

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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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.]

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

I do not know to whom we are indebted for the suggestion that the word Psychography should be replaced by Autography, but I hope that the suggestion will not be adopted. The term now in use is sufficiently expressive, and it has the merit of exactly expressing what we hold to be the origin of this direct writing. Of the coining of words there has been no end since the Society for Psychical Research set itself to the search after terms which should not commit the Society to any belief in Spiritualism or its theories. In sheer weariness we cry out against the use of yet another term which, moreover, seems to be devised for a similar purpose. *Psychography* is spirit-writing. What is *Autography*? I am familiar with the word *autograph*: it has a defined and well-known meaning. A person who writes with his own hand produces an *autograph*. But what is the sense sought to be conveyed by *autography*, if it be not that the writing is self-produced? "Direct writing" was a perfectly intelligible term: convenience alone suggested the use of a single word, and *Psychography* sufficiently fulfils the required conditions. *Autography* does not.

The *Times*, reviewing Mr. Sinnett's latest novel (respecting which I hope to have something to say when less pressed by urgent demands on my time), has gone out of its way, as usual, to sneer at mesmerism, and to dub Mr. Sinnett's theories, founded on his own experience, as "a tissue of absurdities." This has given the author an opportunity of writing the subjoined letter which the *Times* has found space for. It is of interest as showing that Mr. Sinnett has verified for himself the facts on which he has based his novel. This is Mr. Sinnett's rejoinder to the *Times* :—

SIR,—In reviewing my novel *United*, in the *Times* of the 17th inst., you speak of the mesmeric theories interwoven with the story as "a tissue of absurdities." I would not have presumed to ask for the publication even of a few lines in remonstrance against any censure you might have pronounced upon my book as a work of art, but a novelist who builds fiction upon a theory of definite possibilities latent in human nature is bound to have scientific truth at the foundation of his edifice. When you declare, therefore, that my foundation is a tissue of absurdities, may I not reasonably ask you to let me state in reply that in the records of the strangely neglected science of mesmerism I have solid masses of experience to support almost all the abnormal incidents that I have imagined as taking place in my narrative? It was only by a prejudiced committee in Paris, the

members of which did not examine the evidence, that mesmerism was condemned as a delusion in 1784. During the next thirty-five years so many hundreds of people practised it and obtained overwhelming conviction of its reality (*vide* the important works published in the beginning of the century by Deleuze, among others) that a new committee of the French Academy of Sciences re-examined the whole subject in 1831 and pronounced entirely in its favour (*vide* Colquhoun's translation of the report). Since then the writings of Townsund, Scoresby, Lee, Esdaile, Elliotson, and Gregory, not to mention a dozen others of lesser note, and the innumerable records in the thirteen volumes of the *Zoist*, have established the phenomena both of curative and clairvoyant mesmerism on a basis as firm as the leading conclusions of evolution or spectroscopic research. I know that the records of mesmerism are neglected, and that when its possibilities are brought forward in my book they are apt still to excite an incredulity that is really quite out of date. Still, it is trying to find the group of beautiful truths on which I have relied in constructing my little romance described in the terms you apply to them, when they are not my invention at all, but open to the study of any one who will read up the subject, not to speak of the fact that most of the mesmeric incidents in the book are faithfully reproduced from my own practice as an amateur mesmerist.—Yours obediently,
Ostend, July 21st. A. P. SINNETT.

What Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps writes is always thoughtful and interesting to Spiritualists. Contemplating the field of inquiry, approached from different quarters, and by different methods, by Spiritualists and Psychical Researchers, she writes thus in *The Forum*, a new Boston magazine of marked ability :—

Truth is terrible. She will have her way. One law is as inexorable as another law, and the mind that fails, from infatuation with one, to keep in relation to another, is brought up short, somewhere, by the very constitution of things.

One thinks of this not for the first time nor for the last one, but explicitly, in watching the course of the current of progress with which it is our fortune to be contemporaneous. No alert observation would deny that the class of phenomena which, for lack of a wiser term, we have taken to calling psychical, has come to the front of thought. That it is no longer a sign of culture to ignore the inexplicable—this is understood. The ghost is not now remanded to the nursery; he is invited to the library. Coincident dreams are not scouted into the servants' sitting-room; they are respectfully bowed over to the metaphysician.

The force which makes a parlour table rise halfway to the ceiling, with a child on top of it, or the mystery which qualifies a stranger in a back street to tell you at first sight the name of your dead, or the secret of your heart, is no longer relegated to the logic of the medium, or the oratory of the strolling charlatan. It is lifted to the desk of the scholar; and the scholar has accepted the trust. Believers in what are called Spiritualistic phenomena—an army estimated at from two to ten millions in this country alone—are building from their end, and in their way, about a volume of mysterious facts which, at the other end, and from another fashion of approach, command to-day the attention of liberal scientific men on both sides of the sea. The thing has overflowed the culvert of superstition; it has gone above the level of what we call a craze or a fashion. It has reached the dignity of an intellectual current. All momentum has its equivalent force. What is the philosophy working beneath the psychical wave?

The *Hartford Courant* (quoted by the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*) gives the following experience of Bishop Coxe. The Bishop has concerned himself a good deal with

the evidence for Spiritualism, and accepts the general position of the Spiritualists. Was the following due to direct spirit-influence, to telepathy, or to mere coincidence?

Bishop Coxe relates that on one occasion he was reading the service in a little church, with only a handful of worshippers present, when he suddenly resolved to close the Psalter with the Gloria in Excelsis instead of the customary Gloria Patri. He had never done this before, he says, and has never done it since. During the day he was called upon by a widow "of high position in society and a family eminent in the history of our country." She asked him whether he had been desired by any of her relations to gratify her by departing from custom. She had always made this day one of special private devotion, as it was the anniversary of her husband's death. She had made an effort to be at church that morning on this account. "What was my surprise," she said, "to hear you break off with the 'Gloria in Excelsis.' My husband, very reticent as to his religious emotions, lay dying. Suddenly he aroused himself, and to the amazement of all recited the 'Gloria' entire. Reflecting on this as I went to church on this anniversary, imagine my surprise when, for the only time in a long time, I found the 'Gloria' so used by the clergyman. I joined in it with feelings greatly excited, and come to thank you for so kindly considering me." Her husband was a stranger to the Bishop, who regards the whole incident as supernatural.

Interesting to "C.C.M." The *Pall Mall Gazette* says:—

"Just as the general election was beginning we received from a provincial student of astrology an astrological forecast of the probable course of the general election. His letter was dated July 2nd, and his prediction was in no sense after the event, for even the result of the polling at Colchester was not known when his letter was written. His forecast consisted in the main of two predictions: (1) That on or before July 9th Mr. Gladstone's defeat would be a certainty, which has been fulfilled to the letter; (2) That his resignation might be expected on or before the 26th of July. Our astrologer has carried off the double event."

PSYCHOGRAPHY.

TESTIMONY OF ANOTHER AMATEUR CONJURER.

As it may be desirable to meet suggestions of mal-observation on the part of my visitors by additional testimony of those who have specially studied and practised the art of simulating the slate-writing phenomenon under conjurers' conditions, perhaps you will allow me to refer to the published evidence of another witness thus qualified, which may be compared with that of Dr. Herschell. The gentleman in question had a number of sittings with me in the year 1884, with most satisfactory results, of some of which his reports will be found in "LIGHT" of July 12th and October 25th of that year. These reports are among the most favourable and decisive which have appeared. This gentleman informed me that he was an expert in trick writing, having particular skill in writing on one side of a slate while the other was exposed for inspection, and in the use of trick slates; but that he was unable to produce results under my conditions. Although the circumstance of his being an amateur conjurer must, for most of your readers, rest at present upon my statement, that statement will not be questioned by those who know what name is denoted by the signature "S.J.D." I am not yet at liberty to reveal that name, any more than Mrs. Sidgwick was at liberty to reveal the name of a certain amateur conjurer whose performances in slate-writing she put before the Society for Psychical Research as equivalent to the psychographic phenomena occurring in my presence. It is, however, in possession of the editor of "LIGHT," as appears from the following editorial note appended to "S.J.D.'s" report in that paper of October 25th, 1884:—"The writer, for family reasons, does not wish his name published. It has, however, been sent to us as a guarantee of good faith."

I must add that common fairness to me and to the subject evidently requires that any expert in conjuring, before allowing his experiments in trick-writing to be used for the purpose of discrediting the evidence for psychography, should visit me to ascertain if there is any true affinity between the two things. Although I cannot guarantee positive results, a conjurer has as good chance of them as others. If obtained, he would, in one event, be able to make his exposure more complete; in the other he would of course, if a sincere man, not allow his own performances to be used for misleading the public, by suppression of the fact that he had himself obtained proof that psychography was not conjuring. Nor, indeed, would any candid person, with knowledge of the conjurer's real views and experience, wish to make an adverse use of such performances, while keeping the public in ignorance of circumstances so essential to be known,

W. EGLINTON,

M. AKSAKOFF'S REPLY TO DR. VON HARTMANN.

TRANSLATED FROM "PSYCHISCHE STUDIEN." (June and July.)
(Continued from page 334.)

I will further make mention of three photographs which possess a special importance.

On one of them a lady, Mrs. Tinkham, is seated; at the moment of exposure she perceives a part of the sleeve of her left arm raise itself, and her eyes are directed to this point. On the photograph, at this lady's side, is seen the form—call it the astral form—of a little girl, in which Mrs. Tinkham recognises her child; and one sees perfectly Mrs. Tinkham's sleeve lifted up by the little hand of the child. We have thus here the photograph of a movement of a material object by an invisible hand. (See *The Medium*, 1872, No. 104.)

On the second photograph, Mrs. Conant is again seen. At the moment when the light should fall upon the disc, she turns to the right, exclaiming: "Oh, look there; my little Vash-ti!" (a little Indian girl, who often manifested with her), and extends her left hand towards her, as if to take her by the hand. On the photograph is seen the perfectly recognisable form of the little Indian, the fingers of her right hand in Mrs. Conant's hand. We have thus here the photograph of an astral-form, announced and recognised by the sensitive at the moment of exposition (illumination), just as with Beattie. (*Medium*, 1872, No. 104.)

We obtain the confirmation of a fact of this sort, and generally of another remarkable case of transcendental photography, in a letter addressed by Professor Gunning (an American geologist,) to the *New York Tribune*, on the occasion of the Mumler trial, and which is reprinted in *The Spiritual Magazine*, London (1869, p. 260). The letter contains such interesting facts that we will here copy the essential part of it:—

"In February, 1867, I formed the acquaintance of a photographer living in the Connecticut Valley. I had gone to his rooms for a photograph. While sitting for the picture I saw that the artist was strangely agitated. When the plate was developed a bright but vapoury female form appeared, standing at my side. I had never heard of Mumler or spirit-photography. I asked the photographer how that form got on the plate; he did not know; he could only say that while he was photographing me he saw that woman standing at my side. He did not want the picture taken from his gallery, and wished me not to speak of it. He told me that now and then, for years, he had taken such pictures; that they came through no agency of his; that he could take them almost any time by yielding to the control of beings which he believed to be spirits, but he wanted nothing to do with it. 'He would not have his name mixed up with Spiritualism in any form.'

"I had such confidence in my friend's honesty, that I wished to make an investigation of this strange power. It was only after many interviews and much urging that he consented to give me sittings, and yield to the 'invisibles.' I offered to pay him generously for his time, but he declined any consideration, saying that he could not be tempted to use this mysterious gift for gain. He gave me every facility in making the investigation. I took a friend to assist me. We had his time for four afternoons. We had the utmost confidence in him, but made the investigation as if he were a trickster. I assisted in preparing the plates, and stood by while the pictures were developed. We took every precaution to prevent or detect trickery. At almost every sitting we got the photograph of a woman—the same bright, vapoury form that appeared when I went alone, or thought I was alone! And at almost every sitting the photographer was partially entranced. What shall we say? He is a man of position and character. I would as soon think of flinging the charge of falsehood against the Chief Justice. He had no motive to deceive. He would not sell his gift for money. If I believed him capable of falsehood, still I should be unable to account for the pictures. I know of only two ways by which a photograph can be taken. It must be taken either by reflected or by transmitted light. To get a picture on the sensitised plate, something capable of reflecting light must be placed at a proper distance before the lens; or the plate may be sensitised and covered by another picture, and then exposed to the light. A dim picture will be printed on the sensitised plate by transmitted light. These are the only methods by which a photograph can be taken. The artist may use an old plate, and a picture may appear, the result of a latent impression left by an old photograph. This last is a solution proposed by a writer in *Saturday's Tribune*. My artist did not use old plates. He must find the solution in one of the other alternatives. Now I know that my artist did not hold an old negative to the sensitised plate and get a ghostly impression by transmitted light. We have one more alternative: was an object placed before the camera? This is the way the bogus Shenstone ghost was photographed. A sheeted man fitted ghost-like before the camera. Were these pictures taken so? The photographer, myself, and my friend were the only persons in the room. Could we have been deceived for four days by such a shallow trick? And if we were deceived, how did the confederate who personated the spirit make himself transparent? How did she suspend herself in the air? for one of these photographs is the picture of a

woman floating down through the air. They are all as transparent as gossamer. How, then, were they taken? I was in no haste to form my conclusions. Another case came under my notice.

"A young girl in Chelsea called on one of the leading photographers of the city to have some ferro-types taken. He was about to close his rooms for the day. The girl sat, and while the picture was being taken, she felt a blur coming over her eyes. She spoke of it to Mr. A., who was standing by the camera. He told her she might wink, but she must sit still. When he developed the plate a pair of hands appeared on each face! There were eight faces on the sheet. This photograph is very remarkable. I have examined four of the impressions, and have one of them in my possession. The hands are clasped around the girl's neck. They are shown up to the wrist, where they fade away into a formless vapour. They are transparent. One hand comes down over the girl's chin, and you see right through it the perfect outlines of the chin. There is a wonderful family likeness in all these pictures. Judge Edmunds testifies that the spirits he sees are transparent; and one of the leading Doctors of Divinity of New England (Orthodox) tells me that he sees spirits in the same way.

"Now you cannot suppose that these hands had been photographed on the tin before. The photographer tells me that he used a new sheet. Suppose I do not believe him. How, then, did the hands appear over the face? Can you suppose the hands were photographed after the girl? You will see that the little finger and ring finger on the left hand are thrust under the girl's collar. You must say, then, that girl and hands were all taken together. And now, did someone steal in and clasp her hands around the girl's neck, and still elude the eye of the artist? He tells me that no one was in the room but himself and the girl. Suppose someone did steal in—how did she make her hands transparent and conceal the rest of her body? The photographer is a man whose word no one will doubt. He tells me that he had never thought of spirit-photography; that he has no theory; that he only knows the hands came through no agency of his."

Details of this last extraordinary case are reported still more fully in a letter of Professor Gunning to the *Banner of Light*, July 6th, 1867, from which I will only quote the two following lines as having a special interest for us:—"The left hand is quite distinct to the wrist, which is encompassed by a smooth white cuff."

The editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* adds in a later number (1869, p. 329), that Professor Gunning, when in London, had shown him the ferro-type referred to, and also related the circumstances under which he obtained the portrait of his deceased wife with his own photograph, from a photographer who was a stranger to him—the first case mentioned in the above letter. The likeness was beyond question.

It only remains to mention a photograph of Mumler's, in which is represented a young medium, Mr. Herrod, asleep in trance in a chair. Behind him is seen *his own astral-form or double*, standing erect, nearly in profile, the eyes closed, the head a little inclined towards the medium. (*Medium*, 1872, No. 104.)

Another case of a photograph of a double with another photographer is reported by Judge Carter in a letter to the *Banner*, 31st July, 1875, reprinted in *Human Nature*, 1875, pp. 424-5. A third case of a photographic double is related by Mr. Glendinning, and as it happened in a private circle it merits our best attention. The following is his account:—

"About twelve years ago I tried to get spirit-photographs with a friend who is a good medium, and we procured several. At first we obtained curious markings on the plates, and had I had more experience I should have preserved those plates for careful subsequent examination, but as a matter of fact, whenever we developed no distinct portrait, I rubbed my finger across the plate, and put it in the wash tub. Mr. Melhuish, secretary to one of the Scotch photographic societies, supplied us with the glasses and chemicals, and everything was done in good faith among private people. In one instance we obtained a portrait of the medium, in the same position which he had occupied about ten or fifteen minutes before the plate was exposed, and when he was half way between the camera and the background. We had in the room the kind of planchette known as the 'Indicator,' which spelt out rapidly what we were to do, for the spirits said they, at first, did not know how to produce the pictures, and that they had to try experiments; they told us to mesmerise the camera, chemicals, and so on. We did what they told us, partly as a matter of amusement, partly as a matter of interest. When we questioned them why we had obtained a portrait of the medium in a position he had occupied before the plate was exposed in the camera, they said that he had left his 'influence' on the spot, and that had a clairvoyant been in the room he would have seen him there. I do not understand this, but it was all the information we could get." (*The Spiritualist*, No. 234, February 16th, 1877, p. 76.)

These photographs of doubles invisible to the human eye are the valuable forerunners of the photographs of visible and palpable doubles, with which we shall have to concern ourselves later.

(To be continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

A Correction.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In a letter which you published last week, I gave Mr. Eglinton's impression of a question written on a slate as "What did I do yesterday or *ein* day before," and laid some stress on the word "ein" in comparing the impression with the question really written. A friend well acquainted with Mr. Eglinton's somewhat peculiar writing, to whom I showed the sentence, as written down by Mr. Eglinton before the slate was reversed, tells me I am mistaken, and that the word is not "ein," but "the." So I think it better to correct my error, if it is one, for the sake of accuracy. I enclose the scrap for your opinion, as you know the handwriting well, and will only add that if Mr. Eglinton always writes an initial t like that, I think his correspondents have more reason to complain of him than have his "sitters."—Your obedient servant,

C. C. M.

The Perceptibility of Vibration in Psychography.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Since writing the letter I sent to "LIGHT" last week, I have had the opportunity of reading the article in the *Journal of the Psychical Research Society*, contributed by Mrs. Sidgwick, in which she expresses the opinion that no vibration is perceptible when writing is being executed on a slate. To those of your readers who may have read this article, the following extract from an account I wrote immediately on my return from the first séance I was ever present at, may be of interest. I would advise anyone who has doubts on the subject, to try the experiment for himself, not in the way narrated by Mrs. Sidgwick, but by holding the slate with another person exactly as I have described it, while a third person writes on the top of the slate. The second slate must be omitted as (at least according to my experience) a mortal cannot write upon a slate which is covered by another. I am much mistaken if the process of the writing will not be felt as well as heard.

I give the account exactly as I wrote it at the time.

"Mr. Eglinton then, after a few seconds' pause, inquired of his guide whether a communication could be made with closed slates. Answered immediately, 'We will try.' He then took two slates which I saw were clean on both sides, and placed a tiny morsel of pencil on one, covering it with the other; he held one corner of the slates with his right hand, while I held the other side of them with both mine, holding his left hand at the same time. The slates were not near the table. Almost directly rapid writing was heard on the slate, and I could distinctly feel the vibration as well. This may have lasted half a minute, when three taps announced that the writing was finished. At Mr. Eglinton's request I removed the top slate, expecting at most a few lines in the writing I had seen before, which was very rough. To my astonishment the slate was entirely filled, and was, I am almost certain, in my friend's handwriting; he wrote a remarkably neat and pretty hand, but of course on a slate, and written so rapidly, it would be difficult to identify it with certainty; the style was his exactly. . . . Curiously enough, although the medium (Mr. Eglinton) seemed much exhausted, I felt perfectly cool and collected. . . ." &c.—June 27th, 1884.

The following little incident which took place at another séance seems to me rather a "puzzle for conjurers." I often wrote questions on a sheet of paper in ink before leaving home, to which I received answers in pencil on the same paper. On one occasion I took out of my bag such a sheet and laid it with the writing downwards on the table close to me, Mr. Eglinton saying perhaps I had better ask some preliminary question verbally first. I did so, and writing was directly heard on the slate held by him beneath the table, his left hand being held in mine. On his giving me the slate to read I found an answer written, but it had no connection with the question I had asked *vidé voce*. I therefore turned over my sheet of paper and found the question written upon it was the one answered on the slate. So clever a conjurer even as Mrs. Sidgwick credits Mr. Eglinton with being would, one might think, prefer to

answer a question he knew rather than one he could not possibly know, unless, instead of eyes he were provided with "a pair of patent double million magnifying gas microscopes of extra quality," as described by Sam Weller in the celebrated trial in *Pickwick*, in which case he might be able to read through a deal table if he put his head beneath it, such a feat being a trifle compared with some he is supposed by the *Aufgeklärten* to perform.—I am, sir, yours truly,

"V."

An Explanation from Mr. F. W. H. Myers.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should be glad to correct one or two misapprehensions as to words of mine which I observe in "LIGHT" for July 17th and 24th. "M. A. (Oxon.);" says (p. 330): "Mr. Myers is reported as saying in effect that he had, over and over again, appealed ineffectually to me to place at his disposal my own personal record. I have felt myself unable to put into the hands of Mr. Myers or of any person my own private notes and records, for the very sufficient reason, which I have repeatedly stated to him, that they contain matter so private, in many cases so intimately personal to myself and my close friends, that I am absolutely precluded from complying with any such request." I fear that I have thus far failed to make clear to "M. A. (Oxon.);" what it is that I have ventured to ask him to do, and as I am particularly anxious neither to intrude on any one's privacy in the course of this research, nor even to be thought to have thus intruded, I shall be glad to define here what seems to me a reasonable desire, which, I should suppose, Spiritualists as well as inquirers must entertain. "M. A. (Oxon.);" has given to the world, in papers in *Human Nature* and elsewhere, a very valuable record of physical experiences of his own, movements of objects, production of scents, musical sounds, &c. These phenomena mainly took place while "M. A. (Oxon.);" was himself entranced, and were recorded by his friends, Dr. and Mrs. Speer and Mr. Percival. Now it is solely as to records of these *physical* phenomena that I make my appeal. They can surely be separated from everything that is of a private and personal nature. I do not ask for the messages that were given, only for such detailed, contemporary, and first-hand accounts as may now exist of the phenomena which preceded or accompanied those messages. What "M. A. (Oxon.);" has given us is a summary made by himself from the notes or verbal testimony of the persons who actually witnessed the phenomena, during the progress of most of which he was, as he frankly tells us himself, entranced and unconscious. Now I most certainly do not question in the smallest degree the good faith with which that summary was made. But I think that its author has not fully realised the central importance of the facts which he is here recording. I think that—in his generous estimate of other persons of characters less unquestioned than his own—he has not understood how different a degree of weight pertains to phenomena occurring through his *own* mediumship as compared with many of the phenomena, accounts of which he has since taken the trouble to collect and publish. And I would respectfully request that he would deal, or induce his friends to deal, with those contemporary notes of physical phenomena in the way in which persons who have performed or witnessed scientific experiments of great novelty and importance are accustomed to deal with *their* notes: that is to say, to print them *in extenso*, with all details of time, place, and circumstance, which may conduce to their exact appreciation. If "M. A. (Oxon.);" will do this *himself*, I shall be grateful, though for the sake of those who do not know him personally, I think that it might be satisfactory to himself to show the original notes to some well-known person, say for instance, Mr. A. R. Wallace, or Professor Barrett, as a friendly referee who might be permitted to add his testimony to the accuracy of the reproduction of the notes taken by Dr. Speer and others at the time.

To conclude, then, I do not ask that any matter in any way private or personal should be published, or that any person in whom "M. A. (Oxon.);" has not full confidence should in any way intervene, but merely that steps should be taken as soon as possible to give to the world an account, as far as possible first-hand, detailed, and contemporary, of certain occurrences of the highest interest of which "M. A. (Oxon.);" has already published a summary, compiled (apparently) some time after the events, and by a person who (though, of course, primarily concerned in them,) was admittedly entranced while most of them occurred.

Such a request, made, as I now make it, and have previously made it, in a tone of genuine respect, genuine interest, will not, I trust, be considered as intrusive when its purport is correctly understood.

Again, in "LIGHT," for July 17th, Mr. E. D. Rogers repeats a misapprehension which must, I suppose, be difficult to avoid as it here recurs after repeated efforts of mine to remove it. Speaking of my allusion to the disappointing paucity of evidence for "spirit identity," he says that I "complained of the inadequate nature of the response to the appeals which [I] had made to Spiritualists," and adds that "the cause is obvious enough," namely, that "Spiritualists have not cared to place their experiences before people who, as it seemed to them, either could not appreciate them, or would attempt to explain them away by some weak hypothesis."

Now the people before whom I wish these experiences to be placed are, among others, the readers of "LIGHT." That is to say, I have repeatedly explained that it is not to myself specially that I am anxious to see such experiences sent, and that I am very glad to observe that the editor of "LIGHT" has made repeated appeals of precisely the same kind. What I desire,—in common, as I should suppose, with every reasonable Spiritualist, and every sincere inquirer,—is to procure more evidence as to this extremely important point,—a point which "M. A. (Oxon.);" has dealt with in his interesting book on *Spirit Identity*, but which few other authors have taken real pains to prove. What I offer to do myself is to take such trouble as may be necessary in order to bring any case sent to me up to a good evidential standard, and then to submit it for publication to the Council of the Society for Psychical Research, who, so far as I know, have never refused to give publicity to any well-attested evidence. If my hypotheses are weak, that is my misfortune rather than my fault. So long as I set forth candidly and fully the evidence submitted to me, when it seems to me to have force, and give my reasons for not using it if it seems to me too weak, I shall, I hope, be doing useful work. I will give the facts, and others, as well as myself, may form such hypotheses about them as they think fit. I cannot, of course, guarantee that my own conclusions shall be either correct in themselves or acceptable to any special party; but I trust, at least, to be able to maintain a tone which would not subject me, in any other field of discussion, to the imputation either of arrogance or of partiality.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

July 24th, 1886.

[We leave "M. A. (Oxon.);" and Mr. Rogers to deal with the points raised which specially concern them, but at the same time we wish to point out that Mr. Myers apparently ignores publicly what we believe he is perfectly aware of in a more private manner, viz., that so long as Spiritualists are not assured that any evidence which they may possess will not, if sent to the S.P.R., be entrusted to certain persons who have, by reason of the temper and method in which they have approached this investigation, rendered it impossible for anyone with the slightest shred of self-respect to place themselves in communication with a Society which has not disavowed such temper and methods, there is no chance whatever of Mr. Myers' request being complied with. Spiritualists have had more than enough of such cases. Mr. Myers in this letter, as elsewhere, evades the real issue; but we are now beginning to expect little else than evasion and unfair dealing from the S.P.R.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Mrs. Sidgwick and Spiritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The discussion regarding Mrs. Sidgwick's paper on Psychography does not seem likely to lead to any useful result. On the one hand she must judge by such discernment as she possesses, and each of us must do the same whether our minds be weak or strong, prejudiced or unprejudiced.

A strong, clear, and unprejudiced mind is formed to a large extent just as the strong healthy bodies of children are grown, viz., by vigorous and perfectly independent exercise of its powers. If a boy be taken and kept indoors and taught continuously what he must know and believe, when he comes to man's estate he will have acquired the foolish notion that his mind is meant solely for the purpose of imbibing the religious,

political, and scientific ideas that he finds prevailing around him, and he would find that besides his mind being ruined, his body also had become useless through want of exercise.

People see the necessity of exercise for the body, but as yet have hardly begun to observe the necessity for this free and independent exercise of the powers of the mind. They keep the mind continuously bound hard and fast to certain creeds, religious, scientific, or political, until the powers of independent action wholly disappear, and thus unfortunately is education destroying the capacity of the minds it was intended to extend. Mrs. Sidgwick is merely a sample of this enervating influence which has spread its baneful leprosy over nine-tenths of the people of this generation.

Spiritualists can do nothing with these nine-tenths except to leave them alone. There is plenty of work for them amongst the free thinking minds who spurn the bondage that is the glory of these weaklings.

Let Spiritualists realise that they are a small and peculiar people who must work in obscurity for generations, gradually bringing all free minds under the influence of spiritual truth. If anyone wants to believe in things to which it is possible to convert all his friends, let him have nothing to do with Spiritualism. If quiet rest in the prevailing sentiments of the hour is thought desirable, then we earnestly ask people who think thus to give us a wide berth.

Frankly, we prefer their room to their company.—Yours truly,

R. DONALDSON.

36, Gracechurch-street, London, E.C.
July 23rd.

Mrs. Sidgwick and Psychography.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It is a most remarkable thing that Mrs. Sidgwick should pronounce her judgment on slate-writing with Mr. Eglinton as "clever conjuring."

Where she has had one experience on that subject I have had a hundred with him and various other mediums also. I have tested psychography in every possible way, with slate-pencils, lead pencils, and coloured pencils, in broad daylight; both slates being under the table and above the table, and on my head, also whilst holding one hand of the medium. On one occasion when I wrote my question in a book-slate (unknown to my medium, Miss K. S. Cook), in presence of and watched by half a dozen visitors at my house near Manchester, she put the slate on the floor and *put her foot on it*; then in a few seconds the answer pertinent to my question came, without her fingers even touching the pencil at all! Some people who go to séances with biased minds, while *professing the opposite*, frequently get gratified with a dissatisfactory sitting; but I call it a daring thing to infer that a medium is an impostor because Mrs. Sidgwick can't comprehend what experience tells me "is a great fact," whether Mr. A. E. Evans or she believe it or not.—Yours truly,

"VINDICATOR."

34, Ladbrooke-grove, Notting Hill, London, W.

Art Magic.—For sale at the office of this paper, a clean and perfect copy of this scarce work. Price £5.

When certain persons abuse us, let us ask ourselves what description of character it is that they admire; we shall often find this a very consolatory question.

DUPOTER'S Magic Unveiled.—In reply to inquiries, we are requested to state that this work, which has been unavoidably delayed, is now being proceeded with, and will be ready early in the autumn.

MR. EDGAR LEE has in the press a novel of the most absorbing psychological interest. This gentleman has had considerable experience in Spiritualistic phenomena. He will be remembered as the author of the *Great White Spot*.

It is true that many unprincipled persons have counterfeited the spirit phenomena in order to fill their pockets; and there are debased mediums who resort to trickery to supplement the genuine manifestations, or afford a sensational exhibition to their deluded patrons. There are also "mediums" who simply prostitute whatever "spiritual gifts" they possess to unholy uses, being consulted to aid in stock and other speculation, and for selfish "business" money-making purposes. But this is a low and pernicious Spiritism, always despised and condemned, which, as I have ever held, should be shunned and abhorred by every true Spiritualist.—HENRY KIDDLE.

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 godlike before death is the best and wisest preparation.

The following are a few books which will prove of service to the inquirer. They can be obtained by members from the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance, or they may be purchased of the Psychological Press (see advt. pages), 16, Craven-street, Strand, W.C.:—*Animal Magnetism* (Wm. Greyerz); *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism* (A. R. Wallace); *Researches in Spiritualism* (W. Crookes); *From Matter to Spirit* (De Morgan); *The Debateable Land* (Dale Owen); *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* (Dale Owen); *Planchette* (Epes Sargent); *Proof Palpable of Immortality*; *The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism* (Epes Sargent); *Report of the Dialectical Society*; *Zeller's Transcendental Physics* (Translated by C. C. Massey, 2nd Ed.); *Psychography* ("M.A., Oxon."); *Spirit Identity* ("M.A., Oxon.") *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism* ("M.A., Oxon."); *Judge Edmonds, Letters and Tracts*; *Primitive Christianity and Spiritualism* (Crowell); *New Basis of Belief in Immortality* (Farmer); *Hints for the Evidences of Spiritualism* (M.P.); *Theosophy and the Higher Life* (Dr. G. Wylid); *Mechanism of Man*, 2 vols. (Mr. Serjeant Cox); *Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism* (N. Wolfe); *Arcana of Spiritualism* (Tuttle); *Spirit Teachings* ("M.A., Oxon."); *The Use of Spiritualism* (S. C. Hall); *Spiritualism at Home* (Morell Theobald); *Pioneers of the Spiritual Reformation* (Howitt Watts).

These are but a few volumes of a very extensive literature. Not counting pamphlets and tracts, upwards of 2,000 volumes on the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism have been published since its advent. It is therefore manifestly impossible to do more than allude to the fact here.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
16, CRAVEN STREET,
CHARING CROSS, S.W.

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Light :

SATURDAY, JULY 31st, 1886.

DETERMINATION OF THE TIME OF SLATE-WRITING AND OBSERVATION.

I wish to modify a proposition in my letter which you published last week under the heading "Psychography and its Latest Critic." In my letter to the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research I stated it correctly, but not quite so in my letter in "LIGHT." For I say in the latter that the period of observation can be determined merely by reference to the sound as of writing (the time when the writing, in Mrs. Sidgwick's words, "seems to be done") "where a new question, unsuggested by the medium, is written, or verbally put, *immediately*, or within a very few minutes, before a revelant answer is obtained." Evidently I ought to have confined the proposition (as in the *Journal* I had already done) to cases in which the sound as of writing follows *immediately* on the question, as any interval, however brief, prevents the period of observation being strictly coincident with that of the sound and consequent withdrawal of the slate. Although in what follows in the same letter I do advert to this distinction, it was not fair to Mrs. Sidgwick to speak of "seven or eight" cases, in the collection of evidence before her, which were at variance with her proposition. The real number, as I read the statements, is at most four, and *possibly* only two. The remaining cases only demonstrate that the requisite periods of observation were extremely brief. As to these, the only escape from that conclusion would be in the supposition that the questions were put before the slates were in position, and that a considerable unreckoned interval thus elapsed. Now, of course, as the *onus* of proof is on the witnesses, it is for them to exclude such suppositions, which are legitimate in some cases (not in all) when not *expressly* excluded. But mark the difference of the way in which this evidence for psychography has been dealt with in this respect, and that in which evidence for "phantasms of the living," telepathy, &c., was dealt with. In both cases the records are sent direct to the Society. In the one case an immensity of trouble was taken to clear up every doubt arising on the statements as first presented. The witnesses were repeatedly communicated with, personally or by letter, and every opportunity was given them to exclude ambiguities upon which the critic would seize. Nothing could be more fair and satisfactory than the system on which the agents of the Society went to work. But, now, with psychography, what a contrast! The hostile critic is the principal person to whom the evidence was confided, and is found insisting on doubts—perhaps only just conceivable doubts—which the interchange of a single letter might, and probably would

have dissipated. Was *one such letter* written? There is not the smallest indication of it, or rather there is manifest presumption against it. Is this fair, impartial, or consistent?

In mere justice to Mrs. Sidgwick, I presume I am at liberty to say that her reply to me in the new number of the *Journal*—the same in which my own letter appears—confirms the supposition I threw out in "LIGHT," that she was really thinking of the fact that the sound as of writing is no proof of *itself* that the actual writing was then executed.* But the question was not of that. She was expressly dealing with the time of observation, and said that this could manifestly not be determined in any case merely by reference to the time at which the writing seemed to be done (the sound in most cases). But it is just "by reference to" this circumstance that we *can* determine the period of observation in all cases in which there is no appreciable interval between question and sound.

So much is now being made of the difficulty of "continuous observation" that it seems desirable to collect the cases in which the answer to a new question, or the writing of a desired word, &c., by psychography has been obtained within very brief intervals. That any number of such cases would satisfy Mrs. Sidgwick or a few others is of course not to be expected. According to such critics there is scarcely any interval too short for a conjurer to perform unobserved, though under the easiest conditions of observation, operations of a highly obtrusive and often complicated character. But for the rest of the world we cannot do better than by showing how little application their favourite dogma of the instability of "continuous observation" has to a very large proportion of the evidence which they profess to have appreciated.

C. C. M.

THE SIMPLE FACTS.

(From the *Golden Gate*.)

Future existence, spirit return, and spirit communion are the primal facts of Spiritualism. Why retard their mission in life by advanced theories into the realm of the purely speculative? There they are, grand and massive in nature, all-sufficient, and effective in influence upon present life, capable of thorough incorporation, and radical in their reform and transformation of human character. Let us abide with them in contentment until they can work out for human nature the salvation from life's stumbling blocks, life's hindrances, life's injuries, of which they are capable. In our relation to these great, yet simple facts of Spiritualism, let us not rest satisfied with the attitude of the mere phenomenalist, who remains stationary with admiring belief before the wonders of Spiritualism only, without endeavour to recast life, build it anew, renew it, improve it, perfect it, from centre to circumference.

Is Spiritualism intended to create belief in its phenomena alone? What kind of a Spiritualist is he, or she, who reaches an intellectual acknowledgment of the phenomenal facts of Spiritualism, and there stops, without turning to practical account in daily life the wholesome lessons of character growth, and nature growth, into better, nobler, and more unselfish stages of being? Spiritualism ought to make Spiritualists better men and women, in all senses, more self-forgetful, more self-giving, more generous, more benevolent. The real practical Spiritualist should feel that he is making healthy growth every day,—higher and higher in the scale of being, and farther away from littleness of character into the broader, fuller, and richer experiences of loftier levels.

It is high time that Spiritualism was lived up to rather than theorized and speculated about. It has a great work to do for every character, and it ought to be allowed to do it. Every life should produce fruitage worthy of the name. Until it can do a practical work in the lives of people, Spiritualism is prevented from taking its ordained place in human affairs. Rather than attempt to climb theoretical heights to which Spiritualism points, its disciples would accomplish more for themselves and their fellows to become grounded and rooted in the plain foundation of their renovating and refining philosophy.

* I am sure that frequently, if not usually, it is such proof. No doubt the sound of writing can easily be *imitated*, but it is a question of *localisation*. That, however, is not here the point.

"AS A MAN THINKETH."

"Thought," says the Cabala, "is the source of all that is." Our thoughts are veritable things. The picture we form in our minds of any given thing, whether true or false, is the real thing to us, though to other minds it may be something entirely different.

Let us apply this fact to the phenomena of Spiritualism. Two or more persons witness the same manifestation of occult power. To one the thought of deception is pictured in the mind—has taken shape there, perhaps, in advance of the manifestation, and become to that mind a positive fact. What follows—the thing itself—is necessarily but a reflection of the preconceived image in that mind. The real fact not having become incorporated with, or made a part of himself, must necessarily be the deceptive semblance of what to him is a positive reality. Another person, having a true conception of the fact, sees it as it really is—as a reflection of the true picture in his own mind.

May not this fact—the tangibility of thought, in a fine physical sense—explain much of the discrepancy and conflicting experiences of investigators in psychic phenomena? We often hear some investigator say—one, perhaps, who tries to be honest with himself, and no doubt thinks he is—that he can get nothing at all, or nothing truthful or reliable from any medium. If he sits with a slate-writing medium, for instance, he is sure that he discovers a trick. To him it seemingly is a trick, and may possibly be one in reality; for we cannot tell how much this living image of deception in the mind of the investigator may affect the sensitive and cause him or her to do the very thing imaged therein.

And so with investigations in the phenomena of trance or test mediumship;—how much the messages given may reflect the image of fraud existing in the mind of the investigator, is a matter for the careful consideration of the psychic scientist.

This brings us to the consideration of another thought—the thought embodied in the teachings of the gentle Nazarene—"Unless ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven,"—that is, unless you divest your minds of all false pride and arrogance of reason, you cannot discern spiritual things. "But," says one, "if I have to humble myself to the simplicity of a child, in order to believe in spiritual manifestations, then I want none of it." Very well; there is no compulsion of the will on the part of the spirit world. It is only as the windows of the soul are opened to the light that the light is permitted to stream in. And this must be a voluntary act on our part.

The laws of spirit control, and the varied phenomena upon which Spiritualists base their knowledge of a future life, are coming to be better and better understood. We believe the time is not distant when much of the suspicion of fraud investigators are wont to lay at the door of mediums will find a reasonable explanation in the way we have indicated; and instead of blaming the medium for the unsatisfactory results obtained, or for the suspicious circumstances attending the manifestations, we shall be honest with ourselves and look for the true cause in our own minds.—*Golden Gate.*

WANTED, two or three gentlemen to complete a circle meeting on Tuesday evenings for the investigation of Spiritual phenomena. No paid or professional medium. Neighbourhood of Camden Town.—Apply by letter to "M.," 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross.

HIS EXCELLENCY M. AKSAKOF left London on Wednesday last for Paris and Biarritz. We understand that this gentleman has obtained full material in his experiments with Mr. Eglinton for a complete reply to the "hallucination" theory of Eduard von Hartmann.

CONJURING VERSUS PSYCHOGRAPHY.

[The following correspondence explains itself.]

DEAR EGLINTON,—I have asked Professor Henri Hermann, the well-known German prestidigitateur, if he would consent to sit with you to investigate and pronounce an opinion upon psychography, and I enclose his answer. I feel sure that his verdict will be accepted as final by the whole conjuring fraternity in every country, as, without doubt, he has been before the public longer and achieved greater reputation all over the world than any performer now living.—With kind regards, yours sincerely,
37, Moorgate-street, E.C. GEORGE HERSCHELL.
July 21st, 1886.

DEAR DR. HERSCHELL,—You have interested me much by what you have told me about slate-writing. I shall indeed have great pleasure in sitting with Mr. Eglinton any afternoon after 4 p.m., and will try and be converted. You may, however, rest assured that I will give my honest and candid opinion as to the nature of any phenomena that I may see, and that I am entirely unbiassed as to my mental attitude. I may mention to you that I have devised a special test, which I should like to try if Mr. Eglinton is agreeable. I would also suggest that you yourself be present at our sittings, in order that my word as to what I see may be supported by the evidence of an eye-witness who is also an expert in legerdemain.—Believe me, yours faithfully,
July 19th, 1886. HENRI HERMANN.

MY DEAR HERSCHELL,—I am obliged to you for sending me Mr. Hermann's letter. I am quite satisfied of his desire to ascertain whether the results occurring in my presence are produced by any conscious action of my own, and I shall have much pleasure in arranging a series of séances that he may have every opportunity for investigation. I am, however, leaving town on the 28th for my holiday, and can only arrange one day before then, but we can have other sittings on my return. I shall then hope to see you, with Professor Hermann, on Tuesday next at 4.30, when any test which he may devise I will willingly try.

I understood that the M. Hermann of Berlin was the celebrated conjurer of that name, but I find he cannot be so, since M. Henri Hermann was before the public in 1858, when M. Hermann must have been quite a young man.
Yours sincerely,

6, Nottingham-place, W. W. EGLINTON.
July 22nd, 1886.

[We understand that the séance has taken place, and that very satisfactory results have occurred, but no report can be published until the series has been finished.—ED.]

Christ and the Resurrection in the Light of Modern Spiritualism is the title of a pamphlet just published, by Professor Henry Kiddle.

HAPPINESS is the end and aim of all, but all do not follow the direct road to its attainment. They mistake the false for the true,—the counterfeit for the real,—temporary physical pleasure for the lasting delights of the spirit. And this is a very natural mistake of the undeveloped spiritual nature. But when the light of Divine goodness streams down into the soul, and the spiritual man has been touched with a live coal from the altar of eternal truth, he experiences no more ultimate satisfaction in mere sensuous things. Then it is that he finds his sweetest joys in the practice of goodness. All selfishness—all shapes of evil—all mortal appetites and desires—must be outgrown, either in this life or in the next. They block the way to happiness, and must be removed. This lesson well learned here, and well profited by, leads the spirit, at its transition, well on in its journey of progression.—*Golden Gate.*

THE PROBLEM: MEDIUM OR CONJURER?*

THE POSITION OF THE DISPUTED QUESTION.

By CARL DU PREL; TRANSLATED BY "V."

To define the boundary line between mediumship and conjuring is of interest not only to the inquirer into Spiritualism, but to conjurers themselves, whose art would be wonderfully increased in importance if the performances of mediums and fakirs could be either wholly or in part referred to it. I proceeded on this idea when I named the account I wrote of my experiments with Mr. Eglinton "A Problem for Conjurers."

It would have been greatly to the interest of the matter if our celebrated conjurers had taken an opportunity of experimenting with celebrated mediums. Unfortunately they have not hitherto done so, but what has taken place is as follows. The medium Slade came recently to Hamburg and there gave Spiritualistic séances, at which the well-known slate-writing took place, but for reasons unknown to me, and in contradiction to his former practice (see Zöllner's experiments with him), he refused to submit to test conditions. Under these circumstances his séances naturally lost in value, and my hitherto silent opponents profited by the opportunity to raise a cry of triumph against my pamphlet, which, till then, they had ignored.

The challenge thrown down by the title of my pamphlet was then taken up by Herr Schradieck, the Hamburg conjurer. Without regard to the fact that I had *only* experimented with Eglinton, had only given my experiences with regard to *him*, and could only vouch for what concerned *him*, the unsatisfactory séances with *Slade* were brought forward against me, and it could not be very difficult for the afore-named conjurer to imitate by means of his art such mediumistic performances as were produced without test conditions.

I had two reasons besides for breaking off my intercourse with this gentleman: his conduct was not at all to my taste; he published without my permission the correspondence between us in the Hamburg papers, in which he gave vent to his anti-Spiritualistic views in the choicest Billingsgate. I perceived, too, that a snare had been laid for me, and that the correspondence had only been brought forward as an advertisement. I therefore saw that it would be quite contrary to the interest of the matter to have anything further to do with this gentleman. It was my desire that a conjurer of importance and repute should undertake the affair; Schradieck's name is unknown out of Hamburg, and his testimony, therefore, would carry little weight.

A second response to my challenge came from Herr C. Willmann, a manufacturer of magical apparatus, in Hamburg. Still less could I have anything to do with him. He allowed himself, in the letter written against me, to doubt the truth of what I had said about Eglinton. I could only, therefore, send him such an answer as such ill manners deserved. This, however, did not prevent him applying to me again, I need scarcely say, in vain. A decision on the matter from such an opponent, who was not even a conjurer, would have been of less worth even than one from such an obscure man as Schradieck. In order that I may not incur the suspicion of underestimating these two opponents, or of reflecting upon them contrary to my real conviction, I give an extract of a letter from Herr Rudolph Gebhard, of Elberfeld, who is personally known both to the editor of the *Sphinx* and myself, and whose opinion is of importance, because (I speak from experience) he himself is a conjurer, scarcely inferior in expertness to professional ones, and because he likewise some time ago himself experimented with Eglinton. This gentleman, who took the trouble to travel to Hamburg to seek out Willmann and Schradieck, writes as follows:—

"In order to do away with any doubts as to my having described Eglinton's conduct during his séances, after a séance with Schradieck of a similar character, I went in the first place to Herr Willmann, and before I had received any account whatever of Schradieck's performances, I gave him an exact description of my séance with Eglinton. Upon that Herr Willmann told me that a similar séance, that is to say under similar conditions, would *not* be forthcoming with Schradieck. . . . During the séance Herr Schradieck wrote, with a piece of pencil marked by me, answers to questions written on the slate, which I covered; he wrote likewise between two slates. Although cleverly done, the deception was apparent enough, and in the

cardinal points there was *absolutely no resemblance* to a séance of Eglinton's. After the séance was finished, I gave both gentlemen (as I had previously done to Herr Willmann alone) an account of Eglinton's manner of proceeding, and Herr Schradieck confessed that under the conditions which I had seen with Eglinton, he *could not* produce his writing."

Therefore, these gentlemen in *writing* to me assert that slate-writing can be produced by conjurers under the same conditions described in my pamphlet; but verbally, after having had an opportunity of showing what they can do by their art, they say the contrary and declare their inability to perform the same, without feeling their moral responsibility to publicly recant the error they have published.

It follows from the confession of these gentlemen by word of mouth, either that they recognise Eglinton as a medium, or that they acknowledge him to be a conjurer a step above themselves. In the first case it would be of no advantage to the question for Eglinton to be proved by these opponents; and in the second it would even be an injury to it; for if Eglinton is a conjurer, he must be an exceptionally clever one, who would find it easy enough to take in Schradieck, the latter having confessed his inferiority. Such a result could only be deplored in the interest of truth.

After the experiences here described, I have thought myself justified and obliged to add the following:—

1. In a letter to the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, following the challenge contained in my pamphlet, I *excepted* all those conjurers who make a trade of their anti-Spiritualism.

2. In accordance with this letter, I have *rejected* a *third* challenge made me by another Hamburg conjurer.

3. I have advised Mr. Eglinton *not* to accept the invitation forwarded to him by the aforementioned persons to come to Hamburg and be proved by them.

4. I have, on the contrary, begged Mr. Eglinton, if possible, to stop at Berlin on his way home from Russia, and to sit for proof with the well-known first-rate prestidigitateur, M. Hermann, who is acknowledged by Willmann himself among others, to be the most suitable man for the purpose.

If Eglinton is not able to comply with this request just now, the proof sittings may, perhaps, take place in the autumn.* At that season he will be coming to Vienna, and the equally celebrated conjurer, C. Hermann, has likewise expressed his willingness to undertake such a trial.

As far as regards my own personal convictions, the result of these séances will be of no importance whatever. I am personally acquainted with three *private mediums*, in whose presence direct writing not only takes place inside double slates, but is done in inaccessible places; I know likewise from reliable sources of other private mediums of this kind; no fiasco, therefore, could lessen my conviction as to the facts.

Under these circumstances, I must confess that the disputed question, "Medium or Conjurer," seems to me to stir up a great deal more dust than it deserves. But the fault is not to be laid to my charge, though it is true I first gave rise to it—but it is due to the journalists, who were utterly silent concerning my essay for the first ten months after it appeared, but who now consider it a favourable opportunity to strike me dead with their pens, despising, in order to do this, neither anonymous communications nor lies. They would have done far better to have stuck to their previous course of silence; but since they have abandoned it, it will be proved that they have lost their cause, and that in this instance they are

"Ein Teil von jener Kraft,

Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft."

(A portion of that power which always wishes to do evil but brings forth good instead.)

How childish it is to lay so much stress upon slate-writing, and to think by a rationalistic solution of this one problem to disprove mysticism entirely! Slate-writing is only one method of direct writing, direct writing is only a portion of mediumistic phenomena, and the latter only a portion of mysticism. It is quite a sample of the puerile way in which our journalists set to work, to attach so much importance to a, comparatively speaking, unimportant question, and to show no comprehension whatever of the movement towards enlightenment which pro-

* Mr. Eglinton writes to me from St. Petersburg (8th-13th and 14th May, 1886), that he will be willing to agree to a series of proof séances in Germany, with prestidigitateurs of repute, in the presence of competent witnesses, if the latter are actuated only by the love of truth and are willing to make their opinions formed from such observation, public.—ED. SPHINX.

* From the *Sphinx*, June, 1886.

ceeds from it, that, namely, which brings men back to a belief in the supersensual, since the prevailing materialism in practical life is found to lead to such an unbearably corrupt state. Of all which is even already accomplished, these gentlemen perceive nothing, but they raise a cry of triumph because an obscure conjurer tries to place a beam in my way, over which they fondly hope to see me stumble.

I will now proceed to show that in this instance it is impossible for me to stumble. In my essay I have allowed that the opinion of conjurers as to whether slate-writing is due to conjuring is of value. They are in the first place themselves specialists as regards this question. Now how far can I consider myself likewise a specialist in this matter? The speciality of the philosopher is akin to logic; logical criticism ventures to give an opinion upon every possible subject. Therefore I may form an opinion even on subjects of which I have no knowledge, as to whether a view expressed of it is in conformity with the laws of reason or not, whether it is or is not a logical one. If a judgment is contradictory in itself, that judgment is wrong. If in its results it only leads to contradiction it is equally wrong.

It follows from this, that without being a conjurer, I can so arrange an experiment that the objections I anticipate from conjurers will be provided against beforehand. For this purpose it is only necessary that I should exclude every possible and imaginary opportunity for conjuring in the preliminary arrangements. Now, in my "Problem for Conjurers," I have taken up my position, which is a purely logical one, as follows:— I have proceeded on the assumption that conjurers can only produce writing in closed slates in two ways: either by a previous preparation of the slates, or by sleight-of-hand. In order to be quite sure on this point, I afterwards inquired of Herr Schradieck if he knew, or had ever heard of a third possible way. He denied that there was one, and acknowledged that his tricks in this line were performed by sleight-of-hand.

The most important thing, therefore, for the experimenter is to arrange the conditions for the trial in such a way that any suggestion of conjuring points to a logical contradiction. For this purpose one thing only is necessary, but this is of vital importance: the question to be answered on the slate should not be put too soon, but at the very last moment.

I therefore suggest the following method of proceeding:—

1. The experiment must take place in the light.
2. The slates shall not be put under the table.
3. The medium must not meddle with the slates brought by the experimenters.
4. Only when the person experimenting has finished with his preliminaries the medium is to be allowed to place his hand upon the closed slates lying upon the table.
5. And now the experimenter may put a short precise question.
6. When the audible writing is finished, the slates must be opened by the experimenter himself.

Now I have asserted, do assert, and will assert to all eternity, that if under such conditions the questions are answered correctly and to the point, the notion of prepared slates as well as that of sleight-of-hand is utterly excluded, and that it is inadmissible by the laws of reason, because it leads in its results to a logical contradiction. The precaution of putting the question at the last moment makes the theory of prepared slates impossible; because the medium does not know beforehand the question which I put, and if I think of such a question myself only at the last moment, even such an idea as that of thought-reading on his part cannot be admitted; and therefore an answer cannot be prepared beforehand in the slates, to be brought out by the warmth of the hands laid upon them.

The postponement of the question till the last moment disposes likewise finally of the suggestion of sleight-of-hand; for sleight-of-hand is done by movement of the hand; if, therefore, in the short space of time intervening between the putting of the question and the cessation of the sound of writing, the hands of the medium, perfectly motionless, are in sight of everyone, sleight-of-hand is impossible.

In this wise both theories—and there is no third—are proved to be logical contradictions, and, therefore, they *must* be false.

That the advice given in my essay to defer putting the question till the last moment hits the right nail on the head is proved to me indirectly by the behaviour of my opponents; they ignore completely this important, I may say only decisive condition; they say nothing whatever about the fact that I

especially mentioned this point in my essay, and omit to confess that if this precaution were made use of, their art would no longer suffice to perform the experiment.

If therefore anyone should still assert that in spite of this precaution conjuring could be done, I should call such an assertion illogical; I maintain that the process of reasoning of such an opponent, by means of which he judges of the cause from the effect, is defective. But *this* assertion I place not before conjurers but before those who study logic. On this point I am a specialist and a conjurer is not; for a person may be a first-rate conjurer, but understand nothing whatever of logic.

I have related in my essay that a portion of my experiments with Eglinton were conducted in the above-mentioned manner, and I think I have now done everything on my part that can possibly be expected of me to bring about a decision on the disputed question of slate-writing. I have invited the conjurers and have requested Mr. Eglinton to arrange a proof-séance with one of the most celebrated of the former, Herr M. Hermann, of Berlin. This umpire has been proposed by the *opponents* themselves, and as the reader can see in reading his article in the *Sphinx*, which precedes this, he is in no wise prejudiced in my favour. Besides this, the world-renowned prestigitateur (in justification of this word instead of the jaw-breaking "prestidigitateur," I refer to the word "præstigiium"), Professor C. Hermann, of Vienna, has professed his willingness, likewise, to hold a proof-séance with Eglinton, so I shall endeavour to persuade Mr. Eglinton, who intends to visit Vienna in the autumn, to agree to this. And, finally, I think I have done well in opposing a proof-séance with Schradieck and Willmann; for Eglinton, if he be a conjurer, must be a very exceptional one, and would easily have taken in such men as these, which, although his doing so might amuse me mightily, would not forward the interests of truth.

[I have omitted translating the concluding remarks, which do not bear directly upon the question, and would make the article too long for insertion in "LIGHT." I have submitted the above translation to Mr. Eglinton, and have his authority for saying that whilst Baron du Prel's article has no doubt been written with good intention, he has taken it too much for granted that Mr. Eglinton is entirely at his disposal in this matter. In the event of Mr. Eglinton finally deciding to go to Berlin to meet Hermann, he will do so at his own expense, and he therefore considers himself at liberty to make his own conditions, which can be accepted or rejected as Hermann pleases; and he in no wise accepts Baron du Prel's statements or conditions as being binding upon him.—TRANSLATOR.]

SPIRITUALISM, by its philosophy of death, its higher conception of God, its demonstration of immortality and spirit communion, wafts the soul from the lowlands of fear and supernaturalism to the serene heights of spiritual knowledge, peace, and joy. Its ministering angels are waiting around the couch of the dying, their welcoming strains of music often pierce the outer courts of matter and are heard by him who carries a moment at the gates of death. Theology teaches that death places an impassable gulf between the living and the dead, that the heavenly lose all interest in the earthly. Spiritualism teaches that death does not destroy human affection, nor bar the soul from communion with friends upon earth.—*Spiritual Offering*.

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. After the whole range of the phenomena had been before the world ten years and had convinced sceptics by tens of thousands—sceptics, be it remembered, of common-sense and more than common acuteness, Americans of all classes—they were confirmed by the first chemist in America, Professor Robert Hare. Two years later they were again confirmed by the elaborate and persevering inquiries of one of the first American lawyers, Judge Edmonds. Then by another good chemist, Professor Mapes. In France the truth of the simpler physical phenomena was confirmed by Count A. de Gasparin in 1854, and since then French astronomers, mathematicians and chemists of high rank have confirmed them. Professor Thury, of Geneva, again confirmed them in 1855. In our own country such men as Professor DeMorgan, Dr. Lockhart Robertson, T. Adolphus Trollope, Dr. Robert Chambers, Serjeant Cox, Mr. C. E. Varley, as well as the sceptical Dialectical Committee, have independently confirmed large portions of them, and lastly comes Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., with four years of research and unrestricted experiment with the two oldest and most remarkable mediums in the world, and again confirms almost the whole series.—ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

SOME BOGUS SEANCES.

The announcement that I would contribute an article to your column was somewhat premature. I am reminded of the Irishman who was asked if he could perform on the violin. His answer was, "How do I know? Sure, I've never tried." But then I can say something about the "materialising business," as performed in America, although I really never meant to promise a contribution to "LIGHT." If such promise was made by me it was conditional on my being able to awake out of a sort of delightful day-dream, to work during a golden hour of a long summer vacation in this beautiful land.

Well, here goes. Yes, I have investigated, carefully, patiently, and always in the hope of finding gold instead of dross. Experience has taught me that if one is to get the best results with mediums he must cultivate a state of receptivity; he must go as a humble inquirer after truth. I have been richly rewarded in my investigations by the discovery that "materialisation" is a fact, the most stupendous fact, as I believe, of this or any other century. And I also arrive at the conclusion that genuine materialisation exists in something like the proportion of gold in quartz-bearing rock—the relation of the genuine to the false is that of ounces to tons. Let me narrate briefly. In the city of New York, during the two past winters, there have been four well advertised séances for materialisation, all of which have been well patronised, and that by professed Spiritualists. Each medium holds from three to six séances a-week, and the price of admission is one dollar. Let me begin with number one. The séance takes place in the back parlour of a large house, and there are from twenty-five to forty persons present. The medium is a young man of, perhaps, twenty-eight years of age. His mother conducts the séance, standing usually close to the cabinet. The light is turned down so that the room is in deep twilight. All join in singing the "Sweet Bye and Bye," and, before the last verse is reached, an alleged female form walks out of the cabinet. This is repeated again and again during the evening, varied with occasional male forms. It is a dreary monotony night after night of the same alleged persons. There are the "Empress Josephine," who never responds to your French; and "Carrie Miller," and "Esther Hazard," and others. These ladies used to shake hands with me, and invariably they gave me the large and very muscular hand of the medium. The special feature at this place is the materialisation of a spirit outside the cabinet. The light is turned very low, a table, with a cover reaching to the floor, is placed at the cabinet entrance, and then, behold! First a cloudy something just in front of the table, and directly afterwards a spirit fully materialised who gives you the hard hand of the medium again. It is a simple trick, and ought not to deceive a child. The medium thrusts out from under the table a piece of lace which forms a part of his covering, and gradually emerges himself. At times this wonderful phenomenon takes place farther out in the room. On such an occasion the mother wears an enormous trail, and walks slowly away from the cabinet. Then the form arises at the side of the mother. The room is very nearly in a state of darkness when these performances take place. These people do a thriving business, and scores declare that in the person of the masquerading medium they have found a long lost brother, sister, or friend. How do I know it is all a fraud? Because I have investigated and proved it to be one; and a most flagrant one it is.

Now for number two. The medium, a woman, occupies a beautiful house, and the back parlour is the séance-room. The cabinet stands against the wall, and an examination of it is invited. There is no chance for accomplices here. Any form that comes out of that cabinet by itself must be either a spirit or the medium. The first "manifestation" here is usually a child's voice from within the cabinet. Then there come forth the deep sonorous tones of an old man. Each in turn talks with the audience. The child is witty, the old man utters wisdom. Now the curtains part and a white-robed female figure appears in the dim light. The little daughter of the medium arises and says: "This is Priscilla, who comes to help the circle." Priscilla then vanishes, and a moment later a male form appears. It is so dark that you can distinguish him only by his white shirt-front and his manly voice. And what a voice it is to be sure—a deep bass voice. One feels on hearing it for the first time that he could swear it proceeds from a man. After this, forms walk out, and sometimes shake hands with different persons in the circle. But the figure, invariably, is that of the medium, who weighs not less than twelve stone. There are no voices in the cabinet when the form is outside. Presently one

hears a colloquy within the cabinet between the old man and the child. The child wishes to come out, and the old man objects. It is a spirited conversation, as natural as life itself. At length the child prevails, the light having been judiciously lowered, and she comes out. All one can see is something white, which appears to be about as large as a three-year-old child. The little one, who is now dumb, is about eight feet from the cabinet, and she has begun to dematerialise. There! she is gone. Wait. Through the darkness one discerns a bit of white on the floor. Slowly it increases, and rises to its former altitude. Very wonderful all this, is it not? But how do you know that this is an effigy, clad in white on the front side, in black behind, and pushed out of the cabinet on the end of a stick; and that the dematerialising is performed by laying the rag baby on her face, black side up, so as to render her invisible? I can only say that it is this to the best of my knowledge and belief. Allowed to go toward her on one occasion to present her a rose, she developed on retiring into the cabinet to about twice her former height, just as a trail would have done if lifted too hurriedly off the floor, and I know perfectly well that it was no child's hand which took my flower, but the hand of the medium instead, a veritable hand of flesh and blood. Sitting beside an old friend one night at this séance, I was told of a wonderful séance that had taken place the day before. Two figures had issued from the cabinet together. He had scarcely finished telling me, when, lo! two forms appeared. One of them, that of a man, was very indistinct, but the voice was unmistakable; beside him stood a female figure in white. Immediately some favoured one asked permission to go to them, and was bidden to do so. But before they had fairly arisen from their seats the female had vanished, and the deep bass voice spoke and said: "She has dematerialised." Of course she had. The medium, standing there as a man, had held up a slight framework of lace, and gently moved it behind her out of harm's way when danger threatened. This is the simplest and most natural explanation of what took place. I have been called up to the cabinet during one of these séances by an alleged returning spirit. It was an agitated form that stood there, making quick movements, breathing distinctly and rapidly, almost invisible, of course, in the darkness, and I would fain have believed that a dear friend of former days stood before me. But the grasp of the hand was convincing. It was the medium and none other. She gave me the strong, muscular, fleshy hand. This medium has a strong and enthusiastic following, composed of men and women who indignantly resent any suggestion of fraud as an insult to themselves. And yet, as an earnest seeker after truth, and a careful observer as well, I fail to find the slightest evidence that she is a materialising medium. The voices that issue from the cabinet are no evidence whatever of materialisation. These, I am free to admit, are remarkable, especially the male voices, but judging the séance as a whole I am compelled to believe that number two is in a normal condition while in her cabinet, and that long practice has enabled her to imitate different voices. My first visit to one of this woman's séances was made in the summer of 1882, when she was less well known. At that time I was called up to the cabinet by the child voice, and there I distinctly saw the face of the medium as she was crouched down close to the wall of the cabinet, and I saw her lips move distinctly in childish prattle. So you will perceive that my opinions have been formed on something like evidence.

Séance number three was held last winter in a large room looking on the street. The cabinet stood against the wall, and immediately at the right of the cabinet was a doorway over which heavy curtains were suspended. The door led into a small room out of which was a door leading into a hall. At the left of the sitters were two doors, communicating with the back part of the house, over which curtains were suspended. Thus it will be seen that there were three means for the entrance and exit of confederates, not to mention the hall door at the left of the cabinet. I attended eight or ten séances at this place, and saw many wonders. The medium, a little woman, not far from forty years of age, would enter the cabinet, after which, for the space of a minute, the room would be in a state of total darkness. Then light enough would be turned on to enable one to distinguish the outline of persons and the things in the room. The spirits were not slow in coming from the cabinet. First there would come forth a male form,—a rather stalwart fellow he was—wearing a jacket. Sometimes he would be at once recognised; at other times he would wander about the room, apparently

looking for some person. I have known this individual to be recognised during the course of a single evening as a father, a father-in-law, a brother, and as a cousin ; and I am prepared to affirm that it was the same individual on every occasion. This enterprising performer usually returned into the cabinet to "gain strength" after he had been outside for the space of two minutes. As a general thing, he had no sooner entered the cabinet than out came a blithe young female spirit most jauntily done up in lace, and another soon followed her. These charming creatures never failed each to find a father, brother, or lover, and there followed great show of affection, the kissing not unfrequently reminding one of an explosion of Chinese crackers. I think it was on the third evening of my attendance there that one of these fairies came swiftly across the room, seized my two hands, and led me to the cabinet. There she whispered to me—in front of the cabinet entrance—that she was very weak, and asked me if I recognised her. I told her that I knew she was my long lost love by her hands and arms, her face being covered with a veil, while at the same time I saw she was the medium's daughter whom I had met at the first séance at a time when but one form came out, and that one the medium herself. The medium had informed me the night before that her daughter was an actress, and that she had gone on a tour into Canada, but the light favouring me I was enabled to recognise her features through her veil. And then I fully demonstrated the fact that she was a spirit yet in the flesh by a well intended vigorous hug, something of a bear hug, I imagine, for immediately after she had retired within the cabinet for "more strength," the badly disguised voice of the medium was heard calling out: "Please do not hold the spirits, treat them gently, and they will come out and dematerialise before you." An elderly gentleman, a well known physician of Cincinnati, was intensely interested in these two girls who had found their way into the room and the cabinet during the darkness that preceded the opening of the circle, for he saw in them his two daughters who had long been in spirit-life. As he had met the medium at a camp meeting the previous summer it is not difficult to understand how the knowledge of his loss was obtained; it was difficult to understand, though, how he could have allowed himself to be duped in such a manner. I confess that to me it was a sad and a revolting sight to see this venerable man on his knees, while these impudent and unfeeling tricksters laid their hands on his head as in blessing. Now let me add right here that by far the larger proportion of people who attend these alleged séances believe them to be perfectly genuine, and they are hot in the denunciation of any man who intimates the contrary. The least suggestion that the forms issuing from the cabinet were persons who had entered the room when it was totally dark would have resulted in serious unpleasantness. It was owing to such a suggestion made by me that I was subsequently expelled from séance number four ; for be it remembered these people are in league with one another, and information is conveyed from one to the other. The "phenomena," then, at séance number three were easily accounted for. Confederates were admitted at the beginning of the séance from adjoining rooms. But how did they get out? Oh, easily enough. After these people had masqueraded for an hour-and-a-half as visitors from the spirit-world, the conductor would announce the coming of illuminated forms, and then he would proceed to turn out the light. Then we were treated to a show of phosphorus, and illuminated paint, and the ghostly visitors emerged through the curtains. Then the medium came forth greatly prostrated.

I shall have to speak of number four from hearsay, but my witnesses are to be believed. Unfortunately before beginning investigations there I had shown symptoms of doubt, and when I went to the manager he announced that he could not go on unless I took myself off. A few days after this occurred the fraud was fully exposed by the *New York World*, a great daily newspaper. The wife of the showman and a female accomplice were caught in the act of personating spirits. It was the most complete *exposé* that has ever taken place, from the fact that the old defence of unconscious control was ruled out. If it was a case of impersonation on the part of the medium while in a state of trance, then how about the other young woman? How did she happen to be there dressed as a spirit? Ah! but nothing is so easy as lying. Two days after these people had been exposed, and after they had confessed the fraud, they and their supporters went boldly before a meeting of Spiritualists and began denying and explaining. Now how did they account for the seizure of ghost number two? Why, that the medium needed

help, and that another medium had been placed in the cabinet for this purpose. And speaker after speaker stood up there and defended the whole disgraceful business. A noteworthy feature of these alleged séances had been at one time the production of little ghosts. And solid little folks they were too. A lady told me that she had seen three spirit-children out in the room at one time, and had held one in her arms ; that it was a genuine creature of flesh and blood. A famous trick was the entrance of a spirit through solid doors. It was a very simple trick, as explained to the reporter on the night of the exposure. The room in which the cabinet stood was separated from the audience-room by sliding doors, in front of which were heavy curtains. The manager had cut one of these doors vertically, so that when they were closed a person could pass from one room to the other. He would bring the doors together, tie or lock them, and announce the approaching miracle. One of his performers would then enter, concealed by the curtain. When the light was turned sufficiently low he would suddenly spring into the room from behind the curtain, and the effect was startling. Let me add here that the proprietor of public ghost factory number four in the city of New York was formerly an "exposer" of mediums, and that he gave exhibitions to prove that Spiritualism was a sham and a humbug. And yet this man went right on, after he was exposed, after he had confessed himself a fraud, giving séances, and the very night after the *exposé* he was unable to make room for all who applied for admission.

I do not enjoy writing this brief sketch. The facts given are humiliating. For more than a quarter of a century the heavens have been opening and we have had glimpses of the faces of our beloved dead. They have proved to us the fact of their continued existence by rap, by writing, and by appearing at times in bodily form. And now come a lot of traders, who set up their shops to trade on our belief in immortality. These people do not hesitate to simulate the most marvellous phase of our phenomena, and they effect to do it with absolute system and regularity. To me the brazen impudence of the manager of the modern ghost show, in my native land, is amazing. That intelligent Spiritualists should not see the importance of scourging these lying, thieving, and base money changers from out the beautiful temple of Spiritualism is more amazing. I incline to the opinion that the day is not far distant in which American Spiritualists will unite in putting down these fraudulent materialising mediums.

CHARLES D. LAKEY.

We are requested to draw attention to the removal of Mr. W. R. Price, full particulars of which will be found in our advertisement columns.

THE *Spiritual Offering* states that Mary F. Davis is lying near the gate of death, with no hope of recovery ; her disease is pronounced by physicians to be cancer of the stomach.

We have in preparation, and shall issue early in September, a special number of "LIGHT," dealing principally with recent evidence for the reality of psychography. We hope then to give a block of testimony such as has never before been presented in a compact form. We shall shortly announce full particulars.

Do you talk of the sacrifices made to a good cause? Rather think of what you have received, and give thanks. Had you failed to do you would have sacrificed yourself, and your compensation would have been your loss. But for your doing you are the nobler man or woman. Is not this pay enough?

BLACKBURN.—The first marriage at a Spiritualist place of worship in England took place here this morning, in the Public Hall, New Water-street, and it was performed by Mr. Richard Wolstenholme, photographer, president of the Society. The bridegroom, Roderick Round Sanger, is nineteen, and his bride, Miss Jane Ann Farmery, twenty-five years of age. There was a musical service and an address by Mrs. Britten, of Preston.—*Daily Chronicle*.

SCIENCE and philosophy have done much to liberate man from the bondage of creeds and dogmas ; they have broadened life and added to the happiness and prosperity of humanity, but they have not given a philosophy of death, nor a word of consolation to the afflicted ; they have not demonstrated immortality, nor opened for one moment the mysterious gates through which the dying must pass. To Spiritualism belongs the credit of removing the sting of death and dispelling the darkness of the tomb.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—

"Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone can explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages."—*Aftonblad* (Stockholm), October 30th, 1879.

BARON CARL DU PREL (Munich) in *Nord und Sud*.—"One thing is clear; that is, that psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find: (1) That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (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 actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead pencil. (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. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (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. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions."

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—

"Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent."

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

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

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

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

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

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."

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,' 'sommambule,' 'mediumic,' and others not yet explained by science to be 'impossible,' is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to."

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

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

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

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—"No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, 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."

CONJURERS AND 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. We give the testimony of one of them:—

Harry Kellar, a distinguished professor of legerdemain, investigated the slate-writing phenomena which occurred in the presence of Mr. Eglington, at Calcutta, 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."