

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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CONTENTS.

Memoirs of Arthur Hamilton.....	13	The Problem—By Rev. Minot J. Savage.....	20
Testimony of Mr. Eglinton's Father	15	Jottings.....	21
On the Death of a Son—Poetry....	16	Reminiscences.....	22
The Late Mrs. Milner Stephen....	16	The New Church and Spiritualism	22
Mediumship and the Law of Lunacy	17	Personality of Satan.....	23
Visions—By "M.A. (Oxon.)".....	18	"Nizida".....	23
Rev. A. H. Mackonochie.....	20	The Death of Mr. Mackonochie ..	23

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

MEMOIRS OF ARTHUR HAMILTON.*

(Continued from p. 2.)

It will be observed that I have written of the *Memoirs of Arthur Hamilton* as if they were actual memoirs of a once living person. Except to the very careful reader of a prefatory dedication there is no indication that it is not so: the illusion is well kept up throughout. I am told that the memoir is, as a matter of fact, constructed for the purpose of showing the diversities of religious thought which mark the present phase of University life, and not, indeed, of that alone. But this is a detail. It is no disparagement to the value of the book that it should put in this form the views of religious life gathered by its author at Cambridge. Picturesque and graphic in every page, it suggests some problems, and discusses some difficulties, which are worth further notice. The notice I have already given of the narrative part of the book will show that its author is by no means without experience and knowledge of some phases of modern thought in its relation to the occult. I do not suppose that I betray any secret when I add that "Christopher Carr" is Arthur C. Benson, son of the Archbishop of Canterbury and at present an assistant-master at Eton.

I now recur to the little volume to gather up some of the fragments that have been broken off in my rapid dissection of its contents. The subject of this *Memoir* had, as I have hinted, some rare mediumistic gifts, developed, as I think is suggested, in the seclusion that was dear to him, and by the patient and introspective meditation which employed a large part of his time. To the man of the world the development of mediumship comes, if at all, from without. It is a form of beneficent possession, or, the reverse, of malevolent obsession; the citadel of the soul is taken by storm; the stronger than the strong man prevails. To the recluse, the meditative man of reflection, the case is otherwise. He evolves in orderly process those gifts and graces of the spirit which are indigenous and native to his spirit. He does not know by what guardian spirit he is led, what aid comes to him from without. He is conscious only of silent and steady developments, of growth in grace. That which was dormant stirs within him and takes objective form and shape as it becomes a factor in his spiritual life. This is normal mediumship; and it was this that Arthur Hamilton possessed. The author has an impatient contempt for what was vulgarly known to him as Spiritualism, knowing, of course, nothing of the higher phases of it. If he had he would have found them harmonious and satisfying.

A Psychological Experience.

There is recorded in a letter supposed to be written by Arthur Hamilton to his biographer one remarkable psychical experience which I can only touch on briefly. In the course of his long wanderings he had hired a smack, and was cruising about near Dantzic, when an island was sighted which his boatmen told him had an uncanny reputation. It was untenanted save by "a figure which sat on the seaward cape and wept: and by two boys, dressed in antique dress whom to see was certain disaster and to speak with certain death." His curiosity was stirred, and he determined to explore this island. His men would do no more than row him to the shore, and he deferred his exploration till next day. The coast was marshy and malarious, and he spent the night on deck watching the will o'the wisp as it flitted over the swamp—not the wisest thing for a weakly man to do in a "foul pestilential place." Next day he set out to see what was to be seen and made for a clump of trees that crowned a mound that was evidently the highest part of the island. He found it surrounded by a wall of huge stones, and the mound itself seemed built of great hewn stones built carefully together. A rude flight of steps led to the top, and there he found, on a smooth plateau, what was evidently a Druidical altar. He was greatly impressed with the discovery, and, whether the malarious night had unhinged his nerves, or whether it is true that round such places hangs a spiritual atmosphere of which the pestilential vapours he had breathed were the material analogue, he began to muse. His musings show on the author's part much insight. "There are certain atmospheres which, as it were, infect one: the very air has caught some contagion of evil which cannot be got rid of. . . . I have felt it on actual battle-fields, as well as at other places that I have held to be the scenes of unrecorded, immemorial slaughters. . . . The very stillness was appalling. . . . an oppressive heaviness, as if the place were still brooding over the ancient horror it had seen. . . . The sickening contagion of the sin of the place grew upon me every moment. . . . I felt helpless, bewildered, sickened."

Then occurred something to him inexplicable. He was about to get away from this invisible horror when he "was—not exactly called, for there was no sound—but most unmistakably ordered to look round. The sensation produced mentally and emotionally was precisely like the receiving an imperative order that one has neither power nor inclination to resist. . . . I turned and saw, standing together, close by the platform, two boys about twelve years of age (I should have said), in a loose antique dress of a bluish-white colour, reaching down to the knees, and girt about the waist, with leather buskins fastened by straps reaching up the leg: their heads were bare, and their hair, which was a dark brown, was loose and flowing. . . . Accompanying this sight was an indescribable sense of an overwhelming intense vastness—space—immensity—rushing over one with a terrible power: and at the same time the feeling of numbers, as if I was in the presence of a multitude of people."

* Kegan Paul, Trench and Co., 1, Paternoster-square. Price 6s.

What was it? The reminiscence of the sailor's stories intensified by the fever which developed itself next day? This would be the orthodox scientific explanation. "But," says the writer, "I cannot help feeling as if, catching, in my weakened state, the hideous leprosy of the place, I had received into my mind, then less able than usual to resist, the stamp and impress of some other mind forced to linger near that spot, and unable to avoid brooding over some haunting, remorseful thought or image of a deed, ever dismally recalling how he stood in grim silence watching the tears and prayers of the two soft-faced, smooth-limbed Roman boys, kidnapped from some sunny Italian villa, and carried to that gloomy place—held them pitilessly on the altar among the other fork-bearded Druids, with their white robes and glaring eyes—and smote the cruel blow, in spite of the trembling touch of the young fingers and the piteous entreaties, as they looked tearfully from side to side in the damp, sunless Golgotha, among the glens of that sunless isle." I have no difficulty in my own choice. Arthur Hamilton's eyes were opened; and he saw what to most men is denied. To many a medium will recur occasions on which he has been strangely influenced by localities and by their associations, and he will understand this recital.

Determinism and Agnosticism.

Arthur Hamilton is depicted as inclined to determinism, *i.e.*, that system which considers the histories of nations, the lives of individuals, their very deeds and words to be all part of a vast, unalterable design; and whose dealing with the past, with each event as it occurs, is thus nothing but interpretation, an earnest endeavour to exclude regret or disappointment, and to see how best to link each fact in our past with what we know of ourselves . . . exactly the same in effect as a perfect "faith." His little experience as a schoolmaster is said to have strengthened this belief. The author, as I have said, is now a master at one of our greatest public schools. "It seems that we can hardly regulate tendency; in fact as if the schoolmaster's only duty was to register change." To this I by no means subscribe. It depends altogether on the power of personal influence exercised by the schoolmaster; and if all he can do is to act as a sort of self-recording educational barometer, by all means let him, as Arthur Hamilton did, quit schoolmastering with all convenient rapidity, and try to do something more profitable. The business of the true teacher should be to discern the natural aptitudes and inherent tendencies of the pupil, and having done this—which not all who try succeed in doing—to mould and fashion them by his own power of influence, and to guide them aright. It will depend on what Arthur Hamilton recognises a few pages later on how far he is successful. He asks, "Why are there certain people in this world who, whenever they enter a room, have a strange power of galvanising everybody there into connection with themselves? What mysterious currents do they set in motion to and from them, so that those who do not talk to them or at them, begin to talk with reference to them, hedged about as they are with an atmosphere of desire and command?" This is exaggerated, but it conveys in its rather hyperbolic form the truth that without this magnetic power no man ever influences his fellow as teacher, or as orator; never really gets at the soul of any man.

Conversion.

It is the secret, in a degree, of revivalist success, as Arthur Hamilton's biographer saw. "The contagion of a revivalist meeting is a very mysterious thing. Like a man going to a mesmerist, an individual may go, announcing his firm intention not to be influenced in the smallest degree by anything said or done . . . yet these are the very men who are often most hopelessly mesmerised; the very men whom the revival most absolutely—for the occasion—enslaves." It is the secret

of the contagion of a panic in a great crowd, of the magnetic thrill that passes through a vast audience held spell-bound by a great orator.

He had never been in need of conversion, for he had never felt the agony of a dying faith—"that period of agonised uprooting of venerated and cherished sentiment that many whose faith has been very keen and integral in their lives pass through, the dark valley of doubt." But towards the close of his life he realised it. "People talk about instantaneous conversions—I never realised what was meant till a week ago. Day after day, I had been filled with gloomy, reproachful, or bitter thoughts of God that took Edward" (his adopted son, killed accidentally) "from me. . . . I *knew* it was right, but could not *feel* it. But last night as I sat, as I have often done, burning and racking with recollection and regret, a kind of peace stole over me. It was quite sudden, quite abnormal: not that afterglow of hope that sometimes follows a dark plunge of despair, but a gentle, firm trust that seemed, without explaining, yet to make all things plain: not ebbing and flowing, not changing with physical sensation or mental weariness, but deep, abiding, sustaining." The author knows evidently something of that spiritual change, roughly called conversion, which has its analogies in the natural world, in the development of the perfect insect from the seemingly dead chrysalis: in the bursting of the bud: in all the progressive changes and growths of nature.

Visions at Death.

I must not linger further. There is much that is suggestive that I had marked for notice, but I hope my readers will read the book for themselves. As the end of this vividly imagined life drew near it is not surprising that one whose inner vision had been so long partially open, should catch a glimpse of those who were waiting to receive him. "Once he said, 'I have just dreamed of a tall man who came to me and said, 'You will be surprised when you meet Edward; he is delighting everyone there with his conversation; he is so much wiser.' . . . Arthur was asleep. As soon as he awoke, before he was quite conscious, he said, 'It is like a river, it flows very smoothly, and carries me off my feet; but the sun is on it, and it is very clear.' . . . He was very grey about the eyes and temples . . . he began to wander; I heard him say, 'He seems to halt. Yes! but it is only seeming.' . . . He gave an uneasy movement, and half raised himself. 'He is going,' said the doctor. Suddenly he opened his eyes. 'All three,' he said. They were his last words."

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Mr. J. Veitch gave an interesting and instructive address on the "History of Mesmerism," on Sunday morning last, and Mr. Iver MacDonell in the evening took as his subject "Faith Healing," his address being highly appreciated by a good audience.—W. E. LONG, 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

THE LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—Last Sunday evening the choir, assisted by Miss Dickson, sang a Spiritual Invocation with fine effect, and also a sacred solo in a pleasing manner. Next Sunday evening at seven, Mr. Walker will give a trance address, to be followed by clairvoyant tests. During the evening Mrs. Tindall and Mr. Dyer will sing sacred solos.—F. W. READ, Secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N. W.

GLASGOW ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—The election of officers for 1888 took place on the 8th inst., with the following results:—President, Mr. J. Robertson (re-elected); vice-president, Messrs. J. Griffin and Corstorphin; treasurer, Mr. Findlay; secretary, Mr. A. Drummond; corresponding secretary, Mr. G. W. Walrond; librarian, Mr. Kane; book-stall keeper, Mr. Wilson; organist, Mr. F. Griffin; and a committee comprising nine members, *viz.*, Messrs. J. Bowman, Dewar, Gemmell, Harkness, MacDowall, Macfarlane, A. MacKellar, John Robertson, and Russell. The accounts for the past year were read and passed.—GEORGE W. WALROND, Corresponding Secretary.

MR. EGLINTON'S MEDIUMSHIP.

TESTIMONY OF MR. W. EGLINTON'S FATHER.

M. Aksakof continues in *Psychische Studien* his critical observations on Dr. von Hartman's work, *Spiritism*. In the current number he says:—

“In order to complete the historical summary of photographic experiments in general, as well as those undertaken with Eglinton, I think it may not be profitless to publish a letter which I received from Eglinton's father, to whom I had applied for information with regard to details of certain experiments with which I had become acquainted by hearsay. As every witness who occupies himself with these phenomena is equally suspected, I see no reason to suppress the evidence of Eglinton's father, whose letter likewise contains many very interesting details respecting the earlier development of his son's mediumistic powers in the privacy of the family circle.”

The letter is as follows:—

To his Excellency Alexander Aksakof.

DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in answering your questions, more especially those having reference to the photographing of materialised forms.

It is about fourteen years since (after the passing away of my first wife) my serious attention was directed to Spiritualism. To test the accuracy of the marvellous statements emanating from Spiritualists, and being at that time a Materialist and violently opposed to such alleged phenomena put forward by that body, I, in conjunction with a friend of mine, Mr. John Davis, and his family, determined to commence a series of séances with the view of verifying or contradicting the truth of those statements. I need not trouble you with the patience we exhibited before we arrived at satisfactory results, and—when once obtained—the rapid progress we made in developing the various phenomena through our mediums, chief among whom was my son William. The results included table-moving and lifting, both in light and dark séances; trance speaking; direct spirit voices; levitation and floating of my son, in some cases carried entirely out of the room when the door was locked and the key in the possession of one of the sitters, without any possibility of egress; pianos lifted and swung over our heads, and turned the reverse way to the wall, and then placed back again in their original positions.

When the audience has been sitting in a circle with all hands joined, he has been divested of all articles of clothing in a few seconds one by one, moving at each change of garment to alternate sitters, thus showing the impossibility of collusion amongst the sitters. For instance, a match has been struck and his trousers have been found to be turned inside out. The medium then moved between the next sitters and his trousers were turned right again, and so on until he had completed the circle of twelve or thirteen sitters, each time a fresh article of his clothing being served in like manner, even to his under-vest, an interval of about thirty seconds elapsing between the striking of each match. Again, at other séances we have had flowers brought, exotic and otherwise, as fresh as any newly picked.

To test the possibility of bringing articles from a distance, which we had had on previous occasions, but unsubstantiated by any evidence that they were not brought to the séance by the sitters, I, in conjunction with my present wife, tested its practicability, which proved successful and convincing to us who were together in the secret. Five minutes before commencing one of our usual evening séances, as we stood together on the lawn, I explained to my wife that I would ask for two remaining roses on a standard tree to be brought into the séance-room. Having concerted together and arranged our plans, when the sitters were arranged round the table in the dining-room I quietly locked the two doors of exit, and put the keys into my pocket. In the middle of the séance, I spoke of my desire, and requested the “guides” to oblige by favouring us with the presentation of those particular roses, which I took pains, that there might be no mistake, to particularly specify. A few seconds only had elapsed, when the identical roses were placed one in each of our hands. The distance direct through all obstacles would be about sixty feet. On examining the tree after the séance, we found the two roses missing, and on further

examination by the light of a match, we could trace indications of separation otherwise than by a clear cut or pull. It had a slightly charred appearance such as I should imagine electricity would cause.

From one phase of spiritual phenomena to another we continued to make rapid advances. It was nothing unusual to have concerted music with six instruments or more playing in unison. Hearing that spirit moulds of hands and feet had been obtained we likewise tried the experiment successfully, getting indubitable and excellent proofs. Watches have been taken out of the sitters' pockets and returned in a few seconds with the autographs of known spirits engraved upon them, executed as well as any engraver could have done them. These watches are still in existence. A book of spirit-writing was also kept in which we received many contributions in prose and verse.

In many cases spirits have materialised and dematerialised before our eyes. Spirit drapery has been manufactured and thrown through a closed door into a lighted room where we were sitting, and again, when on the floor, gradually vanished from one end to the other. Of the phenomena of materialisation I cannot speak too highly. On our first essay in this respect, commencing in a subdued light, when no cabinet was used and the medium was seated in the circle, the forms were shadowy and indistinct, and therefore unsatisfactory; but afterwards we progressed until the forms appeared in full gaslight, palpable and characteristic, in Oriental and other garbs—of all sizes, from the full growth of man or womanhood to the smallest child—in many instances spirits and medium (when we used the cabinet) appearing together.

One of the best materialisations I ever experienced occurred in a dark séance about two years since. There were about twelve persons present, all known to each other. Lights being turned out and hands joined, the organ was exquisitely played by invisible hands. Shortly afterwards a luminous bust descended from the ceiling, showing beneath a white-draped hood a face which I took to be my first wife's sister, and on my saying so the figure dissented by a shake of the head. “Come nearer, then.” I requested. It did so. “My wife!” I then exclaimed, Mr. Davis (one of the sitters) simultaneously crying out, “Mrs. Eglinton.” The bust proceeded round the circle in full view of each sitter, and was recognised by all who knew her in earth-life. The form disappeared for a time and then emerged from the floor, rising to its full dimensions between my present wife and me. After her departure another form instantly appeared, and at the same moment both Mr. Davis and I recognised it by exclaiming, “Mrs. Davis!” and he by calling a pet name by which his wife was known. As we were sitting together we could not both be deluded, and the features, as in earth-life, were unmistakable. This figure or bust floated in full view before the sitters, and when it reached her son she affectionately kissed him. In this manifestation we had a good display of spirit-power and have never seen the peculiar lights they carried so large or shown to better advantage and determining without doubt the possibility of spirits returning after passing from this life. This séance was remarkable, not only on account of the recognitions, but because no cabinet was used, my son being held on either side.

Having briefly narrated a small part of the various manifestations occurring in our family circle, where no object was to be served by trickery, and in our investigation of Spiritualism, I will instance the séance at which we obtained photographs of spirits by means of the magnesium light. In addition to the photographers (Mr. Kirk and his assistant), there were about fourteen sitters. It took place in the drawing-room in my house about ten years ago. The sketch* which accompanies this is a correct representation of the room, and shows the position of the cabinet. Originally we used to suspend a curtain across one corner of the dining-room, but as the space was too limited, especially when, as was not infrequently the case, two or even three materialised spirits appeared, in addition to the medium, we suspended a curtain before the door leading into the drawing-room, and made the dining-room the cabinet. The sitters were arranged in a semi-circle, with their backs to the door through which the spirits would manifest, as we were told that the gaze of our eyes would interfere with the process of materialisation. But on the mantel-piece in front of us was a large mirror which showed us the door and its entrance. The first attempt to photograph the figure after

* The sketch, which shows the position of the sitters, the medium, the camera, and the photographers, we do not deem it necessary to reproduce.—ED. “LIGHT.”

it appeared was a failure, due to not striking the light at the right time. The second attempt was more successful, and we obtained the figure of a spirit known as "the Turk," a photograph of which I enclose. The third attempt was the crowning one, the medium and spirit appearing together as the photograph in your possession shows. We were told by the guides that this spirit was that of Mr. Wilkes (familiarily known as "the White Warrior"). Never having seen him in earth life I could not identify him, but from a description published of him by his widow we were able to judge of his identity. At the instant the light was struck the spirit preceded my son (who seemed unconscious), dragging or supporting him. At the first sight the spirit seemed more instinct with life than the photograph afterwards revealed. The movements of the spirit and the medium were separate and distinct. The time whilst the light lasted enabled us to see the appearance and the disappearance of both the medium and the spirit. The conclusions we arrived at, at the end of the sitting, were that in the photograph of "the Turk" when he came from the cabinet and faced the brilliant light he bore not the slightest resemblance to the medium and was at least three inches taller. In the second photograph, that of the medium and spirit together, we regretted that the face did not more clearly develop itself; but in any case it was an imperfect materialisation, although from our observation we were convinced that it was a form distinct and separate from that of the medium and imbued with life and vitality.

In conclusion I may add that on account of my relationship I have never before made public any of the extraordinary phenomena which I have witnessed in the presence of my son, and I only make an exception in this place yielding to your solicitation that I should reply to the queries which you have propounded. For fourteen years I have carefully, critically, and constantly examined these phenomena in the home circle, under the most favourable circumstances, never once allowing my feelings as a father to warp my judgment in an impartial criticism of my son's powers; and I have no hesitation in affirming the phenomena to be true and only explainable by the theories propounded by the Spiritualists.—I am, sir, yours truly,

May 18th, 1887.

H. EGLINTON.

ON THE DEATH OF A SON. TO HIS PARENTS.

He hath vanished from your sight,
As a star in morning's light;
Wrapt within the sun's bright sphere,
Is the star less surely here?
Star and child alike fulfil,
Though unseen, their mission still.

Earthly eyes indeed must fail;
He has passed beyond the veil;
But the spirit's eye can trace,
Still within your dwelling-place,
That young angel's radiant brow,
Crowned with deathless glory now.

Though disrobed of mortal clay,
Jesus takes him not away;
Jesus leads him by the hand,
In your bosom's Eden land;
Gives you back your angel boy,
As a minister of joy.

Still he walketh by your side,
Youthful angel glorified,—
Whispering messages of love
From the fatherland above:—
Bearing to your spirit's shrine
Gifts of heavenly bread and wine.

—B. H. FARQUHAR.

LIFE.

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths:
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most—feels the noblest—acts the best.
Life's but a means unto an end—that end,
Beginning, mean, and end to all things—God.

—P. J. BAILEY.

THE LATE MRS. MILNER STEPHEN.

A correspondent sends us the following notes respecting Mrs. Mary Milner Stephen, whose decease we recorded in our last issue:—

It is with deep sympathy and sorrow for her bereaved partner, as well as her family and friends, that we record the passing to the higher life of Mrs. Mary Milner Stephen, wife of the well-known Spiritual healer, now living in the Metropolis, and still more widely known in the United States of America and upon the Australian continent.

For the following brief account of her life we are mainly indebted to a biographical sketch by her son, Mr. Harold Stephen, late M.P., of New South Wales.

Mrs. Stephen was born in England, and was the youngest daughter of Rear Admiral Sir John Hindmarsh, K.H. For the first ten years of her life her father resided in France, and she went to a convent school, on returning from which one day down a narrow wooded lane she came upon two men engaged in a duel with swords and covered with blood. They politely drew back to let her pass, and she ran home, half fainting with the horror of the scene.

She was from childhood spiritually instructed. When only five years of age she took great delight in gazing at the stars, saying "they were inhabited," and "when she died she should travel from one to the other."

Her sweet and affectionate nature led her to reject the harsher features of the popular religious creed, as inconsistent with the faith in a merciful and loving God. She delighted in teaching in the Sunday-school, visiting the poor, and attending the several church services. She early developed a great talent for drawing and music, and her rich contralto voice attracted much attention.

Mrs. Stephen accompanied her father with his family in H.M.S. Buffalo to Australia, in 1836, on the occasion of his proceeding there to proclaim the new colony of South Australia as its first governor. Whilst visiting Rio Janeiro for supplies she made a panoramic drawing in water colours of the beautiful scenery of the city and harbour, which, seven years afterwards, was shown to the late Christian, eighth King of Denmark, on her visiting the Isle of Föhr, where his Majesty and the Queen were spending the summer months. The King was so pleased with it that, at his request, she made a copy of it for his Majesty, and the following summer he presented her with a diamond bracelet, and her Majesty gave her an exquisitely carved tortoiseshell card-basket.

It was while in South Australia that she became acquainted with and married Mr. Milner Stephen, who had been acting governor, she being then in the twenty-second year of her age.

During her continuous travels with her husband she enriched her portfolio with many charming drawings of the most noted and picturesque landscapes. And she enchanted the many friends who visited them by her beautiful pianoforte operatic airs, and her interesting description of the scenes and lands through which she had travelled.

Mrs. Stephen was singularly kind and charitable, especially to the poor and suffering. Her gentle and soothing influence with the sick made her a most valuable help to her husband in his beneficent labours to relieve the suffering and afflicted.

Her friends were greatly attached to her; her servants all loved her, one living twenty-seven years with her; whilst her family adored her.

She resigned all the comforts of her beautiful Australian estate, and cheerfully made every necessary sacrifice, to share her husband's labours for the good of afflicted humanity.

Her kind and gentle attention to his patients won their hearts, and many were the lovely wreaths and flowers with which, in profusion they decked the dear form of their departed friend. She had loving correspondents in all parts of the world; to whom and to her family her death will be an irreparable loss.

Her departure was rather sudden and unexpected; she had been ailing for some time, but nothing serious was immediately apprehended: but on the evening of Christmas Day she was struck with apoplexy and paralysis, and from that time was incapable of either speech or motion till the end, which came on Tuesday, Dec. 27th, at twelve p.m., when she passed quietly away, being tended to the last by her husband and two loving friends, who had learnt to love and revere her for her many virtues.

On Saturday her remains were interred at Nunhead Cemetery.

January 2nd, 1888.

T. S.

MEDIUMSHIP AND THE LAW OF LUNACY.

BY MRS. BOOLE.

No one who has given a moment's attention to the subject can doubt that ladies in whom mediumship develops spontaneously are, especially in country places, in danger of becoming incarcerated as lunatics; because ignorant medical practitioners can always be found who will pander to the prejudices of relatives or landladies. I have often been asked to assist in attempts to improve the lunacy laws; and have been engaged for some years past on a series of experiments, calculated to bring to an issue some questions relative to the status of spontaneous mediums before the English law. I have at different times succeeded in getting myself suspected by a good number of medical men eager to entrap mediums. I have always slipped through their fingers at the last minute, with perfect ease, owing to my knowledge of certain legal technicalities. I have thus convinced myself that the danger is due, not to the state of the law, but to ignorance as to what the law is. I propose, therefore, to offer here a few simple precautions, by the observance of which any medium may defy medical prejudice to do her any harm; and may, at the same time, help to spread a sound knowledge of Spiritualistic science.

Remember always that a certificate may be signed by *any two* doctors. Therefore if your medical man suggests "a second opinion," or "a consultation," take care that the second is one of your own choosing.

Never speak *unguardedly*, never drift into what may be called the "short-hand," or "cant," or "slang" of Spiritualism, in the presence of any person holding a medical diploma, or indeed of any person whatever, *as to whom you are not sure that he or she does not hold a diploma*. It is perfectly safe to express any sort of Spiritualistic belief in the presence of any medical person, provided that you do so in *correct and logical language*.

I will now give a few examples of the stock questions asked by ill-educated doctors when they suspect lunacy; with answers which are safe, and at the same time honest:—

"Do you hear voices?"

"Yes, when people speak within my hearing."

"Do you hear any voices besides those of the persons bodily present?"

"I do not understand the question. My auditory nerves are more perfectly sensitive than some people's. Besides conveying to the brain vibrations made by the air on the tympanum, they also convey to the tympanum vibrations made by spiritual force in the brain. This creates a sensation as of sound; but I know the two orders of sounds apart." (A similar answer as to the optic nerve is safe in case of being asked about visions, &c.)

"Have you a special commission from Heaven to reform society or preach a new religion?"

"The special commission which every pious person has, to do good and explode humbug."

"Do the dead talk to you?"

"I believe, as a matter of religious faith, that it is the function of the blessed dead to guide the destinies of those on earth. Everyone, in this country, has a right to his own religion; and that is mine."

"Do the dead speak specially to you?"

"Not more specially than to every spiritual person. Not more specially to me because my auditory nerves happen to be in more perfect working order than some people's."

And so on. If you are asked your opinion on the subject of demoniacal possession, you may reply:—"I am not learned in devilry. I have heard it said that irreverent men who try, in their earth-life, to put down Spiritualism, are punished, after death, with a mania for wandering about the world trying to stir up people to believe in it without knowing anything really about it; and that such maniacal ghosts are called, by the ignorant, 'devils'; but all I know, of my own knowledge, is that, because I have a firm spiritual faith, no such unholy creatures ever get possession of me, whether in the flesh or the spirit."

If you are asked whether you have enemies, whether you quarrel with your relatives, whether you often change your abode, &c., reply:—"Excuse me; you are not my lawyer; and I do not answer impertinent questions about my private affairs."

Remember that, as long as you are not actually certificated, no one has a right to detain you in any strange house for one moment after you have expressed a wish to leave it; nor has

any person, except your own doctor and nurse, the right to remain in your room after being requested to leave. Therefore, if you are really unwell, and not sure of yourself, answer no questions, but keep intrusive strangers away by warning them not to thrust their society on you at all.

But the best precaution of all consists in applying to be admitted for (say) a month or two into a lunatic asylum, as a *voluntary patient*. You may do this whenever you are tired, or suffering from neuralgia, or when you only need change of air. No position is so safe from the possibility of a certificate as that of a woman who has voluntarily placed herself under the inspection of the staff of an asylum, and proved herself able to understand their advice, and willing to carry it out without compulsion. Moreover, after such residence in an asylum, you will always be able to say, in case of need, that the doctor of it is your medical adviser, and that you refuse to see any other. You may thus spare yourself much worry and excitement. Voluntary boarders are taken at the Holloway Sanatorium, Virginia Water (and I suppose at others also).

The voluntary boarder at an asylum is, of course, expected to set an example of unquestioning and cheerful obedience to the whole staff. If she ventures to expostulate with anyone, it should be with the doctor; *never by any chance with an attendant or servant*. Resistance to an attendant is considered, in such places, as *proof of lunacy*; and rightly so; for sane common-sense would suggest that, amid surroundings so unfamiliar, the new-comer cannot possibly know what ought to be done. And as the commands of attendants always relate to external matters, there is nothing slavish or degrading in absolute and instant obedience; it is a very different thing from the discipline of a convent which aims to subdue the soul and weaken the will. The visitor may feel it strange at first to be always, as it were, under suspicion. But as soon as the staff have assured themselves that she has no tendency to kleptomania, violence, or breach of rules, she is treated with an indulgence which is practically limitless, and a courtesy which is unflinching. I am not going, here, to write a panegyric on the Holloway staff; but my impression is that they are, one and all, weary of unreasonable requests which they are not allowed to gratify; and that it is a relief to their own nerves to be able occasionally to reply, "Oh, certainly, with the greatest pleasure." The voluntary patient can, therefore, enjoy a season of luxurious freedom from worry, amid lovely scenery. She will have the advantage of being able to observe what mental habits are bad to indulge in, as tending to induce real insanity. She will also have such opportunities as cannot be found outside of asylums for observing exceptional forms of spontaneous mediumship:—such as *chronic dream*, *picture-vision*, *polar* (or *inverted*) *thought-transference*; and that other still more interesting form of thought-transference, wherein a thought which is abstract in one mind projects itself on to another in a concrete form; the main source, of course, of prophetic imagery. The free patient will of course not bring the subject of Spiritualism prominently before the regular inmates; she should listen quietly to their spontaneous utterances; and, when occasion serves, try to interest them in rational and unexciting pursuits. As long as she creates no unhealthy excitement, she will be allowed to study freely the phenomena of spontaneous mediumship. The medical officers are too experienced, and the whole staff too busy, to have any desire to interfere with what lies outside the sphere of their duties.

That our lunacy laws need amending, there can, I think, be no doubt; but I submit that mediumistic ladies had better not plunge into all the agitations of party wrangling, until they have made more use than has as yet been done of the perfectly safe opportunities afforded by existing arrangements, for the study of the higher Spiritualism.

MR. MINOT SAVAGE emphasises in his paper, which we reproduce in another column, from the *Soul*, what we have often said and written. People go about laboriously striving to prove that a man has a soul. Would it not be more reasonable if they were to reverse the process of argument and start from the indestructible principle? Man, as we know him, is *a spirit that has grown a body*, and so has adapted himself to his surroundings in this material world. When the spirit has done with it, the body drops off, and is buried and done with; and the man is what we call *dead*. That is really the scientific and complete account of the whole matter.

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Light:

EDITED BY "M.A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14th, 1888.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor. 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.

VISIONS.

By "M.A. (OXON.)"

(Continued from p. 6.)

SECOND DAY.—SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1877.

[Pursuing the same plan as before, I found myself in spirit with the Angel and a number of other spirits, with whom I was conducted, as it seemed, far away into space. I was told that the company was for protection, or for the furnishing magnetic support to me, as I was going into the "Spheres of Desolation"—"the Land of Darkness." We passed rapidly over a tract of country not unlike that which obtains in the iron district, only more lonely and bare. The soil seemed barren, and was covered over with refuse—just as those places near an iron furnace are heaped with slag and rubbish. From it arose a noisome stench. I could detect no sign of life, nor could I fancy anything living there.

Our path took us further and further away from *life*, until we came to a place where I could hear a distant rumbling as of the ocean, and I saw an entrance to a sort of cavern, round which more rubbish was piled. We descended into this aperture, which was choked with filth, and from out of which mephitic vapour ascended.

After going through many tortuous passages, we came to a vaulted cave in which glowed a fire, and from which issued sulphurous smoke. There was a forge in it, and the floor was piled with half-formed engines of destruction. I could hardly breathe, and was refreshed by some passes made over my head by one of the attendant spirits.

I then saw X. Y. Z.,* grimy and filthy, naked to the waist, round which a few rags were gathered. His hair was matted with dirt, his face and body begrimed, and streaked here and there with blood and perspiration. He was savagely welding some material that did not look like metal on his anvil, and was cursing with much vehemence. He was not at once aware of our presence, and when he was he saluted the Angel with a volley of execrations. I need not detail the conversation with him. He did not see me until we were about to leave, and he then grinned savagely, and said, "Ah! . . . you, you know now

* X. Y. Z. was a young man of great ability, but of unbridled temper. He lived in chronic disagreement with his family, and finally took to furious drinking, and killed himself thereby at an early age. I have never known anyone drink as he did. He must have been soaked through and through in ardent spirit. I had known his father and all his family, as well as himself, and had been the means sometimes of mediating between them. But he was mad with drink and rage, because he could not have all he wanted, and was unmanageable. He used very violent language habitually. His family was fairly tolerant of his vagaries, but his father was a hard man, and irritated him, driving him to despair.

where that fire came from that burned you." (At one of the séances I had described him as sitting near me, and had put out my hand in his direction. He had suddenly touched me, and the result was a blister on my hand.) We turned to leave, and his mocking laugh rang in our ears as we went. I wished to question, but was told to refrain till I had resumed the bodily state.

Emerging again into the air above ground, we passed rapidly away, and I was conscious of a dreamy feeling as when one dozes in a carriage; a sense of motion combined with repose. I cannot tell how long this continued.

When I was fully conscious again I saw a very different scene before me. I was looking at a town, large and thickly peopled apparently, for I saw many spirits hurrying to and fro in the streets. But the oddest things surrounded me. Everything was unfinished. There was a most pretentious palace with no roof, and, on close inspection, built of mere gimcrack material, the walls set with sham diamonds; looking-glasses everywhere, and walls half-hung with tawdry tinsel. The very streets were unfinished, and had mirrors here and there, and toilet appurtenances at the corner of the streets, and outside of the houses. I saw many stop and look at themselves, and give a twist to the moustache or a more jaunty set to the hat. I saw no women, all men and boys.

While I wondered at this I found myself going up the steps and through the hall into one of the houses. It had the same unfinished air, the same tinsel magnificence, the same cold, cheerless appearance. We looked into a room on the ground floor and found nothing but combs and brushes and broken mirrors, and fearful clothes of loud patterns, all heaped together in confusion.

We passed on upstairs, and there, surrounded by mirrors, I saw A. B.* He was clothed in most extraordinary raiment, of loudest pattern, and most unharmonious colours, shaped according to our ultra-fashionable pattern. His hair was reeking of strong-scented grease, and he was industriously trying to disguise the scar over his eye with rouge and pearl-powder. It had been made at his death, and it disfigured his face. He turned to greet me, but with an air of great preoccupation. He did not listen to what I said, but interrupted me at once with some foolish question as to the cut of his coat. He brought a mirror to show me the beautiful way in which he had parted his hair (as if I wanted a mirror to see that). He evidently thought mirrors the great thing in his life. He made disparaging remarks about the personal appearance of those with me, who now had assumed the natural appearance of men: and he kept throwing about some very fade-smelling scent which was very nasty. Now and then he seemed to have gleams of sense: and then he hastily covered his face and body with his hands, as though to hide them from our gaze. But the gleams soon passed, and he turned again to his mirrors and pomatum. He was vigorously brushing his back hair when we left him.]

[Another period of half-consciousness and I found myself back in the body, with an extremely vivid memory of what I had seen. I have immediately fixed the impression in what I have now written.]

[By automatic writing.]

What—

Do not question now, but arise and eat and cleanse the body in cold water, after that we will explain.

[Having done so I resumed:—]

What do the scenes mean? Will you explain or shall I ask special questions?

We will explain. In the first journey you were taken

* A. B. was personally known to me: a young man of extreme personal vanity, who was always dressing and redressing: a person of a very unbalanced mind, which finally gave way altogether, and he took his life by stabbing himself. As he fell he struck his head against some object and made a deep scar over the left eye. This is alluded to in the description.

in spirit to the Sphere of Desolation. It is inhabited by those wretched ones who have sunk in sensuality to a state typified to you by fiery torment. They dwell in a desolate and barren land where no life is, because such is their spiritual state. The spirit whom you went to visit had debauched himself with fiery drink, and had occupied himself in dragging down others to his own level, to their own ruin and misery. Hence in his spiritual state he is grimy and blood-stained to your eye, occupied in forging abortive instruments of destruction in the midst of a stifling and noisome atmosphere. His language is cursing and bitterness, and his punishment is to see designs that are full of promise marred and broken by clumsiness of execution. This is the outcome of his life—genius wrecked by debauchery. The stench was the analogue of his spiritual thoughts. The metal that he was welding was an amalgam which in his exceeding cleverness he had made to supersede all others, and he knows not that it is rotten and can never be welded. So again in his life. He would not walk in the path of duty, nor do his allotted work, but would find out new ways for himself, and then rush to drink because they came to nought. He is now leading a life which strikes you as horrible; not so him. To him it is strenuous exertion which he vainly thinks profitable. He will not see till the efforts of the Ministers have availed to stir in him some spiritual life. This has been done more than once, but he has always relapsed.

Horrible! Can't he be got at?

What was the experience of him in earth-life?

True; he was most impracticable.

He is far more so now. Leave him to those who are wiser than you.

We turn to your other friend. In the scene you saw you will discover the analogue of his life. For what was it? Vanity, all vanity. Hence he lives in the city of vanity where all is vain and frivolous, empty and unsatisfying. The houses and buildings are unfinished, for the vain ones have no care for anything but themselves, and so they cannot concentrate attention so as to complete anything. They are tawdry and full of base shams, because the vain ones live in the external, and cannot discern between the gold and its imitation. The mirrors that lie everywhere are to the vain ones the ornament they most desire, for they show them their own exterior. The essences and pomades and brushes and the like are the necessities of life, for the vain ones live in vain attempts to deck themselves with what they imagine will trick out their fancied charms; though, as you saw, they succeed only in covering themselves with that which is noisome and ridiculous. The spirit whom you visited spent his life in vanity, and it has eaten into his soul. For now the spirit-body that he has, and which he thinks so much of, is scarred over with blains, full of corruption and disease, which it is his great and constant care to disguise with varied plasters and appliances. Had you been able to see beneath those clothes which he delights in, you would have seen a mass of sores, the noisomeness of which he vainly attempts to cover by sprinkling about the scent which you so disliked. All the vain ones dislike and disparage each other, and are purely selfish. They require to deck themselves as you need food. Hence their streets are furnished with means of so doing as yours are with shops and drinking fountains. There are no women in their city for the vain ones would fear that their finery would be eclipsed.

How queer! Did he really think those awful clothes were decent? Why, they were louder than those of a music hall comic!

They would seem to him the acme of everything lovely for a brief hour, when he would devise some others: for the vain ones change often.

The City is large?

Yes: for the vain ones are very numerous. Do not seek further information now. The Angel goes, and we may be able to show you more hereafter.

This is a new form of teaching. Does it come from the Angel?

Yes. It is the form employed by the grade from which she comes.

Why "she"? Is the Angel feminine?

No. You said "she," and the feminine best suits the tender grace and purity of one who has not been in rude contact with your earth.

Has she passed through any form of Incarnation?

Oh, yes: but not on your earth. I may not say more.—Farewell.

RECTOR.

SAME DAY—EVENING.

[I was conscious of the presence of HARMONY, and gradually I resumed the conditions before described. After gazing for some minutes at the crystal, I seemed to be disengaged from the body and stood with the Angel in a very peaceful scene. We seemed to travel very rapidly over an undulating tract of country, presenting a general appearance of peacefulness and repose. Nothing attracted my attention, but I was impressed with a desire to stay in so peaceful a neighbourhood. Passing swiftly we came to a valley shut in by low hills, wooded to their very tops, and with a great luxuriance of herbage and flowers. A river meandered slowly and without a ripple through the valley, and the only sound I could detect was the cooing of doves. A delicate scent of new mown hay pervaded the scene, which was one of intense repose. The angel stopped over a cottage—it was hardly more—embowered in flowers, and with a fountain playing in the front of it. The stillness was almost oppressive; and I turned to contemplate the extremely orderly arrangement of everything. Standing in the garden, apparently meditating, was a striking figure; not in any sense majestic—something was wanting, I should say, of *power*—but decidedly striking. It was the upright form of an oldish man with clear-cut features, well-formed head and hands; and the body was draped in fair white, with very little relief in colour.*

He looked at us as we approached him, and saluted us, with rather stately courtesy. We entered the cottage and found ourselves in a room in which orderly arrangement was the first thing that struck me. The furniture and surroundings were simple enough, but all was kept with precision, and nothing seemed out of place. I was struck with the similarity of the place to what I have seen often enough on earth. I should say that *order* was the great characteristic; not *profundity*, or *novelty*.

He seemed to know me, and I conversed with him; and during the conversation, I was not conscious of any other presence. He spoke freely of our séances, of his appearance two or three times (especially at a séance where he materialised), and expressed the warmest interest in what we were doing to familiarise men with the truths of spirit intercourse. He did most of the talking, for I have not yet got power enough to individualise when out of the body.† I cannot say that anything was told me of importance. I was more impressed with the very strong likeness that the face bore to that known to me by a photograph and by the materialisation. I inquired whether he would visit us at our séances. He said, "Oh! no, that is not permitted. I have put you in the way, and now you must go on. You will come to me. I shall not return." I said that it would

* A connection of a close friend of mine. I never saw him except at a materialisation séance. I had seen his portrait, but I had no knowledge of the man in the body. He had been, I am told, a refined, courteous man, of no special power or force of character; a high-minded gentleman, very orderly in his habits, neat and precise.

† This is a touch of naturalness which may bear on the question of reality.

be a comfort if he could. He said, "I cannot. It is not in my choice." I pressed that there were medial spirits, and that he might communicate through them. He put it aside with a rather dignified wave of the hand, and said, "You do not know our life and our interests."

He showed me with much interest apparently a very beautiful flower of a kind not familiar to me, and directed my attention to the opening bud. He said that one of his great delights was the study of flowers.

The whole impression left on me was that I had been calling on a gentleman who was occupied in ordinary pursuits of a rather refined nature, of no great depth and of no originality. There was a pervading atmosphere of simplicity and sincerity. I asked for messages or tokens, and he said, "My love is none other than it always was. Never mind messages. Take this;" and he plucked a rose just bursting from the bud. But when I put out my hand to take it it was not plucked, but blooming on its stem. I wondered, and he signed me to go, and we left.]

[Automatic Writing.]

Can you give me any message about the last vision?

It was not a vision, but experience. No: all is clear, is it not?

Oh, yes. But I should have liked something more personal.

He is beyond the range of the personal, in an atmosphere of peace and rest. He could not, if he would, concern himself with you.

But his affections are vivid?

But cannot operate to your earth. Leave the personal. He is happy. We cannot do more now.

THE REV. A. H. MACKONCHIE.

No. 49 of the *St. Alban's, Holborn, Parish Magazine*, for the current month, is devoted to accounts of the circumstances of the death and funeral of the Rev. A. H. Mackonochie, so long and so well known in connection with St. Alban's Church, Holborn. Of his most self-sacrificing and blameless life, and strange sad death in the snowdrift amid the Scottish mountains, it is needless to say anything here; but the following passage from a letter of the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, at p. 16 of the *Magazine*, will have interest for the readers of "LIGHT":—

"We cannot tell for certain when he breathed his last, but a thing happened which I think may give a clue. About a quarter to twelve on that terrible Thursday night, while J. W. was at his prayers in his Glencoe lodgings, he suddenly felt conscious of a *presence* in the room, and, looking up, he saw something white pass before him. The incident made such an impression on him that next morning he told his landlady what had happened. I should mention that, at that time, he knew nothing of our anxiety. A quarter to twelve would have given our dear friend about six hours or more of utter darkness and bewilderment, and on such a night this would have been about as much as any strong man could have endured."

A DREAM.

On the 19th of last month the daily papers briefly recorded the death of Mr. Mackonochie while on a visit in Scotland. I read the bare announcement when engrossed in preparations for a contemplated journey next day, and the various matters requiring attention crowded the sad event from my mind for several hours. No sooner, however, had I retired to rest than memory recalled the circumstances attending the death of a near relative of mine, with whose life, in a religious house, Mr. Mackonochie had been intimately associated. The *Standard* having observed that "the rev. gentleman had been in bad health for several months," my last conscious thoughts before falling asleep were a sort of conclusion that his life of self-denial had so completely undermined his health that he had dropped dead of heart disease. My dream, during the night, left no impression on my mind, but before daybreak, when between sleeping and waking, I appeared suddenly to realise that I was lying down in an unknown locality. I was out of doors, and, without consequent surprise or alarm, it was conveyed to me that I was dying in a snowdrift. I analysed my sensations. My limbs were stiff and immovable, while a strange glow of warmth filled me internally. It diffused itself, finally, through my brain, and I felt great satisfaction in comparing my dying sensations to the ecstasy I have experienced when under the influence of laughing gas. In the act of dying I quietly awoke, and almost immediately I recalled the death of Mr. Mackonochie, though he was in no way associated with my dream. My family, at breakfast, laughed at my sad experiences during the past night, and two hours afterwards the details of Mr. Mackonochie's death appeared in the *Standard*.

H. F. T.

THE PROBLEM.

BY THE REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE, BOSTON, MASS.

(From *The Soul*.)

"A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save
And fit it for the sky."

This is the first verse of a hymn that I often heard sung in my childhood. It asserts that man *has* a soul. All through those years it was impressed upon me that I *had* a soul; and that the one important business of life was to insure the eternal safety of this soul, as of a sort of precious jewel that had been intrusted to my keeping. The text, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"—this was rung in my ears.

I have quoted these words to call attention to the old idea of one's *having* a soul that some time he might lose—as though it were something separable from his own personality. Doubtless, the old writers did not mean this; and yet the old way of stating it did leave the impression that a man might choose between *his soul's* safety and *his own* gain.

Men do not think much to-day about their *having* souls; but still the *soul-problem* remains as the one that transcends all others in both interest and importance. It is no less than the question *what am I? and what is my destiny?* And in the presence of this, all other questions fade into insignificance.

It is said that Schopenhauer was one day walking the street so absorbed in thought as to be oblivious of all passers-by, when some hurrying pedestrian ran against him. Angry that the old philosopher had not turned aside to make way for him, he exclaimed, "*Who are you, anyhow?*" The old man roused from his reverie, in which he had been pondering, perhaps, this deep problem of his own personality, and replied, "*My friend, I'd give the world if some one would only answer this question for me.*" Such is the attitude of those who look deepest into the mysteries not yet solved.

Mr. Tyndall, speaking for those who deal with one, and that the popular, phase of science says, "The problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages."

That man's essential personality is something that may continue to exist after the death of the body is a belief as old and as widespread as humanity. But it has been held apart from any scientific evidence of its truth. But to-day, the attitude of the world toward this question is greatly changed. Multitudes, indeed, continue to cherish the belief, simply as an article of their religious faith, or because they strongly desire to believe. But I have reason to know, almost every week, that this sort of faith cannot and does not stand the strain of great bereavements. Precisely when it is needed most the support gives way.

The plain fact is, that most thinking men to-day find it impossible to believe what cannot be based on something like adequate evidence. So, as never before, they are reaching out in every direction in search of whatever may have a bearing on the question, not as to whether men *have* souls, but as to whether they *are* souls.

The question then, to-day, assumes just this shape—*Am I a soul?* If I am not, then when the body dies, I die, and there is an end. If I am, then *my body* may die, and *I* continue right on.

My purpose in this brief article is not to argue this question, but only to state the problem plainly, and to state my belief that it is a problem that one may rationally and hopefully investigate. The ground taken by many is that it is a problem incapable of scientific solution, and that therefore time spent upon it is wasted. But the results of psychical research so far are such as to encourage the belief that definite and decisive conclusions can be reached. Much that was scouted a generation ago has at last compelled scientific recognition. Hypnotism, clairvoyance, telepathy—these are now beyond intelligent question. And they reveal such a power, on the part of the mind, to transcend ordinary workings through the recognised channels of sense, as to compel a reconstruction of our theories as to its essential nature; while beyond all these there are the claimed facts of Spiritualism, based on an amount and kind of evidence that would establish almost any other theory than this.

I have no word to say at present as to the truth or falsity of the Spiritualistic claim. I only wish to say that it presents a problem second to no other in all the world in importance. One should not be frightened away by any cry of fraud or delusion. One undoubted fact outweighs a mountain of either or both together.

JOTTINGS.

The Christmas number of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* is full of excellent matter, most of the articles being specially contributed. Dr. H. W. Thomas writes on "The Return of Thought"—man reverting to the study of himself and his own latent powers. Hudson Tuttle, on "The Middle Guard," is very good. "The communion with spirits may be sweet, but there is infinitely more in life. This is but a means to acquire a knowledge of our duty, a means to right conduct in the mortal years." The whole paper adequately indicates the tendency of present-day Spiritualism.

The Rev. Minot J. Savage is clear, vivid, and outspoken as is his wont. "A great question Spiritualism most certainly is. It is either the grandest truth or the most lamentable delusion of the modern world." Dr. Heber Newton considers that "despite the Seybert Commission the last word is far from having been spoken on Spiritualism." (He may depend on that!) "The real force of the movement rests on experiences with which professional mediums have nothing to do . . . While these things hold within home circles, it will take several Seybert Commissions to lay Spiritualism." He may depend on that!

Among other familiar names we have as contributors on various subjects, Bronson Murray, Hon. A. B. Richmond, Elizabeth Lowe Watson, Chas. Dawbarn, Giles B. Stebbins, Lyman C. Howe. A spirit-message, purporting to come from Thomas Giles Forster, is endorsed by his wife, and may be, so far as its contents go, from the source claimed.

We have received the first number of *Il Corriere Spiritico*, a monthly review of Spiritism, published at Florence, by Giovanni Succi, whose prolonged fasting brought him under public notice.

The *Women's Suffrage Journal* has a "Sketch from the Past" of Ela of Salisbury (1188-1261). In the course of the sketch is narrated the story of her son, William Longespé, who fell in the Holy Land, acknowledged General of all the English Crusaders. On the night preceding his death, "it appeared to his mother that a knight armed at all points was received into the opening heavens." She inquired who this might be thus received by angels into glory, "and it was answered in a distinct and audible voice, 'William, thy son.' Having, therefore, taken notice of that night, the vision afterwards proved to be clearly fulfilled." An ancient bit of "modern Spiritualism"!

The current number of the *Fortnightly Review* has an article by Mr. F. W. H. Myers, on "Darwin and Agnosticism," and one by the Rev. Llewellyn Davies, on "The Higher Life: How is it to be Sustained?" which are worth attention.

The first two of the Rev. J. Page Hopps's "Sermons for our Day" are published (price 2d., of all booksellers). They deal with "Religion as a Source of Joy" and "Self-possession and Sanity." The latter discourse is from the text, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," and is an admirable exposition, full of spiritual insight. Prayer, the going out of self to One Who is Holier and Wiser; fasting, the conquest of self by restraint and a wise abstinence.

The type and general get-up of these sermons is worthy of all praise. The tone that pervades them, free from conventionality, dogmatism, and cant of all kinds, and full of spiritual wisdom, should make them very acceptable to many who could not fully accept and make their own all Mr. Hopps's beliefs.

From a leader of the *Daily Telegraph* a quarter of a century old:—

"Yet, who can say when or where the wonderful healing power may be lodged? We know as yet far too little of Nature and her secrets to reject anything as incredible merely because it outrages our notions of probability. It is easy—it is a platitude—to say that no one can violate a law of nature; but that truism does not carry us very far, unless we are quite sure that we know what all the laws of nature actually are—a pitch of knowledge at which none but the most ignorant fancy that we have yet arrived."

We are not much advanced now at the office of the *D. T.*

Jesse Shepard seems to be giving up mediumship. Perhaps mediumship has given him up. We do not know. But it is another "sign of the times" that he should directly say that professional mediumship—healing and test—is not sustained as it

used to be. In his opinion matters have developed, and the "mind-cure" has it all its own way—"magnetic healing has not been a success . . . its days are numbered . . . the sooner healers of the old school recognise this fact the better it will be for their pockets."

"I have received" (writes Mr. Shepard) "many letters from persons in different places with the information that their spirit guides desire them to travel about the world on a kind of mission, and asking my advice. I counsel all such, if they have a home, to remain in it. If they have kind friends and relatives remain near them. I would counsel these misguided persons to have nothing to do with professional mediumship. If their spirit friends are wise they would advise no such action on their part at the present day. The year 1887 is not the year 1870. It is now a long time since travelling mediums were appreciated and well paid. The public no longer patronise mediums financially, as in days past. We are living in a new age, so to speak. New influences are at work; new philosophy is taught; new science is acting. It no longer suffices to declare oneself a medium with a mission. Spiritualists have grown so sceptical and critical that they no longer accept mere statements for facts."

All this is, as we have said, a sign of the transition epoch in which our lot is cast. Making due allowances for a little exaggeration, Mr. Shepard's remarks are true. Partly because physical mediumship has done its work; partly because it has been defiled with reiterated fraud; partly because people now expect their phenomena when they choose to ask for them, and under conditions when they cannot possibly be had, except rarely and after much patience;—for these and other reasons the ordinary phenomena called physical are increasingly rare.

Observers have been driven to despair by one exposure after another. Some of these alleged exposures have been *bonâ fide* discoveries of pure (or impure) cheating. Others, as we believe, have been mistaken interpretations of very obscure phenomena. But the general outcome has been that observers of credit and reputation have been driven to make conditions of observation which have checked the ready flow of phenomena, and have practically made professional mediumship, as it was in the past, impossible.

There is, we believe, no lack of these sporadic phenomena in private. They are subject to a sort of tidal ebb and flow, and we have just emerged from a period of full tide. We shall be wise if we devote the slack time to patient study of the facts that have accumulated. We can dispense with a good deal of fruitless attempts to explain them away. Conjurors are at a discount!

How curiously similar to what we call a spiritual experience is this narrated by Mr. Haslam in his *From Death unto Life*. After telling of a wonderful revival in the house of a penitent—

"The work at Frank's cottage stopped as suddenly as it began. I cannot theorise about the subject; I merely state that so it was. It began, it continued, and continued only in that house, and there it stopped. Another remarkable thing may be here observed—that on visiting the cottages within a limited distance round Frank's house people were softened, and it was easy to persuade them to yield themselves to Christ. They appeared to be ripe and ready. Just beyond this limit the people were as hard and careless as ever. It seemed as if the power of God overshadowed only a certain spot, and that all were under Divine influence for the time, though not all were converted." (P. 92.)

What a good instance this of the way spirit-action experience helps to harmonise so much that without it conflicts both with our abstract theories and received religious beliefs. Truly, it has supplied many a "missing link."

The following pretty little poem is reproduced from the *Golden Gate*:—

Drifting Away.

BY BEATRICE WEST.

"I will abide in thy tabernacle forever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings." (Psalm lxi. 4.)

I am drifting away to some other shore;
I know not where it may be;
But, Spirit of Love, wherever I go,
My soul will abide in thee.

I have known thy love in the years long past,
In seasons of grief and care;
And I know thy peace, which has blessed me here,
Will comfort and bless me there.

I am drifting away from familiar scenes,
From the friends I've known of old;
And things I've valued and held as mine
My life will no longer hold.

I am drifting away, as the years go by,
Out over Eternity's sea;
But, Hope of my life, wherever I go,
My soul will abide in thee.—*Christian Register*.

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.]

Reminiscences.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—After the three séances that gave me the first taste of Spiritualism, in the winter of 1856-57, at Naples, as already described, I met with no more of it until the winter of 1858-59, when I was at Nice. There I fell in with Kardec's *Livre des Esprits*, which I read with much interest. That was all. The following winter, that of 1859-60, I spent at Florence. There I had an opportunity of seeing more of the marvellous phenomena that this new-old enigma has elucidated.

There, a Signor Zanardelli had taken a large concert room. He was a physician or surgeon, and having had a young daughter whose life was despaired of, he tried mesmerism as a last resource. He has told me that he never would have mesmerised his child under any other circumstances; but, as it was, his treatment cured her, and, what was more, left her a subject of extraordinary powers as a clairvoyant. The daughter was a pretty, interesting, intelligent girl, and her clairvoyant powers drew many people to their séances. They, however, varied their entertainments with Spiritualism of perhaps a less ethereal nature, for Signor Zanardelli was not only a mesmeriser, but a physical medium also. An accordion would be played in a well-lighted room in his presence, and what occurred at one of his séances, where I was present, I have never heard of occurring elsewhere. We were sitting round a table in his large room; his daughter was generally, if not always, present; and above our heads was a chandelier, lighted by, perhaps, a dozen candles. He kept his eyes, for a short time, fixed on one of these candles, the nearest to him above his head. He said, "I am asking the spirits to put out that candle." He had hardly spoken when the candle went out.

He had also the power of answering questions in closed papers. He would take a planchette. The closed paper would be placed before him, he would put the closed paper on the planchette, and an answer would be written by the planchette, and read aloud before the paper was opened. Then the paper would be opened and the question read aloud, reversing the usual order of question and response. I have seen, perhaps, a dozen answers and questions thus treated the same evening consecutively, seen by all and read aloud, one after another, and all the questions, so far as I could make out, seemed to have had answers *apropos*, and to the contentment of the questioners. Here is one question that I put. I had written it at home, and when my turn came I put down my paper. The reply was: "They will answer you in sleep." My paper was then unfolded and read aloud; it was, "Will the spirits answer me?" I had put it in bad Italian and in English, and the Signor did not understand it at first; but an American who was present said, "What he means is—'Will the spirits answer me?'" Signor Zanardelli had a remarkably strange little toy for producing raps. It was a flat round piece of wood, about the size of the palm of a hand. In the centre of this was fixed a high button, like a page's button. When Signor Zanardelli held his hand some inches over this little machine, without touching it, it would rise on its button and answer his questions by raps. My question, with its response, "They will answer you in sleep," led to further questions and answers of a like nature. So that it ended in the Signor asking me if I would allow him to try to put me in a mesmeric sleep, as he expected important phenomena might come out of it. So I agreed to come to him the next morning and to let him try. With my present knowledge I would not advise others to submit to it. The next morning I met the Signor in his large room, and duly sat down in a chair; and he made the usual passes without in any way affecting me; and what was curious, the button toy that was lying on a table in this large room, perhaps fifteen or twenty feet off, kept rising up on its button, "urged by no mortal hand," as the saying is (for there were none but Signor Zanardelli and myself present, of the visible order), and rapping, fast and furious, as if laughing at the mesmeric operation and its non-success, which was no fault of mine, as at that time I should have been quite willing to be mesmerised effectually for the good of science.

After one of these séances, some of the people were lingering in the room, and the Signor and his daughter were some distance off. I went up to the planchette, putting my hand upon it, and it moved itself off the table. I then held my hand some distance above the button toy, and it began rapping away quite joyfully. A lady, whom I knew nothing of, stood watching me. She probably thought I was one of Zanardelli's troupe, but when she met me a day or two after walking in the streets with my wife and children in true English fashion, she looked so taken aback that if she had not been on the other side of the street, I might have considered it prudent to go to her assistance to keep her from falling. I have never got raps while sitting alone, though in former days I sometimes attempted. The Signor persuaded me to take his planchette home and try it. It never would write for me, but during the short time I had it in the house I had no peace. There would come little rappings on my chair that I did not want my wife to hear. I felt sure of it at the time, but it might have been fancy, so I soon took it back, and was troubled no more.

Notes in a closed piano would sound in the presence of Signor Zanardelli and his daughter when they were not near it. At the end of the séance, occasionally, the room would be partially darkened, and then furniture all over the large room would commence moving about in a fashion entirely contrary to the laws of gravity, and on one occasion succeeded in frightening some person, I suppose of importance, so much that Signor Zanardelli, his daughter, and another young lady, who was helpful in the physical line (she used to be put in a cataleptic state and pins thrust through her arm), were suddenly ordered out of the town, and I saw their faces no more. They were apparently very respectable people, with abnormal powers that society will not suffer to obtrude upon it beyond a certain point.

AN OBSERVER.

The New Church and Spiritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have come across two chapters of criticism upon Modern Spiritualism in a book which is perhaps not very familiar to most Spiritualists. It has added value owing to the position and erudition of the writer. The name of the book is *Issues of Modern Thought*, by the Rev. R. L. Tafel, A.M., Ph. D. This gentleman is a fully accredited authority upon the New Church (Swedenborgian) position and doctrines. I think such a man is worthy of the keenest and most searching criticism. He represents a style of thought far in advance of the dogmatic standard taken up by ordinary Christian Churches.

I should very much like that you, Mr. Editor, should give your opinion of the objections which he makes against Modern Spiritualism. His arguments are rather abstruse, and veiled in language which might have been simpler in expression. Yet these two chapters, which deal with what he terms "Spiritism," are packed with a considerable amount of plausible reasoning.

Your space will not allow me to give you details of the many sides of his argument. Amongst others he advances these two propositions. First: He affirms that before the fall of man the purity of man's spiritual aspirations was so perfect that there was no need of direct communion with the spirit spheres; by the science of correspondence, and the invisible influx of Spirit into human spirit, the happiness of the spiritual part of man was fully satisfied. But man cried out for natural evidence of immortality, and in this cry were contained the first germs of that tree of good and evil which had for its ultimate fruitage the apple of forbidden fame.

This is altogether antagonistic to Spirit-teaching, if I mistake not. We are taught that when men lived nearer to God, the inter-communion of the two worlds was more frequent than in the more materialistic times.

Secondly, I give you an extract which will formulate his opinion upon physical phenomena:—

"The so-called materialisations, of which we have lately heard so much, are produced in a different manner altogether. During a so-called 'Spiritualistic' manifestation, not only the spirits attendant on the medium are affected, but also those spirits who are attendant on all the other persons who form the Spiritistic circle. In fact all those who are Spiritists at heart are there, attended by a similar class of spirits, namely, by such as burn to effect a return into the natural world; and thus they are brought into a frame of mind peculiarly favourable for Spiritistic phenomena. Their brains, indeed, where their faculties of sight and hearing reside, are in a condition in which they can easily be operated on by spirits in the other life who are in concert together. And such is the case during the so-called materialisations. For sight consists in a change of state produced in the grey substance of the

brain by the impressions which are conveyed thither by the optic nerve from the eye. Illness sometimes affects the grey substance of the brain in a similar manner, and then a patient, with his bodily faculty of sight which resides in the brain, sees objects which are excited in him from the memory by the imagination. Of this character are the images which a person sees when under the influence of *delirium tremens*, and also of certain kinds of hysteria. The same faculty of sight which resides in the grey substance of the brain, in the persons who compose a Spiritistic circle, is also taken possession of by the cunning spirits, in the other life acting together, and by artfully affecting and changing the state of the organs of sight in the brains of the persons, the spirits produce there the identical impression which would be caused by gazing upon materialised objects in the natural world. Hence these persons are prepared to assert solemnly that they have actually seen such materialised objects, or that they have felt them; and their testimony is corroborated by other persons present at such materialisations. The phenomena of levitation and elongation are produced by similar means. In a like manner, the spirits affect the sense of hearing of their victims, so that they imagine they hear all sorts of musical noises, and the like, for the brain is the general sensory organ of all the senses. In other cases, however, and perhaps in most, the so-called 'materialisations' are simply the results of trickery and deception."

Is this a correct explanation of Spiritistic phenomena? I myself think this explanation absurd, but a scientific argument is used, and I should like to see it answered in the same spirit.

These are only two side lights which Dr. Tafel throws upon our movement. If any of your learned correspondents wish to answer this letter, they must read the chapters in the work mentioned above, as the whole spirit of the book and argument must be felt before it can be thoroughly answered.

The book is published by James Spiers, 36, Bloomsbury-street, London. If any person known to you wishes the loan of the same, thinking himself capable of answering the objections set forth, I shall be happy to forward it by book post; but I think that you, sir, "M. A. (Oxon.)," should be able to give it the completest answer. For one reason the author gives you a high place in the movement, and quotes, I think, twice from your books, as an authority upon the subject. I shall await with considerable interest the result of this letter.

May I venture, in conclusion, to ask a question which I have often desired to have answered? What position does Spiritualism hold towards the New Church, and what is its estimate of the teachings and influence of Emanuel Swedenborg? That the New Church represents the finest and most comprehensive Christian theology, cannot be gainsaid. It has a searching and extremely thoughtful literature, taught by highly intelligent men. Swedenborg seems to have been the largest and most comprehensive man who has ever lived upon this earth. How did it come that he linked his new view of the universe and the heavens with the older theology? How did he fail to receive that inspiration which came to A. J. Davis and his successors in these later days? How shall we judge betwixt such men as Swedenborg and A. J. Davis? What standard of truth shall we accept to bring a final settlement? I do not wish by this to raise a theological discussion, but simply that truth may be born afresh, hoping that a few thoughts may be uttered which may be the means of giving rest to many an inquiring mind.

Hall Gates, Hexham-on-Tyne.

C. NICHOLSON.

The Personality of Satan.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Having been associated with the Rev. James Smith in editing the *Spiritual Herald*, I can endorse your favourable notice of an old friend, who was specially known for his admirable answers to correspondents in the *Family Herald*. Perhaps you may remember his objection to the term "Secularist" as a definition of opinion. "All animals," replied Mr. Smith to his correspondent, "are secularists. You mean roast-beef-and-mustardites. No animals like mustard."

The paragraph you quote from the *Spiritual Herald* commencing, "Our correspondent is at fault in assuming the existence of a supreme, omnipresent prince of hell, called Satan or the devil," was not written by Mr. Smith, and as he liked signing himself "*Catholicus*," the statement had better not be attributed to his pen. It is purely Swedenborgian, and Mr. Smith was neither sectarian nor secularist, but a son of the prophets. These, from Job and Ezekiel to Milton and Harris, teach the contrary, and the great world moves accordingly. Some ten years ago Mr. Haweis, of St. James's, Marylebone, preached a sermon on the personality of the devil or Satan, and left it an open question. This is fair enough from a sensual-rational or rationalistic standpoint. We certainly have no means of distinguishing between the operation of a personal

ruler and that of his subordinates; and to those who ask for tangible evidence it is very properly replied, "None exists, please yourselves." But it is *not* properly replied, "Our correspondent is *at fault* in assuming the affirmative theory." Why at fault? It is a prevalent theory. It cannot be disproved, and if likely to be obscured in the luxuriant modern growth of the sensual-rational mind, it has received in the pages of Harris's *Arcana of Christianity* such a wealth of interpretation as to claim the respect of Spiritualists, if not also the adherence of Churchmen. I do not know if this prose-epic of Spiritualism has ever been reviewed in your pages. Its style is too rhetorical, and its subject-matter too transcendental for the ordinary reader. Such themes demand the pen of Milton, or the verse of Shelley, for worthy presentation. But he who, perhaps unsatisfied with the stories of his childhood, is yet willing to find confirmation of their substantial truth in other aspects and in modern inspiration, is likely to admit that in those pages the vexed question of the Origin of Evil, its final extinction, and the restitution of all things, has received its approximate solution in a manner unconceived elsewhere.—Yours truly,

W. W. FAWCETT.

"Nizida,"

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It needs some boldness, as well as strong convictions, for one who eagerly absorbs as helpful and wise every paper contributed by "Nizida," to traverse any assertion of hers; but when, after saying that "greater and higher knowledge is slowly and surely descending into the world of mind and thought, over the whole earth," she adds, "its descent, however, is a false appearance; it is the collective mind of all humanity which is growing into a condition to receive it, it is the human mind *ascends*, not that the *higher* descends" ("LIGHT" for January 7th), gratitude to unseen friends and a sense of historic truth compels me to demur. Is not the mode of ascent for the collective mind of humanity strictly analogous to that of the individual mind? The superior intellect comes down to the level of the inferior, and only by patient and prolonged teaching makes its ascent possible. The human mind did not seek for the Rochester rappings in 1848, which offered to children the childish alphabet of our spirit-teachers' *Kinder Garten*. Surely we might as well expect corn to grow without sunshine and rain, as great and high knowledge without assisting influx from above. So old-fashioned am I as still to believe our earth beloved of Heaven, and that in regard to all precious knowledge as well as to our crops, "it is God that gives the increase." Contemporaneous tares, so far from disproving this, suggest to my mind the exceeding value of produce which our adversaries would so fain pollute with poison.—I remain, yours, &c.

January 9th, 1888.

A. J. PENNY.

The Death of Mr. Mackonochie.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Mackonochie's death was without pain, unless the pain comes at the last moments. I have gone through the preliminary stage of death by cold. Before the time of railroads, I was travelling outside the coach one winter night, from Portsmouth to London, going home for the holidays, when a schoolboy. The wind was north-east, I suppose, and I was meeting it with my face to the horses. I remember feeling intensely cold, and then, I suppose going to sleep. I remember nothing more, no pain, no remembrances, or anything else, until I found myself inside the coach, where the insiders had to keep me; they told me that I had lost my senses. I do not remember any pain in the resuscitation.

There is a curious story told in the Paris news of the *Daily Telegraph* of January 5th. Two police officials found a man lying on the banks of the Marne, during the late cold weather, apparently dead. They procured a cart in order to take the body to the Morgue. "As they were jogging along, they happened to turn round, and to their horror saw the corpse, as they believed it to be, dancing a hornpipe in the middle of the road. Although much frightened they pulled up and hailed the man, who ran up and gave an account of his adventure over a bottle of wine in a cabaret hard by." It appears that the movement of the cart had restored animation. His first thought was to bring back circulation, so he slipped off the cart and began stamping on the ground to warm his feet. The policemen drove the man to his home.

T. W.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. F. (Yaroo)—Your kind remittance duly to hand; many thanks.

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. Herber* Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of *Transcendental Physics*, &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; *Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and *Butlerof, of Petersburg; *Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert 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, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. R. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Empe ors 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 consentaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

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

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

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

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 enquirer.”—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.*

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

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