

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOTH 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.]

OF WHAT GOOD IS SPIRITUALISM?

By HENRY KIDDLE, in the *Spiritual Offering*.

This question is constantly asked by the opponents of Spiritualism, not as a request for information, but as a sneer; and with this sneer they think they logically dispose of the whole subject. It is in this way that the ignorant and self-sufficient have, in the past, tried to dispose of the most valuable discoveries and inventions. "*Cui Bono?*"

Now, the question as to the value of any discovered truth is totally distinct from the evidence upon which the truth itself rests. The evidence cannot be impaired or strengthened by any consideration, or preconceived notion, as to the uselessness or utility—the injurious or beneficial character, of the truth made known. The discovery of a new chemical element—a new metal, for example—would not be sneered at because its discoverer could not at once explain all its useful applications, or because it was found, like arsenic, to be poisonous to the human system.

If spirit intercourse were invariably pernicious or dangerous in its tendency, as the followers of St. Peter and Swedenborg assert it to be, it would be no less incumbent upon us to make a scientific investigation of it, and employ the lessons derived from its study, for admonition, if for nothing else. Cholera and small-pox are serious evils to the human race, but they are studied, nevertheless, by courageous minds, who are not to be driven from the pursuit of knowledge by superstitious bug-a-boos.

It is unquestionably true that every species of knowledge, every fact in regard to the great scheme of things of which we form a part, admits of a useful application; and it is our duty, as well as our best interest, to endeavour to discover it. Observed facts and speculative truths often lie undeveloped and unused for many centuries. Witness the apparently useless discovery by Thales of the attractive property of an excited stick of amber (*electron*), made twenty-five centuries ago—a discovery that, even now, we are but just able to appreciate in the recent applications of that wonderful agent, dynamic electricity. The *cui bono* objection or sneer is characteristic of a shallow, prejudiced mind. No true philosopher could be guilty of using it in connection with any fact or truth, however seemingly trifling or useless.

Nevertheless, it is most important to inquire into the value of every truth in its practical applications to human life and destiny; and having settled in our minds that spirit intercourse is real and practicable we naturally strive to utilise it—to reap its advantages and escape its perils, if it involve any. On general principles, we may be sure that it

would not be practicable if it could not be made available for the benefit of mankind, and also in it, as in all other things, we are necessitated to learn by experience how to "refuse the evil and choose the good."

It must seem to the philosophic mind a curious phenomenon that any person should fail to perceive the vast importance of transforming the doctrine of existence after death from a mere speculative belief, or article of faith, into a demonstrated truth. Death comes to all; and all, we might think, would be eager to know something of the hereafter, if it were only "what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil"; but to some, absorbed in religious prejudice, it seems better to lull reason to sleep in the cradle of blind faith than to be guided by its light, and realise by actual knowledge those truths relating to the future destiny of the soul, which are so vital in their bearing on man's highest and most enduring interests.

Others there are who, chilled in their sensibilities by an exclusive devotion to materialistic science, rebuke in scornful indifference man's aspirations for personal immortality—

"It's not enough, unhappy thing! to know
Thou art? Is that a boon so kindly given,
That, being, thou would'st be again, and go
Thou know'st not, reck'st not, to what region, so
On earth no more, but mingled with the skies?"

Were sorrow never called to bend in agony over the grave of the loved—were there never a sigh for the "touch of a vanished hand and the sound of a voice" stilled by inexorable death, probably the Spiritualists would be confined to the very limited class of speculative minds who cultivate knowledge only for its own sake. Did the value of spirit intercourse merely consist in its power to soothe the anguish of the bereaved—to afford consolation to those who otherwise would mourn without hope, it would deserve to be hailed as the greatest boon vouchsafed to mortals by the dispensations of a wise and loving Creator.

There are, indeed, those who pride themselves, like the followers of Zeno, in having schooled their minds and hearts to bear with philosophic coldness even the saddest of all the casualties of our mundane life—to take the "last fond look" at the loved face upon which death has impressed its marble immobility, to touch the icy forehead, and to gaze at the closed eyes never to open again to the scenes of earth—to do all this to wife, daughter, son, or friend—not without emotion, doubtless, but with such only as may be easily repressed by "Nature's teachings"—that "all that breathe must share this destiny," and that he, or she, in whom our heart's deepest love was centred, has gone "to mix forever with the elements," and thus to participate in the unconscious, impersonal immortality of the material atom. This may be scientific stoicism; but it is not nature, and will not answer the demands of nature in the throbbing heart of unperverted man.

In the simple proof, then, of the life hereafter—in the demonstration that the departed live and "love us yet"—Spiritualism answers, and answers completely, the question *Cui bono?* But beyond that, its value to the human race is incalculably vast, branching out into almost infinite ramifications:—(1) In showing us what are the conditions of that future existence, what are its relations to our present state of being, and how our conduct in the one affects our condition in the other; (2) in affording a definite and

rational basis for a comprehensive spiritual and religious philosophy, and for the study of the spirit side of the universe ; (3) in making known to us the varied influences exerted by the invisible minds upon our own, intellectually, morally, and spiritually, according to the psychologic laws which bind spirit to spirit ; and in teaching us how we may attract and cultivate good influences, and repel such as are baneful ; and (4) in thus supplying us with materials for the enlarged culture of psychologic science as related to ourselves in this embodied state. We should, properly, also refer to the relation of spirit intercourse to medical science, in magnetic healing by the invisibles, either directly or through mediums, and in the diagnosis of disease by means of spiritual clairvoyance and psychometry, together with all the diversified applications of the latter, most of them of an eminently practical character.

Moreover, Spiritualism is closely allied to religion, as it is also to ethics, sociology, and, more or less, to every department of human knowledge and human economy. It is not, as many imperfectly informed persons allege, allied to superstition or superstitious practices, but is the true corrective of superstition. It is true there may be superstitious notions entertained in regard to it as with many other things, for human fanaticism and folly find various outlets and forms of expression ; but as Mr. A. R. Wallace says, "it is the natural enemy of all superstition." "It is," he adds, "an experimental science, and affords the only sure foundation for a true philosophy and a pure religion." This fact, we believe, will be eventually recognised as the culmination of the movement called Modern Spiritualism ; and the question, "Of what good is Spiritualism?" will be seen to be as silly and absurd as now would be, Of what good is the steam engine, the electromagnetic telegraph, or the Atlantic cable ? each of which was at one time an object of derision, the butt of shallow, ignorant, concealed minds.

FOREVER.

Those we love truly never die,
Though year by year the sad memorial wreath,
A ring and flowers, types of life and death,
Are laid upon their graves.

For death the pure life saves,
And life all-pure is love, and love can reach
From Heaven to earth, and nobler lessons teach
Than those by mortals read.

Well bless'd is he who has a dear one dead ;
A friend he has whose face will never change ;
A dear communion that will ne'er grow strange ;
The anchor of a love is death.

The blessed sweetness of a loving breath
Will reach our cheek all-fresh through weary years.
For her who died long since, ah ! waste not tears,
She's thine unto the end !

Thank God for one dear friend,
With faith still radiant with the light of truth,
Whose love comes laden with the scent of youth,
Through twenty years of death.

—JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

How much trouble he avoids who does not look to see what his neighbour says or does or thinks, but only to what he does himself, that it may be just and pure !—*Marcus Aurelius*.

A MOMENT of peril is often a moment of open-hearted kindness and affection. We are thrown off our guard by the general agitation of our feelings, and betray the intensity of those which, at more tranquil moments, our prudence at least conceals if it cannot altogether suppress them.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THE bond of sympathy that links human beings together is never broken. When we shall know as we are known we will realise the agony and torture that has wrung the hearts of our loved ones in spirit life over our selfishness and wrongdoing. Our every act of love and kindness awakens joy in their souls, and helps them to progress in spiritual states.

SOME REMARKS ON MEDIUMSHIP.

By "V."

Private mediums, as a rule, are very loth to make public the communications they receive from the spirit world, and naturally so ; but it is a question with me how far one is justified in keeping entirely to oneself experiences which might be of use to others who are entering upon the path of mediumship. The laws by which it is governed are so little known that information tending to throw any light upon them may be of use to someone, and as each one's experience varies in some respects, a comparison of that of different mediums cannot but be interesting, and may be profitable.

It is from reading an article in "LIGHT" of August 28th, that I am induced to contribute these few remarks. The article in question is called "Misleading Spirits," reprinted from the *Golden Gate*, and every word in it I can endorse, except that I cannot say with the writer "I have never had any experience with so-called 'evil spirits,' or spirits to whom we deemed it necessary to apply any other test than that of our own reason and common-sense." I believe it is not an uncommon thing for mediums in an incipient stage of development to be peculiarly subject to the deception of mischievous, lying spirits. Perhaps, however, my own case is rather out of the common, inasmuch that while my spirit guides are those who were dearest to me on earth, others with whom I was connected, and whom I must call undeveloped spirits, have an interest in trying to prevent and disturb this blessed communion, and have sometimes taken advantage of my inexperience to mislead me by giving false messages, purporting to come from my "guides," in the hope of shaking my confidence in the latter, and thus stopping the communion between us. I must say, however, that these messages always in time betrayed their origin, and, likewise, that they were always due to some slight imprudence on my part, such, for instance, as not leaving off *sitting directly* I was told to do so, or asking a trivial question. Thus, quite recently, after having almost forgotten the existence of my tormentors, I was foolish enough one day to ask my guide if he could tell me where a small article of jewellery was that I had missed suddenly, and had searched for a long time in vain. The answer came promptly in writing, saying he had taken it to someone (the name mentioned) in the spheres—just conceive my folly in believing such a thing for a moment. An hour or two later the article dropped from my dress when I took it off, and in the evening my *true* guide wrote, "I was sorry you asked me about the pin, as it gave — an opportunity of deceiving you," and "Your mother and A. beg you to be always on your guard against —'s machinations." Sitting with promiscuous circles, or being even unconsciously in company with a medium of bad character who is surrounded by a low class of spirits, renders one liable to such attacks. The latter was my case some eight months ago, and thus through no fault of my own (as I afterwards learnt) I, for a time, had much trouble with these "misleading spirits," and my automatic writing was almost put a stop to, "Leave off" being frequently written directly I sat down. But the worst was when I sat for manifestations with a friend, which I did once a fortnight, or sometimes once a week, when the increase of physical force thus obtained seemed to give the misleading spirits greater power to deceive. We sat on those occasions for tilts, and often some silly or rambling sentence would show that we were being taken in. Much distressed by the frequent repetition of these occurrences, I asked advice and guidance from a kind spirit friend of mine, one of Mr. Eglington's guides, from whom I learnt how it was that these undeveloped spirits had obtained so much power to interfere with, and distort the communications I received. She assured me

the trouble would be overcome, at the same time advising me, during this crisis in my development, to be very careful in my way of living; on no account to "sit" with strangers, and as much as possible to avoid large and promiscuous assemblies. She told me that the very tone of the messages ought to enable me to discern the false from the genuine. This was quite true, and on my begging her to give me a test by which I might "discern the spirits," she said that when my doubts were aroused I should solemnly command the spirit communicating, *in God's name* to give his or her name, and *I have never found this test to fail*. Sometimes (my fears at that time being always on the alert) I have used the test unnecessarily, when the name of my little child or of that of my friend has been given, and so explained the difference in the manner of tilting which had aroused my suspicions. All mediums conversant with this method of communication know how characteristic the tilts are of the different spirits; but on several occasions after the command was repeated perhaps more than once, the deceiving spirit was, as it were, *forced* to spell out its name, and then there was nothing to be done but to break off the sitting. I am glad to say, however, that as my power and that of my guides increased, that of my foes diminished, and for a long time I have enjoyed the happiest and quite undisturbed communion till the little incident I have mentioned, which took place the other day, reminded me of the constant necessity of being on my guard against deception; and no better advice can be given to mediums in process of development, or indeed to anyone striving after the higher life, than in the words of the hymn:—

"Ambushed lies the evil one,
Watch and pray."

I find, too, from experience, that it is better in general to restrict the questions one puts to spiritual or transcendental matters, in contradistinction to those connected with worldly or mundane affairs, as the latter give misleading spirits the opportunity they are always watching for to deceive, though I often ask *advice*, or receive it volunteered, respecting my health or other matters. During the last month, spent in quiet and lovely spots among the Swiss mountains, where I still am staying, I have received a series of letters or communications from my guide, for which, by his desire, I have sat in the early morning before breakfast. These average about two hundred words, sometimes more. Before they commenced I asked whether he would approve or not of my asking some questions about life in the spheres, and the answer I received was, "I wish you would ask any questions you like about the spheres and spirit life," the same desire being repeated several times subsequently, and I have, therefore, put each morning such questions as occurred to me, and have received a variety of most interesting information, the answers being always to the point, brief, and satisfactory. The subjects include entrance into spirit life, method of communication between spirits and mortals, description of the fourth sphere, its scenery, climate, cities, occupations, amusements, worship, and many other highly interesting details. I find that the fact of asking questions seems to increase the *rapport* between spirit and medium. Some mornings ago I was rather at a loss what to ask about, and demanded whether he could answer some questions I put relative to subjects he had mentioned in some of the letters I had received from him in direct writing through Mr. Eglington's mediumship. I got for answer, "I hope to be able to answer those questions when you get direct writing (when!) but I wish you would now ask some questions about the spirit land." I therefore suggested the subject of music. I likewise had a letter from my child last Sunday, written in simple and childlike language (though, as she says, she is now quite grown up), describing her experiences since she left me, and a

message from her through my guide another morning, saying she hopes to be able to write to me again next Sunday, and that I must ask her all kinds of questions! I recount these few details solely for Spiritualists, and especially for those who are themselves developing mediumistic powers. I feel that I ought not to withhold them for fear of the ridicule they will doubtless excite among those very clever people who believe in nothing they cannot themselves understand. It is a relief sometimes to write about spiritual matters without making the oft-repeated, and, as a rule, unavailing effort to *prove* the genuineness of what we ourselves know to be facts to those who do not wish to be convinced. To understand, appreciate, and enjoy spiritual things it is necessary to be at least somewhat spiritually minded, and the materialistic scientist who thinks to weigh the facts of Spiritualism in the same scales he uses for his groceries and butcher's meat, or to prove them by the same process he would use in a court of law, will find nothing but confusion and discord. Were he even, like St. Paul, to have a miracle worked in his favour, he would set it down to conjuring or imposture; failing either of those, he would say he was the victim of hallucination! though he can be easily taken in by the shallowest impostor, acting under the banner of the anti-Spiritualists. It is no use trying to convince such persons, and the sooner such a waste of energy as the effort to do so is given up the better, though the overwhelming heap of evidence which is accumulated in this way may incite the true seeker after light and knowledge to examine and search for himself. The highest wisdom was indeed symbolised by the great Master when He set a little child in the midst of His disciples, and said, "Except ye become as little children." Those who come to the contemplation of spiritual things with a simple and earnest desire for the truth will receive it abundantly, while he who is actuated by no better feeling than a wish to prove how clever he himself is, will "lose even that which he seemeth to have."

SPIRITUAL PREACHING FOR OUR TIMES.

[EDWARD HUNGERFORD, IN THE *Century*.]

However opinions may differ as to the value of present tendencies in the theological world, no one will deny that there is a determined push in the direction of a larger freedom. Call it looseness, or license, or liberty, the fact is there, indisputable. With it we have to deal. The forces which have held men, whether of human authority backed by a persecuting ecclesiasticism or of ignorance, or of both combined, are no longer sufficient to hold them. In the face of protests men go on asserting the liberty to inquire into all foundation of belief, whether in science, philosophy, or revelation. The nature and sources of authority are inspected. The claims of Scripture, theories of inspiration, former interpretations of Scripture, the historic foundations of Christianity, the life of Jesus and His work and their relation to individual destiny and race destiny, the innermost meaning of salvation, its scope and reach,—all are reviewed and discussed with intense interest, and with the enthusiasm and hope of a fresh liberty. It is useless to attempt the arrest of this. It is part of the life of the age. He is happiest who most clearly sees that freedom of inquiry is the condition of truth.

On the other hand, such freedom is not without its dangers; and the salvation of our present religious thought can only be assured, and healthful results reached, by baptising that thought in the spirit. The more it feels the pulse of freedom, the more thoroughly must it be pervaded by the sense of the invisible. If such movements are not intensely spiritual, they become rationalistic and sceptical. A rank intellectualism is only a grade higher than materialism. It is the spirit that quickeneth. The Christian Church is passing through great transitions. This is not a sign of decadence, but of an intense life. But change involves crises. Transition periods are critical periods. In guiding the great body of the Church through such transitions, and in order to land the people on a surer basis of faith, the preacher must keep to those spiritual heights where all things are seen in their divinely constituted relations.

PAUL ON A "FOURTH DIMENSION."

Rev. James Freeman Clarke, in a discourse upon "The Broad Church," delivered before his society in Boston last month, chose for his text, Ephesians iii. 17-19, and made the point that in "the breadth, and length, and depth, and *height*" of the theme upon which the Apostle was then discoursing, "Paul gives us *four* dimensions. Physics give three—length, breadth and depth or thickness. Each of Paul's dimensions refers to spirit, and each symbolises some spiritual movement."

Turning from the pastor's eloquent discourse—to the brilliant and (we are sure) spiritually illuminated sentences to which we shall again revert—we wish at present to note the fact that comparatively a few years ago, in the field of the spiritual phenomena as met with in presence of Henry Slade, Professor Zöllner, of Leipzig, made a stand in defence of just such an idea, though in his case physics were necessarily blended with the "spirit" treated of by Paul. Professor Zöllner's "fourth dimension" intelligences—who are existent in a sphere which had *higher* and added powers than ours (hence might truly be said to be the "height" of Paul, as noted by Rev. Mr. Clarke), and who, temporarily bringing material to be wrought on under the action of, or into the confines of that sphere, were able to produce what are known to the world in general as spiritual manifestations—were much derided by certain scientific bigots of his own and other lands, who failed to rise to the "height" of the occasion; but his demonstrations gave a hint, from the scientific side, of the truth of what has been continuously declared for more than a third of a century past, from the spirit side, that the phenomena occurred in consonance with laws which were not out of harmony with nature, even though themselves and the sphere of their operation might be above the ordinary tripartite definition applied by mortals to material things.

The "height" which Paul brought into his measurement of the all-absorbing love of the Infinite, whether expressed in the person of the Man of Nazareth, or the Father's eternal fulness, may, we think, justly be regarded as having gained in these modern days—and under added knowledge of how the movements of physical energy and the activity of spirit interblended throughout Nature's broad domain—a new significance, even as has the clear-cut and oft-quoted sentence of the same Apostle regarding the existence of a "natural" and "a spiritual body."

Fixed terms are difficult of formulation as vehicles and authoritative definitions for that which is continually broadening its borders, but the Spiritualist it would seem is justified in seeing in this passage of Paul and its "fourth dimension" a Scriptural hint from the clairvoyant tent-maker of Tarsus, of the verity of a twilight region in nature's grand operations (the existence of which the Modern Revelation has plainly demonstrated) where material energy shades into spiritual activity, and where the upward-trending action of mortal aspiration for knowledge of the immortal state meets with the respondent reaction of those wise intelligences who through all the varying orders of modern mediumship seek to demonstrate the upward as well as downward reaching of natural law, the continuity of human life on its spiritual side, and the fact that no mortal mind, nor aggregate of minds, has reached the point where more can not be learned in every department of being.
—*Banner of Light.*

Victory is most sure
For him, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives,
To yield entire submission to the law
Of conscience; conscience revered and obeyed;
As God's most intimate presence in the soul,
And His most perfect image in the world.

—WORDSWORTH.

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.]

Mrs. Brietzke and the S.P.R.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have just returned to town, and find I am severely handled in the Society for Psychical Research *Journal* for August. It is rather late in the day to call me *inaccurate*, after printing my dreams, &c.; however, it is only the *unfair* dealing in Mr. Lewis's statements that I object to. Had he taken the trouble to write *one* letter to me he would have been saved much blundering, and the fog my bad composition brought upon him would have been cleared away. I only sent some of my experiences to the Society for Psychical Research at the request of some of the leading members to aid in the cause of truth. It is a pity they did not find these inaccurate when I first related them. However, experience is good for us at any cost. What Professor Hoffman or any other conjurer thinks has nothing to do with me. I went to Mr. Eglinton not to satisfy them, but to find out for myself if certain alleged facts were true. I have found these said facts true, and, therefore, am satisfied so far. Scientific men, logicians, and grammarians may split hairs as much as they choose; the facts are there, and they have upset much of my previous education, and given me much to ponder upon.

Trusting you will print this for me in your paper, I am, sir, yours obediently,

September 3rd, 1886.

H. R. BRIETZKE.

A Correction.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should be glad if you would correct a passage in my letter of "LIGHT," September 4th, 1886. I said that Mr. Frank Podmore made the following remarks in the *Spiritualist* of April 9th, 1880: "If Spiritualism with all its present extravagance, grotesqueness and absurdity could at once gain the adherence of the world, do you think that the world would be the better for it?" He added, which I did not quote in my last: "Will its most practical supporters answer in the affirmative?" He thus continued: "At the best, we should gain a more or less distinct perception of an universe, which seems but an enlarged edition of this (*sic*), with the folly and purposelessness somewhat more accentuated." Not as printed in my letter of September 4th of "LIGHT": "An universe which seems but an enlarged edition (*sic*) with the folly and purposeness somewhat more accentuated."

W. R. TOMLINSON.

An Unfair Comparison.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was strongly tempted to write to you a few weeks ago, when one of your correspondents remarked: "What an unfavourable contrast does the Psychical Society present to its predecessor, the London Dialectical Society!" Now, however, that the remark appears a second time, in your issue of August the 28th, it seems desirable to correct a misapprehension.

As a matter of fact, the "contrast" is entirely the other way, and greatly in favour of the Society for Psychical Research. The Dialectical Society appointed a committee for certain purposes. In due time that committee presented a report. The Society passed a resolution not to publish it. Whether the reasons for this were good and sufficient, or otherwise, is not to the present purpose, the fact remains; thereupon the committee concluded to publish its report itself.

How different is the course which has been taken by the Society for Psychical Research! If any "contrast" is to be drawn, how greatly is it in its favour, as against the Dialectical Society! A mass of testimony is sent in, in relation to Psychography, which carries no conviction to the minds of most of the members of the Literary Committee. The whole of it is placed before the Society in the *Journal*, with comments and criticisms. This is followed by open and candid, not to say severe criticism, from those who have come to an opposite conclusion. This is also published in the *Journal*.

Exception may be taken by some as to the propriety of the exact mode, from a literary or editorial point of view, which was adopted in putting the matter before the Society. That is, however, a minor consideration. Nothing can be fairer than the general course taken.

The regret felt by the writer is, to his knowledge, shared by many others, that a spirit has been manifested in some of the remarks which have appeared in "LIGHT," which is, to say the least, undignified, and which seems to imply that all parties are not equally anxious to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.—I am, yours faithfully,

September 1st, 1886.

A STUDENT.

[We cannot agree with "A Student" in thinking the "mode" of dealing with Spiritualism a matter of "minor consideration." The Dialectical Society, whatever may be said against it, never was so unfair in its methods as the Society for Psychical Research, in the person of some of its leading members, has shown itself to be. Without endorsing all that has appeared in "LIGHT," we are unaware of any remark which has transcended the limits of free and courteous discussion according to the necessities of the case.—ED.]

A Phantom Canoe.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Have your readers heard of the following remarkable occurrence, which appears like a warning given by spirits of Maoris to their native friends of the impending volcanic outbreak and its accompanying disasters?

The special correspondent of the *Lyttelton Times*, June 16th, 1886, writes from Wellington:—

"You remember that in the first accounts of the Tarawera disaster the story was told of a phantom canoe seen on Lake Tarawera by a party of tourists and natives. I have seen some of the tourists who were present, and they have corroborated the story in most particulars. They were on their way from Wairoa by boat to Rotomahana. The day was very bright and clear, not a cloud in the sky, or the least obscurity in the atmosphere. Presently they saw a canoe with high ends going along parallel to them, apparently racing, her crew standing up and paddling in the old Maori fashion. At first they counted eleven men in her, and afterwards not more than three. Their own rowers hailed the strangers several times, but there was no reply. The boats continued side by side until the tourists turned into the arm of the lake leading towards Rotomahana, when the stranger keeping up Tarawera was soon lost to view. This is slightly different from the 'sudden disappearance' of the early account. My tourist friends thought nothing of the matter, except that they had an idea that the big canoe was part of the show; but observing the excitement of the Maori guides and rowers, and the effect the news of the canoe had on other Maoris, they made inquiries and were informed that no such canoe as they described had ever been seen within the memory of the district. The oldest Maoris were very decidedly of that opinion, and Mr. McKae of the hotel at Wairoa, who has been seventeen years in the district, declared positively that he had never heard of or seen such a canoe. According to the description of these witnesses, whose competence I can vouch for, as they are personal friends of my own, the canoe was recognised by the Maoris and others as a war canoe."

From the above account the incident seems to have been a real and not a fictitious one. The correspondent goes on to try and explain it by natural causes, viz., by supposing the priests kept such a canoe hidden away, and brought it out in order to make portents on occasions of disturbance such as heavings of the waters of the lake. Other newspapers affirm that the natives have a tradition that this phantom canoe appears before great disasters to the tribe. But to persons acquainted with spirit phenomena, and looked at in the light of similar apparitions that occur elsewhere, there will be no need to seek for material causes of the event.

F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

A Séance with Mr. Towns.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—There are a great number of people who would like to make some inquiries respecting the truth of Spiritualism, but who are deterred from making a determined start at the commencement, because of the existence of a half-hearted, or doubtful feeling as to the reality of spiritual power and communion. Now, it appears to me, that there is no easier or cheaper (a very important condition with so many) method of obtaining experience, than by means of clairvoyance, and if you will permit me I will give a few particulars of a séance with Mr. Towns on Thursday evening, as it may be very helpful to the class of persons I have indicated.

My father from the country, my wife and daughter, and myself formed the quartette of sitters at this delightful little séance.

Mr. Towns first applied his wonderful gifts for the benefit of my father, and described many of the most noteworthy events of his past life, particularly the details of three narrow escapes from death, which he has had, and mentioned the actual spiritual source from whence aid in each case had been afforded. He described, with names, quite a little army of relatives, and in the case of a brother-in-law, of whose end the family had been in total ignorance, he portrayed his death in a naval engagement, and stated that in the returns made the brother had been "reported as some one else." This remark afforded a singular test, because the family knew that he had assumed a *different name* on entering the navy.

In another instance, Mr. Towns described with singular accuracy of detail, the cause of death of my wife's sister, who had not long passed over. While in the case of my daughter, the state of her health was exactly diagnosed, the case mentioned, and the remedy indicated.

Mr. Towns now passed under the control of "Mother Ship-ton," and the dear old lady so charmed us by her amusing talk and the beautiful spiritual information which she so lovingly and earnestly imparted, that we were indeed loth to part.

While holding my father's hand she described his home surroundings (200 miles away) with wonderful correctness and apparent familiarity with even minute details.

One of the most interesting phases of the séance was a beautiful poem addressed to my daughter, which had a special application to her present life, and which contained many allusions to the future.

Trusting that many who are halting 'twixt two opinions, may be induced by these few details to seek for themselves, I am, yours obediently,

South Norwood.

August 16th, 1886.

G. D.

THE ART OF LIVING.

Deeper than all sense of seeing
Lies the secret source of being,
And the soul with truth agreeing
Learns to live in thoughts and deeds;
For the life is more than raiment,
And the earth is pledged for payment,
Unto man for all his needs.

Nature is our common mother;
Every living man our brother;
Therefore let us serve each other;
Not to meet the law's behest,
But because, from careful giving,
We shall learn the art of living,
And to love and serve is best.

Life is more than what man fancies;
Not a game of idle chances;
But it steadily advances
Up the rugged hills of time,
Till each complete web of trouble,
Every sad hope's broken bubble,
Hath a meaning most sublime.

More of practice, less profession;
More of firmness, less concession;
More of freedom, less oppression
In the Church and in the State;
More of life and less of fashion;
More of love and less of passion,
That will make us good and great.

When true hearts divinely gifted,
From the chaff of error sifted,
On their crosses are uplifted,
Shall the world most clearly see
That earth's greatest time of trial
Calls for holy self-denial,
Calls on men to do and be.

But forever and forever
Let it be the soul's endeavour
Love from hatred to dis sever,
And whatever we may do,
Won by love's eternal beauty,
To our highest sense of duty
Evermore be firm and true.

—LIZZIE DOTEN.

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

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Light:

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 1886.

MRS. SIDGWICK AND PSYCHOGRAPHY.

In the last *Journal* Mrs. Sidgwick has further explained her views on this matter, in so far as they relate specially to Mr. Eglinton's mediumship. We make no apology for giving her the benefit of increased publicity in these columns. The matter can clearly not now rest in the semi-shade of the *Journal*, and Mrs. Sidgwick's communication seems to us still further to clear the way and call for very decided action. We regret the fact, but so it is.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

SIR,—In a letter printed in the *Journal* for July, Mr. Templeton expresses surprise that a believer in telepathy should feel any difficulty in accepting Mr. Eglinton's phenomena as genuine. I do not suppose that Mr. Templeton can mean that anyone taking one step away from scientific orthodoxy—accepting as a truth anything not generally admitted by scientific men—is logically bound to believe everything else. And yet it seems clear that if information can be conveyed from one mind to another independently of the senses, that in itself affords no presumption that movements of material objects can be effected independently of the known forces of nature. And further, even were the possibility of such movements proved, it would still, in my opinion, be reasonable to regard Mr. Eglinton's performances as conjuring.

The argument for regarding them as conjuring depends on four propositions. These are (1) that in 1876 and in 1882 he produced spurious "phenomena," and there is no reason to suppose that he has ceased to do so; (2) that all the evidence for the genuineness of his "phenomena" depends on continuous observation and accurate recollection; (3) that the numerous attempts made to obtain evidence independent of these have invariably failed; (4) that the only clear line that can be drawn between "phenomena" which may possibly be due to conjuring and those which certainly cannot, is defined by saying that the latter are independent of continuity of observation and accuracy of recollection. The argument put shortly comes to this:—Mr. Eglinton is capable of trickery; he cannot produce phenomena which are clearly not due to trickery; the natural inference is that the phenomena which he does produce are due to trickery.

My proposition (4) is disputed by Mr. Massey, but any further discussion of the subject by me is better postponed till the paper which I read in May and Mr. Massey's paper are before the world. Both are, I understand, to appear in the forthcoming number of the *Proceedings*. I will only say now that the idea of the importance of obtaining evidence independent of continuous observation and accurate recollection is not a new one invented *apropos* of Mr. Eglinton; for ever since I began the investigation of Spiritualism twelve years ago, I have sought to exclude the possibility of conjuring by evidence of this kind, and many others have done the same. What is new in my position is that I am convinced by the accumulation of evidence of various kinds which we now have about Mr. Eglinton, that he has had a fair trial, and that there is no hope of obtaining evidence through him thus excluding conjuring.

What Mr. Templeton disputes is my proposition (2), for he considers that in his own experiences the necessity for continuous observation (I suppose he would hardly say also accurate recollection) was dispensed with. I shall not attempt to explain Mr. Templeton's experiences. If I did, my explanation would probably be wrong—at least the small success of my attempts to explain avowed conjuring tricks, which depended, as I suppose Mr. Templeton's experiences did, on a use of accidental and unthought-of opportunities, has not been encouraging. Besides, I am quite ready to admit, as I said in June, that some *bond fide* and careful accounts of séances—like some equally *bond fide* and careful accounts of conjuring tricks—make them seem inexplicable. Indeed, I should expect this to happen, simply because, so far as the writer observed or remembered the circumstances, they were inexplicable. It cannot be expected that he should always betray to a critic the loophole, the significance of which he himself failed to detect, nor that loopholes which he does betray should always be those actually made use of. But, however much Mr. Templeton may believe that his experiences were inexplicable, not only as he remembers them, but as they really happened, he would not, I think, maintain that they were independent of continuity of observation unless I had failed to make clear what I meant by continuous observation. For, in his own opinion, the evidence depends, among other things, on his having observed (I do not limit observation to the sense of sight) that the same slates lay on the table and were not written on from the time he put the question between them till he read the answer. That he conducted, or intended to conduct, part of this observation by keeping his own and his friend's hands on the slate does not affect the question of its needing to be continuous.

Perhaps I should make clearer what I mean by evidence independent of continuity of observation or accuracy of recollection, if I described an experiment which would secure such independence. In such an experiment, the skill of the investigator is mainly shown in its selection and preparation, and the most important part of the observation has to be done before and after the séance. The conditions to be fulfilled in an experiment of this kind in "psychography" are: (1) the surface to be written on must be ascertained to be blank before the séance; (2) this surface must be inaccessible except by undoing fastenings which it is impossible to suppose the medium could undo without subsequent detection, however little he was watched; (3) the possibility must be excluded that the medium can prepare a similar surface similarly rendered inaccessible, to substitute for the investigator's. Numerous unsuccessful experiments of this kind are mentioned in the *Journal* for June, and were enumerated by me on p. 333; but the details of the precautions taken to secure the above three conditions are not given in any detail, presumably because the experiments having failed, the precautions were of no general interest. The example I will take is different from any of these, and is selected on account of its simplicity, which makes it easy to describe. I may say that the credit of inventing it is not due to myself. Let a glass test-tube or flask be hermetically sealed, with paper and pencil inside it. Let its weight and its form, or its weight and its volume be recorded. Its form might be sufficiently recorded by means of a mould, or by noting certain measurements, its volume can be ascertained of course by weighing the water it displaces. Let competent and trustworthy witnesses depose before the séance that these things are correctly recorded, and that the paper within is not written on. It may be taken as certain that the medium, even if left alone with a blow-pipe, could neither open and close this vessel without altering it, nor produce a fac-simile as to both weight and form, or both weight and volume. If the experiment succeeds, witnesses should verify the identity of the glass vessel, and attest that the paper has now writing on it. The evidence thus obtained for "psychography" would be practically independent of the investigator's attention during the séance; and probably no one, however much he believes in the possibility of continuous observation, will deny that such evidence would be more complete and satisfactory than Mr. Templeton's, or any other given in the *Journal* for June.

The question then has to be answered, Why does Mr. Eglinton never obtain phenomena under conditions such as these? The answer that at once suggests itself, especially in the case of a person of Mr. Eglinton's known antecedents, is that conditions such as these absolutely exclude the possibility of conjuring, while the less stringent conditions do not.

What other reason can there be? The better kind of experiments have been too often tried for the failure to be attributed to chance, and it will scarcely be denied that they have been tried in too great variety for the failure to be attributed to physical causes interfering with the occult agency. Had, for instance, only the glass-covered slate experiment been tried (see *Journal* for June, p. 324), such an interfering physical cause might have been surmised in the glass, though it would have been difficult for those who believe in the genuineness of the occult passage of platinum into hermetically sealed glass tubes, said to have occurred in Professor Hare's laboratory, to maintain this view. But if glass is the cause of failure, why does not writing occur in the case of slates covered with wire gauze? And so we might proceed through the various experiments that have been tried, finding it more and more difficult to escape the conclusion that the failure common to these experiments has no common physical cause unless it be that the conditions were specially well adapted to the exclusion of conjuring. The failure cannot be attributed to the investigators, for the same investigators have been very successful in obtaining phenomena under inferior conditions. Turning to purely psychological explanations, it has, I believe, been suggested with reference either to Mr. Eglinton or to another medium, that the suspicion evinced in using such tests affects the medium injuriously and interferes with the phenomena. But the better tests show no more suspicion than the inferior ones, and the inferior tests—those with Mr. Eglinton's own locked slate for instance—do not interfere with the phenomena. Nor can we suppose that Mr. Eglinton's imagination is affected by the difficulties to be overcome, and that this has a bad effect on his mediumship, for how can he imagine it to be more difficult to write in a folding-slate that is sealed than in one not fastened at all, if neither is to be opened during the process? A Spiritualistic explanation has been suggested, namely, that the independent intelligences with whom we have to deal will not produce the phenomena under the best conditions. I do not know of any grounds for entertaining this hypothesis, but of course it cannot be disproved. If, however, independent wills and intelligences govern the phenomena and desire to prevent our obtaining proof of their occult nature, it is clearly useless to continue the investigation. It is of no use fighting against beings so obviously masters of the situation.

In the meanwhile, until some plausible explanation is offered of Mr. Eglinton's invariable failure to exhibit phenomena under conditions independent of continuous observation and accurate recollection, I must continue to regard him as a mere conjurer, though doubtless a very clever one in his own line.—I am, sir, &c.,

ELEANOR MILDRED SIDGWICK.

Cambridge, August, 1886.

DEATH OF PROFESSOR BUTLEROF.

We deeply regret to announce the death of Professor Butlerof, the distinguished Russian *savant*. We are, as yet, in receipt of none of the particulars of the sad event. In a letter which has been received by a friend of the deceased gentleman, announcing the news, the writer says:—"In fact, this loss is irreparable for his friends, for science, and especially for Spiritualism," in which he was an enthusiastic and firm believer to the last; and by his labours in scientifically verifying the facts and the phenomena, he made our movement popular to some extent among his colleagues. We accord our deep sympathy with his widow, a sister of whom is now the widow of Mr. D. D. Home.

MR. S. J. DAVEY'S SEANCES WITH MR. EGLINTON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—On reference to my diaries, which are now accessible, I find I have had seven séances in all with Mr. S. J. Davey, three of which were successful, four of which were total failures. For two of these barren séances I declined my fees. The last sitting took place on June 25th of last year, when Mr. Davey informed me of his having amused his friends by producing trick-writing.—Yours truly,

6, Nottingham-place, W.

W. EGLINTON.

Mr. W. Towns has removed to 143, Kentish Town-road, Camden Town, N.W.

Mr. W. Eglinton has now returned to town, and may be addressed at 6, Nottingham-place, W.

A NEW PSYCHOGRAPHIC MEDIUM.

Independent slate-writing was obtained through the mediumship of Mr. Fred Evans, of 1,244 Mission-street, San Francisco, at a private séance given to the editor of the *Golden Gate* and a few of his friends, on Friday evening, April 2nd, 1886.

There were present at this séance fourteen persons in all, besides the medium and his wife. Six of those present were entire strangers to the medium, who also had no previous knowledge as to the proposed attendance of any members of the circle, with the exception of the writer (the Editor of the *G.G.*) and two others. Care was taken that the names of the strangers present should not be made known to the medium. There were no introductions; nevertheless, all present, except two, received personal messages upon the slate, some receiving two and three.

The manner of the writing was as follows:—A committee of two was appointed to see that the slates were properly cleaned and sealed. This was done first by thoroughly rubbing the slates with a damp cloth, and then, after placing a few minute bits of pencil between them, they were sealed together with sealing-wax at the edges. The committee then tied a cord around the slates and hung them to the gas jet in the centre of the room. In a few moments, in full light, the rapid moving of the pencil tips was distinctly heard, and in about four minutes soft rapping announced that the writing was completed. The committee then removed the cord and seals, when the inner surface of one of the slates was found written over.

[A fac-simile of the writing is given in the *Golden Gate*. It contains no less than fourteen distinct messages and numbers in all 489 words.]

Some of the messages show carelessness of construction; but no more so, perhaps, than they would if written by a like number of mortals of average intelligence. The messages show distinct styles of chirography. And what may be regarded as a significant fact is, that, as far as known, the writing is the same in appearance as that given by the same spirits through other slate-writing mediums.

It is not claimed that this writing was done, in all instances, or even in any instance, by the spirit giving the name. Much of it, no doubt, is done by the medium's control, or by spirits skilled in the manipulation of the pencil tips; and such spirits act as mediums for those less proficient in the matter. This explains the poor grammar and orthography sometimes witnessed in communications from spirits who, in earth-life, we know, would never have committed such mistakes.

That the writing, in the above instance, was produced in the precise manner we have stated, fairly and without collusion of any kind, all present at the séance will affirm to be true. One evidence of its genuineness is conclusive in this; that Mr. Evans could not have known who were to be present, for that was a secret with the writer; hence, there could have been no previous preparation of the slates. *Another is in the fact that he never touched the slates after they had been prepared by the committee.*

Mr. Evans is a young man, twenty-three years of age, boyish in appearance, frank, courteous, and ingenuous in manner. He was developed as a slate-writing medium only about a year and a-half ago. It came to him after several months of daily sittings, and just as he was about to give up the attempt as a failure. His powers have been tested by hundreds of persons, and often under the most crucial test conditions—sometimes producing the writing within riveted slates; frequently without the contact of hands; and often obtaining messages on slips of paper placed within sealed bottles.

A few months ago he was happily married to Miss Agnes Hance, a sensible, intelligent and handsome young trance and test medium, and who, since their marriage, has developed a very high order of mediumship for form manifestation. It has only been a few weeks since they commenced holding public séances for this phase of the phenomena, but already are their séances largely attended, and very great interest is taken therein. From the first they have manifested a willingness to submit to every reasonable test condition, even to the extent of allowing the editor of the *Golden Gate* to sit in the cabinet while the materialisations were taking place.—Abridged from the *Golden Gate*.

Show me thy labour, I straightway will name
The nature of thy thoughts. Who bends the bow,
And lets the arrow from the strained string go,
Strikes somewhere near the object of his aim.

—ELLA WHEELER.

THE PLANETS AND BULGARIA.

Reading that Prince Alexander had arrived at Rustchuk, on his return to his dominions, on August 29th, at 2 p.m. exactly, a few days ago I erected a figure of the heavens for that important time (local), Long. 26° 2' E., Lat. 40° 52' N.—hoping to find in it some indication of the future course of events in Bulgaria. That the figure was highly significant was apparent at a glance. In a question of Royal fortunes, attention is at once directed to the Meridian. Upon the very “cusp,” or exact point, of this I found the great benefic Jupiter—but, in almost exact conjunction with him and with the Meridian, the menacing orb of Uranus, significator of change, revolution, catastrophe and surprise. And mark this—the sun, significator of princes and rulers, was then within thirty-eight minutes in time of his total eclipse, the new moon (ecliptic conjunction) being at 0.54 p.m. of Greenwich time, which is 2.38 p.m. for Long. 26° 2' East.* Now in that way of astrological direction (called the “secondary”) which assigns a year to a day, one hour equals about fifteen days, so that thirty-eight minutes would represent nine or ten days.† It is probable that Prince Alexander's abdication will have been completed by the middle of this week, which would measure that time from the date of the figure.

Jupiter exactly on the Meridian represents the Prince's triumphant re-entry into his dominions, while the interval of less than 2° between the Meridian and Uranus just measures the time between that event and the receipt of the Czar's telegram, with the fatal reverse it decided in the Prince's affairs.

The Prince was born on the 5th April, 1857 (hour and place unknown to me). At Greenwich noon on that day the moon was in Virgo 2° 30'. The eclipse of 29th August last was in the 7th degree of the same sign. To the astrologer it seems highly probable that the hour of birth was when the moon was in this ecliptic degree, as it very easily may have been. It would be interesting could this be ascertained. Those who still believe in the malign influence of the “Dragon's tail” (moon's south node) will note that on the 5th April, 1857, this was within half a degree of the place of Uranus on the 29th August last.

At the Prince's solar revolution for this year, the hostile Mars was exactly in the place of the ecliptic conjunction of the 29th August. And at the secondary direction (for twenty-nine years, five months) Mars was exactly on the place of Uranus at birth, the moon applying to the place of Uranus on 29th August.

September 6th.

C. C. M.

I hold it true that thoughts are things
Endowed with being, breath, and wings ;
And that we send them forth to fill
The world with good results or ill.

It is God's law ; remember it
In your still chamber as you sit
With thoughts you would not dare have known
And yet make comrades when alone.

Then let your secret thoughts be fair,
They have a vital part and share
In shaping words and moulding fate—
God's system is so intricate !

—ELLA WHEELER-WILCOX.

THOSE who have never been stirred out of the dead calm of monotonous life by some great trial, disappointment, or sorrow, know but little of the vastness and extent of the soul's orbit, which is bounded on one side by the lowest depths of degradation and despair, on the other by the greatest heights of beauty, sublimity, grandeur, and spiritual exaltation ; by the length of its decoration and unfoldment, and the infinite breadth and scope of its perceptions, wisdoms, inspirations, and intuitions.—
DR. C. C. PEET.

* It is probable that time at Rustchuk is taken from some distant city having an observatory. This would make a difference which might amount to some minutes, one way or the other.

† The difference between mean and sidereal time is here too small to affect their result.

A PREDICTION VERIFIED.

W. H. CHANEY, of Portland, Oregon, in *Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

The readers of the *Journal* are aware that I am a very poor believer, especially in spirit prediction ; therefore my testimony in the present case must be of as much value, at least, as that of the credulous who never pause to consider the why, or trace the relation between cause and effect. For nearly half a century I have been investigating the occult in nature, and as a result am firmly convinced that there is scarcely an exception to the rule that indications are given in advance of the occurrence of the event. Clouds of different kinds denote a shower, a storm, a tornado, &c. In like manner nature gives notice in all directions, but because man has not learned to read these indications he is disposed to dogmatise and deny, basing his judgment upon what he does not know.

Augusta Hoff, of this city, has been a client of mine for nearly a year, and of my law partner, P. O. Chilstrom, for more than a year. She has long been an earnest Spiritualist. Two weeks ago a medium said to her :

“ You are going to have some trouble and will lose your life.”

Mrs. Hoff laughed at the prediction. She was a native of Norway and was preparing to return to her own country. A week ago she saw the medium again and informed her of her intentions. The medium replied :

“ You will never go ; mind me, you won't.”

Mrs. Hoff kept the Capital Lodging House, corner of C. and First streets, in this city. On the morning of September 28th her house was discovered to be on fire. She was rescued after being severely, but not dangerously burned. She was naturally very nervous and excitable. The fright and exposure brought on acute congestion of the lungs, attended by a failure of the heart to perform its functions, and she lived but fifteen hours after the accident. The *Portland Daily News* of this morning publishes the foregoing prediction with the comment. “ The prediction was fulfilled.” The editors are not Spiritualists.

The reader will naturally desire to ask : “ On what philosophical basis do you account for the ability of the medium to make this prediction ? ” I answer that I can account for it on two rational hypotheses.

1. I have found that the positions and configurations of the heavenly bodies indicate all the important events of mortal life, if properly understood. There are thousands of scientists on the other side who studied these indications, and could calculate planetary directions while in the form, and I hold that they can do the same now, only far better. I naturally attract these spirits, being in constant practice of the science. This leads to their acquaintance with my friends, and when my friends visit a medium, they often control and make astrological predictions. In the case of Mrs. Hoff there was evidently an evil direction of Mars (a fiery planet) to the hyleg (giver of life) which the spirit saw would prove fatal. I have had many such tests.

2. Spirits have a range of vision far wider than that of mortals. They perceive causes which mortals cannot, and are thus enabled to foretell events in a most natural way, although the ignorant deem it supernatural. To illustrate. All are born with a germ that will in time develop and terminate life. There may not be the least development until the man is past sixty. Hence, there being no symptoms, no physician could possibly prognosticate the fatal disease. Suppose the disease is to have its seat in the kidneys, the clairvoyant might perceive the germ, and the astrologer might know its location, especially if he found Saturn in the sign Libra ; but a spirit, without any knowledge of planetary indications, would clearly perceive the germ that must eventually terminate life. In a similar manner the spirit can perceive causes that are hidden from mortals which must, by common course of nature, produce certain events. But I wish to be clearly understood as protesting against the popular idea that the planets cause events, for they merely indicate, like the hands of a watch.

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION.

By Dr. S. B. NICHOLS, OF BROOKLYN.

The average Spiritualist who has been familiar with psychic phenomena and identified with the movement, has seen from time to time in the last thirty or forty years, sporadic attempts on the part of scientists, philosophers, agnostics, or materialists, to explain away the various manifestations by natural law or the unfoldment of powers and forces unknown or but dimly understood. Most of the Spiritualists are men and women who would *know* the truth, many of them having become converts to Spiritualism through the mediumship of their friends and relatives—ofttimes through the ministrations of dear ones who have come to their homes from the other side, to demonstrate the fact of spirit communion. Probably three-fourths of the Spiritualists of America have been converted to this faith in this manner. Many have had to pass through fiery furnaces of bigotry, religious hate, and persecution, but these trials have only made their faith more strong, and their spiritual faculties have been enlarged and developed. They ever welcome honest doubters. The true scientist and philosopher has been taken into their homes and to their ‘holiest of holies,’ the family circle, and permitted to hold converse with the angels. The large proportion of men and women who have announced that they were about to sweep away all this delusion and fanaticism of Spiritualism by their mighty effort have signally failed, because they prejudged the case before investigating. Still, through all these years the phenomena have continued in force and power, yet these would-be Solons are as far away now from solving the vexing problem as ever. Here and there have been notable exceptions of earnest men who were true scientists, who cast all forms of prejudice aside, and, as students of nature, and as philosophers, carefully studied the phenomena. Mediums and Spiritualists gladly aided them, for they knew that there could be but one result, namely, that amid much that could be explained by natural law, by the development of man’s spiritual powers here and now, back of it all was a conscious intelligent force that unmistakably proved itself to be those who had once lived here, and were not dead but living personal beings, and who by God’s wondrous laws and His unbounded love were permitted to demonstrate this fact to all who were receptive to the truth.

In the earlier days of our trials and perplexities, no man did more to establish the fact that a certain proportion of the manifestations were produced by spirit power and intelligence, than did Professor Robert Hare, of Philadelphia. How this grand old man succeeded in demonstrating this fact, which he began in 1853, can be found in his valuable book, *Spiritualism Scientifically Demonstrated*, which I commend to the careful perusal of all members of the American and English Psychical Research Societies. Professor Hare, like most scientists and philosophers, was prejudiced against the whole subject. To use his own words, he “felt called upon as an act of duty to his fellow-creatures, to bring whatever influence he possessed to the attempt to stem the tide of ‘popular madness’ which, in defiance of reason and science, was fast setting in favour of the ‘gross delusion called Spiritualism.’” Professor Hare expected to be able to explain the matter by natural causes and in answer to a letter from an inquirer, said he “entirely coincided with Faraday’s theory of table turning.”

One or two of his simpler but most convincing experiments I will reproduce here, leaving the student for a more full account to read the Professor’s works. First, to satisfy himself that the movements were not the work of mortals, he took brass billiard balls, put them on zinc plates, and placed the hands of the medium on the balls, and to his very great astonishment the tables moved. He next arranged a table to slide backward and forward, and to which attachments were made, causing a disc to revolve containing the alphabet hidden from the view of the mediums. The letters were variously arranged, out of their regular consecutive order, and the spirit was required to place them consecutively or in their regular places. And behold it was done! Then followed intelligent sentences, which the medium could not see or know the import of till they were told him.

Again, he tried another capital test. The long end of a lever was placed on spiral scales with an index attached, and the weight marked; the medium’s hand rested on the short end of the beam, where it was impossible to give pressure downward, but if pressed it would have a contrary effect, and raise the long end; and yet the weight was increased several pounds upon the scale.

Experiments like those made Dr. Hare, a Spiritualist, and as an earnest and sincere man, and a true scientist, he brought the matter before the “American Scientific Association,” at its session in Washington, D.C., in 1853 or 1854, and they treated him with great disrespect. The Association refused to consider or investigate the phenomena, and declared that it was “a dangerous subject that had better be let alone,” but these wise men who were such Solons, at this very meeting held a learned, extended, grave and profound discussion “upon the cause why ‘roosters’ crowed between twelve and one o’clock in the morning.” Their sage conclusions were as puerile as their injustice and want of true scientific acumen were marked.

In the earlier days, another chemist and scientist was Professor J. J. Mapes. Like Dr. Hare he was strongly in favour of rendering for all phenomena, whether in the visible or the invisible universe, a simple material explanation. But he found back of them all a conscious, personal intelligence, which claimed to be a spirit, once a mortal being, and he was honest enough to admit these facts and declare himself a Spiritualist.

A disgraceful episode was the so-called investigation of Spiritual phenomena by the Harvard professors. The treatment by these men of Fred. L. H. Willis was one of the greatest outrages that was ever perpetrated in the name of science and philosophy. The report of these professors has never yet been made public.

Take the more recent course of the Seybert Commission in Philadelphia; with one or two exceptions this committee prejudged the case, and were not competent to investigate the manifestations, for they were bound by their prejudices to report adversely. So it is with the American Society for Psychical Research. Your correspondent, “F. T. S.,” in his scathing arraignment of their non-scientific methods, hopes if they are men with any spark of manhood or conscience, they may be induced to cast aside, if it were possible, their pre-conceived opinions and prejudices, and invite Spiritualists to aid and help them in their so-called scientific investigations. I believe there are one or two exceptions in regard to this Society, men who have had the opportunity to test various phenomena under circumstances that have brought forth conviction. I trust in due time the result of their experiments may be made known to the public.

I have also read with interest in a recent number of the *Journal*, Mr. C. C. Massey’s protest against Mrs. Sidgwick’s report to the London Psychical Research Society. It seems Mrs. Sidgwick assumes that psychography can be explained by conjuring. To the most careless observer of this class of spirit manifestation this conclusion must seem to be the height of absurdity. Briefly I will note an experiment of my own, that I had with Mr. A. H. Phillips, the slate-writing medium. At my second visit I took my own double slate. I also brought some sheets of note-paper marked with a rubber stamp with my name, street, and number of my Brooklyn residence. I placed one of these sheets between my slates and wrapped them up in paper and placed them on the shelf of a small stand. I took two of Phillips’s small slates and placed them on the top of my own slates, put my foot on them all, and waited for the result. Phillips was walking about the room whistling as unconcernedly as if he had nothing to do with producing the phenomena. Three raps on the table indicated that communications had been written. No pencils were used, but I could feel under my foot the vibrations while the communications were being written. On the small slate was a communication from a spirit, a near relative, with her name, “Martha,” signed to it. On the sheet of paper written without a pencil was a short communication signed “James Nichols,” from the spirit of a man I formerly knew in Vermont, and who had been in the spirit-world over twenty-five years. O astute men of science! tell me how could the medium, who never touched the slates or paper, evoke from the spirit-world one who had been in the life beyond so many years, and whom I had not thought of for that length of time. Od-force, thought-transference, conjuring, fraud, or imposture will not reach this case at all.

CHARITY is a habit of good-will or benevolence in the soul, which deposes us to the love, assistance and relief of mankind.
—SIR RICHARD STEELE.

THE setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone. Shadows of evening fall around us, and the world seems but a dim reflection—itsself a broader shadow. We look forward into the coming lonely night. The soul withdraws into itself. Then stars arise, and the night is holy.—LONGFELLOW.

THE FULL MEANING OF SPIRITUALISM.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* says: "We have often spoken of Spiritualism as if it dealt only with the two ideas of life after the death of the body, and of the communion between that life and this. This is a convenient way of speaking, because it makes prominent the 'distinctive doctrines' of Spiritualism, just as in speaking of the Baptist denomination we may speak of it as believing in immersion, without mentioning other teachings in which Baptists agree with other Christians. To say that Spiritualism believes in spirit life and in spirit communion, is true, but it is not all the truth. To all thoughtful Spiritualists, Spiritualism means much more than these two ideas. It means the spiritual origin of the universe and of man: that there is at the centre and source of things a spiritual Power of infinite wisdom and goodness, of which the whole universe is an expression. From the very beginning of modern Spiritualism its principal teachers have taught this with clearness and positiveness. The spiritual nature of man they find in this spiritual origin. The fact that men after the death of the body can communicate with men still in the body, they regard as of very great importance because it proves the continuous life of man, and so becomes an inspiration and a consolation of inestimable value. But with the thoughtful Spiritualist this communion has another value of scarcely less importance; it gives a very strong confirmation to his philosophy of the Spiritual Power at the centre and source of all things. That is to say, the fact that man lives after the body is dead, proven by the fact that he can communicate with man still in the body, is a strong confirmation of that philosophic Spiritualism which has been in existence for many hundreds of years, and which is the foundation of all the best religious thought and life. Philosophic Spiritualism is a theory of the spiritual origin of the universe, including man. Modern Spiritualism is a demonstration of man's spiritual nature, and so corroborates the theory of his spiritual origin, and of the spiritual origin of all things. Modern Spiritualism, thus founded on Philosophic Spiritualism, has all the elements needed for the purest, loftiest, most practical religion, a religion that insists on duty, justice, love, reverence, holiness; and, offering, as it does, a demonstration of man's spiritual nature, it has an advantage over every other form of religion to which man has attained."

THE UNIFORMITY OF NATURE AND THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

Take, for example, the case of alleged apparitions. I imagine that the tendency in the minds of not a few among us is to ignore apparitions utterly and completely. They are supernatural, and that is enough; they do not conform themselves to the recognised laws of mechanics, optics, acoustics, motion. This is a rebound from the old facility in accepting tales of demonology and witchcraft in pre-scientific times, and it has much to say for itself. Nevertheless, it is scarcely philosophical, and is in no wise demanded by the requirements of science and the conditions of scientific progress. A man may be perfectly orthodox in his physical creed, and yet may admit the weights of evidence in favour of certain alleged phenomena which will not square themselves with physics. Such alleged phenomena are not necessarily in contradiction to physical truth, they lie rather in another plane; they are like two lines or curves in space, which do not meet, and therefore can not cut each other. There are matters of the highest moment which manifestly do lie outside the domain of physical science: possibility of the continuance of human existence in a spiritual form after the termination of physical life is, beyond contradiction, one of the grandest and most momentous of possibilities, but in the nature of things it lies outside physics. Yet there is nothing absolutely absurd, nothing which contradicts any human instinct, in the supposition of such possibility: consequently, the student of physical science, even if he cannot find time or inclination to look into such matters himself, may well have patience with those who can. And he may easily afford to be generous; the field of physical science is grand enough for any ambition, and there is room enough in the wide world both for physical and for psychical research.—The Bishop of Carlisle, in the *Popular Science Monthly*.

MAKE use of time while it is present with you; it depends upon your will, and not upon the number of days to have a sufficient length of life.—MONTAIGNE.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The seers and prophets of the present day are unanimous in their predictions that the world is on the eve of great disturbances, both of a moral and physical nature. The thousands of intelligences from the world of spirits that come back to comfort and instruct humanity, all join in the same prophetic warnings of commotion just ahead, such as the world has seldom or never experienced.

The ordinary intelligence, though gifted with no powers of prophecy, can readily discern the operation of spiritual forces, working havoc and destruction to old ideas in Church and State. Society is being shaken to its foundation with new and radical thoughts, as the forerunner, no doubt, of some great moral cataclysm of whose nature and extent no one can estimate.

A change like a new creation, as the outcome of the mighty influx of spiritual forces, is taking place in the enlightened religious thought of the world. Old things are evidently passing away, and the "new Heavens and the new earth," which John saw in his vision, are already opening out before us.

In the civil and social world there are portents of mighty changes near at hand. The wide-prevailing unrest among the labouring classes, the increasing army of the unemployed (caused mainly by the unprecedented march of invention in the matter of labour-saving machinery, which is everywhere supplementing muscle in the work of the world) demanding a readjustment of the relations existing between labour and capital—all of this friction is significant of great changes in the immediate future, which we can only hope may be brought about without physical violence.

In the physical world, also, great convulsions, devastating storms, fierce cyclones, mighty upheavals and changes in the surface of the earth, are taking place. These may be merely the result of disturbed spiritual conditions; and yet we know that the surface of this planet has undergone many changes in the past; continents and oceans have changed places many times. That the crust of the earth is yet by no means permanently fixed, and will not be for ages to come, is a physical certainty.

There must be a Divine purpose in all this, the meaning of which will be revealed in time. Perhaps, in a spiritual sense, it is the fulfilment of the prophecies which our Second Advent friends are disposed to interpret literally as the end of the world and the second coming of Christ. Christ has already come to every one that possesses His spirit of love and goodwill to man. Therein He has set up His kingdom on earth.

It was predicted that in that great day the dead should be brought to life. Has not that prophecy been abundantly fulfilled in the return and manifestation to mortals of myriads of spirits of those who were supposed to be dead?

But whatever these portents may signify—whatever calamity may come to our planet—we know that we are safely sheltered in the mighty heart of the Infinite Spirit of the Universe. We may sink into the depths of the sea; we may be borne to swift physical destruction on the wings of the cyclone; by an explosion of its internal forces the earth itself may be scattered into star dust; and yet no harm can come to us, for the soul is a part of God, and cannot die.—*The Golden Gate*.

THE future of society is in the hands of the mothers. If the world was lost through woman she alone can save it.—DE BEAUFERT.

THE human heart concerns us more than the poring into microscopes, and is larger than can be measured by the pompous figures of the astronomers.—EMERSON.

It is one of the heaviest penalties of wrong thinking and of wrong living that they blur, if they do not obliterate, the very perception of good and evil.—MARY CLEMMER.

GENERATIONS perish like the leaves of the forest passing away, then their mission is completed; but at each succeeding spring, broad and higher, spreads the human mind unto its stature, until the fulfilment of its destiny, unto the perfection of its nature.—LONGFELLOW.

If you have no faith in beneficent power above you, but see only an adamant fate coiling its folds about nature and man, then reflect that the best use of fate is to teach us courage, if only because baseness cannot change the appointed event. If you accept your thoughts as inspirations from the Supreme Intelligence, obey them when they prescribe difficult duties, because they come only so long as they are used; or if your scepticism reaches to the last verge, and you have no confidence in any foreign mind, then be brave, because there is one good opinion which must always be of consequence to you,—namely, your own.—EMERSON

"INTERESTING EXPERIENCES TEN YEARS AGO."

Mr. J. T. Rhodes, 123, Nicholson-street, Edinburgh, writing on other matters, has sent us the following account of various successful sêances held ten years ago with Miss Wood and Miss Fairlamb (Mrs. Mellon):—

I will now speak of action over inanimate objects, and I cannot do better than refer to what took place at the sêances of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Society, at their Rooms in Weirs-court, about ten years ago, through the mediumship of Miss Wood and Miss Fairlamb (Mrs. Mellon). We had sêances alternately for physical manifestations and materialisations on different nights. We had given up dark sêances, and built a cabinet about six or eight feet square solid, with no opening but to the front, which was hung with double curtains. Inside were placed a bell, tambourine, concertina, paper tubes about eighteen inches long, a violin or other stringed instruments, sometimes a pencil and paper, a chair, or two chairs sometimes, perhaps other articles, as the committee might suggest. The medium was not allowed inside the cabinet when we sat for physical manifestations, but was seated *outside* on a chair about one yard from the curtains, and in a light sufficient to observe the slightest movement on her part or that of the circle, which rarely numbered less than twenty, often double that number, seated in a semi-circle. The result generally was that bells were rung, instruments played upon, articles were thrown about with great noise, sometimes out of the cabinet; in fact the chairs were often passed from the cabinet over the head of the medium into the circle, observed by all; and on one occasion when I happened to be the first person at the rooms I placed in one corner of the cabinet a piece of wood, some brass-headed nails, a pair of large pincers (for I had no hammer at hand), and also my walking-stick. I said nothing to the rest of the committee, or the circle. Mr. Armstrong, the president, just glanced inside the cabinet before drawing the curtains close, as we all took our seats, the result being just what I wished—in fact more than I expected; for the intelligent force or power at work inside made a terrible row with the pincers, and as the sitters present were getting alarmed I thought it best to tell those present what I had done, and what I thought was the cause of the performance; and sure enough I was right, for the piece of wood at that moment fell at my feet with several of the nails driven in, in one case with the head knocked off, while at the same moment my walking-stick was protruding through first one side of the curtains and then the other, giving decided raps of a physical nature on the heads of those who happened to be nearest to the cabinet, much to my amusement, and shall I say, instruction? I think so, for what had I here? Simply the fact witnessed by a score or more of persons present, that an *unseen intelligent power or force* knew for what I had placed those articles in the cabinet, and did it for me. It is useless to say that any one of the company, or that the medium did it, as she was not within reach, and knew no more what was inside that cabinet than did the others; and, moreover, I stood up in the circle and apologised for placing them there unknown to the rest of the committee. No damage was done, neither did I expect any would be done, but I think I am warranted in assuming that what was done was done for me, as other manifestations I have seen and read of have been done for others, apparently designed to help on conviction on the part of those specially interested at the time.

It was a common thing at these sêances to get writing on the paper which had been placed inside the cabinet, also to hear voices speaking through the tubes—the paper tubes protruding through the curtains of the cabinet sometimes used as my walking stick was, but with less effect, although with more noise. And sometimes instead of physical phenomena we got materialised forms. In one case I recollect the form growing up by the side of the medium, and it looked very much like the pocket handkerchief being gradually abstracted from her dress pocket, only it got too large for that eventually, and walked away from the medium, and then dematerialised. In another case the form came from inside the cabinet, but directly in front of the medium, as if it had grown up from her feet; but at the sêances set apart for materialisation the medium was placed inside the cabinet, various test conditions being used on which I will not here dilate, but as I attended scores of sêances I can form some opinion of the matter, as also from the experiences of others. At one of Miss Wood's sêances the small dark figure of "Pocha" was walking all round the circle paying attention

to each and all of us—about a dozen. I took my note book out of my pocket and gave it her, with the request that she would write in it for me, but she took it away into the cabinet with her and brought it back with writing in it. I cannot say who did it, she or her medium, but one thing I am certain of—I did not imagine I saw a small moving, talking figure, about three feet high with dark face and hands and white drapery, because in the presence of a dozen witnesses that figure took away a tangible object and brought it back with writing on it, and I have it now, if I may be allowed the evidence of my own senses, and during the time I was in Newcastle-on-Tyne, over two and a half years, I attended on the average two and three sêances per week. I have attended sêances with other persons here in Edinburgh and kept notes of most of them, and, therefore, in offering the above to your readers, the inexperienced ones especially, they may be inclined to give me credit for knowing what I have written to be true and worthy of their acceptance in so far as it will assist them to gain the same or superior evidence for themselves, evidence which to me is priceless and invaluable.

THE BETTER WAY.

It is through many trials and hard struggles that man learns the better way of life. His appetites and inclinations, inherited and acquired, are often such cruel taskmasters, and have such dominion over him, that it seems almost impossible for him to break the chains, and, following the light within, rise to the higher levels of his being.

But comparatively few ever learn to walk in this better way; they grope along among the shadows of selfishness, and the retarding influences of unworthy things, ever unmindful of their duty to themselves and their fellow-beings, until death steps in and closes out the opportunity for such unfoldment on this plane of existence as is best calculated to advance the spirit's growth on the next.

We are too apt to live as though this world were the utmost boundary of life—as though we were to remain for ever in a mortal state, with the red tide of physical being ever ebbing and flowing through the heart, in the flush and potency of health and physical power. We build as for centuries of earthly existence, all unmindful of the fact that we can remain here only for a few years at most, and can take nothing with us of an earthly character into the life beyond—not a foot of land—not a dollar of hoarded treasure—not even the poor raiment wherewith we are clad.

Life is so grand a thing, when rightly lived—is so full of promise, of blossom and fruition, and is so prophetic of grander things to come—that it is indeed pitiful to see the frivolous manner in which most people manage to fritter it away. Take what the world regards as the most successful lives. They do but little good, often, as compared with what they are capable of doing—live far below their highest ideals—and finally pass on, leaving others to fatten in idleness upon the unimproved accumulation of their years of toil.

Prudent thrift, with a view to providing against the haps and hazards of existence, is ever commendable, but it should always be attended with thoughtful consideration for the welfare of others. No man can afford to live for himself alone. He is linked to his fellows by inseparable moral ties which he can not transcend or ignore, without serious consequences to his own future happiness.

And herein, it seems to us, consists the grandest mission of Spiritualism—to teach man his true relation with this world—his duty to himself, to his family, to society. While it is a glorious privilege to be able to *know* that life is continuous upon another stage of existence, and that there we shall meet and know the loved ones whose earthly forms we have followed to their long home, yet those facts will keep for us, and await us when we lay down the burden of life, whether we know it in this life or not. Infinitely grander and more important to us, here and hereafter, is the truest adaptation of ourselves to this stage of existence, and the best use of all our powers and faculties here.

Spiritualism, in its definite teachings of what is best calculated to enhance man's happiness in another life, can not but eventually so impress his nature here as to prompt him to most earnest endeavour in the uplifting of his own physical and spiritual nature, and in so shaping his life that the best results will follow.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND ERLAND, 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.”—*Aftonbladet* (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 contemporaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

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

LORD BROUGHAM.—“There is but one question I would ask the author. Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism.”—*Preface by Lord Brougham to 'The Book of Nature.'* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

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

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

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—“Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possibility of trickery and self-deception.”

He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: “Other and numerous phenomena have occurred, proving the existence (a) of forces unknown to science; (b) the power of instantly reading my thoughts; (c) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late now to deny their existence.”

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

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—“The writer” (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) “can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of so-called Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him.” As stated above, there was no place or chance of 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, Homoeopathy, 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 dear and near 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.”

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 sittings, 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 sittings.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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