

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I do not think I ever quite realised how far, or exactly in what way, it was sought to impugn my statement that a given conjurer who supplemented his sleight of hand by psychical power had the advantage over another conjurer who had no such power to fall back on. It seemed, and seems, to me that such a statement is a mere truism. And if any justification for so reasonable a hypothesis were necessary I seemed to find it in the explicit admission of Mr. Maskelyne in his correspondence with Mr. Joy. To this may now be added the no less explicit admission of one whom I did not expect to be able to quote as on my side. Mr. Frank Podmore stated his opinion seven years ago to this effect:—"That abnormal force is occasionally used by ordinary conjurers for the production of their illusions seems highly probable." So I thought, and so I think: and I may be permitted the enjoyment of a private smile at finding my judgment thus unexpectedly corroborated. But Mr. Podmore goes further than I ventured. He endorses "the clairvoyant powers of Dr. Lynn on evidence as satisfactory as I have ever had from an avowedly clairvoyant medium." I should not like to make any such statement, for I believe that Dr. Lynn was too astute for Mr. Podmore. The reading of closed pellets is a simple trick, and Mr. Podmore is, I should surmise, mistaken in supposing that he kept Dr. Lynn under "continuous observation." Probably he was not then, possibly he is not now, acquainted with all the devices of conjuring. For myself I make no pretence to any such familiarity with trick. I have not found it necessary to cultivate an acquaintance with conjuring as a preliminary to the accurate observation of psychical phenomena. Mrs. Sidgwick regards such knowledge as the key to the situation. Herein I have the misfortune to differ from her. Nor can I any more agree with Mr. Podmore in his remarkable explanation of the psychical gifts of one Miss Nella Davenport, whose "extreme narrowness between the shoulders, and still more extreme depth from breast to back," constituted an "abnormal physical conformation," which, in Mr. Podmore's judgment, "held the secret of her abnormal power." I once more smile. I may, in my time, have hazarded some conjectures which may not commend themselves to the mature judgment of my critics—though I abandon none, so far as memory serves to recall what I have written for the last fifteen years—but at least I have not put forward so remarkable a conjecture as this. Mr. Podmore will, no doubt, tell us that this article is seven years old, and that he is wiser now. The first statement is exact, but then my letter

which Mrs. Sidgwick pins me to, and which I again say I have no desire to evade, is ten years old: ancient history which, perhaps, one might find some more profitable employment than to discuss.

While I am dealing with my courteous critics, I may include among them a writer easily identified as Dr. Hübbe Schleiden, who, in the April number of the *Sphinx*, writes (signing the article "H. S.") on "Occultism and Spiritism." I am not concerned with the definitions of these respective terms which the writer lays down. I should not accept them as a matter of fact, and it would not be difficult to improve upon them. Nor am I concerned to discuss the statement that to derive intellectual and moral instruction preferably from mediumistic communications is not a worthy or rational thing to do.* The passage of which I have given the substance leads to a note personal to myself. "H. S." admits the existence of exceptional communications of high moral and intellectual value, amongst which he does me the honour to include that selection from a much larger mass published as "Spirit Teachings." And then he goes on to contend that a man of high intellectual attainments who had thought out for himself similar teachings from the available storehouses of his knowledge would have excogitated matter of an incomparably higher value. I cannot tell, for I have no means of knowing. Nor do I presume to affirm or deny the statement that scientifically or philosophically realisable knowledge has never been mediumistically conveyed. I am not able to satisfy myself of the exact line of demarcation between mediumship and genius: and thereupon I should receive with interest any enlightenment that my critic can give me. In my turn I may assure him that the messages of which he is pleased to make mention with so much courtesy were wholly unsought by me: and that I did not look to them for any matter which would save me from the trouble of using such powers of mind as I possess. I was indeed repeatedly and urgently recommended by my unseen teachers to use my reason, to accept nothing contrary to it, and to remember that it was no part of the work of my invisible directors to save me from the natural and normal exercise of my powers of mind.

This reiterated admonition I did my best to lay to heart. I weighed all statements, I sifted all evidence to the best of my ability. I accepted nothing merely because it was strange or abnormal; indeed I was much more careful in accepting that which was abnormal than I should have been in receiving statements made to me in an ordinary way. The communications came to me wholly unsought, and I dealt with them in a way that I think no one can reasonably say was credulous or superficial. Whether I could have excogitated for myself anything better I may be permitted to doubt; both because the degree of value to be attached to any given utterance is debatable, and also because I do not know where "I" cease and other beings begin. Be this as it may, I have no

* I do not quote; but I hope that I do no injustice to "H. S.'s" meaning.

hesitation in assuring my critic that no intellectual communications of whatever literary value, however interesting or however profound, could have had any influence upon me at all approaching that produced by these unsolicited communications from the world of spirit. They were as regards their effect absolutely in a category of their own; different and apart from all influences that had ever been brought to bear upon me before. They were, in the veritable sense of the term, a revelation. They lifted the veil that hid from my eyes the world to which I am daily approaching nearer and nearer. And I am not more sure of my present existence in this world of matter than I am of the existence of my guides, philosophers, and friends in that unseen world of spirit. Will "H. S." put this and that together, and tell me whether he seriously thinks that any laboriously scraped up store of knowledge, be it never so impressive, could rival in effect that for which I am indebted to no thought, or act, or deed of my own, and which I am thankful to recognise as a free gift, wholly apart from any supposed personal merit?

I have briefly adverted to the difficulty I personally find in differentiating between the unassisted efforts of a man's own creative faculty and the communications made through conscious or unconscious mediumship. It would be interesting to know what is the exact ground of decision in such a question. If we knew nothing of mediumship it would be open to one to contend that each individual was the efficient creator of his own ideas, subject to the qualification necessitated by the precedent work of other people with which he was acquainted. But we know that ideas are flashed into the mind *ab extra*; and we know, too, that the best works of the highest genius are not laboriously excogitated, but, though accompanied with consciousness as they emerge, are of a character to suggest a transcendental origin. It is not (I hope) impertinent to suggest that an increased knowledge on our part will tend to more diffidence in claiming for ourselves an exclusive proprietary right in our ideas.

I observe that the Seybert Commission's Preliminary Report is a godsend to provincial papers. It has the merit of being light and amusing, and it does not make any heavy demands on the reader's mind. It can, in fact, be noticed by the easy process of skimming. The *Leeds Mercury* has been treating it in this way, and has included in its remarks some strictures on "a well-known London medium," which are, to say the least, loose and inaccurate. The bulk of evidence, quite as good as that on which other facts are received and believed, is unknown to these writers. They are given a book, dealing with a subject of which they know nothing, and against which they are probably prejudiced, and they receive their orders to cut it up. We are very familiar with the process. On the other side, the side of knowledge, it is not too much to say that the Seybert Commission's Report is unworthy of serious attention, and could be pulverised in detail with the same ease as Mr. C. C. Massey has dealt with it in respect of Zöllner.

I am indebted to the *Harbinger of Light* for a very flattering notice of this journal, "undoubtedly the best Spiritualistic paper published in either England or America." We do not desire to come into any sort of rivalry or competition with our contemporaries; and we disclaim any such idea. But I may personally thank my friendly critic for what he is pleased to say of my "Notes by the Way." I try to make them an "abstract and brief chronicle of the time," and am rewarded by much kindly and generous appreciation.

"We cannot help saying that M.A. (Oxon.)'s 'Notes by the Way' are the leading feature of this undoubtedly best Spirit-

ualistic paper published in either England or America. These 'Notes' seem always intuitively to strike the proper key note of our cause, no matter what the subject may be that their writer is dealing with at the time. The 'Notes' are varied, always full of instruction to all classes of readers, whom they place *au fait* with the latest productions in psychic and occult literature, and the most recent phases and aspects of Spiritualism generally."

The *Spiritual Reformer* for September is adapted to the wants of inquirers. I am entirely in accord with its remarks on organisation. "We must unite." That which every society, for whatever cause associated, has found beneficial, nay essential, is necessary to Spiritualism. "We must unite": but not as a mere matter of form; the union must be of spirit, and we must sink all external differences, if such there be, all divergences of opinion in matters non-essential, to stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of the truth which we profess. I am glad to notice that the "London Occult Lodge and Association for Spiritual Inquiry"—a terribly long title that might profitably be abridged—is about to hold a series of meetings with "lectures on the whole range of occult subjects," and Sunday services. I regard the latter as very valuable work. We need to have the emotional and religious side of our nature stirred. Too many Spiritualists have come out of and away from the profession of some form of religious belief which they felt they could no longer conscientiously hold, and have put nothing in its place. Hence the higher nature is starved, and the best aspirations are quenched. Man cannot live on phenomena alone, however real and startling. His nature craves some spiritual sustenance, and must have it, or it starves and is stunted.

Have I not somewhere heard, or read, or did I dream that Mr. Balfour's horoscope is a very remarkable one? Before he achieved the distinguished success that he has reached in his position as Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland I remember to have known that his probable career was indicated astrologically as quite exceptional. And now politicians forecast for him the highest place in his party. Certainly his rise has been very remarkable.

Thackeray, like most or all men of genius, seems to have had his mediumistic side. Miss Perry thus relates the story of the naming of *Vanity Fair*:—"He told me some time afterward that, after ransacking his brain for a name for his novel, it came upon him unawares in the middle of the night, as if a voice whispered, 'Vanity Fair.' He said, 'I jumped out of bed and ran three times round my room, uttering as I went, 'Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair.'"

The *Truthseeker* has the following which I am glad to reproduce. I have never for a moment disguised my belief in the value of the work done by the Society for Psychical Research, especially in the publication of these volumes. In common with all Spiritualists, I believe, I object to the treatment which Spiritualism has so far met with at its hands:—

Phantasms of the Living. By E. Gurney, M.A., F. W. H. Myers, M.A., and Frank Podmore, M.A. Two vols. London: Trübner and Co. These two large volumes are truly English, with all our English characteristics of patience, determination, thoroughness, and courage. To the Psychical Research Society, with all its defects, seekers after truth owe profound gratitude, both for this work, and for its resolute researches in a field much misunderstood and scoffed at by our "millions" "mostly fools." The gentlemen who are responsible for this work are thought, by Spiritualists, to be hard and exacting. All the more worthy of consideration is their testimony if they lead us to the doors of the unseen.

THE meaning of "Thus Saith the Lord": An Unconventional Inquiry into the Origin, Structure, Contents, and Authority of the Old Testament. Seven Lectures by John Page Hopps. Price sixpence. Published by Williams and Norgate, 14, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, London, or direct from the author (Leicester) on receipt of the price named.—[ADVT.]

PSYCHOLOGY IN BIOGRAPHY.

WILLIAM COWPER, THE POET.

From the Unpublished Manuscripts of the late Mrs. HOWITT WATTS.

In the Life of William Cowper, written by Robert Southey, LL.D., Vol. III., chap. xvii., *will be found one of the numerous instances of misunderstood psychological condition with which biography is rife.

All readers will recall the mental affliction under which Cowper suffered, not alone in his early manhood, when it led him to attempt suicide, but more or less throughout the whole course of his life. A student of psychological laws cannot fail in perusing the life of Cowper to be led irresistibly to the conclusion that the pious and sensitive nature was enduring throughout the greater portion of his existence here the obsession of a deeply melancholy and despairing spirit. At times of physical depression, either produced by atmospheric changes, or by abstinence from food, this antagonist—as is ever the case with sensitive natures—was most able to assert his presence and over-power his victim. The episode now under consideration is one near the end of the life of the poet.

With the failure of physical strength in Cowper's devoted friend and constant companion, Mrs. Unwin, whose motherly devotion had so long sustained the dejected mind of the poet, the clouds of melancholy gathered once more thickly over him. His literary occupations and engagements, ceasing to give zest, as heretofore, to his life, became to him even an abiding anxiety and torment. This was, in various ways, therefore, a season of peculiar despondency, and the religious anxieties, as may be readily supposed, to which he had been throughout life a prey, lost nothing of their harassing bitterness.

At this time, however, Cowper and Mrs. Unwin appear to have had a humble friend, a Mr. Teedon, the schoolmaster of Olney, whose endeavours to bring religious consolation to his suffering and afflicted friends have met with contemptuous treatment from the pen of Southey.

The knowledge which we have gained through observation and personal experience of modern spiritual manifestations, and of the condition of "the medium" or "psychic," throw light, it appears to the writer, upon the intercourse carried on between these three friends. Relating, therefore, to a passage in the life of a very remarkable man, hitherto regarded as mysterious—if not absurd—a consideration of the following extracts from the letters and diary of Cowper, may not be without interest to the readers of "LIGHT."

"The Olney schoolmaster" (says Southey) "may have been an enthusiast, and have supposed that he actually received from Heaven the intimations which he was presumptuous enough to seek (for if the heart is deceitful, the imagination is not less so), or he may have deemed it allowable, and even meritorious, to employ pious fraud for the purpose of encouraging one who stood so lamentably in need of comfort, and, consistently with either case, he may have been more or less influenced by the pleasure and advantage which resulted from making himself a person of some consequence to 'the squire' . . . Vain as the schoolmaster was" (continues Dr. Southey) "he appears to have kept the secret of his mysterious communications with a degree of prudence which is not often found in connection with so much egregious conceit."

The student of psychology is tempted to wish that the Olney schoolmaster had possibly "kept the secret of his mysterious communications with a degree" of less "prudence." It is simply from notes passing to and fro between these friends that the extracts which excite our curiosity have been given by the biographer. Cowper thus in a letter to Teedon describes the influence upon his sensitive temperament, of the weather and the season laying him open to the attacks of his melancholy; the conditions are

those which the "psychic" will readily recognise as baleful in their influences:—

"A bad night" (he says) "succeeded by an east wind, and a sky all sable, have such an effect on my spirits, that if I did not consult my own comfort more than yours, I should not write to-day. My spirits, I think, are almost constantly lower than they were. The approach of winter is, perhaps, the cause. My spirits are not good enough, nor my mind collected enough, for composition of any kind. How should they be so? *when I never wake without words that are a poignard in my bosom, the pain of which I feel all day*—Mrs. Unwin's approaching and sudden death the constant subject of them! In vain I pray to be delivered from these distressing experiences; they are only multiplied upon me the more, and the more pointed."

In another letter to Teedon he says:—

"DEAR SIR,—You saw me a little better than I had been when I wrote last; but the night following brought with it an uncommon deluge of distress, such as entirely overwhelmed and astonished me. . . . But on Sunday, while I walked with Mrs. Unwin and my cousin in the orchard, it pleased God to enable me once more to approach Him in prayer, and I prayed silently for everything that lay nearest my heart with a considerable degree of liberty, nor did I let slip the occasion of praying for you. This experience I take to be a fulfilment of those words: 'The ear of the Lord is open to them that fear Him, and He will hear their cry.' The next morning at my waking I heard these words: 'Fulfil thy promise to me.' And ever since I was favoured with that spiritual freedom to make my requests known to God, I have enjoyed some quiet, though not uninterrupted by threatenings of the enemy."

The next bulletin to Teedon says, continues Southey:—

"You send me much that might refresh and encourage me—but nothing that does. The power with which the words are accompanied to you, is not exerted in my favour. But I endeavour to hold by them, having nothing else to hold by. My nocturnal and morning experiences are such as they have long been; all my sleep is troubled, and when I wake I am absorbed in terror. . . . My best times are the afternoon and evening; not because I am more spiritual, or have more hope at these times than at others, but merely because the animal has been recruited by eating and drinking."

Here we have an instance of a blended condition, physical and psychological, which affords a field for most important study for a combined physiologist and psychologist—the effects of food and of fasting upon the nature of the sensitive. How much of the persecution by evil spirits, of the saints of the Roman Catholic Church—and other religious persons—during their long periods of fasting, may not have had a certain connection with the emaciated condition of the physical frame, is a curious question. Harmonious and healthful physical conditions—neither repletion nor fasting—would appear to be absolutely needful for the preservation of healthful and harmonious relations with the world of mind and spirit.

"Two or three nights since I dreamed" (writes Cowper to Teedon) "that I had God's presence largely, and seemed to pray with much liberty. I then proceeded dreaming many other things, all vain and foolish; but at last I dreamed that, recollecting my pleasant dream, I congratulated myself on the exact recollection that I had of my prayer and of all that passed in it. But when I waked not a single word could I remember. These words were, however, very audibly spoken to me in the moment of waking, '*Sacrum est quod dixi.*' It seems strange that I should be made to felicitate myself on remembering what in reality it was designed that I should not remember, for the single circumstance that my heart had been enlarged was all that remained within me."

On December 8th he says to Teedon:—

"I awoke this morning with these words relating to my work [the editing an edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, with notes], loudly and distinctly spoken:—'*Apply assistance in my case, indigent and necessitous!*' And about three mornings since with these words:—'*It will not be by common and ordinary means.*'"

"It seems better, therefore, that I should wait till it shall please God to set my wheels in motion, than make another beginning only to be obliterated like the two former. I have also heard these words on the same subject:—'*Meantime raise an expectation and desire of it among the people!*'"

On December 14th he writes:—

"My nights are almost all haunted with notices of great affliction at hand—of what kind I know not; but in degree such as I shall with extreme difficulty sustain, and hardly at last find deliverance. At four this morning I started out of a dream in which I seemed sitting before the fire, and very close to it, in great trouble; when, suddenly stamping violently with my foot,

* London: Baldwin and Craddock, Paternoster-row.

and springing suddenly from my seat, I awoke and heard these words :—“*I hope the Lord will carry me through it.*”

“This needs no interpretation. It is plainly a forewarning of woe to come; and though you may tell me I ought to take comfort from the hope expressed in the words, yet I truly cannot. I know too well what it is to be carried through affliction. . . . The promise, that in God we shall have peace, has certainly a comfortable aspect in the future; but He knows that I never have at present a moment's peace in Him.”

“The year ninety-two,” said Cowper to his poetical friend, Hayley, “shall stand chronicled in my remembrance as the most melancholy that I have ever known.”

The new year opened with better omens to him. On the morning of January 1st, 1793, he writes to Teedon :—

“I am in rather a more cheerful frame of mind than usual, having had two notices of a more comfortable cast than the generality of mine. I waked saying, ‘*I shall perish*’; which was immediately answered by a vision of a wine-glass, and these words, ‘*A whole glass.*’ In allusion, no doubt, to a famous story of Mrs. Honeywood, soon after I heard these words: ‘*I see in this case just reason of pity.*’”

Southey tells his readers that “the famous story” by which Cowper interpreted “*this illusion*,” as Southey designates it, and from which he considers that the “waking vision” that recalled it, probably itself arose, is related by Fuller, who mentions—

“Mary, the wife of Robert Honeywood, of Charing, in Kent, abundantly entitled to memoriability for having at her decease 377 persons lawfully descended from her, . . . being much affected in mind, many ministers repaired to her, and, amongst the rest, Reverend Master John Fox, than whom no more happy an instrument to set the joints of a broken spirit. All his counsels proved ineffectual, insomuch that, in the agony of her soul, having a Venice-glass in her hand, she brake forth into this expression: ‘I am as surely damned, as this glass is broken!’ which she immediately threw with violence to the ground. Here happened a wonder; the glass rebounded again, and was taken up whole and entire. Cowper’s malady (pursues Southey) was more deeply rooted; the comfort which he derived from one illusion was destroyed by the next disheartening one. Perhaps no other case of insanity was ever recorded with such curious power of self-observation.”

Evidently the patient and sympathetic schoolmaster laboured incessantly to uphold and comfort, but apparently with little result. Writing on January 25th (1793) Cowper says to him :—

“I have often told you that the notices given to you come to me unattended by any sensible effect; yet believing that they are from God, and gracious answers to your prayers, I have been accustomed to lean a little upon them, and have been the better able to sustain the constant pressure of my burden. But of late I have been totally deprived even of that support, having been assured that though they are indeed from God, so far from being designed as comforts to me they are reproaches, bitter sarcasms, sharp strokes of irony—in short, the deadliest arrows to be found in the quivers of the Almighty. To you, indeed, they are manna, and to Mrs. Unwin, because you are both at peace with God; but to me, who has unpardonably offended Him, they are a cup of deadly wine, against which there is no antidote. So the cloudy pillar was light to Israel, but darkness and horror to Egypt.”

In another letter to Teedon he expresses concern lest his kind, sympathetic friend’s health should suffer by the earnest solicitude and the frequent mortification and disappointments which he underwent on his account. In this letter he tells Teedon that “finding his nights intolerable, he had again had recourse to a few drops of laudanum, and had been somewhat relieved; but spiritual relief seemed as distant as ever.” “Whilst I can amuse myself with a pen or a book,” he says, “I am easy; but the moment I lay them down I begin to ruminate on the various experiences of the last twenty years, and among them find a multitude that seem absolutely and for ever to forbid hope of mercy.”

It has been mentioned that at this period Cowper was greatly burdened with his editorial engagements relative to a new edition of the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. It is natural, therefore, that these labours should furnish material for his visions, voices, and dreams. To Teedon he mentions the following communication “as a kind of curiosity rather than for any other reason; though Milton,

who is at present an interesting character to us both, is undoubtedly the subject of it.”

“I waked the other morning with these words distinctly spoken to me :—‘*Charles the Second, though he was, or wished to be, accounted a man of fine taste, and an admirer of the Arts, never saw, or expressed a wish to see, the man whom he would have found alone superior to all the race of man.*’”

“He would write sanely and playfully about his dreams at this time to Hayley” (remarks Southey). “‘Oh you rogue,’ he says to him, ‘what would you give to have such a dream about Milton as I had about a week since? I dreamed that, being in a house in the City, and with much company, looking towards the lower end of the room from the upper end of it, I descried a figure, which I immediately knew to be Milton’s. He was very gravely, but very neatly, attired in the fashion of his day, and had a countenance which filled me with those feelings that an affectionate child has for a beloved father. My first thought was wonder where he could have been concealed so many years; my second, a transport of joy to find him still alive; my third, another transport to find myself in his company; and my fourth a resolution to accost him. I did so, and he received me with a complacency in which I saw equal sweetness and dignity. I spoke of his *Paradise Lost* as every man must who is worthy to speak of it at all, and told him a long story of the manner in which it affected me when I first discovered it, being at that time a schoolboy. He answered me by a smile and a gentle inclination of the head. He then grasped my hand affectionately, and, with a smile that charmed me, said ‘Well, you, for your part, will do well also.’ At last, recollecting his great age (for I understood him to be 200 years old), I feared I might fatigue him by much talking. I took my leave, and he took his, with an air of the most perfect good breeding. His person, his features, his manner, were all so perfectly characteristic that I am persuaded an apparition of him could not represent him more completely. This may be said to have been one of the dreams of Pindus, may it not?’”

We must bring this touching history to a close. “Cowper sought relief in employment, in exercise, in improving his garden and orchard, in the society of those whom he loved, and sometimes, whenever his malady did not preclude him from that resource, in prayer; indeed, no other case has been recorded of such a continued struggle against insanity.” The gloom only darkened. Telling the good schoolmaster that by means of laudanum* he had obtained more sleep the last two nights, he adds :—

“But neither of the nights has passed without some threatenings of that which I fear more than any other thing, the loss of my long-tried, and only intimate (Mrs. Unwin). From whom they come I know not, nor is the time precisely mentioned, but it is always spoken of as approaching. Mrs. Unwin has slept her usual time, five hours, and is this morning as well as usual. As for me, I waked with this line from Comus: ‘The wonted roar is up amid the woods’; consequently I expect to hear it soon.”

It would appear, however, that although in a state of physical and mental decay, Mrs. Unwin still lingered on for three years. The blow when it came found the afflicted poet, through long expectation of its pain, stunned and deadened to its anguish. Though tended by relatives and friends with unceasing care and tenderness, the dark cloud of deep despondency remained shrouding the poet’s mind until the hour arrived of his own release from the prison of his mortal life. He is said with “passionately expressed entreaties,” to have forbidden words of consolation and hope to be addressed to him as he lay upon his bed of death. Nevertheless we read that “At five in the morning of April 25th, 1800, that change in the features which betokens approaching death was observed; that he became insensible, and remained so till the same hour in the afternoon, when he expired so peacefully that of the five persons who were standing at the foot and side of the bed, no one perceived the moment of his departure. From that time till the coffin was closed Mr. Johnson, his cousin, says the expression with which his countenance had settled was that of calmness and composure, mingled, as it were, with holy surprise.”

A. M. H. W.

GENERATION is not a creation of Life but a production of things to sense and making them manifest. Neither is change death, but an occultation or hiding of that which was.—*Hermes Trismegistus.*

* But what must not have been the reaction of laudanum, thus continuously taken, upon such a sensitive nervous system as that of Cowper?

RUSSIAN OPINION ON THE ECLIPSE.

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Times* is very funny in his description of Russian opinion as to the eclipse. After all it is probably not very much behind average English ideas among our peasantry. Not so very long ago the country people round a well-known Midland town not a hundred miles from London thronged the banks of the local river, which was to boil on a particular day as a consequence of an eclipse or something of the sort. When the stream showed no sign of unusual disturbance, the poor people grumbled as they would have done at the failure of a show for admission to which they had paid. "Why did not those who were so clever as to predicting the eclipse also foretell the state of the weather?" There is a deal of human nature in the world: and this particular criticism is not confined to the ignorant and uneducated. We meet it in the reports of educated scientific commissions and critics of psychical phenomena. And it is not, after all, more rational than the action of the Lincolnshire farmer to whom a friend had given a barometer. Its appearance in the farmhouse happened to synchronise with a spell of very wet weather. The farmer had got some vague idea of the connection between the barometer and the weather, and he drew a rash and unwarrantable conclusion. Taking his barometer out into the field he showed it the rain, stamped on and broke it up, with the reflection, "Make rain, will 'ee. I'll teach 'ee to make rain." We are not in a position to throw stones at St. Petersburg. The *Times* correspondent's narrative has nevertheless an interest of its own:—

"During the last eclipse seen in Russia in 1851 the peasant women broke all their household utensils and prepared for the worst. In one village a man returning from a town with a new wooden bowl upon his head and looming large against the horizon on a distant ridge was taken for Antichrist, and the villagers hid themselves in the cornfields and imitated the cries of various birds and animals in order to escape the demon's notice.

"On the present occasion the Holy Synod issued a special *prikaz*, or circular, to be previously read in all churches, explaining the meaning of the phenomenon and exhorting the people to turn a deaf ear to alarming stories circulated with a purpose by evil-disposed persons and agitators. At the same time an Imperial ukase was promulgated, on the strength of which the police instructed the rural population not to let out their cattle on the morning of the eclipse. In spite of these official precautions, it seems that the country people in some districts were induced to believe that terrible storms and earthquakes would occur, and in consequence the market bazaar at Charkoff, for instance, was entirely deserted. Others were convinced that the darkness would last for a whole week. One rural priest is said to have preached against the presumption of scientists in prying into the transcendent works and secrets of the Almighty. It is also stated in a St. Petersburg newspaper that a certain number of 'Old believing' schismatics forgathered at their meeting-house on the eve of the 19th and prayed the night through in anticipation of the end of the world.

"With all the official and ecclesiastical forethought against ignorance, there was one important point about which the Government certainly forgot to issue a special ukase, and that was in the matter of telegraphic censorship. Telegrams about the eclipse passing through St. Petersburg were subject to the Censor's supervision equally with political correspondence. We are apt to forget that Imperial Russia, in the opinion of her critics, claims universal sway. Only a few months ago a kind of pastoral from a Russian bishop appeared in the newspapers claiming the right of salvation exclusively for members of the Russian Orthodox Church. It is to be feared that the failure to see anything in most places has only confirmed the ignorant suspicions of the masses against which the popular Press and pulpit have been writing and preaching for some time past. 'We saw nothing,' they say, 'after all. We have only been deceived. Why did not those who were so clever as to predict the eclipse also foretell the state of the weather?' and so on."

THE generation of man is corruption; the corruption of man is the beginning of generation.—*Hermes Trismegistus.*

THE LATE RICHARD JEFFERIES.

Few writers who have mourned the untimely death of Richard Jefferies have made any allusion to his instinctive belief in and acceptance of what we as Spiritualists hold to be true. The following passage puts so well what we refer to that we transfer it from the pages of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Jefferies's Autobiography.

The interesting note by X, the other day, on "Jefferies's Wayside Conversation," must have recalled to those who have studied Jefferies at all closely on his more intimate personal side, the wonderful autobiographical passages which touch upon Death and Immortality in his *Story of My Heart*, and which have new pathetic significance for us now. It is singular, indeed, that this most characteristic of all Jefferies's books, considered from a personal standpoint, should have been almost totally ignored in the notices which have been poured forth since his death; for in it Jefferies confesses himself with a passionate intensity of imagination, and therewith a naïve simplicity of expression which makes some of its passages haunt the memory as only the writings of a poet can. *The Story of My Heart* opens at the time when its author first felt, as a strong, present consciousness, the spiritual and the artistic impulse to a closer communion with Nature. He even gives us the date of this indirectly, and, singularly, it is just twenty-one years back from this sad August in which we have had to record his death. The scene amid which the book is chiefly laid, one of the great seaward hills on the chalk range of the South Coast, is so vividly realised that it affects one as does the Yorkshire heath which we painfully associate with Emily Brontë. Without vainly attempting further to describe the book, however, let us take the part of it which bears especially upon the fresh remembrance of his death, and let that speak for the rest:—

There were grass-grown tumuli on the hills to which of old I used to walk, sit down at the foot of one, and think. Some warrior had been interred there in the ante-historic times. The sun of the summer morning shone on the dome of sward, the air came softly up from the wheat below, the tips of the grasses swayed as it passed, sighing faintly; it ceased, and the bees hummed by to the thyme and heathbells. I became absorbed in the glory of the day, the sunshine, the sweet air, the yellowing corn turning from its sappy green to summer's noon of gold, the lark's song like a waterfall in the sky. I felt at that moment that I was like the spirit of the man whose body was interred in the tumulus; I could understand and feel his existence the same as my own. He was as real to me two thousand years after interment as those I had seen in the body. The abstract personality of the dead seemed as existent as thought. As my thought could slip back the twenty centuries in a moment to the forest days when he hurled the spear, or shot with the bow, hunting the deer, and could return again as swiftly to this moment, so his spirit could endure from then till now, and the time was nothing.

Sweetly the summer air came up to the tumulus, the grass sighed softly, the butterflies went by, sometimes alighting on the green dome. Two thousand years! Summer after summer the blue butterflies had visited the mound, the thyme had flowered, the wind sighed in the grass. The azure morning had spread its arms over the low tomb; the full glowing noon burned on it; the purple of sunset rosied the sward. Stars, ruddy in the vapour of the southern horizon, beamed at midnight through the mystic summer night, which is dusky and yet full of light. White mists swept up and hid it; dews rested on the turf; tender harebells drooped; the wings of the finches fanned the air—finches whose colours faded from the wings how many centuries ago! Brown autumn dwelt on the woods beneath; the rime of winter whitened the beech clump on the ridge; again the buds came on the wind-blown hawthorn bushes, and in the evening the broad constellation of Orion covered the east. Two thousand times! Two thousand times the woods grew green, and ring-doves built their nests. Day and night for 2,000 years—light and shadow sweeping over the mound—2,000 years of labour by day and slumber by night. Mystery gleaming in the stars, pouring down in the sunshine, speaking in the night, the wonder of the sun and of far space, for twenty centuries round about this low and green-grown dome. Yet all that mystery and wonder is as nothing to the thought that lies therein, to the spirit that I feel so close.

R.

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

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Light :

Edited by "M.A. (OXON.);" and E. DAWSON ROGERS.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1887.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editors. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable.

THE SEYBERT COMMISSION AND MRS. KANE.

The Seybert Commission has reported that the "theory of the purely physiological origin of the sounds [spirit-raps] has been sustained by the fact that the mediums were invariably and confessedly cognisant of the rappings whenever they occurred." It is an indication of the perfect ignorance with which the gentlemen forming that Commission approached their investigation that they should have thought it wise to say anything so simple as that above quoted. Will they tell us what, in their opinion, a medium is? And what force is that which is used in making spirit-raps? Does it originate in the body of the medium? If so, how is he likely to be unaware of its existence and discharge? If not, what is the use of a medium at all? It is condemnation enough of the constitution of that now notorious Commission that we may put to its members such elementary queries as these with a reasonable certainty that they were not entertained when they entered upon their so-called investigation. Experimenting with Margaret Fox (Mrs. Kane) they concluded that "the so-called raps are wholly confined to her person." We are not, of course, competent to discuss phenomena which occurred on an occasion when we were not present; nor can we say how far the march of time may have weakened Mrs. Kane's mediumistic power. But we have before us a volume of the Boston (U.S.A.) *Spiritual Philosopher*, bearing date July, 1850, and in it we find a quotation from an account of the rappings heard in the presence of the Fox sisters. It is contributed to the *Tribune* by one of the editors of that journal, Mr. Ripley. In the course of his description of a séance at which he was present, he states that "at the suggestion of several gentlemen the ladies [Mrs. Fish and her two younger sisters] removed from the sofa, and remained standing in another part of the room. The knockings were now heard on the door at both ends of the room, producing a vibration on the panels which was felt by every one who touched them. Different gentlemen stood on the outside and the inside of the door at the same time, when loud knockings were heard on the side opposite to that on which they stood. The ladies were at such a distance from the door in both cases as to lend no countenance to the idea that the sounds were produced by any direct communication with them. They now went into a

parlour, under the room in which the party was held, accompanied by several gentlemen, and the sounds were then produced with great distinctness, causing sensible vibrations in the sofa, and apparently coming from a thick hearth-rug before the fireplace as well as from other quarters of the room."

This is a piece of precise evidence seven-and-thirty years ago. We are able by personal observation to corroborate the fact that in the presence of Kate Fox resonant raps were made in our presence on a door; these raps were so loud as to cause a very perceptible and marked vibration in the wood. At this time Miss Kate Fox was lightly touching a panel of the door with her finger-tips. At our request she had so gathered in her skirts as to enable all present to see that she was not otherwise in contact with the door. The raps came at request on either side of the door, which was open. The light was perfectly good, the time somewhere about noon. If the observers are not competent to say that what has been described actually occurred, and was carefully observed by three persons, whose testimony was absolutely in accord as to what took place, then we are not competent to conduct the ordinary affairs of daily life. But a more close attention to this Seybert Report establishes in our mind a conviction that it could be torn to shreds if it were at all worth while to do so. It is, no doubt, correct in some elementary matters. It establishes the fact, which required no proving, that there are in America persons who trade on the credulity of their fellow-creatures. It has not proved that the preconceived notions of some of its members respecting mediumship, or even such a demonstrable matter as the source of a percussive sound, are worth seriously considering. If the Commission is to do real service it should meet regularly and issue no report for, say, five years. The Preliminary Report is to the last degree crude and misleading. But much may be forgiven to a wholly ignorant and inexperienced body of men whose guide and instructor informed them that "the true spirit in which to approach the study of Spiritualism is 'an entire willingness to be deceived.'" The misfortune is that there is a class of mind which will greedily accept these raw conclusions as gospel, and thereby the public will be misled, and the unwelcome task will be cast upon us of rebutting assertions that never ought to have been made.

ON SOME ADVERTISEMENTS.

We have often thought that some advertisements which appear in papers devoted to Spiritualism are very little credit to the cause. Some of these we do not deal with; their object is gross, open, palpable, and they should not find publicity at any price. But the feverish advertising of the present age has its comic as well as its repulsive side, and the funniest advertisements of all are perhaps to be found in American Spiritualist journals. It is in no unkind spirit—we have no such feeling—that we comment on some of these. We have carefully excluded all objectionable notices, and on those which we have selected at random, and from which we have excised anything of the nature of a trade advertisement, we venture to make an appeal to our contemporaries. We name none; we blame none. But let us calmly contemplate a very small selection taken from some recent issues of American journals; and let us try to realise the general impression that would be formed by an unprejudiced reader of them. We put it to our friends whether any good can come of such publication except to the advertisers and those who rise to the fly thus unskillfully thrown.

Here is a lady who is a "trance, test, and clairvoyant medium, of ten years' experience," and "who locates business and diagnoses diseases. Guarantees satisfaction."

Another advertiser is a "clairvoyant and test medium," who "will answer six questions by mail: fifty cents and

stamp. Will give whole life reading for 1d. and two stamps. Disease a specialty."

Here again is a doctor who classes "eyes, cancers, and tumours" in one exhaustive category:—

"Dr. A. W. Dunlap, clairvoyant and magnetic healer, diagnoses disease without questions; all kinds of disease treated; root and herb medicine used: eyes, cancer, tumours, &c., successfully treated; has had twenty years' practice as a healer in this city."

This lady will "diagnose disease without questions," especially nervous diseases; a very great boon, we should think, to nervous patients. She is eclipsed by another lady, who certainly does not hide her light under a bushel. She, it seems, we wonder why, charges gentlemen twenty-five cents for what ladies get for ten cents. Is it that the fair sex is so much more impressionable, so much less critical, that matters go on more easily in their presence? Or is there a reduction on taking a quantity? Do ladies frequent such mediums so often that their fee is reduced?

"Mrs. M. Miller, medium. Meetings—Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings, and Fridays at 2 p.m. Sittings daily, 1d. 114, — Street, between Taylor and Jones. Sittings daily. Admission to Public Circles, ladies ten cents, gentlemen twenty-five cents."

And who can judge what is occultly hinted at when an address is given as "between Taylor and Jones"? It sounds very uncanny.

Then we have a group of advertisers who think it impressive to abandon the well-worn title of medium and call themselves "Metaphysicians." What, we wonder, is a "Metaphysician and D. M."? What do two ladies mean by entering into partnership and advertising themselves as "Metaphysicians," leaving it to bewildered brains to guess whether they profess a new variety of physic, or whether, judging by the character of other advertisements near their own, they are only mediums with a difference.

Very funny it all is, to be sure! Another lady informs the public that she

"Gives Psychometric readings by handwriting or photo; also, Magnetised Talismans, by spirit power."

Now, what is a "magnetised talisman"? What manner of person is she who deals in such nostrums? What manner of people are they who are silly enough to buy them?

Perhaps the frankest and concisest trade-notice is the following:—

"Mrs. S. Seip (the Gifted), recognised and acknowledged as the most accurate Psychometrist, has resumed business, and 'welcome all.'"

There is no beating about the bush, no shrinking, timid, modesty, in the "Gifted" one.

And perhaps the most unexpected name in this very motley group is Andrew Jackson Davis's. "Liberal persons" in search of "desirable information" by mail from a "physician to the body and mind," who has "become permanently a citizen of Boston," may apparently hear of something to their advantage from Mr. A. J. Davis!—

"Andrew Jackson Davis, physician to body and mind. Has become permanently a citizen of Boston, and may be consulted concerning physical and mental disorders. . . . Mr. Davis would be pleased to receive the full name and address of liberal persons to whom he may from time to time mail announcements or circulars containing desirable information."

The following advertisement of a rather different character indicates that the loss of the body does not altogether remove a care for the complexion. The "guides from the angel-world" have got up an "English face-powder" which seems unnecessary in San Francisco: and which suggests speculation as to the general employment of the alleged "guides":—

"ENGLISH FACE-POWDER.—Beautifies and preserves the complexion. No poisons are employed in its composition, and it can be used freely without injury to the face. The guides from the angel world evolved the idea that a harmless beautifier of the complexion would be a blessing to the world, and it has

been placed in all the drug stores of San Francisco, for sale. Price 25 cents per box."

But when all has been said "young Dr. Hammond of New York" carries off the palm. "He reads your destiny while in a trance," the doctor, we presume, not the patient. He is depicted—we greatly regret that we cannot reproduce the very striking portrait—as a young man in a smoking cap, surrounded by most of the heavenly bodies, and in immediate proximity to a globe on which the signs of the zodiac are shown in most disproportionate size. His advertisement winds up with an injunction to "cut this out." We have cut it out, and here it is:—

"PRINCE TRANCE CLAIRVOYANT OF THE ATLANTIC COAST.—Born with double veil; seventh son; with the power of any two clairvoyants you ever met; tells your entire life, past, present and future, in a dead trance; every hidden mystery revealed; tells names, business; love and marriage a specialty; unites the separated, and causes speedy and happy marriage with the one you love; genuine Egyptian charms for the unsuccessful; those who are in trouble from any cause are invited to call without delay; challenges the world! Persons will save time and disappointment by consulting this clairvoyant first, before going to others. Reveals everything; fee one dollar and upward."

"One dollar and upward" is good. We wonder how far the "upward" extends. As far, probably, as the gullibility of those "who are in trouble from any cause," and who answer the invitation "to call without delay."

We confess to a certain amount of mild amusement at the specimens above quoted: and we are sensible of a more pronounced feeling of something akin to indignation at the discredit so done to a subject that need not invite a heavier weight to bear it down. There will be fools in the world for ever, and there will be persons who are *not* fools to prey upon them to the end of time. But Spiritualists need not advertise the game of Fox and Geese as exemplified in such notices as we have quoted, even if they are well paid for so doing. There should be something at the back of our action higher than mercenary consideration, and, if there be not, it may be suggested as worth thinking of whether this sort of thing does really pay.

Much has been done in recent times to purify Spiritualism from its plague-spots. It is the inevitable lot of such a subject that it is beset and infested with those who desire to make an easy living on the frailties of their fellow-creatures. Such persons reckon upon the crankiness of all who believe what the world at large does not yet accept. It should be the constant care of those who have public dealings with such a subject as Spiritualism to show these gentry that they are mistaken.

THE STUDENT'S PRAYER.

BY LORD BACON.

"To God the Father, God the Word, God the Spirit, we pour forth most humble and hearty supplications; that He, remembering the calamities of mankind, and the pilgrimage of this our life, in which we wear out days few and evil, would please to open to us new refreshments out of the fountain of His goodness, for the alleviating of our miseries. This also we humbly and earnestly beg, that human things may not prejudice such as are divine; neither that from the unlocking from the gates of sense, and the kindling of a greater natural light, anything of incredulity, or intellectual night, may arise in our minds towards divine mysteries. But rather that by our mind thoroughly cleansed and purged from fancy and vanities, and yet subject and perfectly given up to the divine oracles, there may be given unto faith the things that are faith's. Amen."

FRED EVANS.—We learn that Fred Evans, the "American Eglinton" so far as psychography is concerned, has removed to 133, Octavia-street, San Francisco. He encloses us a very good photograph of himself, and intimates some probability of his being able to reach England next year. We are glad to hear it. We can find any amount of employment for trustworthy mediums: and, if report does not strangely mislead, Mr. Evans can show us psychographic phenomena with fair certainty and regularity.

EARLY SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

Accounts of the occurrences which first directed attention to Spiritualism are always valuable and instructive. We published such an account recently, and should be glad to have more of the same character. It would be a benefit to our readers, who are increasing year by year, and who are in many cases unacquainted with the early literature of Spiritualism, if we could place on record the circumstances which led well-known Spiritualists of experience to the convictions that they hold. We do not know any more profitable field of research. What is wanted is a plain and simple recital of facts where such have been observed. But, since all have not approached the subject through the avenue of objective phenomena, it would be interesting to have a record of subjective experiences in cases where they have led to a permanent conviction.

If we are not mistaken, the time will come when such records and accounts will be of high value; for there appear signs that the phenomena of Spiritualism which were rife forty years, twenty years, ago are becoming rarer and rarer. The experiences of Spiritualists between the years 1850 and 1890 will probably possess a unique value from the fact that they will have gradually ceased. Observation will be no longer practicable. It looks as if it was necessary to startle a materialistic age by the production of the only class of evidence that would produce any impression. Men had so crushed out all other instincts that it was imperative to appeal to them in this way. But we have so far changed this that attention has been directed in increasing measure to a more spiritual instinct, and to evidence which goes more directly to the root of the matter in question. This being so it is not inconceivable that the class of evidence which has served the purpose of the past may yield to a more refined and subtle type in the future.

In the *Spiritual Magazine*, in the *Medium and Daybreak*, in the early volumes of *The Spiritualist*, in the *Psychological Review*, *Human Nature*, and other periodicals there is much of the greatest interest and value. Before it is too late we desire to put on record all personal experiences that the older generation of Spiritualists may be disposed to send to us for publication.

Perhaps we may request that such recitals should be confined to the record of phenomena, or of impressions and direction, which had a direct bearing in the formation of opinion or the establishment of conviction. Unimportant points should be omitted, and those only recorded which are of real importance.

Though we do not desire to adduce as typical the narrative that follows, we quote from the *Golden Gate* a simple and quite ordinary record of experience which many of our readers could, no doubt, parallel.

"My mother died in 1836, long before the advent of Modern Spiritualism. Both my father and mother believed in what was at that time termed 'the supernatural.' I remember an incident, which occurred just prior to mother's death, that reveals their views in a very striking manner. They were both awakened in the night, about one o'clock, by a sound like one throwing gravel or earth on an empty box. It seemed to be in the room where they were sleeping. Father got up and lit a lamp, and then the sound seemed in the cellar; then father took the lamp and went down stairs into the cellar; and father thought the sound came from a barrel where we had kept apples; then it occurred to him that it was rats in the barrel, and he put his light down on a box, and taking a piece of a board, he proceeded cautiously to remove the cover or lid from the barrel, but nothing was therein; but immediately on returning the cover, and starting to go up stairs, the noise again seemed in the barrel, and again he made the effort to capture the intruders, but with no better success.

"On returning to mother's room she told him that the noise again commenced in the room just as soon as he had gone down-

stairs. As soon as the light was extinguished they both again heard the noise, and mother told father that it sounded to her like the first earth thrown on a coffin at a burial, and that she believed it was a warning of the near approach of her death. Father tried to laugh her out of the idea, but he informed us after her death that he had the same impressions that she had, and that he then believed that it was a warning, but that he talked to mother so that she need not feel alarmed.

"Portland, Oregon.

"C. A. REED.

"August 4th, 1887."

CAMP MEETINGS IN AMERICA.

It is the season when our Transatlantic friends relieve themselves of city life and go into camp. Their Spiritualism is of a more demonstrative kind than ours: perhaps their mode of taking their pleasure is a little different: perhaps their climate is more adapted to outdoor recreation.

Be these things as they may, it is apparent from our American exchanges that there is a severe eruption of camp meetings just now in the States. There is Lake Pleasant, and Onset Bay, Sunapee, and Parkland, and many others. If we must be precise, here is a list of them, by no means exhaustive. It may be interesting to give the programme.

ONSET BAY, MASS.—The eleventh Camp Meeting at this place will close August 28th.

THE NEW ENGLAND SPIRITUALISTS' CAMP MEETING ASSOCIATION will hold its fourteenth annual convocation at Lake Pleasant, Montague, Mass., July 30th to August 29th.

RINDGE, N.H.—The Camp Meeting at this place closes August 18th.

SUNAPEE LAKE, N.H.—Sessions for the tenth annual Meeting close August 31st.

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—The fifth annual Camp Meeting of this association will be held at Mount Pleasant Park, Clinton, Ia., commencing August 7th, and continuing through the month.

PERINE MOUNTAIN HOME.—A Sunday afternoon meeting (at 3.30) will be held for the summer at this place—near Summit, N.J.

PARKLAND, PA.—The Camp Meeting heretofore held at Neshaminy Falls now takes place at this locality. Its ninth annual session will close September 10th.

THE NIAN TIC (CONN.) SPIRITUALIST CAMP MEETING closes September 8th.

THE QUEEN CITY PARK CAMP MEETING, VT., commences August 17th and closes September 12th.

CASSADAGA LAKE, N.Y.—Camp Meeting will close Monday, September 4th.

TEMPLE HEIGHTS, NORTHPORT, ME.—Camp Meeting commences August 13th; closes August 21st.

VERONA PARK, ME.—The Camp will continue during August.

ETNA CAMP, ME.—Commences August 26th and continues ten days.

MADISON LAKE CAMP, near Skowhegan, Me., will commence its sessions shortly after the close of the meeting at Etna.

MANTUA STATION, O.—A three days' meeting will be held at this place, August 4th, 5th and 6th.

HASLETT PARK, MICH.—A Camp Meeting will be convened here from August 3rd to September 5th.

NORTH COLLINS, N.Y., Yearly Meeting, August 25th to 28th, inclusive.

It will be seen that there is a very general outbreak of out-of-door Spiritualism, and we believe that this list is very far from exhausting the whole announcements. One naturally turns to the *Banner of Light* for information on such matters. In the August issues we have abundant guidance.

At Onset Bay, Warren Chase is giving what he calls "a plain talk"—the plainer the better. We get too much flummery in our Spiritualism. We see, too, the names of Mr. L. L. Whitlock, Mrs. R. Shepard Lillie, Mr. J. Frank Baxter, Mr. G. A. Bacon, and a vast number of others, whose names are known in American Spiritualism, but less familiar in our country. Mr. Charles Dawbarn and Mrs. Tappan Richmond are announced.

At Lake Pleasant we have also a full gathering, Dr. Joseph Beals for the fourteenth year in the chair. Judge Dailey and Mrs. Davis Smith delivered the addresses; Mrs. Spence on the following Sunday. Mr. Tisdale spoke what seems to have been a popular address on "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man." Mr. Charles Dawbarn discoursed with much

approval on "A Fact of To-Day, or Trial of Spirits," and the very brief extract we have of his hour's address leads us to believe that it was very acceptable and instructive.

Among speakers more familiar by name we find Mr. Morse at the California Camp Meeting. Of him Mr. W. Emmette Coleman says, and his words may be trusted, if, perhaps, we read "speaker" for "orator":—

"The principal speaker, Mr. J. J. Morse, won 'golden opinions from all sorts of people,' by his logical and eloquent presentation of rational common-sense Spiritualism, free from the vagaries and untenable hypotheses so often heard from the lips of other prominent trance speakers. Mr. Morse tells us nothing about the lost Atlantis, the pyramids, the Kabbalists, the veil of Isis, and other rubbish of that character; and in answer to questions he has, at this camp, advanced some weighty arguments in disproof of the truth of the unscientific postulates of pre-existence, re-incarnation, and Theosophy. The extravagances of Christian science and metaphysical healing have also received cold comfort from this inspired evangel of the modern gospel. The Spiritualism advocated by Mr. Morse is based upon the science and philosophy of our age, upon known facts and sound philosophical principles, not upon crude speculation and pitiable ignorance, as is the case with some noted abnormal speakers. The ablest intellectual effort which I have heard for some time was Mr. Morse's recent lecture upon 'The Science of Immortality,' its foundations being known scientific truths and its diction being choice, elegant, forcible, expressive, plain practical common-sense, sound logic, forceful reasoning, eloquence and felicity of expression,—these are among the more marked characteristics of Mr. Morse's addresses, and such orators our cause needs very much.

"At the close of Mr. Morse's Fourth of July oration at the camp (which oration has been rated 'as one of the most eloquent, patriotic, and profound orations on our country that had ever stirred the hearts of the American people'), a series of resolutions was adopted expressive of the depth of gratitude due to Mr. Morse and his controls for their sublime utterances during the session of the camp, and of the appreciation of his auditors of his fidelity to truth, his affable demeanour to all, and his goodness of heart. A more substantial token of appreciation was also tendered him in the shape of a donation of fifty-five dollars in gold."

We have some personal reasons for pleasure at Mr. Morse's success as a speaker in America. We have found before that speakers who have gone over to the States from England have received an access of inspiration which we trace to the invigorating air and new surroundings.

Cassadaga opened with an address by Lyman C. Howe, which he followed by one on the "Battles of Life," and this again by an extempore poem which seems to have affected the audience very strongly. The recorder claims for such efforts the inspiration of spirits, which is probable; but he goes too far when he challenges any other explanation, for what does he make of the *improvisatori* of Italy? They do not pretend to any inspiration beyond that which the few *scudi* they get produce, yet their productions are remarkable enough.

There is no doubt that these gatherings are a very strong feature in American Spiritualism. We could hardly do the same thing: the weather is against us, and England is not the place for an organised and pre-arranged picnic. But the energy that so finds vent under more favourable conditions than we can command might teach us to imitate it. We want much more cohesion; much more concentrativeness; much less crankiness, and much less inclination to make private fads of prominence. We do not suppose there are no "cranks" in England—there are, we sadly know it—but we are, perhaps, less conscious of their existence here than we ought to be. The truth should be said without fear, and we are not afraid of saying it. We have to advocate and defend a subject that creates antipathy and opposition, and we cannot afford to weigh it down with defence of all sorts of ideas that have no connection with it. Why, we wonder, should Spiritualists bother themselves about the thousand and one fads that those who have broken loose from orthodox trammels seem to revel in? We see no reason as Spiritualists to avow a belief in vaccination or anti-vaccination; to embark in a crusade for or against woman's rights. As a matter of fact, the subject has been discredited and weighed down by this tendency to crankiness. We are not about to say that anti-vaccination may not be a most important question. We think it may be, but it is not our business. We have no more concern with it than we have with Pasteur's treatment of hydrophobia, or Koch's cholera germ. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*. Let us avoid cranks and crankiness, and stick closely to what we have to do with. And that is simply, a demonstration to sense of existence after physical death.

WHAT THE STARS SAY.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* keeps an "Own Astrologer." Here is what he says about September. It seems poor stuff, and it is perhaps more remarkable that it should be published at all than that it should be so silly. Concurrently with the belief in these subjects there is growing up a sort of sneaking dealing with them that is both silly and dangerous. The *Pall Mall Gazette* thus delivers itself:—

"What the Stars Say for September.

"By OUR OWN ASTROLOGER.

"The last eclipse of the sun, upon the 19th ult., occurred at sunrise, and was only visible here as a partial eclipse, the middle of the eclipse occurring after sunrise, from its position in the heavens and the sign in which it occurred. Treachery and great activity is shown among the private enemies of the nation, spies numerous, and some epidemic among large animals. The eclipse, being quickly followed by the conjunction of Mars and Saturn in the first degree of the fixed sign Leo, foreshadows great troubles to our rulers and excitement in political circles. The Grand Old Man will now gather more support, power, and influence day by day. European wars more than probable. France, Italy, Russia, and Prussia seem to be the most disturbed by these influences, which will necessitate a more firm and decisive policy upon our part, not of defiance or aggression, but a firm, defensive policy, ready at any moment to defend our position and interests, yet careful not to be drawn into the vortex of the threatened European war at the commencement, but to reserve our strength to a future day in defending our own possessions, which will be menaced. Our friends and allies are unsettled and wavering in mind, listening to the overtures of our open foes and avowed enemies, for discontent and indecision at home and in our foreign possessions at the Antipodes will soon be manifest. This can only be overcome by a firm and just policy, which is not shown so clearly as I could wish by the scheme of the heavens at the time of the conjunction.

"Great anxiety is felt for the safety of kings and those in authority. Treachery is prominently shown, and I am afraid more than one will die. We shall not have to wait long. The worst effects will fall upon France and Italy; these nations will be in a very disturbed state during Saturn's stay in the sign Leo (two and a-half years), and places where the centre of the eclipse was rising, or meridional, and under the rule of that sign, as Bath, Bristol, &c., will suffer in many ways. Atmospheric disturbance of a peculiar nature in many places and general drought, with earthquakes. Those born on or about the 24th of July, the 25th of October, the 21st of January, and the 21st of April, in any year, will experience many evils for some months to come, and those whose moon at birth occupied the afflicted places. September will, I judge, be a very favourable month in general, fine and but little rain. The 10th is the only evil date of importance. Honour in any undertaking on that day cannot be expected."

LECTURE BY MR. ALDERMAN BARKAS.—The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* has the following notice of a lecture which Mr. Barkas delivered on Sunday evening last to a crowded audience, under the auspices of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, in the Cordwainers' Hall, Nelson-street, on "Additional psychological facts confirmatory of the reality of a future life for mankind." "The chair was occupied by Mr. Kersey.—Alderman Barkas said that on a previous occasion he directed attention to a series of questions and answers having relation to a future life. The questions were asked by himself, and the answers were given through the hand of a lady. One thing was tolerably clear—either the lady wrote the answers herself from her own mind, or some mind was influencing her hand to write the answers. His theory was that she had no practical knowledge of the subjects herself, and that her hand was moved by some intelligent agent who appeared to have the knowledge he was communicating. The lady through whom the communications were received had had an ordinary day-school education; she affirmed she had not studied scientific subjects. The questions were asked by himself, and neither the medium nor anyone else knew the questions until he read them in the presence of the medium and the witnesses present at the séance; and the replies were all written by the hand of the medium immediately after the questions were asked. The lady medium was not in a trance, but during the whole series of 37 sances, extending over upwards of 100 hours, was apparently in her normal condition; and she affirmed that she did not know what her hand was writing, and that she did not always understand the questions. Many of the answers to scientific questions were opposed to his opinions, and many were much beyond the knowledge of himself and the other persons present. He proceeded to read certain questions, and the answers given on the subject of anatomy; and the spirit controlling the medium stated that the information on the subject was given by 'my friend, the anatomist,' named Willis. He next read questions and answers relating to electricity. At the conclusion of the address Alderman Barkas answered a number of questions."

JOTTINGS.

The Truthseeker has an amusing article, "What is it to be an Inquirer?" *apropos* of a paper of that name which has been recently priding itself on its determined opposition to Spiritualism in every form. The fun is good; but the "Inquirer" is too pachydermatous to feel it.

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We have received in pamphlet form Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace's lecture delivered at San Francisco, and reprinted from the *Golden Gate*. We have already expressed our sense of the value of this recent addition to our literature.

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Two reverend gentlemen, who have been discoursing on Spiritualism according to their light, bring down W. Emmette Coleman on their backs in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. The result is disastrous to the critics.

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The *Journal* reprints that "excellent article" on "Memory" by Dr. Eadon.

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Canon Wilberforce thinks it would have been impossible to have stamped Ireland under foot if she were not weakened by her whisky. So then Home Rule will bring Teetotalism. Where does the logic come in?

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It is said that in Jefferson County, Indiana, there exists a religious sect whose belief is that when the body dies the soul enters on a state of sleep, in which it exists until the final resurrection of the body on the Day of Judgment, when it awakes and again enters the body as it arises from the tomb.

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The *Saturday Review* on "Mr. Furness, of the Seybert Commission":—

"He wore a piece of blotting-paper—for which he paid the medium four shillings a sheet—next his skin day and night for six months, and on every individual evening of those six months he shut himself up in total darkness and sat thinking about nothing for half or three-quarters of an-hour, with his hands on a black muslin packet containing two slates. By this martyrdom he succeeded in showing that, if you carefully fasten up two slates with nothing written on them, and nobody gets at them in the interval, there may still be nothing written on them when you take them out after six months of this abject tomfoolery. Does the University of Pennsylvania really think it dignified to accept alms on condition of making grown-up men behave in this way? It would not be at all less useful or sensible for a man to sit with his mouth shut for sixteen years in order to prove that when he opened it at the end of that time there would not be a sovereign in it unless somebody had put it there."

"He wore a piece of blotting-Paper when last we met."

How does it go?

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The Rev. J. Page Hopps in *The Truthseeker*.

"Can the suggestion be possibly made by any one, that the God who will make amendment and hope impossible for 'the lost' will make callous or oblivious the saved? Millions of good mothers have mourned for children lost to light and love on earth, by whom they have been brought down with sorrow to their graves. How will God make them forget their bereavement and their grief? How could they be happy in the loveliest heaven that ever shone in any poet's dream? Robert Buchanan, one of our truest and most spiritual modern poets, has put this with pardonable force in his brief song of 'Doom':—

"'Were I a soul in Heaven,
Afar from pain,
Yea, on Thy breast of snow,
At the scream of one below
I should scream again.'

That must be true; and they who say such things to-day are not rebels fighting against God; they are anxious children trying to make their way through the jungle to the Father's feet."

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Sir Henry Roscoe, M.P., D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S., &c., at Manchester:—

"Pursuing another line of inquiry on this subject, Crookes has added a remarkable contribution to the question of the possibility of decomposing the elements. With his well-known experimental prowess, he has discovered a new and beautiful series of phenomena, and has shown that the phosphorescent lights emitted by certain chemical compounds, especially the rare earths, under an electric discharge in a high vacuum exhibit peculiar and characteristic lines. For the purpose of obtaining his material Crookes started from a substance believed by chemists to be homogeneous, such, for example, as the rare earth yttria, and succeeded by a long series of fractional precipitations in obtaining products which yield different

phosphorescent spectra, although when tested by the ordinary methods of what we may term high temperature spectroscopy, they appear to be the one substance employed at the starting point. The other touchstone by which the identity, or otherwise, of these various products might be ascertained, viz., the determination of the atomic weights, has not, as yet, engaged Crookes' attention. In explanation of these singular phenomena, the discoverer suggests two possibilities. First, that the bodies yielding the different phosphorescent spectra are different elementary constituents of the substance which we call yttria. Or, if this be objected to because they all yield the same spark spectrum, he adopts the very reasonable view that the Daltonian atom is probably, as we have seen, a system of chemical complexity; and adds to this the idea that these complex atoms are not all of exactly the same constitution and weight, the differences, however, being so slight that their detection has hitherto eluded our most delicate tests, with the exception of this one of phosphorescence in a vacuum."

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is desirable that letters to the Editor should be signed by the writers. In any case name and address must be confidentially given. It is essential that letters should not occupy more than half a column of space, as a rule. Letters extending over more than a column are likely to be delayed. In exceptional cases correspondents are urgently requested to be as brief as is consistent with clearness.]

Haunting—and Prevost Paradol.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your last issue I find an article on "Haunting"—the doctrine on which subject is sought to be confirmed "by the suicide of the brilliant Prevost Paradol, who killed himself," your correspondent says, "without any apparent reason, soon after his arrival in the United States as French Ambassador." I have italicised the words which convey an entirely erroneous statement.

It is true that he committed suicide, but it is untrue that there was no apparent reason. There was a very constraining motive for it under the special circumstances of the situation in which the unhappy man found himself. Your correspondent is not responsible for the misstatement, as he found it in the current number of *Le Spiritisme*, and seems to have taken it for granted. I was much interested in this case, and found a full explanation of this deplorable termination of a promising career. M. Louis Noel, the writer, will find no confirmation of his doctrine in the melancholy fate of Paradol when truly related.

It is well known that Napoleon III. was extremely anxious to fortify his ill-gotten power by acquiring the support of eminent writers and journalists. He was always trying to detach such men from the Liberal or Republican side, and to attach them to his dynasty by mercenary means, and never were his efforts more strenuous in that direction than in the year 1870, when the omens of approaching ruin were multiplying fast around him, and when unusual efforts were required to gain the assistance of the men of the pen—seeing that force alone was found too weak to uphold his throne. His attention was turned to Prevost Paradol, and he offered him the gilded bait of the Embassy to the United States. In an evil hour and with many misgivings Paradol accepted the offer.

From that hour Paradol knew no peace. His conscience upbraided him for purchasing ease, wealth, and dignity by the surrender of his most cherished principles, and the abdication of his self-esteem. Besides all this, he knew that his succumbing to the perjured despot, and accepting his bribes, were viewed by his former associates and colleagues with the bitterest contempt and execration. We may easily imagine how the lofty soul of Victor Hugo would view this "transaction" and the traitor himself.

"Che fece per viltate il grand rifiuto."

His state of mind could have been little less than the remorse of Judas Iscariot.

But the bond was sealed, and Paradol embarked on his ill-starred mission. When he arrived at Washington, a new cause of uneasiness arose. It was the state of relations between France and Prussia. These were painfully strained, and foreboded war—that is, to competent observers. Shallow observers saw nothing of the kind. Thus Lord Hammond, who had been some thirty years at the Foreign Office, congratulated Lord Granville, who acceded to office just on the eve of the Franco-German war, on the peaceful aspect of Europe, which was likely to give him little trouble.

Nevertheless a storm was at hand, and ready to burst. On the 15th of July, 1870, France declared war against Prussia.

Her ambassador at Washington had been watching the precursory events with extreme anxiety. But when the announcement came, it cast him into a state of utter prostration—of prostration akin to despair.

And why was this? Because he was in soul a deadly enemy to the tyranny of Napoleon, and saw in the approaching conquest of the arms of France the firm and final and irreversible establishment of his dynasty, with the consequent increased degradation and subjugation of his country.

He was an instance of the fatal vanity and precipitation of the French mind. It never occurred to him to doubt that France would conquer. That seemed to him an impossible supposition. He only shared the error of nearly all Frenchmen. The only point of doubt was—not whether they would fight their way to Berlin, but on what day they would enter it. They earnestly hoped to be there on August 15th—the birthday of Saint Bonaparte. Nay, there is much ground for believing that in the calculation of the Emperor and his confederates one month from the declaration of war would be a fair allowance of time for the march to Berlin. The regiments went shouting and singing to the stations in Paris in confidence of victory. Emile Ollivier, the young Prime Minister, contemplated the war “with a light heart.” Paradol, at Washington, contemplated it with the heavy heart of despair. But both men equally believed in the absolute certainty of victory. If only Paradol’s good genius had whispered into his ear, “Do not be too certain—Germany may win, and the perjured tyrant may find in this war his ruin and his death-warrant, not the prolongation of his dynasty. Wait awhile and see.” It was the Nemesis of his fatal submission that he had not the patience to wait, but sought relief in a self-inflicted death.

Such is the true account of Paradol’s death, not the shallow, depressing, and base theory of “Haunting,” as given in the columns of *Le Spiritisme*. There may be some influence in our surroundings, and no doubt is, but the noble soul is not the abject slave of them which this writer would make out, and which he seeks to confirm by a sad event the causes of which he wholly misunderstands.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

Leamington Spa.

Primitive Beliefs in Spirit Communion.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—“M.A. (Oxon.)” in his “Notes by the Way” in “LIGHT” for September 3rd, says, “The only people, so far as Mr. Abbott can ascertain, who lack the belief (in spirit communion) are the New Hollanders. I should be surprised to find that further research does not show that they are not a solitary exception.” In the year 1881 the *Daily Telegraph* was so condescending as to admit in its pages a series of letters on ghosts; and by one of these letters it appears that the aborigines of New Holland, or some of them, believe in metempsychosis. Now they are not likely to have got that belief from the English. From what other source, then, can it have arisen if not from spirit communion? The letter is well worth reading *in extenso* by Spiritualists, therefore I send it, in case you may find room for it.

[COPY.]

“To the Editor of the ‘Daily Telegraph.’”

“SIR,—Apparitions of deceased or absent friends are so universally believed in that I hope I may be permitted to add my mite to the material contributed to your columns by referring to the extreme Orient and other far off lands. Wherever the belief exists in the transmigration of the soul, or in its immortality, however crude the idea may be, according to the degree of civilisation existing, there will be found a strong belief in apparitions. The ‘black fellow’ in Australia wishes his enemy, the ‘white fellow,’ to die and ‘jump up working bullock,’ so that he may have ‘the driving of him.’ The savage islanders, the more civilised races of Eastern Asia, the Chinese, and the Japanese, have all their ‘ghost stories’ as everyday instances of domestic life. The propagandists of the tenets of Christianity encounter much difficulty in endeavouring to eradicate these ideas, while at the same time striving to instil into the native mind some conception of an ‘immortal soul.’ Even among ‘Confucius scholars’ the powers of a ‘guilty conscience’ are fully recognised, and during my residence in Japan I heard of many instances, vouched for by respectable natives, of apparitions. There are many ‘haunted’ localities, houses, and families, in the comparatively modern city of Tokio (Yedo), that I have visited. To the folk-lore student such testimony is of interest; but the man of scientific research will find that human nature, with its frailties, is the same all the world over; like causes produce like effects in all nations, no matter how civilised. The ignorant and superficial observer alone scoffs, the practical man sets to

work to discover a cause, and to these latter I recommend this wider range of investigation.—I am, yours, &c.,
“London, October 12th.” “C. PFOUNDEN.”

The late Baron Dirckink-Holmfeld says, in a letter to the *Spiritualist* of May 12th, 1876:—

“Re-incarnation is with the Zulus a belief. They hold that unprogressed spirits are still bound to earthly objects or animals; a belief quite as crude as that of the Spiritists, but less absurd.”

Sir Richard Burton, in his *Two Trips to Gorilla Land* (Sampson Low, 1876), tells us: “An African chief said, in my presence, to a Yahoo-like naval officer: ‘When so be I die I come up for white man! When so be you die, you come up for monkey!’” Sir Richard, however, says: “The doctrine of man’s destruction is largely, if not universally, held by the whole negro race. . . . The ghost endures only for a while and perishes.” They do not seem even to believe in the survival of the fittest, with King David or with St. Athanasius, who makes the souls of the unfit to perish everlastingly without doubt, by everlasting fire, showing that he believed fire to be everlasting, but life everlasting a grant to be gained in the world to come by good works, and especially by a knowledge of God’s truth as he believed it.

T. W.

The Golden Rule.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—In the last number of “LIGHT” a writer names eight ancient authorities who taught more or less fully the Golden Rule of love to our neighbour; these authorities living from fifty to 650 years before Christ.

In this list he omits the names of Socrates, Plato, and Gautama Buddha, who also taught the rule. The most striking omission, however, is the name of Moses, who lived 1,500 years before Christ, and who, in Lev. xix., says “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

Doubtless the morality and advantage of loving one’s neighbour were appreciated from the earliest ages, but by Jesus only is the doctrine taught in its completeness in those words in the Sermon on the Mount: “I say unto you love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you; do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.”

In the same number of “LIGHT” there is a quotation from the *Spiritual Reformer* in which the writer shows the absurdity of the idea that Jesus was not an historic being. But while thanking the writer for this contribution, I would take the strongest objection to his assertion that “Many of Christ’s teachings are contradictory and mistaken.”

This is an assertion occasionally made by Spiritualists, and whenever I have met with it I have asked for evidence of the assertion, but hitherto I have received none.

While engaged in editing my *Life of Jesus Christ as a Continuous Narrative of the Four Gospels*, I was continually and deeply impressed with the marvellous fact, that although all we know of the life and teachings of Jesus is contained in four books, the oldest extant MSS. of which were written between 300 and 400 years after the events described, and thus open to the suspicion of possible interpolation, there yet did not seem to me to be one doctrine or one sentence which was not powerful and dignified, and in perfect consistency with historic and philosophic probability and Theosophic truth.

Keswick.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

B. A.—Necessarily deferred.

NIZIDA.—Thanks. Next week.

J. H. W.—Shall have attention in our next.

V.—We hope to take an early opportunity of using your kind contribution.

EPITAPH.

Here lies a piece of Christ; a star in dust:
A vein of gold; a china dish that must
Be used in Heaven, when God shall feast the just.

PECKHAM, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday last the platform, both morning and evening, was occupied by Mr. Walker, whose guides delivered eloquent addresses upon “The Cultivation of Spiritual Phenomena,” and “The Spirit World; its Location and Laws.” Clear and concise expositions were given on each subject. On Sunday next, September 11th, Mr. J. Hopcroft will speak morning and evening.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 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. 1. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical

contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force 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.”

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 to deny their existence.”

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,’ ‘sommambulic,’ ‘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 every thing 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.”

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

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.”