

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

It hardly falls within the scope of my duty to do more than chronicle, with all respect for an honoured name, the termination of the earth-life of Mary Howitt. It is pleasant to think that the close of that long and energetic life was full of peace. She passed away at Rome, and in her death there the two-fold wish of her heart was accomplished. In a letter to the *Times*, dated Hampstead, February 4th, and obviously written by Mrs. James Macdonnell, Mr. Howitt's niece, the writer says:—"Mrs. Howitt had ardently desired to be present at the Papal Jubilee, and to sleep beside her husband who lies in the English cemetery." Mrs. Howitt had been received into the Catholic Church some five years before, and it was one of the pleasures on which she dwelt at the last, as in her last letter to Mrs. Macdonnell, that she found at Rome both old and new friends whom she valued.

"In her last letter to me, written but a short time ago, after a vivid and enthusiastic description of the coming in of the pilgrims, she speaks of the warm welcome given her by so many gathered in Rome at the present time. 'It is very pleasant,' she says, 'to be thus kindly welcomed back by such of our old Roman friends as are still residing here, and by so many others with whom we have become acquainted of later years, so that we now find ourselves in the midst of a much larger circle of intelligent, kind, and enlightened people than it has ever been our happiness to enjoy before.'"

Mrs. Howitt passed away in her sleep without any pain in the presence of her only surviving daughter, Miss Panton (an attached friend), and Dr. Vardon, of Rome, her medical attendant. She was buried, as she had desired, by the side of her husband in the Protestant cemetery after a Requiem Mass at S. Isidore. In the afternoon the mourners returned to complete the burial, and found the great doors wide open, the sun streaming in upon the coffin with its wealth of beautiful flowers, and the church being thus open, poor children, men and women, joined in the service. All the young German and Irish Seminarists in their brown gowns and sandalled feet, each holding a tall lighted taper, filed in a long procession round the bier, then standing in an oval round it, headed by their Superior, chanted the service in a most heart-touching manner. The body was then conveyed to the cemetery, and Dr. Vardon having said the Lord's Prayer, all joining, the remains were laid by the side of William Howitt, as the wish of the departed had always been. She had been in life a simple earnest woman, and full of sympathy always with the poor and the young. It was not, then, without a true spiritual significance that the closing ceremony was touchingly rendered by young

persons who were vowed to poverty in the presence of a church full of "poor children, men and women," whose voices swelled the dirge for the dead.

Nothing is more foolish than the persistent manner in which the *Christian Herald* goes on prophesying the most alarming catastrophes which never, by any chance, come approximately true. Mr. Baxter, the uninspired seer of this nonsense, has been possessed by this "lying spirit" for sixteen years, and is dominated by it still. Pondering this phenomenon, a writer in the *New Age* thus recalls an experience with Miss Lottie Fowler:—

"Talking of predictions has reminded me of an experience which a friend of mine had, some two years ago, with a Miss Fowler, a so-called *clairvoyante*. He went to her as a perfect stranger, when, shortly after, she began to describe, in the most wonderful manner, the chief episodes of his life. This may have been guess-work or not; and, being a hard-headed sceptic upon such matters, the revelations failed to impress him; but when the witch turned to him and said he possessed certain shares in a Venezuelan mine, which he ought to sell at once, as next week it would be in liquidation, he was staggered. He was a shareholder in such a mine, and although it was in a fairly flourishing condition, the advice so haunted him that he sold out; and the following week the prediction came true, the mine being absolutely worthless. Explain this how we will, it is certainly curious; and when Mr. Baxter can make as good a shot, we may believe in him, but not until then."

I should be glad that Miss Fowler should derive some benefit from Florence Marryat's generous testimony which was printed in "LIGHT" last week. There is really a mass of testimony in her favour. With some sitters she is exceptionally successful: with others, as is usual with mediums, she is less so, but I have not often known her to fail, and I have heard some remarkable cases of her success. It is almost as sure as anything can be that such gifts as Miss Fowler's, if properly cultivated and used only under carefully guarded conditions, would increase and develop in power. By this I mean that relief from disturbing anxiety, a peaceful and secluded life, and a careful selection of those with whom alone she should exercise her gifts would tend to increase their power and certainty. I do not know whether it is possible to carry into execution some plan which should isolate this medium, relieve her from the wearing necessity of earning a precarious livelihood, and place her gifts at the disposal of competent observers. We shall not make the most of our opportunities until we establish what I have for many years advocated—a School of the Prophets. To borrow an expressive Americanism, we ought to "raise" mediums; to watch the promise of psychical gifts in the child, to keep them pure and unsullied by contact with the world; in brief, we ought to revert to methods which have been proved good in older days, and abandon the loose and irregular practice of mediumship, which has been the fruitful source of all our woes. Till we do this we must not expect much progress, and we may expect repeated scandal bringing contempt on what ought to be lovely and of good report.

Touching the development of psychical gifts by regular

training, I find (in the *Echo*) a narrative very much to the point:—

“I have just seen ‘Miss Maud Lancaster’ give a small private séance in this most curious art. She is quite a young lady, the daughter of a clergyman, and, except in her capacity as the discerner of the thoughts of the heart, is known as Miss Collyer. She differs from the ordinary specimens of the genus in that she performs her experiments without the slightest contact with anyone. Her eyes wear a strange, dreamy, far-off look, and there is a nervous restlessness apparent in her hands and general movements. After she had found a flower that had been carefully hidden, she said, ‘I have never been taught my power. When I was at school I used to amuse myself by astonishing the girls with little tricks, and, when I came home, of course I used to ‘show off’ a little. Then my father exercised me in it. He would keep me at the most puzzling things for hours at a time, until I began to realise that I actually felt what was passing in his mind. I make my own mind as completely a blank as I can. I then return to the room, and a curious dazed sense of light streaming into me first reveals the level at which I shall find the object, and then directs me where to go. Supposing that several people are not agreed upon what I shall do, the sensation is agony. I am pulled in all ways, irresistibly first by those who have the strongest will, though ultimately I get so bewildered that I can do nothing. The mental strain of giving a long performance is terrible, and I often feel utterly overwhelmed by nervous prostration afterwards. But I am inclined to think that most people could read thoughts, only an education in it is as necessary as in any other branch of mental attainment.’

“IRIS.”

An American friend sends me an interesting note as a contribution to the early history of the Spiritual movement. In the year 1852 there was formed, in the village of Amherst, Ohio, a group which became widely known as the “Amherst Circle.” Its members were all persons of rather unusual intelligence, and, with two exceptions, belonged to five families of farmers, named Steele. The two outsiders were Colonel Olcott and a Mr. Benedict. In this circle the late Hon. Selden J. Finney was developed, under Indian control, into a splendid platform speaker, and a Miss Jane as a good clairvoyant. The circle soon took up Barnum missionary work, holding public meetings and helping to organise circles in that section of Northern Ohio. It was visited by A. J. Davis—then living with his first wife—and other well-known American Spiritualists. Colonel Olcott had just come away from the parental home and its Presbyterian religious despotism—as he felt it—and his mind at once expanded in the delightful, intellectual, and moral atmosphere of this ideal circle. It was his re-birth, the entrance into a path which his feet have never left within these succeeding thirty-six years; for though his views of the cause of the phenomena are now those of the Orient, his testimony to their reality has ever been unqualifiedly affirmative.

In connection with this interesting statement, I may be permitted to draw attention to the attempt that is being made to find a place in the columns of “LIGHT” for some of the facts and arguments about them which have occurred so long ago as to be practically out of reach of the present generation. It has seemed to the management that it would be a good and useful thing to place such records within easy reach. If this be successfully done, this journal will become a storehouse of most that is best worth attention both in the present and in the past. It is not proposed to meddle with anything that is to be got at, for example, in the *Spiritual Magazine*, but there are rare and scarce publications from which it is thought well to select from time to time what otherwise would escape notice. There are also controversies such as that now being dealt with—the Tyndall-Faraday-Home argument—which has its instructive side, and which may serve, if for nothing else, at least to show us that some types of mind are persistent, and that, spite of great names, truth finds a hearing.

CONSULT the acutest poets and speakers, and they will confess that their quickest, most admired conceptions were such as darted into their minds like sudden flashes of lightning, they know not how nor whence.—SOUTH.

SUBJECTIVE COMMUNION WITH SPIRITS.

By NIZIDA.

The highest communion a man can possibly have with spirits is *subjective communion*; when, separating himself from the earth, and his own body, either in a state of voluntary trance, or of deep mental abstraction only, his soul rises upon the interior plane, and becomes odylised, so to say, by the mental rays proceeding from the superior mind or minds with which he seeks communion. This, however, can only happen to the really pure and spiritual. And herein the spiritual nature of the soul may be either largely developed, or only just in an incipient stage of growth, and correspondingly weak, or infantile. The perfection of the communion would be regulated according to the spirituality of the embodied personality. This communion is open to all who have evolved even the smallest amount of spirituality; but it is impossible to the grossly animal, imbruted, or sensual natures, which never feel the slightest aspiration towards what is heavenly or spiritual. A man's soul is wafted up into this superior condition in states of deep and earnest prayer, whether he belong to the school of Modern Spiritualism or not; in moments also of any exaltation whatever of the soul, when he feels himself sensibly quickened within, and his whole being is infilled and responsive to the higher odylism of superior beings, whom he would involuntarily call God and the angels: and he would speak truly, according to his conceptions of truth, in so terming it, since the influence thus received proceeds from denizens of the highest spiritual sphere to which corporeal man can be intromitted.

Into such conditions of exaltation ascended in ancient times the “saints” as they are called, when, their psychic senses being opened, they had visions of a heavenly nature, personalising the glorified entities they may have beheld under such designations as harmonised with the ideas received in the earthly state through religious education. Into such conditions ascend the pure, spiritual sensitives of our school of teachings, whose symbolical visions are highly instructive. (*Vide* certain visions lately described in “LIGHT” by (“M.A., Oxon.”) The sensitives, labouring under an illusion, frequently represent the beings they behold as *descending* to earth. But as this would entail a question of *altered polarity*, it is evident it cannot be so. They *attract*—they cannot be *attracted*. The sensitive, if pure, is already polarised to them, and is drawn towards them by immutable, irreversible laws. Although ethereal, and purified from gross matter, the pure spirits are still subject to the universal laws of nature. The atmospheres surrounding our earth are antagonistic to them, and there is a total dissimilarity between our physiological and their spiritual conditions. But it is easy to see that if we, *in the body*, have evolved a high spiritual condition, our inner, higher self—*i.e.*, all that is of the spirit—may enter, has indeed already entered, into *rapport* with them; and at those happy periods of psychical exaltation, when earth is completely shut out, we enter into a communion which is already our highest normal state; although, owing to the necessities of the earthly life, we may possibly rarely *consciously* experience it. How supremely happy the being who has evolved the privileged condition of living daily, hourly, with a perfect consciousness, in such communion. It is my firm belief that the whole human race will one day have ascended into this state; but how changed will be society: the whole earth transformed, for the residence of a different order of inhabitants.

It is a mistake to say of such communion, which is purely conditional, and voluntary on the part of the sensitive or psychic, that it is a “control.” Such a word implies an essentially arbitrary influence or power, exercised over an entirely negative subject. The communion I describe is

the pure *rapport* of homogeneity, from which arises an identity of molecular vibration between the astral part of the incarnate sensitive, and the astral, or perhaps more properly speaking, the spiritual or divine-astral part of the disincarnate personality.

It is well to bear in mind also that this condition of homogeneity, or accord with the highest, on the part of the spiritually developed soul, brings it into nearness with certain minds, or beings *still in the body*; who are virtually emancipated from matter; leading an essentially spiritual life, in bodies of transformed, or sublimated substances. These beings transcend matter, with vision opened to psychical events and incidents, which pierces through space at will, in all directions. Such beings are able to approach man on the psychical plane, to make him hear their voices by the interior sense of hearing, to teach him by symbolical visions, &c., &c. Being still in a physical, though highly purified, body, they violate no law of polarity by visiting man; and indeed are at liberty to travel wherever duty calls, on the astral plane. It is to beings of this character I alluded in a former paper, when describing "brethren" as coming forward to hail and aid the aspiring and successful neophyte. It is very easy for him to mistake them for "spirits"; and in his ignorance he confounds them also with disembodied human phantoms, whence ensues a confusion that, with his limited powers, he is not able to set right. In fact, in penetrating a little way into the adjacent region of more ethereal existence, which might, perhaps, be appropriately termed the astro-phantom-world, he has to encounter *human* projections of all kinds, besides his own "elemental" surroundings, which frequently turn out to be those much deprecated "Dwellers on the Threshold," which it is necessary to conquer before the would-be independent aspirant to high spiritual powers may stand master over his petty other-world kingdom. I may be wrong, but I imagine it is possible to have led so pure and holy a life—but this of course would be rare indeed, as our world and human nature are *now* constituted—as to encounter *no* Dweller on the Threshold. I imagine some of the "saints" met with none. It is my theory that souls may grow very naturally into all these high gifts of the spirit. But enough of that at present.

There are certain circumstances which complicate the fact of our meeting on the astral plane the fluidic personality of superior beings still in the body, and render it difficult of solution to one aspiring to ascend, but unable to decide from his own unassisted powers, the nature of any abnormal influence of which he may become conscious. The power of leaving the body, or of projecting the double, as it is called, is obtainable by the impure and depraved, as well as by the pure, upright, and holy. It is well known that such power was possessed of old by witches and sorcerers, who had means of self-inducing deep trances, during which they attended what was called the "Witches' Sabbath"; besides separating the etheric body at other times, for the perpetration of evil deeds. These are well-attested facts, which we can no longer ridicule and set down as superstition. The projection of the double, or gasiform duplicate of the human body, is a physiological fact, proving that man is of a dual nature—or rather *treble*—material or physical, psychical, and spiritual; and that the *soul*, the psychical part, having touch with the lowest and highest, may roam at will into regions above the physical—*i.e.*, astral—or ascend by that spiritual growth which rejects the material, into high regions of the spirit. So long as man remains in the lower degrees or principles of his complex organism, so long is evil possible to him; and degrading those powers and faculties of his soul, which, if properly used, would elevate him towards divinity, he transforms them into demoniacal powers, and becomes a devil roaming abroad to do evil.

There are still sorcerers on the earth. They may cer-

tainly be numbered by hundreds, if not by thousands; and although their power is doubtless limited, they are able to do a vast deal of harm in the world. They have done it, and they do it still, although they work principally from the astral plane. They undoubtedly intrude their influence upon neophytes in the pursuit of occult experimentation, or study; and as they are deeply insidious, deceitful, and flattering, it is, in some instances, unhappily, easy for them to obtain a power which they exercise to the injury of their victims; whom they mesmerise, enslaving them completely to their will, and either obsess, or cause to be obsessed, by an "elemental," or depraved human phantom.

If we study Spiritualism or Occultism at all, we must learn to deal with these facts. We cannot shut our eyes to them, and delude ourselves with the idea that *all* whom we encounter upon the astral plane are what we term "spirits"; or necessarily of an elevated nature, *merely because* they are disembodied. It is, perhaps, more correct to apply the term "spirits" to those beings who have ascended out of the astral regions, into the abodes of the blessed; whilst we call the disembodied of lower grades, human phantoms, shades, ghosts, &c. Upon the astral plane we also encounter the "doubles" of human beings; the evil ones of this class are termed "Brothers of the Shadow," "Followers of the Left-hand Path," Sorcerers, Black Magicians; in the East, Dugpas, Rakshasas, &c.

I will not here dwell further upon this subject. Suffice it to say, that any man who may not feel himself on the safe side of self-purification, may always find protection in the uprightness of his intentions and aspirations; in the integrity of his own soul; that even if he be disturbed for a time by an undesirable influence, he may at length rise out of it by the purity of his will, by the resistance of evil, of low or impure thoughts; and by seeking to establish a polarity between himself and the highest beings, so as to come within reach of their odylie effluence.

In my next paper, I will treat of the more external manifestations of next-world beings.

MUSICAL MEDIUMSHIP.

Close upon two-and-twenty years ago there was a young lady of the name of Mary E. Currier, daughter of a gentleman in good position, at Haverhill, Mass., U.S.A., who possessed a remarkable form of mediumship. We believe that the following account (extracted and condensed from the *Banner of Light* of February 2nd, 1866), which Dr. Willis, a well-known Spiritualist of that time, gives of his experience with this young lady, will be valuable as introducing our readers to a phase of mediumship with which they are not likely to be personally familiar.

The young lady is described as quiet in manner, "with an air of perfect sincerity and frankness," and the manifestations that occur in her presence are constantly of a very remarkable nature. Dr. Fred L. H. Willis wrote from Haverhill on the 26th December, 1866, in the following terms:—

"Miss Currier may be termed a musical medium. She takes her seat at a piano in a room that has been made impervious to the light. Beneath the piano and around it are a dozen or more bells, forming a perfect chime; a large and a small drum, a tambourine, &c. On the piano is a guitar, a violin, a triangle, a trumpet, and an accordeon.

"The spectators are seated facing each other upon two settees, with hands joined, and the connection is not allowed for a moment to be severed. It is apparent to everyone that the only mortal present in the room outside of this circle is the young girl who sits at the piano. She commences playing upon the piano, and frequently before the door is closed that excludes the light, bells and drums and tambourines will chime in in perfect unison, and the music produced is very wonderful. The instruments are not struck feebly, or uncertainly or bunglingly, as they would be if one person was attempting such a performance in total darkness, but they are played with precision, and with a merry, rollicking enthu-

siasm that is truly inspiring, and makes one long to break the circle and clap hands, and cry 'bravo.'

"The tambourines are played in a truly professional manner, and I have repeatedly and distinctly heard a sound as of knuckles beating upon them, and also that peculiar whirring or buzzing sound produced by rubbing the ball of the thumb over the surface of the instrument, and this while both hands of the medium were employed in executing a brilliant waltz or march upon the piano.

"I pursued my investigations in silence, preferring to share my observations with no one. I distinctly heard sounds produced during this stage of the manifestations that would require at least six pairs of hands to execute, and I cannot conceive how a sane man can sit through one of those séances and listen carefully and closely to the effects there produced, and ascribe them all to the two hands of the medium.

"During this part of the séance, I repeatedly asked mentally that certain effects might be produced upon the different instruments. To my delight, invariably my thought was responded to, showing a wonderful power of mind-reading somewhere. This was no chance result, for I tested it again and again, and so varied my experiments as to make the demonstration triumphantly beautiful and satisfactory.

"After this had continued some little time, there was a change in the order of proceedings. The medium's hands, as was claimed, were taken from the piano, and a spirit commenced playing independent of her touch entirely. This, of course, I had no means of verifying. I only know that the change in the style of playing, and also in the style of the music, was as decided as can well be imagined, and during this part of the performance—which claimed, I believe, to be under the especial supervision of an Italian musician—the most surprising effects were produced upon the piano I ever listened to. An experienced musician, himself a master workman upon musical instruments, declared that there were effects produced upon that instrument that were entirely beyond the power of one mortal player to produce. For instance, the harp stop would be so applied that its effects would be confined entirely to the bass register, and not affect any of the treble notes, or to the treble without touching the bass. Several times it was applied to one octave, while the tones of the next octave would be clear and ringing as a bell.

"Once, while notes were being executed at the extreme ends of the key-board, requiring the widest possible distance between the two hands of the medium—granting for the moment that she was the performer—I heard a beautiful minor interlude performed upon the middle register of keys, that could not by any human possibility have been executed without the presence of another pair of hands upon the key-board.

"Again, the piano lid was always down, and covered with heavy articles, music books, and various instruments; and yet the most surprising effects were produced inside the piano. I defy any mortal to imitate them, even with the cover removed. The power seemed to penetrate to and pervade the inmost recesses of the instrument, and the wires were manipulated as if by hands between them and the sounding-board, imitating now the harp and again the guitar or banjo. Here again I applied my mental test, and with the same success. Invariably and readily came the responses, giving the effects asked for mentally, now upon one set of strings and then upon another.

"During this time the other instruments frequently chimed in, producing effects as beautiful as they were novel.

"Other manifestations of a remarkable character and in great diversity were given, that I have not time or space to describe minutely. I wish to confine myself entirely to those that most interested me, and that seemed to demonstrate most clearly the presence and operation of invisible spiritual forces. The musical instruments are floated about the room, brought to the members of the circle, &c. Several came to me, in response to mental requests. I have heard the drums, the bells, the triangle and the tambourines, and the piano, with the violin and guitar, all played upon in unison, both as to harmony and to time. The amount of physical force expended upon the drums is truly astonishing. Some of the drum solos are splendidly executed, commencing with a low, scarcely perceptible tap, and gradually increasing in power till a volume of sound fills the room that is almost deafening. A strong man could not display more power, and the medium is a delicate girl, with but slight physical strength and very slight powers of endurance.

"And now let me give you a little experience that was more satisfactory to me than all that I heard in the darkness, wonderful as that was. So true is it, that I am most fully satisfied by the evidence of all my senses, and also demonstrating to me one of the most frequent causes of failure in manifestations of this character.

"One evening the medium went into the circle-room, and took her seat at the piano. I was in the sitting-room; the door between was open, and a flood of light from the room I was in

made every object in the circle-room distinctly visible. Scarcely had the medium struck the first note upon the piano, when the tambourines and the bells seemed to leap from the floor and join in unison. Carefully and noiselessly I stole into the room, and for several seconds it was my privilege to witness a rare and beautiful sight. *I saw the bells and tambourines in motion. I saw the bells lifted as by invisible hands, and chimed each in its turn accurately and beautifully in unison with the piano. I saw the tambourine dexterously and scientifically manipulated with no mortal hand near it.*

"But suddenly, by a slight turn of the head, the medium became aware of my presence in the room. Instantly, like the severing of the connection between a galvanic battery and its poles, everything ceased. Mark this: so long as my presence in the room was known only to the invisibles, so long the manifestations continued in perfection. The moment the medium became aware of it, everything stopped. A wave of mental emotion passed over her mind, which was in itself sufficient to stop the phenomena at once. So wonderfully delicate a thing is mediumship! Even the veterans in Spiritualism have no real appreciation of it, nor can they realise that a medium is of necessity an instrument so delicately strung that the slightest jar, even the vibration of a thought on the mental atmosphere, may entirely disintone it. This little incident proved to my mind most clearly that, in nine cases out of ten, it is the condition of the medium that renders it so difficult for spirits to perform these wonders in the light, rather than any lack of power or disposition on their part."

Especially interesting in the above recital is that portion which is italicised. Dr. Willis saw what most men are not privileged to see. We have been present at a dark séance when the musical instruments were being, as far as the ear can judge the locality of sound in darkness, carried over the heads of the sitters and played upon in mid-air. Some person suddenly struck a light, and the instrument known as the "Fairy Bells" fell at once from the spot near the ceiling where it had been and whence we heard the sound of it proceeding in darkness. Moreover, we have frequently been told that there is in the fixed gaze of the human eye a power which paralyses these manifestations. The answer to this assertion is, as Dr. Willis puts it, that no such paralysing power is found to act until the medium is conscious of the presence of the onlooker. This points to the fact that the power proceeds from the medium, and is given off involuntarily, the flow of it being at once checked by anything which interferes with the perfect passivity of the sensitive. It emphasises also the question as to the methods by which the power is employed. It also suggests a further question: Is there reason to believe that there is any invisible operator at all beyond and beside the medium?

In this case, when she sat in passive unconsciousness, the manifestations went on with unbroken regularity, and with no conscious efforts on her part. In other cases, when a medium is discovered actively, though perhaps still unconsciously, aiding the manifestations, may it not be that the difference is one only of degree? When the power is good, manifestations occur at a greater distance from the centre of the evolved force—the body of the medium. When the power is weak they are nearer, and the actual physical powers of the medium are involved in their production. This is no new hypothesis, but Dr. Willis's narrative suggests its application. We believe, as experience increases, that we shall find in this theory a truth, the application of which will account for some cases of alleged fraud on the part of persons whose mediumship has been abundantly proven. There has hardly been a case of exposure of fraud on the part of a medium within our recollection when the existence of mediumship has not been at once demonstrated under conditions which preclude imposture, and that when the minds of the observers have been stirred into doubt or antagonism by the discovery of alleged fraud.

Dr. Willis's account of what he saw is very useful, too, in throwing some light on the question as to how far the now fashionable explanation of conjuring is any explanation deserving of the name.

IMPOSTURE AND SUSPICION IN MEDIUMISTIC MANIFESTATIONS.

BY CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

(From the *Sphinx*.)

TRANSLATED BY "V."

Manifold experiences extending over many years have made me well acquainted with "supranormal" occurrences; but since I left Europe some years ago to take up my abode in Australia, several important details connected with our movement appear to me in a somewhat altered light, and the opinions, in many respects contradictory, which I had formed in the course of my experimental observations were in time (as to most of them perhaps) partly disturbed, partly, however, rendered clearer.

My present remarks are especially directed to the much-misunderstood department of so-called exposures and impostures; and as such exposures have frequently been presented to my observation, I feel it my duty to try to present the subject from a somewhat wider point of view. In the scale leading from indirect up to direct manifestations many incidents suggesting suspicion occur. At present I only wish to call attention to such experiences as at the time startled myself and urged me to greater precautions in arranging test conditions, while they stimulated me at the same time to carefully observe the medium's mental attitude.

The whole series of table movements while touched by the hands always offer points of attack to the inveterate sceptic, in spite of the extraordinary exhibition of power, which at times surprises him. Only the *direct* manifestation of a power, which can be ascribed to no one present, such as the independent movement and tilting of a table or other object without contact, will disarm the opponent, when his *scepticism* does not overstep the bounds of logic and reason. I remember in the early days of my experiences how I sometimes helped the table when it suddenly came to a standstill, over some obstacle (such as a nail or a knot in the floor), and afterwards was so surprised by its violent movements that I thought it almost superfluous to make a confession. I conclude from this that the power operates at first in a horizontal direction, but as it increases, it manifests itself by lifting or violently shaking the object. At the same time I became convinced that the ordinary attempts at table-turning offer equal facilities to the believer and the sceptic, till, as I said before, the independent acting power, so to speak *set free*, renders by means of direct manifestations all earlier supernormal explanations impossible.

At dark séances I have often found convulsive movements on the part of the medium when next me, correspond with the manifestations, without any circumstances occurring to excite my further suspicion. A method I frequently employed, that of fastening the whole circle, including the medium, by wire to the edge of the table, so as to render any trickery of consequence impossible, did away once for all with the idea of explaining all that took place by the suggestion of conjuring.

The exposure of real and *repeated* trickery not only stamps the pseudo-medium as exceptionally expert and skilful, but shows the circle to be quite incapable of scientific research. I have frequently noticed peculiar movements in the medium at the same time that raps were heard in remote parts of my own well-lighted room. I always look upon the medium as the root or starting point of the manifestations, in which he shares bodily more or less, till the *complete development* of the power removes the last trace of suspicion.

An opinion which I early formed, that the medium ought to be quite free and feel the circulation of the blood quite unrestrained (or better still, have no sensation at all), caused me very soon to discard the plan of bandaging the medium like an Egyptian mummy, and to question whether his powers would not operate better if he were quite unencumbered by clothing. This question throws light on my doubts, where others only find grounds for condemnation of the medium "caught in the act," by the fact of his appearing in his shirt-sleeves. Thus a medium for materialisation, in whose presence on a former occasion materialised forms had appeared when he was confined and locked up in a vapour bath case, only his head being free, was "exposed" on another occasion because, on the gas being turned up suddenly and the cabinet thrown open, he was found sitting on the chair without his coat and boots. My humane scruples or remonstrances were of no avail whatever against the outcry raised; and the delay of the longed-for explanation on the part of the spirits, or whatever these intelligent forces may be called, left me in painful suspense, which was only made somewhat endurable when I was given to understand that we could not hope for our task of solving this stupendous riddle to be helped by the slightest suggestion from these powers.

In the private experiments I instituted for materialisations any idea of imposture or personation on the part of the medium was simply out of the question, and to introduce an accomplice into my own room, with the door fastened by seals, was

an impossibility. The medium on these occasions was a heavy stout woman; the materialised form, on the contrary, was small and light, almost like that of a child. But any suspicion of deception was rendered impossible by the occurrence of partial materialisations (that is, incomplete or only partly developed portions of the body); and the impressions we obtained of feet and hands in gypsum left to the ultra sceptic only the option of questioning the honesty of the witnesses.

Shortly before the so-called "exposure" of Mrs. Corner, I went to one of her séances, and I then predicted some such misadventure, because I detected in each materialisation some mystification of the *double*, or a trick on the part of the invisible performers. Herr von Buch pricked up his ears when I told him of my experiments, but the advice I gave him to seek for further explanation from other sources was neglected in the intoxication of his youthful triumph at having done something out of the common; and in his excitement only *one* question sometimes troubled him, whether Mrs. Corner could extricate herself without mysterious help from the fetters which bound her, and in which she had been undoubtedly found after the séance, without the slightest signs of the bandages having been disturbed. And thus was the work of years of careful test experiments by scientific men undone or upset for a long time by a few [two] hot-headed youths.

The "exposure" which made the most noise of any, the entrapment of the celebrated mediums, Williams and Rita, in Holland, in which instance wigs, beards, and other things were found in the mediums' travelling-bags, excited my astonishment in the highest degree. Immediately after the return of the "exposed" mediums to London, during a séance with them, their phantom, "John King," allowed me to touch and pull his beard so strongly that the flesh yielding to the force of the pull forced me to the conviction of its being a genuine materialisation; although the question I put as to how the objects came to be in the bags met with no satisfactory answer. The assumption that the fatal event took place in a circle at which some clever person artfully personated the manifestations, especially that of "John King," did not seem to me sufficiently to explain the occurrence. On the contrary, I believe that it must be regarded as possible for mediums to be in league, or to have an understanding, with the communicating intelligences that in case of insufficient power they can assist in producing the manifestations by means easily to be concealed.

The exposure of Bastian at Vienna, however, scarcely caused me more than a smile, after I had heard of the suspicion aroused by the fact that Bastian was found without his shoes (which, being new, hurt him). I remember once that after dining at a strange house, I allowed myself to take a little nap in a side room, and took off my shoes, which were tight, for ten or fifteen minutes. If anything of value had been missed from the house during this time my uncovered feet might have laid me open to suspicion. That no concealed wardrobe was found on Bastian's being seized, after figures taller than himself and in different costumes had been seen, seemed to me an important fact, and the whole occurrence strengthened the opinion I had already formed, that to confirm medial manifestations, a number of test experiments are necessary, while most persons consider that *one* inexplicable case of suspicion is sufficient to condemn the whole thing. If scientific men rightly exclude the suggestions of imagination from their experimental studies, a judge should, to begin with, not be strongly prejudiced against a person's character.

Our task for a long time it will be to inquire indefatigably into all new occurrences, and form a careful opinion of those of the past; and looking at the latter in this light, I feel pleased to think that my hitherto neglected experiences will fulfil their purpose; neither should we rest satisfied with withholding from critical eyes the exposure of scientific pretension and authority.

Above all, the intimate connection existing between the manifestations and the organism of the medium is presented as a field of most interesting study, which should not be cut short by forcible measures (like laying bare the root to observe the growth of a plant). Without cherishing the hope of ever ascertaining thoroughly the extent of this connection, I have at least learnt this, that any forcible seizure in the course of the sitting has the effect of bringing about a mysterious and rapid return to the preliminary condition. When this is not completely successful, traces of the power at work remain behind, which excite the suspicion of the beholders. I compare this retrograde movement with the shrinking together of a tightly-closed bladder at the bottom of an air-pump. If the air is pumped out, that which remains in the folds gains the power to fill out to its former position; the bladder, however, falls back into its first folds as soon as the air streams again into the receiver of the air-pump. When the medium is surrounded by complete passivity, his psychic sphere, or power, streams forth in such force that the most astonishing phenomena become possible, but contracts again in a corresponding manner on the occurrence of the slightest increase of the normal atmosphere. I here repeat what I have frequently before said: If all the notorious cases of so-called "exposure" were brought to the bar of strict and impartial inquiry, we should probably be astonished at the minimum of the result in favour of imposture which could be proved and repeated.

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18th, 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.

AN OLD CONTROVERSY WITH A MODERN APPLICATION.

(Continued from page 67.)

Following this we have an intervention by Mr. F. T. Palgrave, which is not important except as it serves to bring out the tone and temper of Professor Tyndall in conspicuous relief. It is better on the whole, in view of what follows, to print Mr. Palgrave *in extenso*.

"SCIENCE VERSUS SPIRITUALISM.

"To the Editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette.'

"SIR,—Few of the 'correspondences' which have appeared in your columns will have been read with greater interest than that between Professor Tyndall and Mr. Home. Whether we regard 'Spiritualism' as a new and astonishing faculty conferred upon man; as a mixed series of phenomena possibly containing some unexplained law; as an honest delusion; as a profitable fraud; or as a bore of the first magnitude, and devastator of agreeable conversation; anything which tends to settle the question must be welcome. In the interests especially of those persons who look upon Spiritualism from the last point of view indicated, I beg leave to draw attention to certain elements which have been (no doubt unconsciously) introduced into the scientific side of the controversy, but which appear extremely well calculated to damage or defeat that settlement of the case for which all persons, whether spectators or parties to the cause, are anxious.

"If we put aside Spiritualists proper (as not likely to be convinced by any process of human reason) with those who (like your correspondent) are satisfied already that Spiritualism is no more than a second-rate species of legerdemain, it is certain that to the general or undecided public the verdict of Professors Faraday and Tyndall, yea or nay, after a fair and full trial, would be conclusive. It would also be equivalent in public estimation to a verdict against Mr. Home if a fair trial were offered, and he feared to face it; or again, if he declined such a trial on manifestly evasive grounds. Now, passing by the minor points debated, the present position is that the offer of a trial by Faraday (on certain terms named by him) has actually been made and refused, and that a trial (under similar conditions) has been offered by Professor Tyndall. It is hence doubly worth while to look closely into the 'programme' given by Faraday, and printed in your number for May 9th. How far does the refusal of it (by Mr. Home's friend, but now endorsed by Mr. Home himself) tell against Spiritualism? How far is the reiteration of it by Professor Tyndall calculated to bring about a solution of the problem? Are we to agree with the inference which Professor Tyndall's first letter in the case (May 5th) appears intended to give, and conclude that Mr. Home has already evaded a fair challenge? Or, as Mr. Home

asserts, did Faraday only consent to the trial on terms and in a temper which justified Home in declining it as an unfair one?

"It is quite superfluous that I should here make profession of that deep respect and admiration with which, like the great majority of Englishmen or foreigners acquainted with his life and labours, I regard Faraday; or disclaim, as an act of obvious folly, any attempt to criticise any judgment of his formed upon those technical scientific grounds in mastery of which he has had few rivals. On the contrary, when, after examining certain 'Spiritualist' phenomena ten or twelve years ago (I think), he elaborately proved that they were solely caused by common but unheeded mechanical causes, his admirable exposition hardly commanded my conviction more completely than his simple *ipse dixit* would have commanded it. But this is not the point which has now been raised. We are at present concerned with the challenge which passed between him and Mr. Home in 1861, and with Professor Tyndall's renewal of it in 1868. In this challenge (the transmissal of which to Mr. Home he authorised), besides many contemptuous expressions, Faraday requires Mr. Home himself to admit the futility of the very art or science which he professed, and to be ready to aid in putting it down as a mischievous delusion, in case the verdict should go against him. Surely when we read this we must confess with regret that this great man then fell into an error of judgment, which does really justify Mr. Home (*ex post facto*) in treating the challenge as unfair, and which, further, will justify him in declining any challenge conceived in a similar spirit?

"The same rule must apply here which prevails in common life. We may decline to meet a man on the ground of personal character. But if we do consent to meet, it must be on terms of equality and civility. Faraday would have been perfectly justified in refusing to trouble himself any longer (as was naturally his wish) about 'Spiritualism,' and those who agree with the estimate above given of his scientific and personal eminence will sympathise with him. But, if he consented in any way to renew the trial, the common principles of justice, not to speak of the higher ground taken by the philosopher, demanded that (whilst defining such conditions as should ensure completeness of investigation) he should not demand such as carry with them the air that he has predetermined the cause, and (in effect) require the antagonist, if defeated, to confess that he has been under an idiotic delusion. Indeed, I rather understate Faraday's conditions in thus describing them; the tone is that of a man who has decided that the other party is a rogue, and ought to be ready to confess it. Whether justified or not in holding such a view, Faraday's eminently fair and liberal mind would, surely, at a calmer moment, have recognised that this was precisely an occasion when he should have rigidly suppressed it. It is incredible that he would have accepted a converse 'programme' for himself, and Mr. Home (had the trial taken effect) would have been worse off than in that Greek city where the proposer of a new law had to plead with a halter round his neck. Such demands would have been quite inadmissible, even on the part of an advocate; but here Faraday was to act more or less as a judge in what other paragraphs in his own letter describe as a scientific investigation. Mr. Home is surely right in observing that it is not in this spirit that Faraday approached any obscure problem in physics, or met any scientific men who entertained opposite views to his own. Had he done so, indeed, he would not have been Faraday the philosopher.

"Of course, an answer may be made to the effect of what was probably passing through his mind—that this was no real science at all, but a more or less conscious imposture which it was too great a condescension to notice. He might have said this with effect and stopped there. But, if he did not condescend, he was bound, for his own sake, to treat the question as an open one for scientific investigation; relying (as he securely might have done) on the result of a fair trial, and remembering that the utmost liberality and impartiality are never more essential (as well as more graceful) than when the truth is altogether on one side of the question. As it was, Mr. Home's friend had a perfectly legitimate plea for refusing the challenge, and it will be a real misfortune should the transient and hasty error of a great man (unadvisedly made public after his death) be reiterated now, with the result of a similar 'defeat of justice.'

"I have ventured on these remarks, because, believing firmly that a fair trial would crush a mischievous delusion, it is of great importance that Spiritualism shall not gain an easy triumph by showing that Science refused a fair trial. And (with all deference to Professor Tyndall's position in his own sphere) it is impossible

to read his letters of May 5th and 9th, whether in regard to the tone or the argument, without seeing that (no doubt unconsciously to himself, or through the heat of controversy) the manner in which he proposes to proceed is eminently unjudicial. It is also exactly calculated to damage the cause which most of my readers will agree is the cause of truth. To advance to a scientific investigation with an air of infallibility (however well founded), to prejudge the case, and scatter obnoxious hints against the antagonist, will not indeed render 'Spiritualism' credible to honestly constituted minds, but may naturally indispose them to a favourable view of the advocate of science. As the matter now stands, there is a serious risk that what has happened will afford a triumph to folly, and grieve those who rely upon true scientific investigation to dissipate vulgar error by the sight of a good cause thrown away. Human things are apt to repeat themselves; and, in truth, such a trial as that offered by Faraday bears a striking resemblance to certain scenes which we read of during the Middle Ages. Then, a heretic, notoriously unsound in his doctrines, and with his life (let us suppose) conformable to them, was sometimes brought up for trial before his ecclesiastical superiors. The saints and holy priests in council make him parade before them in a yellow coat handsomely decorated with devils, require him to go down and confess his errors as a condition of being tried, and sentence the poor wretch to hell with a rapidity and a tone of contempt which make him the martyr of his own sect, and the reproach of the true faith to after ages. If the trial proposed for June closes with Mr. Home's refusal of May 11th, the victory will not be with his opponent. For the sake of science and of truth, let us hope that it will be arranged in a more judicial spirit; that science will show fair play, even to Spiritualism: and few of my readers will then doubt of the result.—Obediently yours,

"Athenæum, May 13th, 1868." "F. T. PALGRAVE.

On this down came Professor Tyndall from the serene heights of science with the following letter. It is a sample of irony and sarcasm, administered by an *adlatus* of the Gods to a mere ordinary mortal, and intended obviously to be crushing, which our readers will, we think, enjoy. There is in it a delicious sense of assured superiority, shared in later years by Dr. W. B. Carpenter, an artless assumption of *sic volo, sic jubeo*—out of the way, you inferior creatures, with your facts and your botherations!—that is very funny.

"SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

"To the Editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette.'

"SIR,—From time to time it has been my privilege to be instructed and edified by the notions of men and things with which Mr. F. T. Palgrave has favoured the English public, and I now find myself promoted to the distinction of being the object of his criticism.

"Mr. F. T. Palgrave knows the world, and the world's ways, and what it is desirable for the world to know, and how that knowledge should be presented to the world, far better than I do. He is also intimately acquainted with the frame of mind in which a philosopher like Faraday ought to approach the study of reputed Spiritualistic phenomena. It would, therefore, be presumptuous in me to contest the opinion of this eminent person that Faraday was wrong in writing that letter to Sir Emerson Tennent, and that I was wrong in publishing it. I would only ask permission to state, in a few words, the motives which induced me to act in a manner to which Mr. Palgrave applies the adverb 'unadvisedly,' a word which derives its power less from its intrinsic weight than from the elevation of the pen from which it falls.

"Recent events had revived the subject of Spiritualism. In the public courts of England men with heavy scientific appendages to their names had testified, on oath, their conviction that the phenomena reputed to manifest themselves in the presence, and through the agency of, Mr. Home are 'not due to the operation of any of the known laws of nature.' This solemn testimony had been circulated through the length and breadth of the land, and along with it a great deal of flying gossip regarding the relationship of Faraday to these spiritual phenomena.

"Though it involved a kind of jar to the sanctity in which I hold his memory, I thought it right that the world should learn from Faraday himself what his latest opinions were in connec-

tion with this subject. As a matter of mere authority, by which so many are guided, I thought his published opinion would be a wholesome corrective of the evidence to which I have referred. I also thought it desirable to sweep away the gossip which surrounded his name in connection with this subject. These were my motives for publishing his letter.

"Mr. F. T. Palgrave speaks of the letter as the 'hasty and transient error of a great man.' Now, as I before stated, I am willing to defer to the opinion of a gentleman so experienced, so well-informed, and so self-assured as Mr. Palgrave that the letter was an error. Here he is on his own high ground, where his supremacy is undisputable. But how did he find out that the 'error' was 'hasty and transient'? I would ask him, with all distinctness, whence come these adjectives? From the region of fact or from that of imagination? If the latter—and this is the case—I would in all submission say that the tendency of the imagination to assume a definite structural form, irrespective of fact, is a very perilous one, and that it will require a master equal to Mr. F. T. Palgrave to keep its possessor out of danger, if the imaginative faculty be allowed this license.

"The simple truth is that Faraday was not moved by either heat or haste in writing that letter. He thought over it, wrote it, and read it to me after it had been written, with the utmost coolness and deliberation. Here, as in all other things, he endeavoured to 'walk circumspectly.' It cannot be otherwise than a source of regret to all of us that so eminent a judge as Mr. F. T. Palgrave should regard his endeavour as a failure. I was not aware, until I had seen the last number of your journal, that the letter of Faraday could be rightly described as a challenge to Mr. Home. Faraday responded, reluctantly, to the entreaty of a friend. He had spent time upon the subject; he had examined it in his way, and reached his own conclusions regarding it. He had not the slightest hope of adding to his own knowledge by further investigation. He regarded the necessity even of discussing such phenomena as are described to Mr. Home as a discredit, to use no stronger term, to the education of this age. Still, when pressed to do so, he overcame his repugnance, while avowing it in moderate language, and for the sake of others he agreed to undertake an investigation which he knew would be without profit to himself.

"If, after having approached the subject in a spirit which might have secured the approval of Mr. F. T. Palgrave; if, after having in this spirit satisfied his own mind that these reputed Spiritualistic phenomena were only worthy of the scorn or the pity of all intelligent persons, he permitted a modicum of that strong contempt with which he regarded the subject to ooze out in undertaking a repetition of his task; surely the *honesty* of making his feelings indirectly known by the series of questions he proposed, and to which he required no affirmative subscription, will, in the minds of simple people, be a set-off to the lack of that 'judicial' tact which Mr. F. T. Palgrave would have preferred.

"In all reverence I would now say, let the glorious shade rest. I endorse the opinions and accept the responsibilities of Faraday in this matter. In the spirit of his letter, which, cavil apart, was simply this, that he should be permitted to apply to the examination of this subject the methods which have made his name immortal, I will at any practicable time undertake to meet Mr. Home. I ask him to subscribe to no condition, to furnish me with no 'programme.' I only ask him to permit me to deal with him and his phenomena as I now deal with Nature. If he fully and frankly grants this condition, the investigation can have but one of two results; either his phenomena will be proved delusive, or I shall be converted to the ranks of Spiritualism.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"Athenæum Club, May 17th, 1868." "JOHN TYNDALL.

Mr. Palgrave's reply ought to have given an uncomfortable quarter of an hour to his correspondent. But only too probably it rebounded from the armour of proof in which an all-abounding vanity had clad the Professor, and fell fruitless at his feet. That, however, was *his* loss and his alone. We shall give Mr. Palgrave's letter in our next.

(To be continued.)

SUBSCRIPTIONS to "LIGHT" for the current year are due, and should be forwarded at once. Our friends will do well to read the "Notice to Subscribers" at the head of the preceding page.

JOTTINGS.

"It is a good thing," said Mr. Page Hopps, at St. James's Hall, "to force people to get behind mere words and phrases." That is the true business of every reformer. Men are such slaves of habit that they need some rude shocks before they realise their slavery. Human nature gets so easily accustomed to a groove of thought that one who deals with its subject-matter as Mr. Page Hopps does is in danger of being called profane or irreverent.

A paradox. Ponder it. Profanity such as this is the first step to true reverence. Depend upon it no honest thought candidly expressed by a truth-seeking mind is irreverent. Ingersoll is not irreverent. He is unsparing in his ridicule of what is base and bad in our so-called religious thought. He has no mercy on shams: and he is perhaps the most potent engine for tearing up intellectual and moral waste ground, and bringing it under cultivation, that this generation has seen. Let us have thought, straightforward, direct, and honest, at any cost. Let every man think what a proposition means and involves before he assents to it.

Mr. Page Hopps was severe on Professor Huxley on account of his avowed want of interest in some flabby and flippant messages purporting to come from the world of spirit. The Professor confessed that they did not interest him. We have since learned from Darwin's Life that he found a séance insufferably tedious and wearisome. Well! what then? It means only that Mr. Huxley has not made himself acquainted with the range of spirit-communication, that his limited knowledge is confined to what is of inferior quality, and that *he is not interested*; therein lies the whole matter.

Mr. Page Hopps is right. Mr. Huxley simply does not believe in the existence of spirit. He is agnostic here as elsewhere. If he did, he would see that any folly demonstrating the existence of any disembodied spirit, however unprogressed, who had once worn a body in this world is of supreme importance. He must bide his time.

It is worse than useless to force unwelcome truth on unwilling minds. Spiritualists have spent far too much force in this direction. We may more profitably search into the mysteries that surround us at every step of our experience, and try to fathom what phenomena mean.

The days finally fixed for the soirées of the London Spiritualist Alliance are March 15th, when Mr. Barkas will deliver an address; May 15th, when it is hoped that Mr. Paice may occupy the platform; and June 28th. It may conduce to a good attendance if our readers will make a note of this, and regard the days as engaged.

The *Two Worlds* gives a short notice of the last meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, an act of courtesy for which our thanks are due.

A correspondent sends us a ghastly drawing from the *Argosy*, "Mr. Easton's Ghost." It represents a bedroom with a latticed window at which stands an aged crone in an agony of fright. Our correspondent rightly calls the drawing "odious," and thinks it "calculated to frighten simple-minded people away from Spiritualism." We think it would take more than that to influence any simple or weak brother in whom the power of the spirit has made itself felt. The drawing has gone to its own place—the wastebasket.

The *Sidcup and District Times* has this story of a fulfilled dream, for which it vouches, the parties concerned being known to the writer:—

"A few days ago a young lady of Bromley went up to London by a South-Eastern train to make purchases in town. Arrived at Charing Cross, she changed for a bus; and when the conductor asked for his fare, discovered the loss of her purse, which contained several pounds in gold. Fortunately a friend lived close at hand who supplied her pecuniary needs, and the young lady returned to Bromley much distressed in mind by the misfortune. That night she dreamt that a Bromley tradesman, whom she knew quite well by name but had never in her life seen or spoken to, had got her purse. The vision made a strong impres-

sion on her, but her mother, to whom she related it in the morning, naturally attached no importance to the circumstance, and persuaded her to think no more about it. The matter, however, continually reverted to her mind, and finally she determined to go to the tradesman, who, I may say, is a jeweller in the High-street, and tell him what had happened. Though it may be supposed, from her making this visit, that she had some faith in the reality of her dream, she was not a little astonished to find that he actually had got the missing property in his possession. 'I went up to London yesterday,' explained the jeweller, 'and picked it up at Grove Park, where we had to change trains.' This is the story, which I leave my readers to make what they please of."

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* reproduces in full the article on "Where does the danger lie?" contributed by "Nizida" to "LIGHT."

Words of truth and soberness:—

"Humanity is ever asking the question: 'Have we heard from the other side, and what is the proof of it?' 'What will be our condition on the other side, and how do you know it?' All through the Old Testament Scriptures we read of the nearness of the spiritual realm to the material; that they are not lying leagues and leagues apart, but that they border and touch upon each other; but does not the communication, the contact, continue in this present day? Yes, if it ever did! and let us not be deterred in examining or investigating this subject because a great Bible fact and a sweet and holy consolation have been perverted by some for deceit and money. The mere fact that you and myself do not see a thing does not prove that it has no existence. The mere fact that you and myself do not hear a thing does not prove that it may not be heard. The mere fact that you and myself do not feel a thing does not prove that it may not be felt. The mere fact that you and myself do not understand a thing does not prove it beyond the grasp and comprehension of others more spiritually refined or strangely gifted."

How strange it is that man should try to limit that which is by that of which he is conscious! The most determined Materialist knows that man's senses are only imperfect avenues through which he gains his knowledge. This is well put:—

"Yes, the grandest and best things in God's great universe are those which now we cannot see.

"We cannot see the human spirit with its powers of love and hate—of thought and sympathy, only as it plays upon the face and features. But who ever doubted its existence or separate identity from the human body? The mind now reigns in the material body. It controls matter by will power and is conscious in itself of its separateness and superiority over inanimate matter. The human being, unlike the brute, sees intuitively beyond sense and recognises the unknown with the seen and known, predicts and indicates, and so he lives in the enjoyment of that which he expects and looks for as well as the things which come to him in the present time. This is reason, instinct, intuition, to feel and to realise what is and what may be from what we now see and experience, and to know the future and the hidden by the analogies and intimations of the present. Had we not the power to perceive truths and facts beyond the sphere of our senses we should be little better off than the brutes that perish. And the fact that man reasons and infers beyond material things is itself proof positive that his mind is not material nor a merely material production."

From the same source (a sermon which we read in *The Better Way*, but the preacher's name is lost to us) one more illustration, which is to the point:—

"We may walk through some fair garden at midnight, with the lilies and carnations, the azalias and roses all about us, but unseen and unrecognised on account of the darkness, and only when here and there a whiter bloom gleams out, and sweet, faint odours from unseen sources steal through the dewy stillness, do we feel and know that we are in the garden amid the shrubs and flowers. Now, shall we doubt the existence of the flowers because we cannot see them? So, too, we may sit on some hillside with the glorious landscape spread all around, yet owing to the dark pall of night thrown over hill and valley we can see nothing of Nature's widespread loveliness. But it is all there just as real and existent as though a summer's sun were pouring his beams down upon it. The mere fact of conditions being such that we do not see or feel a thing does not militate against its reality or existence."

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* has involved itself in a vast correspondence on Dr. Wolfe's articles detailing his experiences with Mrs. Fairchild. The Editor shies at the hundred letters he has received and refuses to print any more of them: for it seems most of them are critical of Dr. Wolfe's taste as a writer. In point of fact the Doctor does expose much surface to such criticism: and as to his allegations the Editor's judgment is "still in abeyance." This is the scientific spirit. No good end is to be gained by allowing a mass of people to abuse Dr. Wolfe, Mr. Wright, or one another. And most assuredly Dr. Wolfe's wonderful story lacks corroboration, and even ordinary probability.

"THE GATES BETWEEN."

While we do not wholly go along with Mr. Case he puts criticism worth pondering. It may be worth while *per contra* to ponder whether Spiritualists are not as much indebted to Miss Phelps's insight and utterances as they are to anybody else. We quote the subjoined from the *Banner of Light*:—

"Elizabeth S. Phelps, the celebrated authoress of *Gates Ajar* and *Hedged In*, has now brought out before the public this later volume, *The Gates Between*. The volume fell into my hands recently, and I have a few words to say about it and its excellent writer—and that in the best possible feeling. To say I am simply pleased with the volume does only half express it; I am delighted, and never more so. I hung over its pages, fully under the power of the wand of the enchantress to the last, and am willing to do the most ample justice to the conception and portrayal of the characters and story. *But* there is one thing perfectly amusing in this, as in all the fair author's books I have seen; and that is, the enormous and ill-concealed struggle she continually makes to let the world know *that she is not and does not mean to be a Spiritualist!* And there is, or seems to be, a dread fatality against her, which she cannot avoid any more than she can avoid the

"'Destiny that shapes our ends,
Rough hew them how we will.'

"Will or can any one believe, after reading *Gates Ajar*, or this latter book, that this lady is not a fine spiritual medium? yea, one of the very finest? and that she has not, as Burns beautifully expresses it, 'A correspondence fixed with Heaven'? She may personally disclaim Spiritualism, and 'pooh' at it and at mediumship as much as she will, but she bases all her books that I have read on it. She runs into it on every page, and might as well get rid of her right hand as to avoid the spirit intelligences, who, like flocks of gathering doves, hover over her head and influence her hand and her brain when she writes. It will not do for the good lady to deny it. Nobody who knows aught intelligently of Spiritualism or mediumship in their best sense will accept the negation, but will smile good-naturedly, and, setting her protests all aside, only thank both the good God and Elizabeth Phelps for her books.

"But, now, aside from all this, what shall we say of Miss Phelps's our letter awhile ago, denouncing so vehemently the Spiritualists of the country, and which was at the time handled without gloves by a number of your correspondents? How she poured out her scorn and derision on all mediums in the descriptions of the flights of stairs, to little, obscure rooms and meanly appointed apartments, and sinister looks and suspicious machinations, we all remember; and with what self-possessed air of satisfaction she came down upon all the mediums she had visited and all Spiritualists generally. She did not even try to conceal her contempt of them in the way of innuendo, sarcasm, and satire, if we remember rightly. But Miss Phelps is not so obtuse—*she* cannot be—as to think any intelligent Spiritualist does not see through all this dissimulation! To my mind it was nothing but a sop to the 'very respectable,' pharisaical Cerberus of the old and the new Orthodoxy.

"It seems strange that the fair authoress could not open her eyes wide enough, with all her intelligence, to see that there are millions of people in the world—as sensible, as truthful, as honest, and in every way as respectable as herself, and who can see into a millstone quite as well as the authoress of *Gates Ajar* and *The Gates Between*, though they never saw Andover or New England perhaps—who are filled with a sort of righteous indignation when, on reading her books, and finding her so near the kingdom of modern truth, they also discover her in the act of dodging the issue, and endeavouring to veil the great light which is yet to enlighten 'every man that cometh into the world,' from an evident reluctance on her part to meet the frowns of conservatism. May God and the loving angels help her in time to attain to perfect liberty of thought and the fullest expression thereof.

"Beaufort, S.C."

"REV. E. CASE.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday next, at seven, Dr. S. Chadwick will deliver the second of his course of lectures, entitled "Phrenology." On the following Sunday he will lecture on "Phrenology Proved by the Characteristics of all Nations." A Phrenological Demonstration at the close of the lectures.—F. W. READ, Secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—The hall was crowded on Sunday evening to hear Miss Young, who gave a beautiful address on our "Heavenly Homes," which was much enjoyed by those present. Mr. J. Humphries will speak on Sunday evening next. Subject: "Planetary Influence on Man." We should be glad to receive for distribution any books or papers which friends could spare us.—W. E. LONG, 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

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.]

Mr. Mohini M. Chatterji.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have received the following letter from my friend, Mr. Mohini M. Chatterjee, and if you will kindly publish it that will best serve the end he has in view. Mr. Mohini writes, as you will see, from Rome, where he has been staying for a visit with some English friends, *en route* to India, whither he returns very shortly.—Yours truly,

A. P. SINNETT.

Roma, Italy.

To the President of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society.

SIR,—I understand that among the members of your Society there is a rumour to the effect that I have joined the Roman Catholic Church, which has caused much annoyance to my friends, and also to myself. I beg, therefore, that you will do me the justice to make it known that the rumour is entirely false, and that I have no desire to join any Christian Church.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

MOHINI M. CHATTERJI.

The Companionship of the Insane.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In "LIGHT," January 21st, a writer, who signs himself "M.D.," expressed a doubt whether Spiritualist students are admitted into asylums. He does not seem to be aware that, at the Holloway Sanatorium, part of the building is actually a private boarding-house, where free visitors can stay by the day or week, taking their meals in hall with the patients, and spending as much time as they please in the drawing-rooms and recreation grounds. Such visitors are eagerly welcomed, both by the staff and the patients; and the medical officers would like the boarding-house to be more used than it is.

A serious student, however, may prefer sharing the life of the patients by sleeping in the asylum itself, within hearing of the dormitories and "strong rooms." I know a lady-nurse and a monk who have done so. For my own part, I confided to the doctor that I am a Spiritualist desirous of writing on psychical science; and from that day to this he has done everything in his power both to facilitate my visits and to make them profitable for my purpose.

If relatives of psychics, and ordinary medical men and clergymen, had half the candour, common-sense, and sympathy with abnormal psychical conditions shown by the Holloway staff, comparatively few of the patients would have been driven mad. But the staff are fully occupied; what the patients long for is the society of educated ladies and gentlemen *at leisure*. They want, as some of them have said to me, "someone who can make a centre for our intellectual life." And what can be more the duty of Spiritualists than to create a centre for the intellectual life of the seer overwhelmed and crushed by irregular revelation? The last time I was at the asylum the matron told me that outsiders ask her whether the patients take any interest in art or literature. "Who *does* take an interest in such things if not our patients?" she said. "It is not the fools that come here."

The most tragic fact connected with mental disease with which I am acquainted is this: In proportion as the mind loses health and vigour it loses the power of absorbing truth *at first hand*. (By truth, I here mean the widest sense of the word, including religious, scientific, and artistic truth.) What the individual used to get from the exercise of his vocation, he can now get only from the magnetic influence of those who are exercising it. The former poet now craves for mesmeric contact with poets; the artist for talk with artists. Failing this, the sick like, next best, to talk with some one who habitually lives among those occupied in their former pursuit. Even when the intelligent patient is too ill to talk *about* anything but frivolous outside concerns, it makes all the difference to her if she can talk about them to some one who has just come from that world of letters or art to which she once belonged. The *words* may be the same as would be used if the interlocutor were a kindly, but hard-worked servant; but the patient, however ill, feels the difference of mesmeric influence. The literary woman, when in the exercise of her vocation, is the better for contact with the *unintellectual*; their touch brings her back to humanity as a whole, and prevents

intellectual fancifulness. But when cut off from the world of letters by illness, she needs the touch of those who live in it. The lack of this is, perhaps, the greatest privation to which asylum patients are subjected.

And the student who puts aside her pursuits to share for a time the amusements of the sick and lonely is rewarded by occasional words of counsel and help, such as none but the sick can give. "Whatsoever ye have done unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me," said One who knew more than most of us about psychical conditions. We talk of the *revelations* made at séances. Let any Spiritualist, who wants to know what *revelation* means, sit quietly day after day with certain lunatics for a month or two.

"M.D." suggests danger to psychics from contact with certain classes of lunatics. The danger is very real if the visitor is actuated by idle curiosity. I propose to send to "LIGHT" a few articles on mesmeric transference of evil. For my present purpose it is enough to say that a deep truth is embodied in the legend that Christ went into hell to seek lost spirits as a preliminary to reaching Heaven; the same truth as was perceived by the Psalmist who said that if he went down to hell he should find God there.

MARY BOOLE.

Mr. A. Lillie and the Kabala.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In both of his recent communications Mr. Lillie has made the popular ignorance of astronomy in ancient times an argument against the possession of a true conception of the universe by the authors of the *Kabala*. I shall be glad to learn whether he means it therefore to be understood that in his opinion the framers of the Sacred Mysteries of Antiquity—an Order which comprised the Kabalists—were restricted in their sources of information to those of the non-initiated, and knew no more than these; and, if so, what value, if any, he attaches to the Mysteries. But against such a conclusion it should be remembered that the omission of Initiates to make their doctrines common property is no ground for denying to them the possession of special knowledges, since the prime condition of initiation was secrecy, because only by the maintenance of a strict reserve in respect to them, could the Mysteries be preserved from profanation and loss, and their possessors from outrage by the multitude, who, at the bidding of the priests, clung to the popular superstitions and resented aught that implied a superior truth. Hence the force of the term Mystery, which, though it has since been perverted to mean something transcending human comprehension, meant only something which may not be disclosed save to persons duly qualified to receive it. And it is for this reason that whenever in their writings allusion was made by Initiates to a tenet of this kind, it was made under a veil of symbols so contrived as, while revealing it to the initiated, to conceal it from all besides.

This being the case it is easy to see that even the particular expression relied on by Mr. Lillie to disprove the antiquity of the doctrine involved,—“In the suns the soul remembers; in the planets it forgets,”—does not necessarily refer to the heavenly bodies at all, but may well be a symbolical expression denoting, not *places*, but *conditions*, a “planet” implying a condition of partial, and a “sun” a condition of full illumination and recollection.

E. M.

“Strange Tracts.”

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In the “Jottings” of the current number of “LIGHT” there is a reference to the current No. 3 of *Strange Tracts*, in which I am confronted with a quotation from my preface, and it is objected (I suppose) that “credentials” of the writings to which the *Tracts* relate are not produced. May I point out that, on the contrary, I am not only prepared to produce such “credentials,” but that *I have produced them*? In each of the last two numbers of the *Tracts* I have notified readers and subscribers that the *pièces justificatives* are to be seen at my residence. Moreover, the publication of the *Tracts* themselves is done with the object of explaining the nature of these papers, and bringing into public notice what there is to be adduced in support of their asserted origin. *There is nothing whatever to be withheld from any serious investigation into the matter.* But those whose interest does not at present extend beyond reading the *Tracts* I send to them (which I am obliged to them for doing) would nevertheless, I should have thought, already be beginning to see something of the nature of the evidence I

possess. They may prefer that I should tell my story my own way. Meanwhile the serial issue of any literary work has its limitations. The whole (case) cannot be contained in the (current) part.

May I add that I do not understand why “LIGHT” should be unable to criticise No. 3 in the same way as the preceding numbers, the criticism on which was to myself both interesting and useful? The fact that this particular case does not go on all fours with Spiritualism should, surely, as little exclude it as the fact of Spiritualism not going on all fours with science should have excluded that from the notice of Professor Faraday.

THE EDITOR OF “STRANGE TRACTS.”

[The squaring or not of opinions expressed in any publication with our own has, of course, nothing whatever to do with our noticing them. Our correspondent should know enough of our method and practice to be sure of that. Our comment did but give expression to criticisms which have reached us from various quarters. All cannot spare time to seek for evidence in the way our correspondent offers it. We beg to assure him that we have no feeling other than friendly to him and to his undertaking, which has for us many points of interest.—ED.]

A few Lines from an Absent Worker.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—An old proverb assures us that “absence makes the heart grow fonder,” and as myself and family are now in the third year of our absence from England and home, we can bear testimony to the appositeness of the proverb as concerns our love towards our native land. Yet, after all, how small the world is! Here are we nearly 7,000 miles from Craven-street, yet seventeen days only are required for “LIGHT” to make its weekly journey to us. There are so many valuable articles printed in it that its visits are ever welcome ones. Viewed by the standards of American literature it is conservative, but the careful caution it discloses has an element of strength that is of lasting value. Its “Notes by the Way” are simply invaluable as an able but all too “brief chronicle of the times.” I hear “the English ‘LIGHT’” spoken of at nearly all places we visit, and always favourably.

What can I say of Spiritualism, so far as I have seen it, since arriving in the United States? It might without any real injustice be summed up in two words—phenomenalism and mysticism. Materialisations under circumstances affording full scope for emotionalism and imagination. Circles “managed” by “conductors” armed with “billies” (*Anglicè* policemen’s staves) and six shooters. Seances given every night, with Wednesday and Sunday *matinées*—a condition enough to kill any genuine medium. Every now and again “exposures” more or less disgusting and disgraceful, until one fairly marvels that such things can be. Even admitting that all the scandals that have occurred concerning the subject of materialisation have been conspiracies of outsiders, the general arrangements of public circles for “form” manifestations are such as to preclude, as a rule, any sort of satisfaction to the inquiring sceptic. The plan urged in “LIGHT” some years ago—in 1882, I think—of holding such circles in the light with the medium in view, and the abolition of the “cabinet,” will have to rule here yet. Genuine “form” phenomena are obtainable, but on all sides I am told that much that now passes in public as such is questionable. Materialisation has been a craze which was bound to run its length, and then give place to some new manifestations. But, too often, it is utterly valueless as evidence of personality or identity. That all this is more than regrettable needs no saying. How to correctly apportion the responsibility is the question? Possibly a solution of the matter may be found in the relegation of phenomenal Spiritualism to the domestic fireside.

Another phase of the phenomena exciting great attention in the United States is “slate-writing,” the mediums for which are loosely described as “slate-writers” and “independent slate-writers,” leading to the inference that *they* and not the spirits produce the writing! I am assured, on good authority, of the reality of “slate-writing” and “form” manifestations; but very frequently the question of the identity of the “spirit” is the one element of incertitude in the matter. What is called “platform tests” have had quite a run too. A medium appears before the public and gives “tests” of spirit return. The very best and altogether the most satisfactory medium for this phase that I have met is Mr. John Slater, a young man of highly nervous organisation, whose “tests” eclipse any I have heard from others. In his case

there is no suspicion of preparation beforehand, or the use of "exchange" lists or confederates. If he could be induced to visit England and give there the same evidences of his powers that he presents here, he would astonish all who heard him. The general condition of phenomenal Spiritualism in this land is in need of more calm judgment and examination than, according to common report, is generally bestowed upon it, either by mediums or sitters.

As to the other side of the question—mysticism—there never was a time when the movement was deluged to anything like the present extent with such a dreary mass of bewildering trash as now. Philosophy run to seed, and transcendentalism gone mad, are not too harsh descriptions of the state of affairs. The really valuable elements in works upon "Mental Cure," by Rev. F. W. Evans, have been tortured out of all recognition by the late P. P. Quimby and Mrs. M. B. G. Eddy, of Boston, and Mrs. Hopkins, of Chicago, who are the foremost, but conflicting, exponents of a system they denominate "Christian Science," which, in its turn, is assailed by certain imitators who describe themselves as "metaphysicians" and "spiritual" (as opposed to Christian) "scientists," who teach varying and conflicting theories of God, man, life, matter, being, and other trifling subjects of like nature, with a sublime contempt for the carefully acquired facts of existence as the result of the patient labours of enlightened scientific inquiry. In many cases these learned oracles would scarcely be able to describe the processes of digestion in the physical economy; yet they claim to know all there is of the philosophy of existence! Then there are the Theosophical and Occultist mystics, who affect to look down upon poor ordinary Spiritualists! Years ago I protested against all this intellectual rubbish being foisted upon us.

I have read Mr. Hodgson's report in S.P.R. *Proceedings*, "Report on Blavatsky Correspondence," J. D. B. Gribble, also the pamphlet of Madame Coulomb, with the one result which such matters produce on a mind not blinded by a fanatical acceptance of miraculous claims merely because they are claimed to be miraculous.

Fearing I have far exceeded all claims upon editorial courtesy by the excessive length of my letter, I will close it at once. I greet all my old time London friends, and assure them of my continued remembrance, as well as of my devotion to the work we are all engaged in.—Fraternally yours,

San Francisco, Cal., U.S.

J. J. MORSE.

January 24th, 1888.

Rev. J. Page Hopps's Address.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Reading the wonderful address of Mr. Page Hopps, which is worthy of being printed in letters of gold, there is one idea which I cannot see when he says, "Man is *not* a *fallen* but a rising creature. His Eden is before him, *not* behind him." Does not this state only half the truth and suppress the other? at least if we take the circle, or rather the *spiral*, as the symbol of man's involution as well as evolution. Should we not rather say then, "Man is *both* a fallen and a rising creature. His Eden is before him as it has been behind him. He is recovering and *also* winning ground. He has been saved from a ruin, and is building his glorious temple of life. He hath descended and therefore he doth ascend"—Yours,

I. O.

Miss Lottie Fowler.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am sorry to hear of the adverse circumstances of this marvellous clairvoyante. Her powers are so various. Upon business matters, if conditions are anywise favourable, she is of the greatest value. Some may call it "fortune telling"; to me it seemed like a true spirit friend, viewing our surroundings with clearer eyes than our normal ones, giving a diagnosis with its remedy, and advice for healthy business action for the future, saving us much pain and disappointment. I wish I was near enough just now to have her guide's advice.—Truly yours,

The Manse, Framlingham.

T. DOWSING.

February 14th, 1888.

Gilles de Retz.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I shall be very much obliged if you will tell me where I can obtain any information concerning the Mystic, "Gilles de Retz." Possibly you, or some of your correspondents, may be good enough to put me on the right path.—Yours,

February 11th, 1888.

F. LL.

LEEDS.

SUDDEN DECEASE OF MR. J. EDDISON.

We have this week to record the passing to the higher life of Mr. James Eddison, president of the Psychological Society of Leeds, an earnest and devoted Spiritualist, and one of the earliest pioneers and most active promoters of Spiritualism in that town. He was extensively known beyond the sphere of his immediate activities, and visitors who came to Leeds to promote the cause he had so much at heart, whether as lecturers or in the exercise of their medial gifts, were sure to receive from him kindly and hospitable welcome. His departure, which was due to heart disease, was sudden, but painless and peaceful. On the afternoon of Sunday, January 29th, he had been to post his usual weekly letters to his son and daughter in London, and was returning home with a friend, when he complained of feeling warm and faint, and went into his friend's house to rest. In fifteen minutes, and before either the doctor or any member of his family could arrive, his spirit had departed, leaving the body with a sweet tranquil smile upon the face. By the strange irony of fate, the closing day of his mortal life was the twenty-sixth anniversary of his wedding day. His funeral took place on the Wednesday following his decease, and a large course of friends attended to mark their respect for him and their sympathy and condolence with the bereaved family. The memorial card reads:—

"In Loving Memory of James Eddison, who departed this life January 29th, 1888, aged 53 years. Interred at Beeston Hill Cemetery, February 1st. His end was peace."

On Sunday a commemorative service was held at the Psychological Hall, when an appropriate address was delivered by Mr. Armitage, a well-known local Spiritualist, and an old friend of Mr. Eddison.

T. S.

DR. JAMES R. NICHOLS.

Mr. Brackett writes as follows of Dr. James R. Nichols, one of the Spiritualists whom the world knew not of. It will interest our readers to peruse Mr. Brackett's modest words, quoted from the *Banner of Light*:—

"In your notice of the late Dr. James R. Nichols, you state that he was known to be 'an interested student of the Spiritual Philosophy.' Having known and loved the man, I desire to bear testimony to that part of his character not generally understood.

"When, several years ago, I received a copy of his admirable book, *Whence, What, Where?* I could not help reading between the lines the fact that, back and behind these words, there was no inconsiderable knowledge in spiritual matters, which for prudential reasons he thought best to withhold from the public. In my subsequent acquaintance with him I found that I had not been mistaken, and that this popular book was only a prelude to a more important work which he would have given to the world had his health and life here been spared him, in which the present aspect of Spiritualism would have been prominent.

"Trained to scientific methods of thought, which led him to give due weight to whatever facts were presented for his consideration, he, nevertheless, possessed that genial nature which led him to approach the spiritual side of life with great delicacy.

"As a member of the American Society for Psychical Research he was one of the first to point out the fact that the methods of investigation which they had adopted would be fatal to any just conclusions.

"His failing health prevented his giving to the later phases of the spiritual phenomena that attention which he earnestly desired. He was always grateful for any assistance in this direction, as will be seen by the following extract from one of his many communications to me:—

"I am now quite restored, and I feel that my great indebtedness to you should be again acknowledged. I have thought very much of the extraordinary occurrences at the séance last April. The experiences of that day were of great interest to me. I wish I could see more of the phenomena, and intend to soon. What I saw was so conclusive that all doubt was dispelled, and I have not for a single moment entertained distrust from that day."

"The séance alluded to was a private one held under the mediumship of Miss Helen Berry, and was the most remarkable I have ever attended. Everything was arranged to the entire satisfaction of the parties present, and the intelligence controlling the manifestations, apparently appreciating the Doctor's lack of opportunity, crowded into that one sitting an amount of evidence which often requires years to obtain through the ordinary public séance.

"I desire to bear testimony to the admirable qualities of the man, to his clear spiritual perceptions, and to express my regret that his poor health and sudden departure from this life prevented him from giving to the world the important work he had in contemplation.

"E. A. BRACKETT."

TO CORRESPONDENES.

SEVERAL communications have reached us too late for the current issue.

GEORGES CARRE.—"Les Lys Noirs" received with thanks. (A hundred pages of short poems published at 58, Rue Saint-André des Arts, Paris.)

A. J. L.—We will forward a parcel of old numbers. We are glad to help in this way when appealed to for aid in introducing "LIGHT" in new quarters.

J. E. J.—We cannot understand the drift of the first part of your communication; and we see no good end to be gained by printing the controversial part, which is only too plain in its meaning.

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. Zollner, of Leipzig, author of *Transcendentia Physica*, &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-ntstübbe, &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 Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

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

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

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

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

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

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—“Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone can explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages.”—*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,’ ‘mediumic,’ and others not yet explained by science to be ‘impossible,’ is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biassed 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 inquirer.”—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.*

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

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