

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATEVER LOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.—Paul.

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A PROBLEM FOR CONJURERS.

BY CARL DU PREL. (Munich.)

(Translated by V.)

"Quam multa fieri non posse, priusquam facta sint, iudicantur."

II.—DEDUCTIONS AND REFLECTIONS.

(Continued from p. 508.)

The logical deductions which we must draw from the facts here narrated are partly of a physical, partly of a philosophical kind. With regard to the first, almost everything is still veiled in obscurity; one thing only is clear, that is, that these slate-writings, which are impossible according to the laws which govern our phenomenal world, must be ascribed to a transcendental origin, and these occurrences which take place in our world of sense must either be accounted for by Zöllner's theory of another variety of space, or be ascribed to the passage of matter through matter (*Durchdringung der Materie*).

If we first analyse these events in their separate parts we shall find:—

1. That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible, since the questions are put at the last moment, or written without the medium's knowledge, and then answered correctly.

2. The place on which the writing is found, is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate pencil.

3. That the writing is being actually done at the time, can be heard.

4. That the medium is not writing is to be seen.

5. The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead pencil. The scratching sound upon the slate is distinctly audible to the whole circle, and the sound always corresponds to the side of the slate written upon, and the bit of pencil used. On one occasion, when a sceptic placed a morsel of red chalk in the slate, the writing was done with the red chalk; besides which, the bit of pencil is found to be worn down after the writing is done, and its identity can be ascertained by its having previously been marked.

So much with regard to the physical point of view. With respect to the philosophical, we add the following:—

6. The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions.

7. This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium.

8. It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made.

These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature, or species, as regards the intellectual side. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition; it is not for this person or that to draw what logical conclusion he pleases

from facts; and this is a very good thing, otherwise humanity would never be taught anything by means of facts.

Should we, therefore, call these beings spirits? This we are not justified in doing; since, let alone that the idea of a spirit according to Kant, as a being simply of thought, is an unjustifiable one, because he had no experience on the subject; the fact that they are invisible does not prove that they have no materiality, or form, for every scientist knows that there are combinations of matter which are imperceptible to our senses.

It is only because I do not wish to be accused of having formed too hasty an opinion, that I proceed to give further particulars which lie at the root of these experiences, without committing myself here to any further assertions, before doing which I desire to have still more experience.

9. If these beings speak, they do so in human language.

10. If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (*Verstorbene Menschen*.)

11. When these beings become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the medium sitting in a dark cabinet, the room in which are the members of the circle being only dimly lighted—when I was present two candles were burning—the hands seen are of human form. I need scarcely say that I should not advance this as evidence, had not every precaution been taken against imposture, the medium's coat being sewn down the front and the sleeves sewn together behind his back, the stitches being cut after the séance was over; and had not one of the party, while the proceedings took place, stood behind the medium in the cabinet, holding his hands.

12. When these beings become entirely visible in the dark room, in which case the medium himself sits among the chain formed by the circle, they show the human form and countenance. It is very easily said that in this case it is the medium himself who is masquerading. But when the medium speaks from his seat; when his neighbours on either side declare that they have hold of his hands, and at the same time I see a figure standing close to me; when this figure illumines his face with the air-exhausted glass tube filled with quicksilver, lying on the table—the light produced by shaking which not impeding the phenomena—so that I can see it distinctly, then the collective evidence of the facts I have narrated proves to me the necessity of the existence of a transcendental being, even if thereby all the conclusions I have come to during twenty years of work and study should be thrown overboard. Since, however, on the contrary my views (as set forth in my "Philosophy of Mysticism") have taken quite another course, and are only further justified by these experiences, I find as little subjective grounds for combating these facts as objective ones.

In the "Philosophy of Mysticism," the analysis of our so-called unconsciousness has brought me to recognise a transcendental power of perception, into the different ramifications of which I afterwards inquired. Some agent must also necessarily be at the bottom of this power, a transcendental subject. Now, from reasons, which it would be out of place here to mention, this subject must be considered as capable of development, whereby the principle of "conservation of energy" and of Darwinism in its meta-

physical department is led up to. The fact is, therefore, that earthly Darwinism would not be possible, were not metaphysical Darwinism a truth.

On the other side, I now have the empirical experience of the existence of such transcendental beings, which I am convinced of by the evidence of my senses of sight, hearing, and feeling, as well as by their own intelligent communications. Under these circumstances, being led by two methods of inquiry to the self-same goal, I must indeed be abandoned of the gods if I did not recognise the fact of the immortality—or rather let us say, since the proofs do not extend farther—the continued existence of man after death.

There is forcible proof for this conclusion in the analysis of the occurrences, given in Nos. 1 and 8, by slate-writing, and I would therefore advise everyone to seek for conviction by this method. Here the whole process takes place before the eyes of the spectators in full light; the medium is almost entirely passive in the proceeding, he does not require to know the question asked, and often operates solely by his mere presence, though more powerfully when his hands touch the slates—because there is no force in nature, which is not weakened by the effect of distance; in short, the whole proceeding is so simple, that it may be likened to “looking for knots in rushes” to scent imposture here.

There are indeed sceptics who consider it a matter of suspicion that the medium should touch the slates, and that the folding slates should be locked, so that the surface of the slates is in darkness. According to this logic, the existence of the fixed stars may be denied, on account of the suspicious circumstance that they are only seen by night, which evidently points to a great American humbug. There are likewise sceptics who suggest that the medium writes with his foot, and I have no doubt that some journalists will assert that they know at a distance both of time and space what took place at a well-lighted table in Vienna, far better than I did who was sitting at that table. I am not going to address myself to such clever persons; for it is well known that the most obstinately blind are those who are determined not to see, and those who are not open to reason cannot be convinced, even by the most well-proved facts. To fight against facts with theories is, however, as though a pot of earthenware should strike one of iron in the hopes of shattering it.

On the contrary, if a person of sound and clear understanding, that is, one who has not a pre-conceived theory which he is determined to save at any cost, will attend one séance for slate-writing only, he will have to give in to the facts. I will relate an instance of this in the case of a Viennese professor. When we attempted in his presence some experiments with a photographer—which, however, led to no results—(real conjurers have no unsuccessful séances) we concluded by asking the question if we might hope for more success later in the day; in the folding slate the answer “No” was written, the sound of the writing being distinctly heard. And these two letters were quite sufficient to convince the professor.

Now, why was this so? Simply because his mind was unbiassed, and, like a finely-balanced pair of scales, was able to give the right weight to the facts that came before him. Other brains resemble rough, heavy scales, which cannot even with a cart-load of facts be brought to a just understanding of them. Considered in themselves, two letters of the alphabet seem but an insignificant fact, but they are all sufficient if the mental balance is a fine one. According to Kant and Schopenhauer, the essential function of the brain is to trace effects to causes. Now, in the case of these slate-writings, it is manifest that the cause of them cannot lie within the phenomenal world, and therefore must be of a transcendental nature. If anyone who is an eye-witness of these occurrences is not able to see this, it is a proof that the causal function of his intellect is imperfect,

The causal function of the intellect really exists in finding the reason of some apparent contradiction of the laws of nature. This faculty must evidently precede a correct capacity of judgment, and if this is present, the domain will be recognised in which the especial cause of the phenomenon must lie. This slate-writing especially imposes upon the reason the task of determining whether the cause lies within the domain of mechanical law, or is of transcendental origin. If, therefore, the cause is sought in an inverted direction, or in accordance with the *a priori* assumption that it cannot lie in the domain in which it really does lie, this is a proof of a defective causal function of the intellect. And if it is indeed a logical error of judgment to deduce a false cause from the right domain, the error is still greater if the cause is looked for in the wrong department. This is, however, the case when the cause of slate-writing is sought in the domain of mechanical law, which, as we have before proved, leads to a logical impossibility.

A rightly balanced intellect makes good use of the means at its command. Such a man as Kant, for example, knew very little of our solar system, compared with a modern astronomer; but those few data which he possessed were sufficient for him to reconstruct the system in his own mind. From few effects he arrived at the right cause. Another, who knew perhaps even more than our astronomers, might not arrive at a correct conclusion. Kant proceeded after the principle of making the most of the smallest indications of power, which is only done by nature and genius. On the other side there are, without doubt, doubters who after witnessing with their own eyes the phenomenon of slate-writing, still remain sceptical. They wish to believe it is only a case of greater powers of deception, since they are on the look-out for imposture; but the fact only proves that their minds are not capable of correct judgment, and that instead of becoming enlarged by this means they become still narrower. The rightly balanced intellect must, in witnessing such slate-writings, be opened to the fact, that from the impossibility of their being executed by normal means, an interference of the transcendental world with our normal world is here accomplished, which, even because the theory of development is true, draws each world little by little to one another. Not to speak of such sceptics as these, the same thing happens here as in other departments; those who have seen and observed the facts, confirm them; those who have not seen and indeed consider it beneath their dignity to examine into them, deny them. It is pretty evident on which side the truth should be found.

Those sceptics who are deficient in powers of observation may be divided into certain classes. Among the most ignorant are those who think that whatever is beyond human comprehension, particularly their own individual comprehension, is also against reason. These persons may, therefore, give an explanation of the views I have here set forth, by questioning in me the “*capitis diminutio*,” or, in other words, denying me the use of my senses. As, however, in the future, I do not intend by any means to restrict myself in my writings to the subject of so-called “Spiritualism,” I hope to force upon them the strange hypothesis that I am only mad on that one subject. Naturally, I shall not answer such opponents.

(To be continued.)

TRANCE AND PREMATURE BURIAL.—On Monday week the infant child of parents living at Hillside-road, Stamford Hill, N., was seized with convulsions, which resulted in apparent death. The body was prepared for burial, and on Saturday the interment took place at Abney Park Cemetery. While the coffin was being lowered a child's cry was heard, and as soon as the lowering had been completed a cry was again heard. The coffin was drawn up and the top unscrewed, when it was found that the little one was alive. The child was taken home and is now in a fair way of recovery.—*Echo*, October 20th.

PHASES OF MATERIALIZATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH

IN THE

OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M. A. (OXON.)"

(Continued from page 509.)

It is now a common occurrence for Mr. Eglinton to be brought out from the inner room, which serves him as a cabinet, into that in which the observers are sitting while the psychic form is visible to all. I may refer to narratives recording this crucial piece of evidence which have appeared in "LIGHT," and especially to that remarkable record published on February 28th, 1885, which, for exactness of description, as well as for the facilities for observation granted to fourteen people, is of high value as a piece of evidence: and I may quote, as eminently germane to my argument, a narrative of a very precise and remarkable character contributed by Florence Marryat.*

"I wish to call the attention of the readers of 'LIGHT' to an account of two sésances, at which I have had the pleasure of assisting lately, given under the mediumship of Mr. William Eglinton, at 12, Old Quebec-street, W. The first sésance took place on Friday evening, September 5th, on which occasion the circle consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Stuart, Colonel and Mrs. Wynon, Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Russell-Davies, Colonel and Mrs. Lean, Mr. C., and Mr. Morgan. We sat in the front drawing-room in a semi-circle, with one gas-burner alight; and the doors having been properly secured against any intrusion, Mr. Eglinton took up a position in the back drawing-room, which is divided by a pair of curtains from the front. He had not left us a couple of minutes before a man stepped out from the *portière* and walked into the midst of us. He was a large, stout man, and very dark, and most of the sitters noticed that he had a very peculiar smell. No one recognised him, and after appearing two or three times he left, and was immediately succeeded by a woman, not unlike him in appearance, who was also unrecognised by any present. These two spirits, before retiring, came out *together*, and seemed to examine the circle curiously.

"After a short interval, a much smaller and slighter man came forward, and darted in a peculiar slouching attitude round the circle. He had also a dark face, but with very refined and handsome features. Colonel Lean asked him to shake hands. He replied by seizing his hand, and nearly pulling him off his seat on to the floor. He then darted across the room, and gave a similar proof of his muscular power to Mrs. Stuart. But when I asked him to notice me, he took my hand and squeezed it firmly between both his own. Colonel Lean asked him if he could disappear through the floor. He responded by mounting through the ceiling. His figure elongated until the head reached the ceiling, at which time the drapery touched the floor, and then he ascended, little by little, till all that was left of him was a piece of drapery no larger than a pocket handkerchief, which he flapped for a minute or so before he drew it after him. He had scarcely disappeared before Abdulah, with his one arm, and his six feet of height, stood before us, and salaamed all round. Then came my daughter Florence, a girl of nineteen years old, very slight and feminine in appearance. She advanced once or twice, near enough to touch me with her hand, but seemingly fearful to venture farther, retreated again. But the next moment she re-appeared, dragging Mr. Eglinton after her. He was in deep trance, breathing with difficulty, but Florence held him by the hand and brought him up to my side, when he detached my hands from those of the sitters either side of me, and making me stand up, took my daughter and placed her in my arms. As I stood enfolded in her embrace, she whispered a few words to me relative to a subject *known to no one but myself*, and she placed both my hands upon her heart and bosom that I might feel she was a living woman. Colonel Lean asked her to go to him. She tried and failed, but after having retired for a minute behind the curtain to gather strength, she appeared again *with Mr. Eglinton*, and, calling Colonel Lean to her, embraced him. This is one of the most perfect instances on record of a medium being distinctly seen by ten witnesses *with the spirit*, under gas. The next materialization that appeared was for Mr. Stuart. This gentleman is newly arrived from Australia, and a stranger to

Mr. Eglinton. As soon as he saw the lady who called him to the *portière* to speak to her, her exclamation of genuine surprise and conviction, mingled with awe, was unmistakable. He said, 'My God! Pauline.' The spirit then whispered to him, and putting her arms round his neck, affectionately kissed him. He turned after a while and addressed his wife, telling her that the spirit bore the very features and expression of their niece, Pauline, whom they had lost the year before. Mrs. Stuart asked if she also might not advance, and look at the spirit, but it was intimated she must wait for the next time, as all the power had been exhausted in producing an exact materialization, so perfectly recognisable on the first occasion of its return to earth. Mr. Stuart expressed himself as entirely satisfied of the identity of his niece, and said she looked just as she did before she was taken ill. I must not omit to say that the medium also appeared with this figure, making the third time of showing himself in one evening with the spirit-form. The next appearance was of a little child, apparently about two years old, who supported itself in walking by clinging to a chair. The attention of the circle was diverted from this sight by seeing Abdulah, six feet high, dart from behind the curtains at the same moment, and stand with the child in our view, whilst Mr. Eglinton appeared between the two forms, making a '*tria juncta in uno*.' Thus ended the first of the sésances I wish to bring before your notice. The second took place on Saturday, September 27th, and under very similar circumstances. The circle this time consisted of Mrs. Wheeler, Mr. Woods, Miss S., Mrs. P., Mrs. Victor Stevens, Mr. Frank Marryat, Colonel and Mrs. Lean, Mr. Morgan, and the Hon. G. S., and we sat in the same order as before, and under the same conditions. Mr. Eglinton appeared on this evening to find some difficulty in passing under control, and he came out into the circle so many times to gather magnetism, that I guessed we were about to enjoy some unusually good manifestations. The voice of Joey, too, requested us, under *no circumstances whatever*, to loose hands, as they were going to try something very difficult, and we might defeat their efforts at the very moment of victory. When the medium was at last under control in the back drawing-room, a tall man with an uncovered head of dark hair, and a large beard, appeared and walked up to Mrs. P. She was very much affected by the recognition of the spirit, who was her brother. She called him by name, and kissed him, and informed us that his face was just as it had been in earth-life. Her emotion was so great, we were afraid she would faint, but after a while she became calm again. Then a lady came forward, the mother of Miss S., and gave her some advice relative to her private affairs. We next heard the notes of a clarinet. I was aware that Mr. Woods (also a stranger, until a few days since, to Mr. Eglinton) had lost a brother under peculiar circumstances (all of which had been detailed satisfactorily to him by slate-writing through Mr. Eglinton), and that he had been promised and expected to see his brother this evening. It was the first time, however, that I had ever seen Mr. Woods, and yet (so remarkable was the likeness between the brothers) that when a spirit now appeared with a clarinet in its hand, I could not help knowing at once who it was, and saying so to my next neighbour. The spirit advanced to Mr. Woods and grasped his hand. As they appeared thus, with their profiles turned to one another, they were *strikingly* similar in feature and expression. This spirit's head was also bare—an uncommon occurrence—and covered with thick hair. He appeared twice, and said distinctly, 'God bless you,' more than once. Mrs. Wheeler, who had only seen the spirit once in earth-life, was startled by the tone of the voice, which she recognised at once, and Mr. Morgan, who intimately knew the deceased gentleman in Australia, confirmed the recognition by saying it was a perfect likeness of the spirit. My daughter Florence then came out, but only a little way, not far enough to reach us. I was disappointed at her want of boldness, which Joey explained by saying she was weak to-night as they wanted to reserve the strength for a manifestation by and-by. He then said, 'Here comes a Masonic friend for Mr. S.,' and a man wearing the Masonic badge and scarf appeared, and made the tour of the circle, giving the Masonic grip to the Freemasons present. He was a very good-looking young man, and said he had met some of those present in Australia, but no one seemed to recognise him. He was succeeded by the same male spirit who ascended through the ceiling on the 5th September. As he appeared through the curtains, a female form, bearing a very bright light, appeared with him as if to show the way. She did not come beyond the *portière*, but everyone in the room saw her distinctly. On account of the dress and com-

plexion of the male figure, we had wrongly called him 'the Bedouin.' Mr. Frank Marryat now discovered he was an East Indian by addressing him in Hindustani, to which he responded in a low voice. Someone asked him to take a seat amongst us, upon which he seized a heavy chair in one hand and flourished it above his head. He then squatted, native fashion, on the ground, and left us, as before, by ascending through the ceiling. Joey now announced that they were going to try the experiment of *showing us how the spirits were made from the medium*. This was the crowning triumph of the evening. Mr. Eglinton appeared in the very midst of us, in trance. He came into the room backwards, and as if fighting with the power, his eyes shut, and his breath drawn with labour. As he stood thus, holding a chair for support, a white, flimsy mass was seen on his hip, his legs became illuminated with lights travelling up and down them, and a white cloud settled about his head and shoulders.

"The mass increased, and he breathed harder and harder, whilst invisible hands pulled the flimsy drapery out of his hip in long strips that amalgamated as soon as formed, and the cloud grew thicker. All at once, in a moment, as we eagerly watched the process, the spirit, full formed, stood beside him. No one saw it had been raised in the midst of us, but it was there. Mr. Eglinton then retired with his new-born spirit behind the *portière*, but in another moment he came, or was thrown out, amongst us again, and fell upon the floor. The curtains opened, and the figure of Ernest appeared, and raised the medium by the hand. As he saw him, Mr. Eglinton fell on his knees, and Ernest drew him out of sight.

"This ended what I am sure your readers will agree with me in calling a most marvellous séance."

We, the undersigned, were present at one or both of the séances described, and we give our testimonies that the description of them is perfectly accurate, and that they were performed under test conditions, the doors being locked and the key in the possession of one of the company:—Francis Lean, Lieutenant-Colonel, 20, Regent's Park-terrace, N.W.; R. H. Russell-Davies, 12, Westbourne Park-road, N.W.; R. Stuart, 24, Ebury-street, S.W.; Alexander Wynch, Lieutenant-Colonel, United Service Club, Pall Mall, S.W.; Eva Florence Stevens, 20, Mimosa-street, Fulham, S.W.; Frank Marryat, 20, Regent's Park-terrace, N.W.; W. P. Morgan, 4, Salisbury-street, Strand.

(To be continued.)

STONE THROWING.—The *San Francisco Chronicle* reports manifestations of a strange, intelligent power in Shasta County, by which a family, in which were children from four to fifteen, has been driven from its home. The manifestations were movements of heavy objects, stone throwing, &c., by unseen agents. Similar manifestations occurred in San José some time ago, by which a family was driven from one home to another, and then another, when they suddenly ceased. In this latter case, some of the stones thrown into the house weighed two or three pounds, and were very numerous. Doors and walls were badly battered, and windows broken, but no living person was hurt, even when struck. Stones which had been thrown through the doorway were seen sometimes to rise spirally and strike the ceiling. A sceptical gentleman who came "to find out how it was done," chose a seat from which to make observations, but was driven to change it by a half-pound stone striking the wall behind him, missing his head by a "close shave."—*Golden Gate*.

THOUGHT-READERS.—A writer in a late number of *Le Messenger* refers to the instances of thought-reading communicated by Mr. H. S. Thompson to the Psychical Research Society. They presented themselves in a little girl who had an affection of the eyes consequent upon a fever. In the course of his mesmeric treatment, he found that she perceived his thoughts. One day, at the previously expressed wish of an investigating friend, he silently willed her to bring to him from a vase of flowers in the room a particular sprig, and she did so as promptly as if he had uttered his request in words. The writer in *Le Messenger* regards the thought-reading faculty as a natural gift capable of further development by use—a kind of mediumship. Thought-readers say, like mediums, that the exercise of their faculty is followed by a sense of nervous exhaustion; for success in the exercise of it they also ask for passive or neutral subjects to act with them in their demonstrations, such as have not made up their minds adversely as to the existence of the faculty.

THE SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK.

XLI.

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

Thomas R. Hazard, a well-known Spiritualist, of Rhode Island, U.S.A., is giving an autobiographical account of his observations of Spiritualism for thirty years in one of the oldest American journals, the Philadelphia *North American*. His experiences began in 1839, and have continued ever since. These letters, so widely circulated through the newspaper Press by the American habit of copying every matter of interest into thousands of journals, will make one of the most interesting books ever published.

* * *

There are now living in the world scores—hundreds—of men and women, whose observations may be nearly as extensive and remarkable as those of Mr. Hazard, and the time is not distant when some competent writer will bring together, arrange, and publish an Encyclopædia of Spiritualism which will convince the most incredulous of the reality of the Spiritual phenomena.

* * *

Such a book, I need not say, will have more real interest and value than many books now existing on this planet. Psychology is the highest, the deepest, and by far the most important of sciences. Astronomy, geology, and biology lead up to this science of sciences—the nature, powers, and destiny of the human soul. Our one guide to that knowledge of ourselves centres in the phenomena of Spiritualism.

* * *

The true dignity of man consists in the fact of his immortality. The life which could be ended—the existence which could be terminated by a pistol-shot, a drop of prussic acid—by a thousand accidents, would be hardly worth caring for. "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die"—let us have our fill of sensual delights—are quite natural conclusions to those who do not believe in a continued and progressive existence. If life is to end, and may end by the accident of any hour, why not end it whenever it becomes disagreeable?

* * *

The *Christian Commonwealth* is flying signals of distress. "The faith-cure and the mind-cure," it says, "are both alike the offspring of fanaticism and superstition. The ministers of Boston know not what to do in presence of this new craze, which is robbing them of their congregations wholesale. We regard this new development of fanaticism with considerable alarm. Its results are only too likely to be evil and disastrous. Scepticism is born of superstition. The human reason, held in bondage by darkness and authority, revolts, and rebounds to the furthest point in the opposite direction." Just so. Then why try any longer to hold human reason in such miserable bondage?

* * *

In 1692, twenty persons were put to death in one county in Connecticut—tried by torture and convicted of witchcraft. In New England 200 persons were condemned for this now obsolete crime, and down to about a century ago hundreds were similarly convicted and executed. A woman and her daughter, aged thirteen, were hanged on the same gallows at Oxford. It is just about a century since the last witch was executed in Scotland. In late years mediums have been denounced in pulpits and newspapers, and a few imprisoned—but the era of stake and gibbet is happily passed away.

* * *

It is really much better when you think of it. Mr. Eglinton can give a slate-writing séance to a Royal Highness or to a more powerful Prime Minister without peril. To think how different it was less than two centuries ago! Here is a sample: "Abigail Faulkner, daughter of the Rev. Francis Dane, of Andover, was condemned to death, her two daughters, only eight and ten years of age, testifying that their mother had made witches of them, they having signed their names to the devil's book with pen dipped in their own blood. She was tortured to make her confess, but died without confessing. Giles Corey, an old man eighty-one years of age, was accused and tried. Refusing to confess, the court ordered him to be put to the torture. They laid him prostrate and piled heavy weights upon him to break his stubborn will. He called upon them to 'pile on more weight! more weight!' till he died." And this was done under the influence of Christians like Governor Endicott and the Rev. Cotton Mather, and so wise a judge as Sir Matthew Hale.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

The London Spiritualist Alliance.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The London Spiritualist Alliance has now held a considerable number of soirées at St. James's Hall, admission to which has been freely accorded to friends of members, and to those who have sought introduction. The number of persons who, by their presence, may be presumed to have an interest in our work, is very considerable. These soirées are a very large item in our expenditure, and we are not disposed to grudge the outlay which they have involved.

But we are of opinion that those whose interest in our proceedings is sufficiently active to lead them to desire to attend our meetings so regularly may fairly be invited to qualify themselves for future attendance by becoming members of the Alliance. The expense incurred is so trivial that it is within the reach of all but a very small minority.

It should be borne in mind that our resources are limited, and that the work before us is vast. We want funds, and we can utilise any amount of money that is likely to be entrusted to us. Our operations are curtailed by want of the means that ought, we think, to be at our disposal, in view of the general interest in our work.

We do not propose, therefore, to issue indiscriminately, as we have done, invitations to our meetings. We are desirous that any one who is interested in our work should have opportunity of attending one or more of our meetings, and any member will at once be furnished with a ticket for the admission of such an inquirer on application to myself or to the Hon. Sec. But we trust that those whose continued interest in our work is manifested by a flattering attendance on our proceedings will go a step further, and support us by adding their names to our list of members.

I hope I may be pardoned if I ask that the *quid pro quo* may not be too rigidly insisted on. Instead of the oft-repeated question, "What am I to get out of membership in the L.S.A.?"—a query which, if it were of universal application, would paralyse all effort except that which was expected to be of merely selfish application—I would hope that we might rather ask ourselves, "How can I best within my power subserve what I recognise to be a good and useful work?" The subscription to the L.S.A. has been placed at so low a rate as to bring it within the reach of all. May I suggest to those members to whom a guinea more or less is a small matter that they may render us a real service by distinguishing between the minimum subscription, and the larger sum which generosity may dictate?

I may add for the information of your readers that I shall have the honour to submit at our next meeting some very interesting facts relating to the state of Spiritualism in various countries, together with a plan of home work which I hope may be the commencement of a period of activity within the Alliance in the way of practical research and investigation, as well as of the development of the rarer phenomena in carefully organised circles.

Any friends, not members of the Alliance, will secure admission by signifying their wish to me or to the Hon. Sec.—I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

W. STAINTON MOSES, M.A.,

President of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, S.W.,

October 26th, 1885.

Corrections.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—My preface to the translation of Hartmann's "Spiritism," as published in the supplement to "LIGHT," contains two passages which I have altered for the reprint, and I should like the alterations to appear also in "LIGHT," as they concern a material point for discussion. Speaking of Kant's striking prediction of the proof of a world of spirits, I, too, positively stated the physical condition of such proof to be "a partial solution of the cellular tissues encasing the subtler organism which relates us to supersensuous things and beings." As altered the passage will stand: "The physical condition being, perhaps, a partial solution of the cellular organism masking one for subtler impressions."

A little lower down I say—"whereas it can almost always be shown that mediums and somnambules are either persons in whom some constitutional lesion has taken place, or in whom there is some failure of equilibrium in the organic forces." Please to read instead: "Whereas it seems probable that in the abnormal persons called mediums and somnambules some constitutional lesion has been either inherited or incurred, or there is some disturbance of nervous equilibrium."

In my letter on "Facts and Theories," towards the close of second paragraph, for "psychical presence" read "physical presence."

C. C. M.

"The Human Characteristics of Communicating Spirits."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—A touch of common, everyday life in Spiritual communion is sometimes more telling, and sends a straighter home-thrust as to the humanity of the agency employed, than the most startling phenomena can do.

Therefore, after the very learned disquisition on this much vexed question that you have had the large-mindedness to publish in your journal, perhaps your readers may not be displeased with a few lines of extreme simplicity that will speak for themselves on this same subject.

Allow me, then, to say that on one occasion I was sitting with a dear friend (a private lady and constant companion of my séances) at a table placed before one of the three large windows of my apartment, on a summer's afternoon, so there was light in abundance.

I was correcting for publication a spiritual article purporting to be given me by a spirit sister long deceased, and I came to a passage I did not quite understand in its then written state; so I asked my friend what she considered my sister's real meaning was, when my sister herself (the voice heard by us hundreds of times being unmistakable) answered me, correcting the passage in as distinct tones as I could myself have used!

I thanked her warmly and said, "Then you really did give me this communication, dear sister?" "Yes," answered my sister, "but not the mistakes!" which made my friend and myself laugh heartily.

On another occasion my friend and I were again sitting together in my apartment, and had put out the lights to give easier conditions to our spirit friends to speak with us.

Being much absorbed by their conversation, we had forgotten the time necessary for my friend's return by train, when my spirit sister said to my friend, "Dorcas, look at the clock." My friend instantly tried to light a match to do so, but failed, when my spirit sister in a very amused tone of voice said, "Why, you've got the wrong end of the match." This my friend found was true, and on lighting the match and looking at the clock, saw she must instantly leave to catch the train.

I could multiply these home touches almost indefinitely, but must not encroach on your kindness. They will, however, suffice to show I have reason for saying in the letter you were good enough to publish from me in "LIGHT," that the spiritual beings who communicate with us—so far as my experience goes, at all events—are just men, women, and children like ourselves.—Faithfully yours,

October 26th, 1885.

"LILY."

SPIRITUALISM in England, endorsed as it is by those eminent English scientists, Professors Crookes and Wallace, has a standing that it has not reached in this country. But it is gaining ground here in a marvellous manner.—*Golden Gate, U.S.A.*

RESTITUTION THROUGH A SPIRIT.—At the beginning of the civil war, two young men of Milan, Ohio, being about to join the army, called upon a young lady friend to say farewell. While talking, one asked for a glass of water. She left the room and procured it. After they left she missed a bracelet. One of the young men fell in the war. The young lady married. Long after the incident of the bracelet, which had faded from her mind, she awoke one night to see before her the young friend who fell in the war. "I have come," he seemed to say, "to speak about the bracelet. It was I who took it. I have always regretted it. My sister has it; I handed it to her at once when I went home. If you ask her for it, at my request, she will restore it." He disappeared. Next day she went to the sister, told her the story, and she gladly handed it to her.—*The Daily Local, Sandasky, Ohio.*

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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.]

Light :

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31ST, 1885.

PSEUDO SYBILS.

One of the many perplexities of Modern Spiritualism is its tendency, in certain stages, to develop Pseudo Sybils. Given a certain amount—usually limited—of mediumistic experience; an absence of all study of, or respect for, the experience of others; a defective imagination, and an infinite faculty for generating phantasy in lieu of it, coupled with an adequate amount of vanity and exaggerated self-esteem and the Pseudo Sybil steps forth, armed at all points, for the confusion of society. It is not needful that she should be consciously an impostor. It may be admitted that, occasionally, like the Pseudo Sybils encountered on the blasted heath by the Thane of Glamis, she gives us "earnest" commencing "with a truth"; but this is not often, and when she has this modicum of what is useful to impart to us, it is so smothered in superincumbent egotism and self-delusion as to be scarcely identifiable for what it really is. Nevertheless, the consciousness of this possibility inspires the more experienced Spiritualist with a certain tenderness in dealing with the Pseudo Sybil; and this feeling of forbearance is encouraged by the conviction that explanation or argument would be addressed to her in vain. She is, therefore, usually left to work out for herself her own phantasies, a lengthy process, and sooner or later painful, but probably the only possible method of illuminating a nature which, even where admittedly honest, is so absolutely irrational, so insanely self-absorbed.

But, unfortunately, there is another class of zealot entitled to be considered in this relation, viz., those upon whom from indiscriminating enthusiasm on their part, from ignorance of spiritual laws, or a mere wondering love of novelty, the Pseudo Sybil imposes, usually, it may be hoped, innocently, being herself imposed upon, and sometimes, it may be feared, the reverse. It is for the protection of such persons that we are now led to speak.

The Pseudo Sybil, full-blown—for she passes through various stages before arriving at the butterfly—is usually not young. If of a comely and dignified presence, so much the better for her self-imposed mission. She dresses well, when her fortunes admit of it, and affects, but not too austere, a quasi-sibylline style of costume. "How do you get on with her?" inquired once the friend of a young invalid under the tendance of one of this sisterhood. "Not very well in the nursing way," was the answer, "but I find the costume very supporting."

The Pseudo Sybil possesses usually a small independence but she condescends freely to accept the gifts of the faithful "for her charities." These investments will be repaid with interest in Heaven! Like Miss Flite, in Dickens' romance, she will confer estates at the Day of Judgment! Also dignities! The latter she sometimes confers on herself,

even here. She is invariably mysterious; partly because mystery inspires veneration in foolish people, and partly because she has not really anything to reveal. She drapes herself, therefore, in phrases and phylacteries, surrounded ever with a halo of phantasy. She is not unalive to the practical wisdom of the philosopher who advises us not to prophesy unless we know. Nevertheless, when she has recourse to her spirits, whom she always describes with the definite article and in the singular number, they sometimes lead her into difficulties. These she surmounts, entirely to her own satisfaction, by disregarding them. Though accustomed to have recourse to the spirits on emergencies, she is careful always to disavow being a Spiritualist, and, in any real sense of the word, her disavowal must be accepted as true. In order to maintain in the eyes of the exoteric world the aspect of reserve and seclusion proper to the dignity of her claims, she frequently entertains "a dame de compagnie," lay sister, or lady-in-waiting, who interposes between her and the vulgar, and adumbrates her to the outer world. This office is usually held by a disciple, who may possess property, and certainly possesses faith, as she understands it, not unaccompanied, perhaps, at seasons by misgivings, which she dismisses as sinful.

The Pseudo Sybil is much given to symbols and similitudes, "finding sermons,"—always about herself,—"in stones," and self-adulation "in everything." She is partial to "good society" in this outer sphere, when she can attain thereunto, feeling it to be a natural outcome and symbolical representation of her own rank in the Courts of Heaven; and in "those whom Providence hath blessed with affluence" she takes ever a tender interest, inspired, we will hope, by compassion for and desire to alleviate the special worldly trials and temptations to which it exposes them. Where the activities of the useful and benevolent work of the age are most alive we may scarcely hope to find the Pseudo Sybil; she belongs, she would say, to the centre and not to the circumference, and her "mission" she would claim to be to inspire and shed a Divine lustre on work rather than to do it. Indeed, "not to do it" is very generally the essential aim of her ministrations; because there lies at the root of them,—in so far as they can, by a form of speech, be said to have any root,—no spirit of useful work whatever. She, however, clothes herself in a superficial form or simulacrum of good works; and it is agreeable to her and in some sort needful to her "mission," to play "Lady Bountiful," in the comedy of her life. She does it very fairly well to indiscriminating observers, being frequently endowed with considerable histrionic powers. These are favoured by her often being enabled to possess herself with the persuasion that she is really the personage she enacts. As, for example, the lady whose work was reviewed in "LIGHT," October 17th, who claims to have been born without a father and to be in fact no other than the Woman in the Sun in the vision of the Apocalyptic seer; and another lady whom we must class with the same sisterhood, whom it was found impossible by any arguments or explanations to convince that the Franco-German War of 1870 had not been stayed solely by her prayers; or another who passed into the other life in the full conviction, which nothing could disturb, that she was never to die. These aberrations are very pitiful, but it is needful that they be firmly and even sternly repressed, as a class. The Pseudo Sybil is to be individually treated with tenderness and compassion. The ways of self-delusion are so varied and the weaknesses of human nature so manifold, that it is needless, and would be often unjust to attribute her extravagances to conscious imposture and the deliberate desire to deceive. But, as we have said, she requires to be steadfastly and earnestly withstood, lest she delude others as well as herself; and this, and not the smallest desire to give personal pain is the serious object of these remarks upon her and her doings.

ANTIQUATED TYRANNICAL LAWS.

An antiquated and rapidly-expiring form of Christian theology may fairly be credited with our present coercive and almost effete laws in relation to Sabbath observance, necromancy, &c.

The one ancient blot on our statute books with which we are more particularly concerned is that which, under the guise of Palmistry, lends itself to the suppression of the occult phenomena which are exhibited in what are termed Spiritual séances; and the remarkable fact is that its use is not urged by dogmatic theologians, but by more dogmatic scientists, who fancy in their ignorance that they have sounded the infinite depths of natural laws, and have ascertained what can, and what cannot, by legitimate natural means, be accomplished.

The question for solution is, Do or do not the phenomena occur? and however antecedently improbable their occurrence may appear, it is the duty of all to investigate their genuineness or non-genuineness. The theory by which they are accounted for is quite another matter, and will vary with the intellectual standpoints of the investigators, but the facts are patent to all who fully investigate.

Prejudice, however, is doing its perfect work. Magistrates refuse to accept the testimonies of the most credible and well known witnesses, and assuming an exhaustive knowledge of the laws of nature, affirm that except by trick the alleged phenomena are impossible, and, evidence or no evidence to the contrary, the psychic prisoner charged with a pretension to the possession of occult powers is condemned.

Psychics conscious of their innocence are naturally not disposed to face the ordeal of a prejudiced judge, a partial bar, or an inexperienced jury, by whom supposed criminatory evidence is greedily accepted, and genuine evidence is rejected.

Within the range of our own experience we know powerful private psychics in whose presence, and under the most crucial conditions, all the higher phenomena of Modern Spiritualism have occurred. To the séances of these psychics acceptable visitors were freely admitted, and hundreds have become convinced of the reality of the phenomena through their mediumship.

Now, however, that scientific men have resolved to crush the occult powers by resorting to antiquated laws, and magistrates on the bench have affirmed that no amount of evidence would convince them of their genuineness, these powerful psychics either decline to sit for the development of the phenomena, or sit only with their families, domestics, and intimate personal friends.

This legal terrorism, exercised over the sensitive and the innocent, has rendered admission to manifestations of occult power almost impossible, and the phenomena that a few years ago were placed before any earnest inquirers, are now to be seen only in the privacy of domestic life.

Possibly the public mind is not yet ripe for the abolition of these absurd and old-world laws, but the coming elections would afford many opportunities for educating the public, if liberal and catholic-minded men would catechise Parliamentary candidates, and thus ventilate more liberal views on this vexed question.

Our readers would do well to suggest a series of appropriate questions to be publicly asked of candidates for Parliamentary honours during the coming elections. Possibly "C. C. M." would furnish us with a list of suitable questions.

The Social Strife is the title of an Independent paper, published at Muskegon, of which the 43rd number has been forwarded to us. It contains a liberal selection from Spiritualist papers.

BARON HELLENBACH.—*Psychische Studien* for October, states that Baron Hellenbach has merely removed from Vienna for an indefinite time on private affairs. It adds: "Mr. Eglington has, up to date, published no explanation in 'LIGHT' of this case from his point of view (*von seinem Standpunkt*)."

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RECORDS OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

(Continued from page 514.)

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

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 N.—THE SPIRIT VOICE.

[There is the audible spirit-voice, of which the "cry of the Banshee," the voices of dying persons heard at a distance, the voice heard by the Roman sailors "Great Pan is dead," and the voices heard at séances, so far as the organs of the medium are not used, might be taken as examples; and there is the inaudible spirit-voice. The latter is doubtless the "still small voice" of the Bible, well-known and cultivated in the schools of the prophets, but to their modern representatives "foolishness." It is the Dæmon of Socrates, and the other interlocutor in the internal colloquies of Luther, Bunyan, and many others. It is inaudible and yet a voice, a thought-voice, sudden, without previous links of thought, resembling in this, yet in other respects not like, a sudden thought. It may be occasionally in the faintest degree audible, always within the cranium, to the degree that singing in the ears is. It is then as if that peculiar sound had been differentiated into words, like a falling stream of quick-silver breaking into different sized globules. It may seem sometimes to come from spirit within and sometimes from spirit without. And the same is probably true of the audible voice that it may be in this sense either subjective or objective. The following is an interesting account of this phenomenon as it occurs in the experience of one of our correspondents. We beg for other accounts from those who are fortunate enough to possess this neglected bud of the undeveloped future. We should like them to give us a complete natural history of it in their cases: how it began what it says, its dependent variations, its decline, if it has come to that. And if any of our readers hear or otherwise perceive voices audible or inaudible, which seem to say words without meaning, inexplicable, like the fragments of a half-heard desultory conversation, we should like to know about these also, and if there may be detected, as we suspect, in such a phenomenon any signs of an undeveloped faculty of clairaudience.]

September 8th.

My dreams are generally allegorical. There is one feature sometimes presents itself, viz., a voice loud and distinct which sometimes gives advice to me.

October 3rd.

The voice: I hear this when *soud* asleep. It is quite loud, almost a shout. On the other hand, I have in my dreams heard the voice of my wife (she is alive) when I have not seen her, and sometimes I have seen her after hearing her speak. She has not (actually) spoken to me, nor does she speak in her sleep. So there is another puzzle.

I have "felt" the same, or a voice in the daytime, especially when I am trying "by impression" to find the locality where a person may be whom I wish to see. This I am mostly successful in finding, when the person is one whom I see much of. I remain as still as I can, and the name of the place or street

where I shall meet him will suddenly shoot into my mind. In the same way I can feel one coming to see me. This can never be done after drinking any intoxicating liquor, and not at all successfully after smoking. Bear in mind I am simply giving my experience. I have had no guidance from friends; I wish I could have. I have stopped telling anyone, since they appear to think that one who has such ideas and impressions must be getting fit for a lunatic asylum. So all my researches are made under difficulties.

October 9th.

The voice in the daytime is quite silent. You might call it a voice impression. There are several such voices. The difficulty is to decide which is the "true" voice. In most cases I can decide. If I cannot decide, then I do not follow it. When I have followed it, it has been right. I had a curious experience of this in several instances. I was once going home to dinner, when I suddenly heard it, or "received it," telling me to go to a certain restaurant instead. I proceeded homeward, but it got so importunate I said "Well, I will see what comes." When half through my dinner a foreigner, whom I had not seen for two years, and certainly did not expect to see, came up to me, and after some conversation gave me a very good order. I could give you other instances. I never ask for such things, because it is against the express teachings of spiritual intercourse to desire business communications; we are assured that where it is necessary it will be given spontaneously. This I have always found to be the case. This I take as the working of Providence through the spirit-world.

Only last week I twice disregarded the voice, warning me not to go down a certain street or I should meet some one I did not wish to see. Although it *was highly improbable*, yet it happened so. I had distinguished it as what I term the "true voice" (the voice of my spirit guide, I expect), yet it was so improbable that I could not credit it, and taking any other direction would have given me 500 yards more to walk. Hence I went on. Well, it only proves it true, wherever it comes from. It seems to be the same voice as "conscience." Indeed, personally, I think it is, for conscience I look upon as the expression of the guardian angels admonishing you.

W. S. P.

CLASS R.—A DIVINE DREAM.

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
As is a winged messenger of heaven,
When he bestrides the *lazy-pacing clouds*,
And sails upon the bosom of the air."

[This is one of those dreams which, whether born of the emotions, or of a fine rare unconscious faculty, or of the impression of the spirits, leave behind the feeling that something mysterious and divine has occurred, that another world has touched us.]

I had been much disappointed in my investigation of Spiritualism, that although I had had incontrovertible evidence of my own departed friends, yet the mediums always avoided me or rather never had any information to give me respecting my peculiar adaptability for any phase, nor any information respecting my physical or spiritual guides. This preliminary is necessary to explain my dream. If you *will* have them I shall give you all attendant circumstances so that you can better account for them. I must also premise that I have taken up Spiritualism from a purely religious standpoint, it being the only system which has given me thorough satisfaction. My nature is very religious, I mean as regards faith in my Creator, and when in any difficulty or perplexity it is my custom to lay the matter before Him; hence, in this case, not hearing anything of my "guides," I desired that one might be shown me in a dream. Nothing occurred for three nights, nor had I any preconceived notion of what any of my guides were like. I thought perfect passivity would be the best.

I had been wakened up four times by my child, and on sleeping again I thought I was in the air upon clouds, when suddenly I fell upon my face, and a most brilliant light, like a number of first-rate electric lights, met my sight, so that I could not raise my head, the light being so powerful that it hurt my eyes even when closed. This light gradually subsided until I felt I could raise my head, when I saw a white rock, and from under the rock the rays of light projected outward; upon the rock was the most beautiful female I have ever seen or could ever imagine. She was draped in white, had long golden hair, which hung in masses down to her feet. She did not speak, but looked at me with a smile, and giving me one hand, which I kissed reverently, she *pointed upward* with the other. The light then increased until it was unbearable; and she vanished. I suddenly found myself in a church, where upon the windows was written "Faith." I thought a number of people were offering me the direction of this church and congregation; but I pointed to the windows, and said: "Not faith, but works; love to the neighbour." Whereupon they declined to have anything to do with me. That is the end of that dream, which I dreamt between 4 and 5 a.m.

W. S. P.

SPIRITISM VERSUS OTHER THEORIES.

(Being an answer to Messrs. von Hartmann, Myers, and Gurney.)

By THE HON. RODEN NOEL.

Will it be attempted to assimilate these phenomena to the subjective "hallucinations" of madmen, delirious patients, dreamers, and the "delusions" of sensitives induced by mesmerism? I wish some competent person would take in hand this matter of "hallucinations," not from the physiological point of view, as has been done very ably by Mr. E. Gurney (in *Mind*), but from the philosophical. Personally I incline to think that hallucinations, and dreams are the effect of an exclusive, particular experience involving spiritual action from without upon the individual; as the subjective impressions, or hallucinations of the hypnotised sensitive are. And the Psychical Research Committee find that telepathic influence from the minds of others very readily affects a dreamer, which notably confirms my view of what dreams are.—But we need not discuss that now. For the very differentia of "hallucinations" and dreams is that they are subjective *for me*, not objective *for all*; that the forms seen and touched, the conversations held, are peculiar to the hallucinated, or dreaming person, are not shared with him by the bystanders, or companions; whereas the members of the circle at a Spiritist séance perceive the same form, witness the same writing, hear the same voice, hold intelligent communication with the same external agent; and the medium equally, if he be not entranced. Inasmuch that Von Hartmann has to resort to the extraordinary supplementary hypothesis that, while these manifestations are the result of the medium's private somnambule imagination, or (as he also says), of his "hallucinations," the *objective* character of them, their perception by so many others, is a result of all the other persons being infected with his hallucinations, mesmerised by him; and the knowledge displayed by these abnormal agents is from the "masked somnambule consciousness" of medium or circle.

I call this hypothesis "extraordinary," because I think its entertainment is only to be accounted for by the fact avowed by Von Hartmann that he has never personally attended a séance. Had he done so, I suppose it would have been quite impossible for him to have put forward this notion. That a lot of different people, of diverse temperaments, who are, as often as not, discussing the last new play, or talking and joking about some topic entirely foreign to the experience in question, should be, without their suspecting it, thus all hallucinated and mesmerised simultaneously by the medium, is too extravagant an idea to be entertained for a moment by anyone who has ever been present at a materialisation or slate-writing séance. And, therefore, the question remains how do the private hallucinations of the medium get themselves made into objective perceptions for any amount of indifferent (not necessarily expectant, or hysterical) people? How do they hold conversations with these people, and give them information? Do the people you seem to meet in a dream, do the people a madman, or delirious person seems to meet, also hold conversations with me, and give me information, if I happen to be near at hand? Besides which, as I have already said, if the medium be not in trance, he certainly *has no such somnambule or hallucinatory consciousness as is imputed to him*, but on the contrary sees, converses with, and touches these external agents for the first time, just as do the other members of the circle. If ever such theories are accepted, all criteria for the ascertainment of external objective reality will be null and void; the consequences of which may be serious. But dreaming, I think, gives no countenance to any such theories as these. For in dreams, either (as I believe) the dream personages who converse with the sleepers are verily spirits (or at least, the experiences proceed from intelligent agents external to the sleeper), or again (and perhaps the fact is made up of both alternatives), these personages and their converse are a creation of the sleeper's own imagination, just as the personages of a drama are the creation of the poet. But in either case there is no warrant for the notion of a division of the one self into several distinct selves. For consider that, in a dream, we always identify *ourselves*, as distinguished from the personages who seem to con-

*May not madness be due to converse with, and continuous dominant suggestion from, unseen agents, whether genii, or demons, in the sense of departed spirits; the proper self-mastery of the sufferer being, from some cause, enfeebled? I never read a more obvious case of what a very old-fashioned Book calls *possession* than the case of mesmeric cure related by a foreign gentleman in a recent number of the *Journal of Psychical Research*; though doubtless one ought to apologise to "culture" for adopting so old-world a solution, *bran-new* explanations being so notoriously preferable to those entertained "*seniper, ubique, et ab omnibus.*"

verse with us, or act independently of us. We hear them talk, or we witness their action; but they are always objective or external to us, just as the people we meet waking are—we are never behind, or within their subjectivity; never identify ourselves with them; on the contrary, they surprise us with unexpected deeds or speeches. But even if they are all our own creation, they never act externally, objectively, so as to be perceptible to others. It is true we may imagine ourselves to be what and where we are said by others not to be—what and where we do not suppose ourselves to be in our waking state. So also may a somnambule, or a madman, imagine himself what and where others do not believe him to be. But, though Von Hartmann urges this, it is really no support to his theory at all. In these cases we have simply a subjective experience, whatever the explanation of it may be. We have no *contemporaneous* subjective experience of an opposite kind belonging to the same person. It is one continuous experience, not two of opposite kinds, mutually exclusive of each other. The sleeper, or madman does not suppose himself to be two people at the same moment; at least I never heard of such a case. Even if he did, that would still be a different thing. For *his own one* self-identifying consciousness would still include these different personalities; whereas here there are two personalities, each obstinately refusing to identify himself with the other, and no common Ego, or self, to reconcile them in one consciousness. And surely if two consciousnesses stand face to face, and deny that they belong to the same Ego, it can hardly be supposed that they will have any *future* opportunity more favourable than this for correction of their presumed mistake!

But one mesmerised subject (see "Stages of Hypnotism," by Mr. E. Gurney, *Proceedings*, S.P.R., January, 1884) said he felt as "if he had two selves, one watching the other." Now the worst of philosophers is that they will insist on reducing these poetic, metaphorical "as ifs" to the literal prose of the analytic, dogma-casting faculty. Of course, in a sense, we are not two, but a myriad people—think of the ancestral, and present influences that go to shape us, so that now one character, or mood is uppermost, now another—but that does not mean that we literally consist of a myriad incommunicable compartments, incommunicable, since, though the experience of one may occasionally slip into another, it does not any the more get recognised as ours, so that the compartments ever remain incommunicable. That is the prose, and falsehood version of this mystery of life, not to be squeezed into any propositions, that do not need to be instantly set against their opposites. Thus Calvinism is the understanding's false and prose version of St. Paul's doctrine, so terribly and vitally true, of the two conflicting moral natures in one man. Thus "Esoteric Buddhism" seems to me a very clever, but untrue, because prosaic, version of the grand old Buddhism of venerable Hindu genius. Truth cast into dogmas by the intellect is true no longer, because it has lost life and flexibility. Truth is Proteus, and will not be holden in any one definite form. The Occultist doctrine of "shells," again, seems to me a prose-travesty of the view which we owe, I think, to the very distinguished young Brahmin thinker, Mr. Mohini Chatterji, that hauntings of houses by the victims of a murder (which appears so strange and unjust) may be due to the *thoughts* of the victim reverting to the place, not to his whole, perpetual presence there. And may we not hope that the same is true even of spirits we name "earth-bound" also? that they are not so absolutely?

Again, a great dramatist undoubtedly passes into, and lives in his characters. Shakespeare is Hamlet, the gravedigger, Falstaff, and Desdemona. But though the transitions of his multifiform experience are swift, is he all these simultaneously? He is potentially; yet not literally, actually all these: in one sense he also stands afar off, contemplating these and unparticipating, as Coleridge says, "in the passions" of his puppets. Yet is he not also possessed, inspired by veritable personages representative of the type created, with whom his own many-sided nature is in sympathy?—if it were only by the people he has met, and so to speak, lived through, as well as with? For is not their influence a part of their very being? And still he is Shakespeare all the time, with his own royal manner of comprehending and creating. He is the men and women of his dramas, *plus Shakespeare*.

But it may be asked if I do not admit that some actions are performed by us without consciousness? I should reply that such actions are not, strictly speaking, performed by us at all—reflex motions are not, certainly. They are either the inherited nature, or the habit-engrained movements of the organism,

which is intimately associated with ourselves, and *co-operates* with our thought, emotion, and volition, but which also belongs to the *external* world, or system—we being, more or less, in harmony with that world, or system—acting upon it, while it acts upon us—forming, indeed, in it and with it, a great solidary organism. Of many actions, however, we are *sub-conscious*, *i.e.*, momentarily and superficially aware of them, though the main stress of attention is directed elsewhere, and such experience we easily forget; it is somewhat apt to be effaced by the moresalient and impressive characteristics of the simultaneous experience. *But, nevertheless, at the time, the same self-identifying consciousness took them all in, and made them part and parcel of one self.* The phenomena of "double-consciousness," again, lend no support to these theories, because they, though very extraordinary, and difficult to explain without calling in the conception of another alien, or more than one other alien personality, are continuous, or successive in time, not contemporaneous. One person may either gradually, or suddenly change in the nature of his experience, even character, the past, or a portion of it, becoming a blank in memory; and the alternating periods sharply marking off these changes (as in certain diseases) may ultimately be embraced in one profounder and wider consciousness: the phenomena of hypnotism give remarkable facts of this kind (but here we have the external intelligent agency one is inclined to postulate in such instances); so we may conceive that successive *lives* may ultimately be gathered up into the memory of one self. But contemporaneous, though mutually exclusive, consciousnesses cannot, without absurdity and self-contradiction, I believe, be attributed to one self.

And I maintain this, although I quite feel the necessity of recognising an absolute transcendent self—or rather many, eternally distinct, though also eternally harmonious, and *one*, since no otherwise can I comprehend the origin, ground, and substantial, spontaneous activity ("free-will") of the imperfectly developed, and successive personalities, of which we are now each of us self-conscious. As I have explained in my (*Academy*) essay on Von Hartmann's philosophy, this alone would seem capable of fulfilling all the important functions which he attributes to the "Unconscious," but which the unconscious would assuredly (as it appears to me) be quite incapable of fulfilling; yet a transcendent consciousness there must be over and above the time-consciousness, to supplement, explain, and give it the requisite support; while truly this is largely cut off and removed from our experience of the passing moment. Hence, my own conception may be thought chargeable with some of the difficulties I charge upon the hypothesis I here combat. To some extent that may be so, but I believe only to some extent.

Of course the somnambule, *before it enters into temporal experience*, may be said to be transcendent, but that is true equally of the normal, every-day experience, and yet the latter is not, therefore, taken for the experience of a stranger. Why, then, should the former be so mistaken, when that enters the field of temporal vision? Von Hartmann says the same regarding his "middle-brain" consciousness. But if it is not subjectively penetrated, only objectively apprehended, then it certainly is not ours, whatever part of the brain, or no-brain it may come from. Then is it truly a guide, or control, or intelligence external to the medium, as it claims to be. It may be using the medium's brain, or nerve-force, or muscles, or vocal organs, or even his whole body, (see "M.A. (Oxon)" and Wallace on Materialisations) "transfiguring" that; but it is not himself.

Of course I admit the difficulty of conceiving this intuition belonging to our being out of time, and not fully grasped by us, because we are limited to the time-mode of conceiving. Yet I cannot think this equal to the gratuitous paradox of supposing ten or more *simultaneous consciousnesses of ours* all *knowable and ex hypothesi actually known (by some one) under the form of time*, yet, though thus known under the form of time, not known by us to be ours. No one pretends that either of these is eternal, for all are assumed to be in time.

(To be continued.)

WAS SHAKESPEARE A SPIRITUALIST?—As I have said, says John Fraser, in *Mind in Nature*, in a long article upon the supernatural in Shakespeare, almost all Shakespeare's noblest work is tipped with a supernatural tinge, as witness "Julius Cæsar," "Antony and Cleopatra," and even "Cymbeline"—though the vision which blots the last act of that charming play is almost certainly an interpolation by some much inferior hand; but he who would understand the spiritual development of the dramatist must study these four plays: "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Hamlet," "Macbeth," and "The Tempest."

WITCHCRAFT AND THE WATER-ORDEAL.

BY CARL DU PREL,

Author of "The Philosophy of Mysticism."

(Condensed from Dr. Rohner's Translation from the German in the *Harbinger of Light* of July and August.)

II.

In the *Vienna Gazette*, No. 67, of 1728, another phenomenon is noted. An official report is there given of certain alleged witches, imprisoned in Szegedin, being subjected to the water-ordeal, and who, on their floating, were put in a balance and found to weigh only some ounces.

This abnormal levity was found not to be constant. Hermann (see *Le Bruin*, II., 137) gives an account of some rogues who, knowing that they were of the ordinary weight in swimming, submitted themselves to the ordeal, when, to their dismay, they found themselves unable to get under the surface of the water. This variability being verified, the phenomenon ought to have been properly studied, but it was not; the recognition of it, however, led to the ordeal being abandoned as a witch-test.

All attempts at explanation of such phenomena in the Middle Ages were found inadequate and inconclusive. William Scribonius, one of the professors at Marsburg, who witnessed a witch-trial by the ordeal at Lengo, explained in writing to the magistrates there that "the devil being as light as air, he could confer his own lightness upon those he was possessed of." But he seemed subsequently not to be content with this explanation, for in his book about witches he attributes their "not sinking in water, in which they were baptised into the Church, to the water's hatefully refusing to receive them after they had become imps of Satan." A similar view was taken by James I. of England, who held that "the reason of water not receiving witches into its bosom was that it had a horror of them from their having cast off belief in God and Jesus Christ." ("Görres" V., 546.)

In Holland, at a witch-trial, in 1594, the professors of the University of Leyden were referred to for their opinion. They answered that the water-ordeal could not be regarded as valid, seeing that water was not of itself able to enter into considerations and come to a conclusion. "If the water," they asked, "is not capable of finding witches guilty, how could the earth bear them up and permit them to breathe the air of life?" They regarded the fact of their not sinking as beyond question, and opined that their arms being crossed, and their hands and feet bound together, their bodies were brought into boat-form, and thus enabled to float." (Soldan V., 513.)

The devout St. Osmar, being shipwrecked, was tossed about on the water for hours before being rescued. Christians, who believed that Jesus Christ and St. Peter walked on the water, attributed her not sinking to the fact of her holding a blessed crucifix in her hand. (Görres II., 284.)

Not more satisfactory were subsequent explanations; for example, Dr. Charbonnier, in his book on the "Disorders and Faculties of Mystics," says: "In the Middle Ages hysterical subjects, called witches, who floated on water by reason of their loss of gravity, were burned because such floating was held to be supernatural."

Temporary lightness of the body has been ascertained to be connected with the ecstatic condition, so frequently observed in the early martyrs of the Church. Accepting then the ecstatic or somnambulant condition as a factor in the inquiry, let us glance down the list of observed facts recorded to the present time.

Dr. Franklin relates that once, while bathing, he was taken with sleep, and lay, unconscious, floating face upwards, on the water.

Brière de Boismont, in his "Hallucinations," 311, relates the case of a man who, rising in the night, walked in his sleep into the sea, and was picked up floating a mile from the shore in a somnambulant state.

Gmelin, in his "Magnétisme Animal," I., 63, gives an account of a Neapolitan, attached to the Court, who, while bathing, found himself involuntarily floating without effort on his own part.

Baxter, in his "World of Spirits," narrates the case of a woman, suffering from melancholia, who threw herself into the water, on which she floated for three hours; that when she was got out her body felt quite light; and that her prolonged bath cured her of the melancholia.

Despine relates, in Pigeaire's "Electricité Animal," 275, the case of a girl, eleven years old, who floated in the sea on her first entering it.

Dr. Koroff wrote to Deleuze about a woman who, when in the somnambulant state, went into the sea as if it were her native element; that once, while in the trance, she said that she must be willed not to go into the sea, for if she woke in it she would drown.

Körner says of the Seeress of Prevorst that when put into her bath while in the magnetic sleep, she vibrated all over as if pervaded by currents of electricity, and she would have been shot out of it if she had not been pressed under. Körner says that he had no doubt that she would have floated if she had been thrown into the river, as was the case with witches.

The same phenomena were observed alike among those who, in the Middle Ages, were called "Demoniacs" among "Christian Mystics," as well as among the Brahmins and Fakirs of India, not forgetting the Neo-Platonists of Egypt.

But what is strongly to our point is this, that the same phenomena occur in our midst at the present time, offering us every facility for studying them: they present themselves abundantly in induced somnambulism, on which subject we have a vast store of trustworthy records.

At this point, concludes Du Prel, we pause for the present.

A TEST.—"I have been to a séance for materialization here, in Auckland. I provided a test in the form of a sheet of cardboard well blackened with smoke. This I placed quite beyond the reach of any one occupying the medium's seat. While sitting in the dark all were in contact including the medium; I held one of his hands. The signal for 'light' was given by the sounding of a bell, none of our hands being able to reach it, and on the blackened card was the imprint of a hand. The medium's hand was found partially blackened as if it had been lightly laid upon it, the card being out of his reach, and his hands being held. Subsequent experiments showed that his wearing apparel could be similarly impressed by the black on the card. While sitting in a subdued light, all within ten feet of the medium were touched; we saw, now and then, an arm and hand emerging from the medium, waving about, and we inferred that the touches were by an arm and hand materialised from him."—W. D. CAMPBELL, Auckland, in *Harbinger of Light*.

MESMERIC CURE.—Having received letters of inquiry in respect to the cure of paralysis in Whitstable, we communicated with our correspondent, who writes: "Mr. Thorpe, a gentleman residing at Argyle Villa, Whitstable, had for four years been paralysed on the left side, and partially deprived of the use of his limbs. He was able to walk with difficulty, and he was helpless in cutting his food, being obliged to keep his left hand in a sling. He had the best medical advice, but to no purpose. Some time since he made the acquaintance of Mr. F. T. Beckett, of Clayton Villa, Whitstable, who is a believer in animal magnetism, and last Saturday week the latter gentleman placed Mr. Thorpe under his influence. The operation has since been repeated several times, with the result of Mr. Thorpe having the free use of his arm, hand, and leg, which, as we have said, he had not enjoyed for four years. He may be seen walking briskly along the street, carrying his stick under his arm, and a week ago last Thursday, as a further proof of his activity, he indulged in a run round his garden. Mr. Thorpe says he has reason to be thankful that he came to Whitstable and made the acquaintance of Mr. Beckett. He writes: 'It is no quick affair, but a wonderful cure, and ought for the sake of other sufferers to be made known. I can scarcely realise it myself.'"—*Daily Chronicle*.

MARVELLOUS INVENTION!—A correspondent calls attention to the *Dunelm Evening Telegraph* (September 9th), which quotes the following from a Chicago paper: "A gentleman, whom we call Mr. Holland, of Lincoln, Nebraska, declares that he has made a discovery by which he can demonstrate scientifically the existence of the soul. Mr. Holland is a man of small stature, thoughtful countenance, and is a devout Christian. He holds the theory that the human soul is the counterpart of the body; and he thought that by an arrangement of microscopes he might aid his dull eyes to see it. His attention was first drawn to the question, he says, by hearing a man reclining on a couch complain of severe pain in his foot, although his leg had been amputated years before above the knee. 'For years,' says Mr. Holland, 'this incident was present to my mind, until at last I resolved upon an experiment. I procured the most powerful lenses I could and completed an invention of my own, and when I had my light arranged perfectly, so that I could examine the microbes of the air, I called upon a friend who had lost his arm and explained that I wanted him to put his viewless hand under inspection. He accompanied me to my rooms, and the moment I adjusted the glass a revelation broke upon me. The dual hand lay beneath my glass. I asked him to make letters with his (to himself) viewless finger. He did so, and to my astonishment I spelled out the sentences he wrote. That was conclusive evidence to me,' concludes Mr. Holland."

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butlerof, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Fricse, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHAT CONJURERS SAY ABOUT PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

Testimony of Robert Houdin.

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

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

"4th May, 1847.

ROBERT HOUDIN."

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

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

"May 16th, 1847.

(Signed) ROBERT HOUDIN."

Testimony of Harry Kellar.

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

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

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

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

After describing several successful experiments, Mr. Kellar proceeds:—

"In respect to the above manifestations, I can only say that I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed anyone who described such manifestations under similar circumstances. I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand."

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

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

The Testimony of Professor Jacobs.

Professor Jacobs, writing to the editor of *Licht, mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—

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

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

"Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also the individuality of the spirit in 'spiritual manifestation.' I authorise you, dear sir, to insert this letter in your next number, if agreeable to you," &c., &c.

Testimony of Samuel Bellachini.

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

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

"Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI."

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The first indications of success usually are a cold breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitchings of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly, Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.