuals in the Absolute: a principle to which only Materialism can object. This explanation transcends, it is true, the mere natural sphere, but only in so far as reaching back it lays hold on the supernatural root of the given natural, without which the latter would have neither essence nor existence; but it is not supernatural in the sense that it appeals to a sphere of existence beyond the natural, a hidden world of supernatural individuals lurking behind the given. It only declines to maintain the usual abstraction of the natural from its supernatural basis, rather considering it in its concrete unity with the latter, immanent in it as being and substance. It is just in the phenomena of true clairvoyance (*e.g.*, corpse-seeing) that no one has ever supposed the cause to lie outside the individual himself; that is to say, the single phenomenal province which mere natural or abstract natural causes will not explain is not claimed by Spiritism.

Moreover, true clairvoyance seems not to occur with professional mediums for the sole reason that they are usually in no relations of intimacy or deep sympathy with the rest of the party, so that the interest of the will in establishing the radical connection fails. For the thought-transference in which mediums have an interest, induction of brain vibrations suffices, there being thus no need at all for the restoration of a telephonic-connection in the background; but there is nothing to excite so deep an interest in the past and future fates of the circle and their relatives and friends, as would compel the unconscious will to draw from the absolute knowledge of its absolute basis. What the Spiritists call clairvoyance in their mediums is not that; true clairvoyance, the tenderest, though morbid, blossom of man's unconscious spirit life, the Spiritists till now know nothing of from their mediums, because the latter carry on their business far too much as a trade. For the development of genuine clairvoyance in mediunistic circles the conditions are far more favourable when private mediums sit with their families, with lovers, and intimate friends; if it occurs here, it may elicit the most startling revelations without driving us to any other source than those in the medium himself, and in his radical connection with his absolute basis.

In concluding this section, I cannot warn too emphatically against extending the theoretical interest, which these phenomena excite, to a practical one, or replacing the former by the latter. That the Tibetan monks have arrived at the development of thought-transference into a kind of telegraphy, implies the absence among them of a natural postal and telegraphic system. We who are in possession of such have no interest at all in accustoming ourselves to psychical actions at a distance, which yet in their hallucinatory form admit only of a very incomplete, inadequate, and uncertain mode of transmitting intelligence. Still more irrational, however, is it to cultivate the gift of clairvoyance. For if anything whatever is adapted to make life endurable, it is ignorance of the future, leaving room for hope and effort.

One who has the misfortune to foresee the deaths of his acquaintances is a mirror allowing the calamities and sufferings of the future to cast their shadows upon the present; his best success will be to keep his visions to himself, and to blunt and harden himself against the joylessness of his morbid capabilities. Since it is only important events that so far excite interest as to elicit prevision, but of the more important events of human life by far the greater part are of a sad and painful nature, it follows that prevision must anticipate far more sufferings than joys; but as these sufferings are not to be averted, the prophetic gift is in defiance of the truth that inevitable grief can never be late enough learnt. Only in quite rare exceptional cases does prevision relate to natural events (shipwrecks, fall of houses, and the like), which threaten man with destruction if he does not withdraw himself; but such hints for avoidance of impending dangers are perhaps more rare than the gruesome irony with which prevision itself too often drives man into calamity in his attempt to escape it. Tradition is full of such instances; of the more recent I will only mention that of the engine-driver, who by moonlight saw the body of his father, as it really lay upon the rails, but angrily drove over it because on the two preceding nights at the same spot he had stopped the train in front of his hallucination for nothing. Whoever possesses the unhappy gift of clairvoyance will do unconditionally well to ignore it as much as possible and in no way to strengthen it by exercise, but rather to lead a sort of life not favourable to its development.

## IV.

## TRANSFIGURATIONS AND MATERIALISATIONS.

If a somnambule is ordered by her magnetiser to be someone else, she fulfils this command with the automaton-like will-lessness and with the hallucinatory vivacity which belong only to the somnambule consciousness. With a slight cue she transforms herself into the figure and character of another, like an extemporising actress, expresses opinions, sympathies, antipathies, and wishes conformable to the character, and supports her talk by corresponding mimical mien and gestures, if her somnambulism is so deepened as to allow of this. The automaton-like will-lessness of somnambulism cannot be more sharply characterised, than by the readiness with which the somnambule flings off her whole personality, and adopts another diametrically opposed, perhaps, to her age, sex, character, religious belief, and political opinions. Even the human quality is given up, and exchanged for that of an animal designated by the magnetiser; the experiences of somnambulism explain the miracle of Circe naturally, supposing her magnetic force to have been strong enough to hypnotise the companions of Odysseus, and to make them see themselves and each other as swine.

What is possible in provoked somnambulism is so also in auto-somnambulism, whether the latter occurs involuntarily or is spontaneously elicited. As there are insane persons who take themselves for animals and so behave, such insane hallucinations having in former times spread epidemically (were-wolves), so also in spontaneous somnambulism of mediums can there be a self-displacement of the Ego, an inner transfiguration of the personality, manifested by corresponding demeanour, gesture, and speech. The precondition is, that the medium at passing into somnambulism fills the place of the directing magnetiser, *i.e.*, gives by the still waking will the directive for the automaton-like hallucinations. What the persons are into whom the medium, as somnambule, believes himself transfigured, will in such cases depend on the forms most engaging his phantasy, to the appearance of which, as he knows, the expectation of the spectators is directed. As mediums learn to know the tradition of Spiritist circles before they

get beyond physical manifestations and thought-reading, it is explicable that certain figures are of stereotyped reproduction with quite different mediums, as Harlequin, Pierrot, Columbine, &c., in the Harlequinade; they call themselves John King, Katie King, &c., and are supplemented by the turbaned Oriental, the pert little girl under different names, and others. With these types the phantasy of mediums has become so familiar that they at once present themselves as figures for the self-displacement of the Ego. Already in masked somnambulism they play their part when the communications, themselves maintaining more or less the character of these types, announce them as the authors of the intelligence conveyed. This persistent tradition, of course, does not prevent phantasy of different mediums conceiving figures peculiar to themselves, of which in the somnambule state they are delivered, the somnambule Ego—consciousness flowing over into them, no matter whether along with it an unappropriating consciousness of the persistence of the abandoned Ego asserts itself or not.

It is striking, how great a change of features, deportment, gait, &c., the somnambule transfiguration can bring about in the external appearance of the somnambule; the size of the figure can apparently increase or decrease, voice and utterance be quite different, and even the turgescence of the skin and the lustre (*Feuchtigkeits*) of the eye can thus be changed. Even with accomplished mimics, similar changes in a degree astonishing to ordinary people are observable; but the somnambule transfiguration, by the vivacity and involuntary character of the hallucination, sinks the true personality in the part to be played to a degree which even the greatest dramatic genius, with all its other superiorities, cannot attain, because it still always remains conscious of its transfiguration. The deviation of the voice from the normal can go to involuntary ventriloquism, which notoriously possesses, with other peculiarities, that of altogether deceiving the ear as to the place where the voice originates. With some mediums, already in masked somnambulism different voices speak confusedly together, which announce themselves as proceeding from present but invisible spirits,\* and such mediums will also support their mimical transfigurations by sprightly "speaking with tongues." Other mediums, who are not strictly "speaking mediums," confine themselves to mimical transfiguration without support by speech or with sparse addition of detached words.

It is a matter of course that a medium, who in somnambulism has dramatised the Ego into a figure of the phantasy, will involuntarily desire to be attired for the part to be played in conformity with the character assumed, so far as the means are at hand. In this irresponsible state, for instance, an otherwise modest young girl will not feel prevented from taking off her clothes and going about in shirt or chemise; or if the hallucination is an Oriental, linen will be tied round the head for a turban. So far, however, as the available costume is not suited to the part, the medium will take care to keep behind the curtain, and to show only those parts of the body which correspond to the figure of the phantasy.

If the medium has the indefinite, but urgent, impulse to appear in the mimetic transfiguration, so as to fulfil the expectation of the circle, he will involuntarily seek to remove the obstructions to the satisfaction of this impulse, thus to loosen knots and strip off fastenings which the spectators have attached to him for security.

In so far as the somnambule medium himself believes in his transformation, *i.e.*, feels himself another person, there can be no talk of intentional deception if he presents

\*[I shall never forget the storm of whoops and cries, supposed to be of "Indian spirits," which came from the little bed-room of Mrs. Huntoon's cottage at Chittenden, Vermont, just after I had thoroughly searched it, and secured the window—the only aperture, except the door before which we sat—with mosquito curtains nailed outside, tested and found quite intact immediately afterwards.—TR.]

himself to the spectators as this other person; and in case he imagines the "other person" as one deceased but surviving in the other world, he acts completely *bonâ fide* if he comes forward in the chosen costume and mimetic disguise as the apparition of a spirit from the other world. If the spectators do not understand the somnambulant state, whether they believe in the reality of a spirit apparition, or on the other hand lay hold of the "spirit" and "expose" the medium, the latter is in either case just as little to be made responsible. The medium is here just as little spirit as deceiver, but an irresponsible auto-somnambulant, to be protected from fright. That there are also fraudulent representations without somnambulism is at the same time not for a moment to be disputed.

According to the best Spiritist authorities, it may be taken that in 95 per cent. of all so-called spirit-appearitions, the medium himself figures as the apparition, putting fraudulent imitations quite out of sight. It is quite vain to hope, by binding the medium to a particular place, to be secure that any apparition away from this place is not the medium; partly because somnambules are astonishingly expert in loosening knots and stripping off fastenings, and partly because, according to Spiritist assertion, the medium can penetrate the matter of the fastenings.\* Supposing this assertion to be true, it is also impossible to secure mediums by enveloping them in gauze carried round the seat and sealed, or by caging them; for if the somnambulant medium can penetrate substances, he can produce himself as an apparition notwithstanding all such precaution. That the medium is on the seat at the beginning and close of the cabinet sitting, but meanwhile gets up whenever a form appears (often also without such appearance), is proved by testing the weight of the chair from second to second, although these observations are not to be universally relied upon.†

This much is certain, that if the penetrability of matter by mediums is admitted, the non-identity of medium and apparition must be proved by wholly different means than by material confinement of the medium. Regard has not been had to this, even in the statement that 95 per cent. of the apparitions are substantially the medium himself, so that the 5 per cent. residue may still be much reduced. Whenever the assertion of non-identity rests on no other ground than this material confinement of the medium, it is to be rejected as utterly unproven; everything done by the apparition is in such cases to be conceived as the act of the medium; e.g., when it cuts off and distributes a lock of hair (*Ps. St. I.*, 487; *II.*, 22) displaces furniture, carries objects round, extends hand or arm, walks about with the spectators and converses with them, has itself photographed (*II.*, 19-20, 22), impresses its feet, hands, or face in molten paraffin, and delivers these impressions to the spectators (*VI.*, 526, 545-548), and so on. All such reports, intended to prove the objective reality of the apparition, are defective, because they dispose of the question of the identity of apparition and medium on the ground of the fastening or confinement of the latter. In America, where mediums "work" in families or gangs, as it were, no value whatever is to be attached to the reports generally, since here door and gate are opened not only to somnambulant confederacy, but also to plain fraud. That hitherto all objects, flowers, samples of raiment, locks of hair, &c., delivered by such apparitions are of earthly origin, the apparitions themselves have not denied when questioned; experts can assess the price of the material per meter quite accurately, and as to

the locks of hair, it is to be observed that hair at different parts of the head varies not inconsiderably in shade and colour.

It is asserted by some Spiritists that the apparition is as a rule spatially divided from the medium, and that the latter first, when the apparition is seized, effects a junction with it by sudden penetration of the restraining material, because otherwise death would result. It seems more likely that the apparition, by dissipating itself under the hands of the seizer, and penetration of the material, should hasten back to the medium, than the reverse; but if the medium can so suddenly penetrate the restraining material, as to reunite with the apparition in the moment of danger, one does not see why he should not rather prevent this danger, by quietly going about with and in the apparition.

(To be continued.)

GLASGOW.—A public debate was held on Sunday evening, September 20th, in the Secular Hall, Ingram-street, Glasgow, between Mr. E. W. Wallis (Affirmative) and Zosenius (Negative). Subject: "Has Man a Conscious Personal Existence after the Change called Death?" The proceedings were laudably conducted under the impartial chairmanship of the Rev. J. Taylor. Both sides were ably set forth, considering the limited time of two hours apportioned to the treatment of so important a subject. Yet the immediate results of the debate were, as might have been expected, unsatisfactory. The subject is evidently not one for debate at all, as was clearly demonstrated at the conclusion of the first hour. Mr. Wallis led the way with the citation of a few well-authenticated typical facts, and invited his opponent and the audience to consider these, and if they would, to sift them also. Zosenius, however, is too skilful a fencer to be outdone by what he chose to term "mere assertions," which neither he nor the audience were then able to prove or repel, and so he had recourse to the somewhat hackneyed subject of "Exposures," of which he succeeded in making not a little capital, to the amusement and satisfaction of those in the audience who were of like mind. Zosenius is clever; quick to take advantage of an adversary's slip, and as quick in dodging an uncomfortable issue. This smartness, indeed, was the salient characteristic of his remarks; for to those who were once sceptical like himself, but are now amongst the ranks of the convinced, his apparent familiarity with the literature of Spiritualism was a mere parade: he has evidently dipped into it only deep enough to find his own depth, or at any rate only to the extent that others whom he deems authorities on the scientific side, have proceeded. So far as he was concerned it was in vain that Mr. Wallis returned to the attack with the recital of mere facts. It was complained that here was no subject for argument or for the exercise of reason. Of course; for how can a subject which is first and foremost a question of fact be satisfactorily debated with an individual who in the first place alleges his own ignorance, and in the second denies *a priori* that the testimony of others is of any value whatsoever? The subject might have been otherwise introduced. Mr. Wallis might have been prompted to present it philosophically, arguing from matters patent to things obscure—from the visible to the occult—thus inductively laying the basis in reason for the assumption of a spiritual counterpart of things natural; then strengthening his position by the presentation of the evidence of Spiritualism with regard to the persistence of this spiritual counterpart (*i.e.*, the spirit body) subsequent to physical dissolution. But such a procedure would be open to the same kind of attack. First, the philosophy would not be appreciated, and secondly the evidence would not be accepted. There is nothing for it but *personal* investigation in an earnest but not too positive frame of mind, avoiding the extreme which combined incredulity and egotism lead to, namely, of setting at naught the valuable testimony of other investigators favourable to the subject, whose judgment and intellectual acumen are at least equal to one's own. But if the immediate results were unsatisfactory there can be no doubt that, with earnest thinking minds, the facts adduced as evidence on the affirmative side of the momentous question must eventually assert their own influence and yield their own results.—ST. MUNGO.

WALWORTH ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Public services are held every Sunday at seven o'clock, and every Tuesday at eight o'clock, at 83, Bayson-road, Walworth. On Sunday, September 27th, at seven o'clock, Mr. J. Burns, editor of the *Medium*, will inaugurate the Sunday services by delivering an address.—J. VEITCH, Secretary.

HAPPY the man who, studying Nature's laws,  
Through known effects can trace the secret cause,  
His mind possessing in a quiet state,  
Fearless of future, and resigned to fate.—DRYDEN

\* [Of course, Spiritists do not ascribe to the conscious mediums themselves any such power, nor have they hitherto sufficiently, if at all, recognised the superior power of the somnambulant condition. It is this general unfamiliarity with the psychology of the somnambulism which, in my judgment, makes the study of the author's application of it to mediumistic phenomena so important. The fact is that somnambulism, so far as known, has been hitherto explained among us by Spiritism (an explanation which cannot possibly survive a serious and unprejudiced examination of the facts), instead of the converse attempt being at first made, to explain mediumistic phenomena, partially at least, by somnambulism.—TR.]

† [The reference here seems to be to experiments recorded by Baron Hellenbach ("Geburt und Tod, &c." Vienna: 1885; p. 143, *et seq.*).—TR.]