

Light:

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1881.

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ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS SPIRITUALISM.

In view of the action of the coming Church Congress in discussing Spiritualism, it is interesting to read the opinion of a prominent American divine, Dr. Austin Phelps, on the question, "Ought the Pulpit to Ignore Spiritualism?" In the *Congregationalist* (quoted in the *Banner of Light*) he expresses a very strong opinion that the pulpit should do nothing of the kind. In the course of his argument he makes some very noteworthy admissions, which we are amused to find coming from such a source. For, it must be remembered that the attitude of the Church, of whatever denomination, to Spiritualism is that of "Get thee behind me, Satan!" It is, of course, "a delusion," "a form of error," "a depraved type of supernaturalism," "the rebound of a starving mind," "necromancy," and so forth. Those who know better, and who can read into Dr. Phelps's angry and fear-stricken invectives the calm and sober language of experience and knowledge, will not be disturbed by this wholesale ticketing of a hated thing. It is the natural device of the irate theologian, and deceives no one. The first noteworthy thing is that the time should have arrived when it is felt to be necessary both in England and America. We have always felt assured that the real struggle would commence when the Church would awake to the necessity of denouncing Spiritualism, and of fastening upon it the odium of a Satanic delusion typical of the "latter days." The denunciations of the Royal Society were harmless compared with the fulminations of the pulpit; or rather, the latter have been in ages past a far more serious power. We believe that that power is now shattered, and that the pulpit has begun its diatribes too late. Nevertheless, Boanerges will roar.

Dr. Phelps is fain to say that Spiritualism is both "extensive and growing" inasmuch as to be "a very positive drawback to churchly influence." "In some towns it claims to be the only form of religious faith that has organic life." Though, it would seem, Spiritualists claim as adherents of their faith many who are not rightly so included, "the residuum" (he ruefully adds) "is painfully large." "The leading organ is said to have a circulation of 100,000 copies, and so far as I know, the claim is not disputed." Moreover, "it is a seductive form of error," well-calculated to make its way when, in "an age of silent revolution," "the Christian faith of many is being very hardly tried." Science has undermined the faith in, for example, the verbal inspiration of Scripture. This, Dr. Phelps laments! "Whatever were the defects of that type of belief (!) it had this merit—that it was definite!" It is hard to repress the smile that rises at the Doctor's naïve simplicity; but it yields to indignant reprehension of the principle so calmly stated. Never mind about truth: only get a definite belief in something—preferably in *me* and *my opinions*! Never, perhaps, was the doctrine of doing evil that good may come more unblushingly propounded.

But this is not all. Science cannot explain away the facts of Spiritualism; theology, therefore, must brand them as diabolic. "Nothing else in scientific history has so perplexed scientific authorities as this [Spiritualism] has done. Even the simple form of it called Planchette has been well denominated 'the despair of science.' The notion of secret wires and invisible hairs, by which wise men once thought to explain these phenomena, will not do now. Men of sense know better. . .

To the common sense of common men 'unconscious cerebration' is not much better. 'Psychic force' shares the same fate. These are but names of things that remain as profound mysteries as before. . . . After all deductions. . . . there remains what nothing accounts for on any principle of science that can be made clear to popular comprehension. Honest scientists admit this." Thank you, Dr. Phelps! It seems to us that if we leave the theologians and scientists to fight it out among themselves, the Spirits may patiently await the issue.

SOME NOTES OF LITTLE PHENOMENA.

The visit to Mrs. Marshall related last week by "J. C." reminds me of a little occurrence at her rooms. I called there—it was when she lived in Red Lion-street—to arrange for a séance at my own house. I met there Dr. Viettinghoff on the same errand, and also a lady, on the part of Mrs. Milner G., a well-known Spiritualist. Having made my appointment, I was about taking my leave when Mrs. M. said to the lady that her influence told her that she also was a medium. To this she assented, and the chair on which she sat began rocking, as if in confirmation. This often happened, she said, when she was seated by another physical medium. I ventured to ask if she was conscious of perfect passivity on her part; in answer she put her feet upon the rung of her chair and drew her dress about her so as to let us see them, and placed her hands upon the table. The chair then, by the action of some force, rose with the lady on it till her knees reached the table-top. The chair, rising, oscillated, but equilibrium was maintained by the lady's hands on the table. That position was maintained perhaps for half a minute, the chair being quite a foot from the floor, and then it gently descended. In answer to our questions the lady said that the Spirit who did this declared, by the alphabetical method, that she had been one of the girls at her village school. She used to give the children some instruction in dancing to improve their carriage of body; and this Spirit could, if dance music were played, move the table to it. Upon this Mrs. Marshall called Mr. Emanuel Marshall from an adjoining room, asking him to bring his violin; and at our request he played some music of the polka kind, and the table—a small tripod one—rising free in the air, went through the movements of dancing, lightly touching the floor successively with each of its feet, its motions being in strict accordance with the music, the hands of the lady being passively on the table top. This ended, the lady asked the Spirit to imitate the country girls' bob, such as she used to make before learning the proper curtsy. The table rose from the floor and most amusingly imitated, as well as a table could, the country bob. "Now," said the lady, "favour us with the curtsy I taught you." Again rising into the air the table executed as gracefully, and with as much animation as was possible for a table, the evolution of a curtsy, again and again, inclining, in doing so, to each of us present.

I was relating these little facts, occurring under my own observation, to a friend who was loud on what the scientific world says about Spiritualism, and he silenced me with the exclamation "Frivolous!" The purely scientific, however, do not dismiss all small facts with the exclamation "Frivolous!" We have lately read of so great a man as the President of the British Association detailing at the great York meeting a series of ingenious experiments for ascertaining some curious little facts in relation to bees, and the colours which attract them; the result being, he says, that blue is the colour which most draws bees. Which was it that ran through that picked assembly of English men of science at this discovery—exclamations of applauding admiration or of "Frivolous!"? All facts, great or small, are good "materials for thinking," and as such I hold that these little notes are as worthy as Sir J. Lubbock's about the colour most "fetching" to bees.

D.

SOME REMARKABLE SEANCES.

Elucidation of the Passage of Matter through Matter.

Contributed by the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan.

Under this title we recently published a very interesting contribution from Mr. O'Sullivan, of New York, now temporarily in London, describing some fine manifestations witnessed by him at three sances with the medium Husk, and one with the medium Firman. The most valuable portion of the narrative was that headed "Rationale of the Passage of Matter through Matter," not only because that phenomenon occurred at each of the four sances, with extraordinary force, but also because, by the answers elicited by his questions addressed to the operating Spirits, Mr. O'Sullivan obtained more light than had heretofore been cast on its *modus operandi*. It seems that in all these cases it was declared that it was the wrists of the living mortals in the flesh which were dissolved or disintegrated so as to allow free passage to the wood and metal of chairs and iron rings, and then reconstituted by the instantaneous return of the atoms to their former relative positions, through the force of *attraction*; the whole without consciousness on the part of the persons thus operated upon. In three cases it was the wrists of the medium, Mr. Husk, which thus opened and re-closed with the rapidity of thought; in the fourth it was the wrists, not of the medium Firman, but those of Mr. O'Sullivan himself, according, at least, to the assurances spoken by the operating Spirits.

We received, too late for insertion last week, a continuation of the narrative, which we now insert with this explanation. In it is related a fifth instance of the passage of matter through matter, in which the presumption is that it was not the human wrist that opened for the passage of the chair, but the chair which opened for the passage of the wrist; the person whose hand was clasped with that of the medium (Firman) being a distinguished American gentleman, who had been an intimate friend of the late Dr. Hare, famous in the annals of Spiritualism as he had before been in those of science in America, of which country he used to be regarded as the "Faraday."

A further illustration of this phenomenon, now common yet always surprising, and to the inexperienced almost incredible, is also given by Mr. O'Sullivan in a remarkable *souvenir* of the old Davenport days. Mr. O'Sullivan says:—

In my previous communication I omitted to mention a manifestation, at the last of these sances with Husk, which may deserve a passing notice. The musical box, shortly after having been freshly wound up by the invisibles, suddenly stopped short. I supposed some accident, some breakage or displacement, to have occurred in the interior. "No," was answered, "I'm only going to try some experiments." We were then told to ask for any number of notes we should wish to hear sounded. Three, five, one, &c., were successively called for by us all round the table, and each call was responded to by that number of notes, and no more. "And now shall it play fast, or slow?" asked the voice. "Slow," I replied, and so slow it was that the tune could scarcely be distinguished. Then, on "fast" being called for, the tune seemed to gallop while the box circled in the air overhead. We then had other variations of the manifestation, such as, first fast, then slow, then fast again, to be played consecutively, without stoppage. In a word, the "experiments" were perfectly successful; after which the box resumed the even tenor of its way, and played itself out till again wound up by the invisibles.

And, by the way, when I thus imagined the box to have got out of order, I had in mind a curious occasion at one of Count de Bullet's sances at Paris, when that accident had actually occurred, and when "John King" repaired the damage in the dark, with his own materialized fingers. The box was in full career, when a violent whizzing was heard, and the music ceased. We were seated at a small round table, the Count, myself, and Mr. and Mrs. Firman, all hands joined in circle, and the door locked. Presently we heard the sound as of the box drawn across the table, and the sound as of fingers at work upon its machinery. "Here, John, hold this piece," said the voice of John King, and a piece of the brass "insides" of the box was placed in my hand, and I could feel his hands at work about the machinery. The work continued audibly for a minute or two, with an occasional little click or metallic sound, and an occasional note struck. Presently, the piece I held was taken from me—in a few moments the top of the box shut down with a clap—and the music started off afresh in perfect order. "There," said the familiar voice of John King, "this is my first appearance in a new trade, that of a watch and clock maker." "For a man called dead, it does you credit, and you could make a good living at it." "Oh, it's not dark to us; it's your light that is a hindrance to us," was his reply. This had not been a marvel of

"will-power," or "psychic force," or "cerebration" conscious or unconscious, or anything of the kind. It had been simply honest, intelligent work by John King's materialized fingers.

The hands of the only four mortals in the room were joined together, and the door was locked; nor could mortal workman have possibly performed such a task in the dark. I have since witnessed the same thing, with another Spirit as the operator, namely, the repairing in the dark of a rather dilapidated musical box, which we, the mortals present, had had to give up in despair.

At another private sance, yesterday, with Firman, at my rooms, there was present a distinguished American gentleman who had been intimate in former years with the famous Dr. Hare, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry in the Medical University of Pennsylvania, author of various scientific discoveries and inventions, among which was that of the oxy-hydrogen blow-pipe. It will be remembered that Professor Hare, confessedly at the head of American science, undertook the investigation of Spiritualism, with a view to destroy what he regarded as a popular delusion, but, as with the prophet who was sent to curse but whom the Spirit of the Lord compelled to bless, it resulted in his publishing, in 1854, an 8vo. describing all the processes of investigation, through strictly scientific methods, which had fully converted him to Spiritualism. Our American Professor Hare now shares with your Crookes, Wallace, Varley, Lord Lindsay, and Lord Rayleigh (all of the Royal Society), and with the German Professors Zöllner, Fechner, Scheibner, Fichte, Hoffman, Frieß, the Swiss Professor Party, the French astronomer Flammarion, and the Professors Wagner and Boutlerof, of the University of St. Petersburg, the honor of being all men distinguished in the front rank of modern science who have had the honest courage to investigate the claims of Spiritualism, and the noble loyalty to truth of avowing their consequent conversion;—in splendid contrast with the conduct of so many of their fellow scientists, who make flimsy pretexts for not investigating because they shrink from the conclusions from which they would have no escape; and because the idea is intolerable to them of having to reverse their old habits of thought, and to stand forlorn amid the shattered ruins of their materialistic philosophy, confessing the existence of God and the immortality of the Soul.

The sance was Mr. A.B.'s, as I must call him, not being authorized to publish his name.

The medium was in poor condition, being unwell. The sance consisted mainly of interesting conversation between Spirits and the mortals (among the voices of the former, as well as from the tenor of what was said, Mr. and Mrs. A.B. recognizing that of their grandmother); but the sance wound up with another manifestation of the passage of matter through matter, the medium's chair being found threaded on the arms of the medium and Mr. A.B., when their hands had been firmly locked together. The medium fell suddenly to the ground, with a cry, his chair having been withdrawn from under him, and *instantaneously* the chair was in the position described. In this instance (unlike those before related) John King told us that it was not one of the human wrists that had been for an instant dissolved, but the crossbar of the chair. He had before said that it was done sometimes in the one way, sometimes in the other, and that the disintegration of the wood or metal, rather than that of the flesh, was the simpler way.

In reference to the instantaneousness of this operation of the passage of matter through matter, so quick as to constitute no perceptible or cognizable time, I may as well, before dismissing the subject, refer to the manifestation which has been witnessed by thousands of spectators here in London, at the exhibitions of the Davenport Brothers, when coats were taken off from a medium and again put on as in the twinkling of an eye. I once witnessed it, many years ago, in a very striking manner, at a private exhibition. It was at the apartments of the late Sir Henry De Haughton, in 1864 or '5, at Maurigy's Hotel, Regent-street. There were present Sir Henry and Lady De Haughton, a clergyman and his wife (name forgotten), myself and my wife, and a young Irishman named Touhey, brought by us; also one of the most eminent barristers of England, and the hotel proprietor, Mr. Maurigy, besides the two Davenports and their associate medium, Mr. Fay, and Rev. Dr. Ferguson, of Nashville, Tennessee, their travelling companion and spokesman. One of the Davenports and Mr. Fay were seated at a small table in the middle of a large dining room, thoroughly bound by the company to their chairs and to the table, by small cords round and round their arms and legs, with their various knots sealed. Their wrists were moreover tied together, back to back, behind them, and then secured to the rungs of the chair, while, by way of still further precaution, the palms of their hands were, I believe, filled with flour. (On this last point I am not quite certain in my recollection; the flour was often thus employed with them; but it is immaterial, for the idea is absurd of any possibility of the medium getting out of and back into such fastenings as have been described within the time of a few seconds, or indeed at all.) The company—including Dr. Ferguson and the other Davenport—were ranged in a semi-circle in front of them, all hands joined. Dr. Ferguson was seated in the middle of the semi-circle with a candle and wax taper matches in his hands.

After the various usual physical phenomena, I asked for that which I had before witnessed, that of Mr. Fay's coat being taken off from him. Sir Henry thereupon requested that it

might be done. In an instant we heard Mr. Fay exclaim, "It's off!" Dr. Ferguson relit the candle by applying the match to the point of fire still alive at the end of the wick, and we saw the coat flying through the air and fall in one corner of the room. Certainly not three seconds had passed since the request for that manifestation had been made. Mr. Fay was now sitting in his shirt sleeves, with all the bonds and fastenings about him intact. The coat on examination shewed neither cut nor rent, nor anything different from an ordinary dress coat. It was evident that it had dissolved from off his arms; been instantly reconstructed in every fibre of its tissues, cloth and lining; and thrown to the distant corner of the room, where we picked it up after having seen it flying through the air.

The converse of the operation was then performed on our request. The coat was replaced on Mr. Fay as instantaneously as it had been taken off. "It's on," he exclaimed this time, in a moment after the request had been made. And again the point of fire at the end of the wick served to light the match and relight the candle.

The young Irishman present, Mr. Touhey, then asked if the same could take place with any other coat, and if his coat could be put on Mr. Fay. "Probably it may," answered Dr. Ferguson. The ladies permitted him to take off his coat and lay it across his knees. The result was the same. "It's on," exclaimed the medium; the candle was again relit in the same way; and there was Mr. Fay sitting, thoroughly bound as before, with both coats on him, Mr. Touhey's as an overcoat. The fourth variation of the manifestation was equally successful, being the taking off of the two coats. All passed just as before. On the candle being again relit from the point of fire at the end of the wick, there were the two coats, the sleeves of one in those of the other, lying on the floor before our eyes. In all those four variations of the phenomenon the time was a matter of seconds—three or four at the outside—and in all the candle was relit in the way described. In all there was instant examination of the intact fastenings, by intelligent observers. Trickery was physically out of the question. No other theory was possible than that the coats were dissolved off the arms and instantaneously reunited in the same relations of atomic cohesion and solidity.

We were told—and I do not doubt it, for the same thing has occurred to other mediums, as I have been assured by reliable persons who have witnessed it—that the waistcoat was sometimes taken off instantaneously from underneath a closely buttoned coat.

I might also, if space and time permitted, refer to numerous instances—a few seen by myself, others recorded by unimpeachable witnesses,—in which material objects have been brought into rooms whose doors and windows were securely shut; such as flowers, singly and in showers from the ceilings, and often freshly wet with dew—plants uprooted from the ground with the damp earth clinging to their roots—fruits—ferns with not a leaf ruffled—living birds, fishes, &c. (sometimes according to the requests of the several sitters)—edible things—musical boxes while playing, and floating in the air, suddenly passing out of the room and then returning into it—and the various nicknacks about a house, brought from a distant house or apartment, or from a particular trunk or drawer, &c. When brought by Spirits from without into a closed room, these things are called *apports*. They all evidently involve the same phenomenon, which is presented with conclusive self-evidence in the facts above related, of the unresisted passage either of wooden and iron rings through the momentarily dissolved human wrists, or of the wrists through momentarily dissolved chairs and rings; either of which is more conceivable than that of the unchanged solids through each other.

I have thought it worth while thus to group together all these cases of the passage of matter through matter, with a view to settling, not only the fact of the phenomenon, but also, from the declarations of the operating Spirits, the *modus operandi* of it. It is clear that there are Spirits who possess a knowledge of that attractive force (whatever it may be) which holds together the atoms of "matter" in the cohesion of solidity; and who are able at will to overcome or suspend momentarily the action of that force; that this action on their part is too instantaneous and too rapid to be perceptible to our senses of either sight or touch; and that the attraction of atom to atom, that is, of each to its contiguous ones, is sufficient (with perhaps some coincident will-power of the operating Spirit) to bring them instantly together again in precisely the same relations of position as before. And this seems to be "the rationale of the passage of matter through matter." Thus closely observed by watchful witnesses, it is unquestionable as a fact, and thus explained by the operating Spirits it ceases to be a phenomenon either inconceivable in theory or incomprehensible in practice; once we have been taught by abundant experience that invisible Spirits do exist about us, and that they, or at least many of them, possess both knowledge and power beyond those yet attained by us Spirits still embodied in the flesh.

The friends of Dr. Davies will be glad to learn that he had a pleasant passage to South Africa. During the week we have had a call from a gentleman who was one of his fellow-passengers, and whom he interested in the subject of Spiritualism during the voyage. Mrs. Davies and family leave England this week by the steamer "Warwick Castle."

SIX MONTHS WITH A HEALING MEDIUM.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I shall ever bless the day when I placed myself under the care of that powerful, experienced, and careful healer, Mr. D. Younger, of 23, Ledbury-road, Bayswater, London. Four years I have suffered severely through a diseased spine, with curvature at the bottom, and severe creaking pains at the top, at the junction of the spine with the brain, with other complications arising no doubt therefrom, which rendered me quite unfit for business. Although only twenty-three years of age—an age when life should be most enjoyable—it was to me a great burden, and the future seemed a hopeless blank.

I tried every means that held out any hope of relief. I placed myself under the care of several medical men, and swallowed vast quantities of drugs, the result being that I found myself getting gradually, but surely, worse, and my physical strength much reduced. My doctors were at a loss to know why fits had not set in, as I had all the symptoms of fits strongly. However, finding no relief from physic, I took Shakespeare's advice to "throw it to the dogs," and placed myself in a very excellent Hydropathic Institute. There I stayed until I could scarcely walk at all, and returned home worse than when I went.

I was then recommended by some of your readers to try healing by the laying on of hands. Acting on their advice, I came to London and placed myself under the care of a then celebrated healer, who, instead of treating me, and, as I have since learned, by the simple, natural, and as I now fully believe, the only effectual method of healing, operated upon me with a machine, which miserable treatment not only made me worse, but caused me for a time to lose all hope and look upon the glowing accounts of my friend, at least, as a delusion. But when I told my friend the treatment I had been subjected to, he at once concluded that I had fallen into wrong hands, and as he had a considerable knowledge of mesmerism, he gave me fresh confidence, and I placed myself, not without grave doubts, under Mr. D. Younger's care. Thank God I did, for he not only succeeded in restoring me to perfect health and vigour, but during the six months I lived in his house, I have enjoyed such marvellous manifestations of Spirit presence and power day by day, that I seem to have been living away from earth on the mountain top, where I could view the Promised Land and realise with my physical senses the greatest of all truths, namely:—that those loved ones whom we thought lost, still live and are ever around us, leaving no doubt of our own eternal hereafter.

Thus you see, dear sir, I have not only been made healthy but happy. I have also seen Mr. Younger perform most marvellous cures apparently without effort, certainly without any mechanical contrivance; for he has no need of such innovations, neither has any other true healer. I am thoroughly convinced, since my experience with him, that if properly applied by a natural healer, this heaven given power, call it mesmeric, magnetic, or what you will, is able to effect more permanent cures in less time, with more certainty and ease to the patient, than all other systems where medicines or mechanical appliances are used. I am fully persuaded that pure healing power can only be transmitted through its natural channels, the chief of which is the hand directed by the will. The influence thus imparted will not only restore an equilibrium of the vital forces, but give new life-power to the fortunate recipient. Nor do I believe it is confined to specialties, but that all pangs and pains may be dispersed and permanent health restored, both to body and mind, and that by the cultivation of the powers within ourselves we may all pour into each other this beautiful life-force and so lift each other heavenwards, strengthen each other's weaknesses, and make ourselves and others more noble, pure, healthy, and happy. Here then is work for all, a glorious incentive to make some real use of life for the physical and spiritual lifting up of ourselves and others.

All the physic and machines in Europe cannot heal, nor all the priests in Christendom accomplish, what vital human magnetism or sympathy was designed to accomplish. It has no substitute. Political economists and positive materialists may prate about self-help, liberty of the subject, &c., but I pity the man who never felt the elevating influence of a better man than himself, with purer mind and healthier body. He knows little of the virtue that passes from a healthy, good man's hand, or from his presence in the workshop or the palace. It is the same that passed from Peter to the cripple at the gate; the same that went from Jesus to the poor woman and made her whole; the same that raised a degraded Magdalene to a high state of Spirituality; it is the same power that Paul sent in handkerchiefs and aprons, and is as subservient to the human will to-day as it was in those far back ages. Whoever doubts it let him try for himself. It is accessible to all, more or less, with all other Spiritual gifts; and I would say to all—Seek them in good faith with the honest, honourable intention to try all things, prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

F. CUMBERPATCH.

100, Redcliff-street, Bristol.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding, and enclose stamps for the return postage.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The August number of *The Theosophist* contains a translation of a letter contributed by Mr. A. J. Riko, of The Hague, to the *Revue Spirite*. The subject is "Stone Throwing," and the facts adduced are of the usual type. It is noted, however, that the stones, in some cases, did not strike any one, though they were flying about in all directions. This is not, I fancy, by any means an invariable peculiarity in stone-showers. If I remember rightly, great annoyance has been frequently experienced from various missiles, which would seem to have been spitefully aimed at persons so as to disfigure and annoy them. But be this as it may, the most instructive part of the article is that which embodies the editor's comments on Mr. Riko's narratives. Who are the invisible beings who play these Puck-like pranks? What do they do it for? Are they departed human Spirits? or the Elementals of the Theosophists? These are the points to which the editor devotes attention.

Short work is made of the Spiritualist theory that such phenomena are due to the agency of departed human Spirits. Such, it is argued, are either *esprits malins* (malicious Spirits) or devils, as the Roman Church holds. How then account for the fact that these Spirits, being what they are, are careful to avoid striking or annoying those who are present? "Their object—if they have any at all—must be to derive cruel pleasure from tormenting mortals." Are they likely to be less malicious than a school-boy, or more careful of possible consequences? The answer is that the object in view may conceivably be, and in many cases apparently is, something quite apart from "cruel pleasure in tormenting" anyone. I have repeatedly seen phenomena which might far more reasonably be attributed to the gambols of a monkey than to the calculated malice of a fiend. These aimless antics, and many perplexing phenomena of a kindred nature, suggest Puck rather than Satan: a sub-human intelligence devoid of moral consciousness, rather than the serious attempts of a departed human Spirit to demonstrate its continued existence. In this I find myself in agreement with *The Theosophist*. It is extremely difficult to refer such pranks to departed human Spirits. Nor is it fair to say broadly that all Spiritualists assume this position. The present writer, speaking solely for himself, is free to confess that he has long felt it to be one of the most considerable stumbling-blocks in the way of intelligent acceptance of the creed of Spiritualism that such tricks should be put down to the action of our own departed friends. The evenly-balanced mind rebounds with a shudder from such profanation, and refuses to entertain so repulsive a proposition. It may be that this is the result of misguided ideas implanted by mistaken training. It may be that the sacred solemnity with which the serious mind invests the state of the departed is fallacious, and that those whom we fondly think of far otherwise, are really disporting themselves in this unseemly fashion. It may be: but to most minds, not debauched by an emotional enthusiasm that has run wild, the idea is most repellent, and drives many back from the threshold of investigation. We

may at least demand that every conceivable explanation be exhausted before we are reduced to accept this.

In so far I find a point of agreement with *The Theosophist*. The ordinary Spiritualist explanation is ponderously difficult, and, to my thinking, quite wanting in verisimilitude. What has the editor (of *The Theosophist*) to say in positive elucidation? It is one thing to demolish the theory of an adversary, and altogether another to submit one that will stand the test of his destructive criticism. The answer given deserves careful attention. The phenomenon is referred to the action of "a blind though living force." We can hardly fancy a *blind* force which yet carefully misses the living beings in a room, and, as is contended, designedly avoids them: or a *living* force without some intelligent being to manipulate it. So far the explanation is hardly intelligible. It receives some light, however, from a subsequent reference to "the invisible body of those we call blind Elementals or Forces of Nature." These the editor does not regard as "beings." "They are the active forces and correlations of fire, water, earth, and air, and their shape is like the hues of the chameleon which has no permanent colour of its own." It would seem, then, that the claim made is that the four elements, though not properly described as "beings," are "active forces," and can operate in the Puck-like manner we have seen. What is the evidence for this? "Through the interplanetary and interstellar spaces, the vision of almost every clairvoyant can reach. But it is only the trained eye of the proficient in Eastern Occultism that can fix the fleeting shadows and give them a shape and a name."

It is at once apparent that this narrows down the testimony very greatly. Those of us who have had experience in psychical phenomena have learned much of the action of Spirit, not only through its operation on the plane of matter, but by psychological processes. I know no case in which any of these intelligences—apart from the fancy of some human being—has consistently described itself, and given fair reason to shew that it is an *Elemental Spirit*. In every single case within my knowledge, a manifesting intelligence in a circle represents itself to be, and frequently gives evidence that it is, a *departed human Spirit*. The only exception that I am disposed to make to this invariable result of personal experience is one that, standing out in solitary isolation, serves but to confirm the all but universal law. One Spirit that for a long time appeared—one can hardly say communicated—at a regular circle, was represented to be one that had not yet reached the plane of incarnation. However this may be, the fact remains that, the rare exceptions being admitted, the communicating intelligence claims to be that of a departed human being. How is this?

The "proficients in Eastern Occultism" are, I presume, the "Brothers of the first section" of the Theosophical Society, one of whom, Koot Hoomi, appears so frequently in Mr. Sinnett's recent work, "The Occult World." These Brothers are so mysterious in their action that it is very difficult indeed to make out who and what they are. The number of *The Theosophist* which contains the explanation respecting which I have been writing, has the published testimony of five fellows of the Theosophical Society, all Hindus, who have seen and conversed with one or more of these persons. Their testimony is emotionally phrased, and somewhat hazy in some points, leaving much to be desired in the way of exact and clear statement and detail, but it is satisfactory to know that, though Mr. Sinnett has not been so favoured, and though to Western Spiritualists their very existence is mythical, there are persons who have satisfied themselves of the existence and activity of these Brothers. If we are to accept on their authority such an explanation of psychical phenomena as that to which I have adverted, it is extremely desirable that the veil which enshrouds them should be lifted. We have no right, indeed, to impose any conditions on those who, secluded from the world, and devoted to a life of meditative asceticism, seek to develop in themselves the inner spiritual life. But when the consentient testimony of the huge majority of these spiritual visitants, and of those of us who hold converse with them, is impugned, we have a right to know who so speaks, on what authority, and by virtue of what knowledge, before we accept the theory as anything serious.

I commenced by the admission that there are phenomena which are with difficulty referable to the action of departed

human Spirits. But the Theosophist goes infinitely further than that. To him the action of the departed is so rare a thing, so improbable, that each claim so made must be suspected, and proven before being accepted. The presumption is that a false claim is being set up. He assumes that the Spirits who come to earth are false and bad, or wicked and irresponsible. They are to be treated generally—all but universally—as liars. Just as to us there is hardly a case in which the Spirit was not presumably human, so to him there is hardly a *rèvenant* whose claims can seriously be entertained. This is an extreme case of divergent testimony; and the line of demarcation is deeply drawn. But it must be remembered that we do know of departed human Spirits, and in their presumed or alleged action we have a *vera causa*. We can demonstrate their action by evidence as complete as the nature of the case permits us to obtain. We entertain no doubt whatever that the sweeping allegations of the Theosophist respecting what we know of Spirits, where we have been able to test them, are exaggerated and untrustworthy. How then can we accept the theory of these “blind but living forces” without some far more clear and positive demonstration?

There is another point in the explanation given that must not be passed over. It is alleged that a study of mediumship would shew “how closely related to and dependent on the variations of terrestrial magnetism are those of the mediumistic or animal magnetic (!) state.” The chief cause of the fitfulness of psychic phenomena is alleged to be “unfavourable variations of the terrestrial magnetism.” “The power of a real strongly charged medium will always prevail against the animal magnetism which may be adverse to it; but it cannot produce effects unless it has received a fresh supply of molecular force, an impress from the invisible body of those we call blind Elementals or Forces of Nature.” A physical medium is described as “an organism more sensitive than most others to the terrestrial electro-magnetic induction.” “Physical mediums have very little, if anything, to do with human Spirits. Their powers are purely physical and conditional, i.e., they depend almost entirely on the degree of receptivity and chance polarisation of the body of the medium by the electro-magnetic and atmospheric currents.” This is limited to physical mediumship: “Purely psychological manifestations are quite a different thing.” So far as experience can test this allegation, it contains some truth, but, as we frequently find in testing these generalisations, it will not cover all the facts. Electrical disturbance is a strong preventive to manifestations with some mediums; with others it does not apparently affect them at all. A falling barometer will utterly stop the flow of psychic force from some mediums; others do not feel it. I have seen phenomena evolved under every conceivable atmospheric condition. But few mediums, if any, can depend on the production of phenomena in the presence of a determined antagonistic circle. The introduction of one positive mind, with active opposition or dislike of the subject, will do more to stop manifestations than any atmospheric disturbance I ever witnessed.

Among the settled convictions established by close and prolonged personal observation, a chief one is that very few mediums can make way against the active antagonism of a strongly positive mind. It is the great beauty of Slade's mediumship, as it is of Mrs. Simpson's in Chicago now, that in their presence phenomena can be had under almost any conditions, including that which I have noted as being, in my judgment, the most deterrent. But of how many public mediums can this be said? And if they, hardened to meet unfavourable conditions, and to endure without shrinking all that scepticism, suspicion, and antagonism can devise,—if they cannot undertake to face these conditions with success, how can it be expected that the sensitive, who has been the friendly medium of the family circle, can succeed? These, and such considerations do not lend any great probability to the theories of *The Theosophist*.

The theory of physical mediumship, that it is a highly-developed sensitiveness to the terrestrial electro-magnetic induction, is in direct contradiction to the fact that the most delicate scientific instruments fail to shew any connection between the phenomena of percussive sounds or of movements of ponderable bodies, and magnetic disturbance of any kind. Mr. Crookes sought repeatedly for evidence of this connection, but, so far as the world knows, without result. Nor do I believe that any such connection exists.

M. A. (OXON.)

MR. HUSK'S MEDIUMSHIP.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—As “facts are the groundwork of Spiritualism,” your readers may probably be interested in the following account of a séance with Mr. Husk, at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, Holborn, W.C., on Saturday evening last, 10th inst. The circle comprised five gentlemen, including the medium, who was *securely* held on the right by the “Lieutenant” (mentioned by the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan in previous reports of séances in your columns), and on the left by the writer of this letter. The hands of *all* were carefully interlinked throughout the séance, which was held in darkness, and which lasted for upwards of two and a-half hours. Under these conditions the Spirits respectively known as “John King,” “Irresistible,” “Ebenezer,” “Peter,” “Lightfoot” and his daughter, “Potomack,” and “Mentor,” a Greek Spirit, spoke in their characteristic voices, and gave palpable evidences of their presence by handling the musical instruments, carrying them over our heads and round about the room. “John King” shewed his head and bust over the table, holding a large slab covered with Balmain's Luminous Paint, in such a manner as to permit of his features being distinctly seen by each of the sitters, and talking in his well known tone of voice. Seated as I was next to Mr. Husk, I was enabled to dimly discern the outline of the entranced medium, while the draped form of “John King” leaned forward over the medium's head towards the table. At the request of Mr. E. Larrard, of Leicester, who sat on my left, “John King” placed one of his hands upon the surface of the luminous slab, and, as we watched, the hand gradually diminished in size, while the head and bust of “John King” were perfectly visible, and he was speaking to us. Towards the close of the séance the “Lieutenant” was lifted with his chair on the table, but retaining his hold of the medium; and, after an unsuccessful attempt to raise me in like manner, the medium's chair was first removed from under him and placed upon the table, and the medium then raised and placed in his chair, while an iron ring was threaded upon the “Lieutenant's” arm, without the contact of our hands throughout the circle being broken.

Although the foregoing is of necessity but a very brief description of much that transpired, it may serve the purpose of attracting the attention of some of your readers whose interest may be stimulated thereby, and induce those who are in search of evidence to utilise Mr. Husk's mediumship.—Yours faithfully,

THOMAS BLYTON.

38, Great Russell-street,
Bloomsbury, London, W.C.
September 13th, 1881.

MR S. C. HALL.

Mr. S. C. Hall is again visiting his native town, Topsham, Devonshire. The occasion is one of singular interest. In 1802, when the regiment which his father commanded, “The Devon and Cornwall Fencibles,” was disbanded, at the Peace of Amiens, he presented the flags of that regiment to his parish church. For 75 years they hung over its altar; but some five or six years ago they were most improperly sold to aid a fund for repairing the church. Mr. Hall succeeded in tracing them, and they were given to him by the generous and distinguished officer by whom they had been purchased. Mr. Hall is now about to restore them to the place where they had been so long. The present vicar and the parishioners universally are rejoicing to receive them back again; and they will be taken to the sacred edifice by bands of the volunteers, who will honour the bequest which was made to them just 80 years ago. A brass plate by their side will record the singular fact that the colours so given by Colonel Robert Hall, in 1802, were restored to the church by his son, Samuel Carter Hall, in 1881. It will add to the interest of this matter to state that the day on which this restoration is made will be the 20th of September, which, as Mr. Hall writes to us, is the fifty-seventh anniversary of his wedding day. He was married on the 20th September, 1824.

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN has sent us “A Plea for the Revival of Spiritualism,” which unfortunately reached us too late for insertion. She speaks very earnestly of the error of those who, because of the many “disgraces” which evil doers have brought on Spiritualism, have withdrawn from all public connection with the cause. She believes that the private investigation of phenomena, and the public exposition of the facts and philosophy should go hand in hand; and acting on the advice of her Spirit friends, she has determined to do what she can to put our faith fairly before the world; and she is therefore ready to accept invitations to lecture within a reasonable distance of her residence—The Iimes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

DEATH'S CHIEFEST SURPRISE.

"She is dead!" they said to him, "come away;
Kiss her and leave her—thy love is clay."
They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of stone they laid it fair;
Over her eyes that gazed too much,
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;
With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet, soft lips, that had secrets to tell;
About her brows and beautiful face,
They tied her veil and marriage lace;
And drew on her feet her white silk shoes,
Which were the whitest an eye could choose;
And over her bosom they crossed her hands;
"Come away," they said, "God understands."
And there was silence, and nothing there
But silence, and scents of eglantere,
And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
And they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she."
And they held their breath till they left the room,
With a shudder, to glance at its stillness and gloom.
But he who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,
He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turned it; alone again—he and she!
He and she! Yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name she loved erewhile.
He and she! Still she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love.
Then he said: "Cold lips and breasts without breath,
Is there no voice, no language of death—
"Dumb to the ear, and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct, intense?
"See, now; I will listen with soul, not ear;
What was the secret of dying, dear?
"Was it the infinite wonder of all,
That you ever could let life's flower fall?
"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?
"Was the miracle greater to find how deep
Beyond all dreams sank downward that sleep?
"Did life roll back its records, dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?
"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss,
To find out so, what a wisdom love is?
"Oh, perfect dead! Oh, dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear!
"I listen as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven, and you do not tell.
"There must be pleasure in dying, sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!
"I would tell you, darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon my brow shed;
"I would tell, though the Angel of Death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.
"You should not ask vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which of them all was death's chiefest surprise—
"The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."
Ah! foolish world; oh, most kind dead!
Though he told me who will believe it was said?
Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the sweet, soft voice, in the dear old way:
"The utmost wonder is this:—I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, dear;
"And am your angel, who was your bride,
And know that, though dead, I have never died."

New Jerusalem Messenger.

MR. WALTER HOWELL, trance inspirational speaker, is in London and is staying at Mrs. Maltby's, 22, Gordon-street, Gordon-square, W.C. Mr. Howell will be glad of any opportunities for the exercise of his mediumship, either in private or public assemblies.

LAUGHING IS CATCHING.

On the banks of the river Delaware, America, (the *Journal de Condé* informs its readers) lives a farming family, the members of which are troubled with a most singular affection. The father was seized—it is ten years ago—with a sudden, uncontrollable fit of laughter. As it continued without apparent cause, the wife appealed to him to tell her the reason, but he only laughed the more. His son beat him between the shoulders, but that was of no use, so they sent for a doctor. He was unable to deal with the case, said it was a nervous disorder for which he knew no precedent, and against it, he thought, medical science was powerless. At sunset the laughing ceased, and the farmer fell exhausted. But his strength soon returned, he supped, and afterwards slept as usual; but, at the end of a few hours the fit of laughing suddenly returned, and ceased as suddenly at the end of five hours. On succeeding days and nights, the laughing fits came on at regular intervals; but becoming used to them, and feeling that they did not impede his working, he continued in his fields, and took as little heed of his laughing as he could. But although the fits came on, as a rule, at fixed hours, sometimes one would take him unexpectedly; for instance, one Sunday at his chapel it came on and he could not control it; it proved catching; gradually the congregation joined him; and after trying in vain to quell the contagion, the preacher himself proved a victim, and he laughed also until obliged to hold his sides. So it went on with the farmer for nearly two years; the young people feeling the impulse but struggling against it, but ultimately they all, beginning with the eldest, have become victims to the disorder.—*Journal du Magnetisme*.

SPIRITUALISM AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

We have seen a statement that the proposal to discuss the question of Spiritualism at the forthcoming Church Congress has been abandoned. This is incorrect. "The Duty of the Church in respect to the Prevalence of Spiritualism" stands on the official programme for Tuesday evening, October 4th—a paper to be read by the Rev. Dr. Thornton and a speech to be delivered by the Rev. Canon B. Wilberforce. Possibly other speakers will also claim to be heard. What "the Church" will say on the subject is altogether problematical. Probably they will denounce Spiritualism as sorcery and diabolical. If the facts are admitted we shall be satisfied. For the rest we can afford to wait.

DR. MACK AND THE FLETCHERS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your journal, dated June 25th, 1881, there are certain statements which should be refuted, made by J. William Fletcher concerning the litigation between the Fletchers and myself, which was founded upon the presumption that I was liable for the goods given to me in the name of Madam Hart-Davies as her property. This position; however, has been abandoned not only in the English courts but in the American courts also. Not that there is a desire to harrow up any feeling in the matter, but that the public may no longer be misled, and that injustice may no longer be done to one who has already suffered too much by trying to assist a stranger in a foreign land, who sought aid and assistance in a very distressing manner, the following statements are submitted and have the record of court to bear them out.

Mr. Fletcher states, in the first instance, that Dr. Mack had Mrs. Fletcher arrested, while the Record of the Municipal Criminal Court of the City of Boston shews that the complaint upon which she was arrested was made and sworn to by Madam Hart-Davies.

Secondly: In regard to Dr. Mack's arrest on *mesne process*, on the ground that he was going to leave the State, so that execution, if obtained, could not be served upon him, Mr. Fletcher states that Dr. Mack applied to be allowed to take the poor debtor's oath—which is contrary to both fact and record. I applied to a commissioner to be allowed to take the oath that I did not intend to leave the State, and the matter was continued on my own recognisance of 40,000 dollars to appear at a future date. In the meantime I went to England by advice, having ample time to return before the date set by the commissioner for a hearing, but circumstances arose while there so that I could not return within the time set; but upon completing the business in England I returned to America to meet all charges against me.

Thereupon, on the 3rd day of June, 1881, I was re-arrested on the same ground as before, and after a partial hearing the case was continued until the second day of July, 1881; and upon that date there was no appearance against me; whereupon all proceedings in the case were abandoned.

The proceedings against me being civil—the State having no interest in them whatever—the assertion by Mr. Fletcher that Dr. Mack was upon the law books a defaulter to the State to the amount of 40,000 dollars is altogether groundless.

And lastly, Mr. Fletcher states that if necessary he will forward a copy of the judgment against Dr. Mack, shewing him to be a fugitive from the United States. There is no such judgment, and I defy Mr. Fletcher to produce the record.

JAMES McGEARY,
37, Upper Baker-street,
London, N.W., England.
September 14th, 1881.

Usually called Dr. Mack.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

Journal du Magnétisme (Paris).

The current number is devoted to the memory of the distinguished Du Potet. At his funeral obsequies there were present, besides a host of friends, representatives of societies to which he belonged or which were in sympathy with him and his work; among them the *Société Scientifique d'Etudes Psychologiques*, the *Société des Etudiants Swedenborgiens*, of which Alphonse Cahagnet is president; the *Société Théosophique*, of Bombay, the *Société de Magnétisme*, and the *Jury Magnétique*, of Paris. The *Journal du Magnétisme*, established by Du Potet, was represented by M. de Cazeneuve, whose duty it was not only to eulogise the deceased but to protest against the clerical ceremony which had been performed, Du Potet having been, from the beginning to the end of his days, an antagonist to clericalism. The latter part of M. de Cazeneuve's duty was left undone at the urgent entreaty of other orators, to avoid shocking, on the occasion, clerical relatives. There is a battle going on in France between unclericals and clericals, and on such occasions as this the former generally make a point of waving their flag. All the above representatives made orations; from them we gather that Du Potet—we omit his title because he used to say that true nobility was in mental qualities—was not only a worthy successor to Mesmer, but in all respects a man of great character. He was a voluminous writer of trenchant style: he recognised within himself a force of inspiration. The loves shewn by so many for the chains forged by selfishness and ignorance moved his anger and commiseration. In France he had in this hosts of sympathisers. The orations over his grave manifest veneration for a great teacher and love for a good man.

The last of Du Potet's works was his best—the “*Thérapeutique Magnétique*: Rules for applying Magnetism to pure Experimentation, and to the Treatment of Maladies. Spiritualism, its Principle and Phenomena.” It is an octavo volume of 540 pages. This book has done much to spread Magnetism and Spiritualism among educated people in France.

“The Spiritualist.”

The editor has a brief article upon “Epidemic Mesmeric Influences” as exemplified by the “Salvation Army.” He says:—

“In nearly every town in the United Kingdom at the present time, an opportunity is afforded of studying the action of mesmeric influences upon large masses of people, by observing the actions of the Salvation Army. The enthusiasm of the leaders gradually infects apathetic listeners, and the mesmeric sensitivities among the latter, when at last convinced that some vast Power is acting upon them, are drawn to the platform as surely as if the operator upon it were a professional biologist. As the frenzy of the meeting increases, synchronous visions, and speaking in known and unknown tongues, are among the psychological phenomena presented, but the best part of the matter is, that some of the persons thus influenced do actually, as a matter of fact, begin to lead better lives.”

The following “Declaration of M. Jacobs concerning the brothers Davenport,” directed to “M. Chas. de Rappard, director of *Licht mehr Licht*,” contains M. Jacobs' testimony to the reality of the phenomena he observed in the presence of those mediums in 1865. M. Jacobs says:—

“All that has been said or done adverse to these American mediums is absolutely untrustworthy. If we would judge rightly of a thing, we must understand it, and neither the journalists nor the conjurors possessed the most elementary knowledge of the science that governs these phenomena. As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect.”

As the testimony of a conjuror this is useful as against those who assert that Spirit phenomena are but conjuror's tricks.

“The Herald of Progress.”

The “control” of Mrs. Wright, lecturing upon the duty of Spiritualists to the young, utters the following sentiments:—

“I perceive a greater desire abroad to make converts to Spiritualism from incongruous elements of life, rather than to develop suitable channels through which the Spiritual world can be heard and seen. It is far better to get the possible conditions by which extraordinary Spiritual manifestations can come, than to bring scores unprepared to the séance room to see phenomena they cannot understand. If the young continue to be overlooked, if they be not regarded as an important factor in the development of the cause, Spiritualism will be a questionable success. It will move forward by fits and starts; what it gains at one place it will seem to lose at another. By the Spiritual development of the young, the future of the cause will be overcast by no shadows, but, in the strength of a Spiritual Samson-like life, it will go on from conquest to conquest and victory to victory, until the human race, as one family, is bound together by the divine laws of everlasting concord.”

“The Medium.”

“Bible Spiritualism” is again treated by “Ouranoi,” who discusses the subject of “Compensation” in a thoughtful spirit.

“J.K.” continues his articles on “The Adeptship of Jesus Christ.”

Under the heading of “Strange Phenomenon at Moston, near Oldham,” J. Murray writes as follows:—“I send the following account of a phenomenon, which took place at Chain Bar, Moston, near Oldham, which I have received from Mr. John Holt, Manchester-street, Oldham, who along with others can bear testimony to its truthfulness. Mr. Edward Glossop, grocer, of the above-named place, on the 14th of August, 1881, had a cart load of flour delivered at his shop, after which, he, along with the carter, retired into the house, behind the shop, to have a little chat together, when on happening to look round, behold a table which was covered by a table-cloth, was seen to be in a blaze of fire. They both hastened forward to put it out, and when they had succeeded and examined it, it was found to be as perfect as before the fire, and strange to say there was nothing near it to cause such a thing to happen. Mr. Glossop is a well known Spiritualist, but the carter was not, which made him think the devil was not so very far away.”

“The Religio-Philosophical Journal.”

Referring to some recent criticisms upon Spiritualism, in America, by Unitarian ministers and writers, the editor asks:—“In view of this searching discussion and this new assault what can we do, as Spiritualists, for the truths and blessed experiences so dear and precious to us?”

And he replies as follows:—

1. Hold up a high standard of ethics and morals, of conduct and character. Let honour, fidelity to home and family and marriage, temperance, chastity, self-control, spiritual culture, and a living interest in all wise reforms abound among us.
2. Let us hold high, with clearness and positive confidence, the facts of spirit-presence and power; as illustrating immortality; as emphasizing a spiritual philosophy; as giving light and life to natural religion; and let these facts be rounds to the ladder by which we climb, not clogs to hold us down.
3. Let us learn more of the inner life of man, and of the Soul of Things, and so cultivate our own wonderful powers reverently and freely.
4. Let us weed out illusion and fraud and falsehood, hold mediums morally responsible for their acts and words as we hold each other responsible, and no more excuse them for being controlled and led to bad ends than we excuse others who fall into criminal ways from evil influences and their own pitiful weakness.

Can any of our American readers forward us the full particulars in regard to the following item from the *Journal*?—

“Mr. Tuckett managed the shooting affair at St. Louis some time since, giving, as he says, 14 newspaper reporters ample space in a room where the cabinet and apparatus was got up under their supervision, the medium (a man) tied by some of them, and one of their number—Mr. Cunningham of the *Globe-Democrat*—with his own rifle shot the materialized Spirit plainly seen by all (a woman), the ball passing through her forehead and lodging in the wall behind, as the reporters admitted, without affecting her motions or position.”

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.

BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

The usual monthly meeting of the Council of the B.N.A.S. was held on Tuesday evening, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, one of the Vice-Presidents, in the chair.

Two resignations were accepted, and four new members were elected.

On the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald, the following resolution was cordially and unanimously adopted:—

“That the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists has long recognised, with admiration and gratitude, the zeal and ability which have been displayed by Mr. T. P. Barkas, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in the advocacy and defence of Spiritualism, and desires to express the earnest hope that he will add to his many valuable services to the cause, by supporting it at the forthcoming Church Congress at Newcastle-on-Tyne, on the 4th of October next.”

Mr. D. Fitzgerald, as chairman of the Research Committee, was requested to undertake the necessary arrangements for a course of fortnightly discussions to be held during the coming winter. He cheerfully agreed to do so, and said that his mother had also kindly volunteered her assistance.

The Secretary reported that the Glasgow Society had nominated Mr. James Robertson to represent them at the Council of the B.N.A.S.

The Soirée Committee were directed to consider the question of holding a conversazione at an early date.

DALSTON.

The Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism resumed its regular sessions on Thursday evening, 8th inst. The attendance was fairly good, considering that not a few members are still out of town. Mr. J. Taft, hon. sec., and Mr. J. J. Morse, President, were in attendance, and a pleasant evening

was spent by the company in listening to the controls of Mr. Morse. One of the members, who is developing as a seer, described different Spirits as he discerned them.

HACKNEY.

The meetings of the Hackney Primitive Spiritualist Christian Mission are still continued with their accustomed usefulness, every Sunday, and are attended by many earnest inquirers, who evince much interest in the materialisation séances. Mr. E. Rhys Williams, the president, will be pleased to welcome all earnest inquirers who are desirous of studying Spiritualism in a spirit of earnestness and reverence.

LADBROKE HALL.

An increased audience on Sunday evening assembled at this Hall to hear Mr. McDonnell lecture on "St. Paul and his Writings." The opinion of the audience was expressed in a vote of thanks at its conclusion, and we can truthfully say that the address was one which was carefully studied and ably delivered. The views were novel in many respects, and the arguments unanswerable. Next Sunday the same gentleman will speak on "Apostolic Succession."

BIRMINGHAM.

We have taken as before, the Board Schools, Oozells street, in which to carry on our meetings for the coming season. Mr. Mahoney has kindly consented to open them on Sunday, 18th; subject, "What is Religion?" We have also engaged Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten for October 2nd. We shall be glad of the assistance of all Spiritualists, as we should like to see an established society in this town. There are many Spiritualists, and did they all assist the work would be easier. The cause has spread widely during the last eight years, and if all worked together in unity we could soon establish a Spiritual Church. We therefore ask them to give their aid for the love of the cause of truth. We thank all mediums and speakers for the work they have so cheerfully done, whilst being so poorly paid; but we know it has been done with the single desire that the knowledge of Spiritualism may be spread, its blessings felt, and our brothers and sisters find communion with friends and relatives who have passed to the higher state of life.—C. GROOM.

CARDIFF.

On the evening of Sunday, the 11th instant, there was a very fair attendance at the Society's rooms. Mr. Rees Lewis read some highly interesting extracts from the *Banner of Light*, and after the close of the public meeting a very satisfactory séance was held, several good tests being given to various sitters through the mediumship of Mr. Brooks. In consequence of the resignation of our late worthy and energetic secretary, Mr. W. Paynter, through his probably having to leave Cardiff, the necessary change of officers has been made as follows:—Council, Mr. Haynes, Mr. G. Sadler, junr., Mr. Rees Lewis (the latter combining the duties of treasurer); secretary, Mr. E. Adams. We sincerely wish Mr. Paynter every success where'er his lot may be cast, and trust the Cause will not lose the services of so valuable a worker by his removal from our midst.—E.A.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Mr. F. O. Matthews.

On Sunday morning last Mr. Matthews held a meeting in the lecture room of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, the room being wellfilled with an attentive audience. Mr. Matthews, under control, prefaced his text with a lengthy speech, and we would like in a kindly spirit to suggest to Mr. Matthews that if he could induce his controls to compress their remarks so as to occupy only about 20 minutes it would add greatly to the enjoyment of his very unique assemblies. On this occasion it was the more felt as the process of naming a child was also gone through by him, the tedium of which was only relieved by the look of blank astonishment with which the infant regarded Mr. Matthews, whilst in his arms. Whether it was the nature of the remarks poured forth by the control which appealed so forcibly to his organ of wonder he did not say, but he was evidently so lost in admiration that he quite forgot to take refuge in that indescribable wail of woe so characteristic of babydom.

Mr. Matthews, under control, then proceeded to give the following tests, leaving the platform and walking down the aisle.

1. To the mother of the above named child: Do you know one Christine? (Yes.) Do you know one Jane, a Spirit? (Yes.) She will manifest and reveal herself to you in the future. She comes here with great power.—The medium said something else which was inaudible.

2. Here is a Spirit named William Grey. Does anyone know him? One John Grey is also with him.—A person present claimed to be John George Grey and said he had a brother named William in the other world.

3. To a lady: Give me your hand. How did you like your long walk this morning? Give me that locket you have brought (given to him). How far have you come this morning? (From West Pelton—about eight miles.) Why do I see a living man come and take hold of the locket? (describes him). He has been away to America and returned, and has wandered up and

down this country, and is now away in Australia; but he will return again. (Description recognised and acknowledged that the person referred to had gone away no one knew where.) You would have been very sorry if you had walked all that distance this morning without getting a test. (Yes, I wished for one.) Did not somebody dream a very peculiar dream respecting his return home? (Yes, I did. Dream partially described and recognised.)

4. Spirit William Taylor seen and described. Asked if any present knew him, there was no reply.

5. Does any one know Thomas Dodd? To a man present—Do you know a friend named Dodd about to enter into a speculation? (Name of Dodd known but the speculation unknown.) Tell him the Spirit wants to warn your friend against it. (I will if I can.)

6. I see a Spirit, William Simpson (describes him), and he wants to communicate with a friend sitting near the fireplace about some property. (No response.) To a man taking his hand—Do you know him, he is just here? (I know a Wm. Simpson, but he is living and believes in Spiritualism.) Did you have a friend who passed away in Sunderland? He had an accident; connected with a vessel; I see water and ships. He is named George, and he died from the effects of the accident. (Not recognised.)

7. To another person—Have you ever been to Switzerland? (No.) I get a scene in Switzerland. I know it is it, by the houses and scenery. Then I see a letter coming from there which will arrive about Tuesday next. A female Spirit shews it to me. (A stranger sitting close by said that he was expecting a letter from Switzerland shortly.) Mr. Matthews—The Spirit says it will be highly satisfactory.

The control stated that he would retire and Mr. Matthews would give some tests in his normal state. Mr. Matthews in normal state—

8. To a lady—There is a Spirit here, a woman (describes her). She speaks of a friend having undergone an operation, and all now going on well. (Recognised.)

9. A curious scene I see here. A child swallows a pin or needle, and it works through the system. It comes out of the child's side; child ultimately dies, but whether from the effects of the pin is not clear, and I cannot positively say. To a person near—Is not your name William? (Yes.) Mr. Jardine knows all about it; we were neighbours. You had a sister named Jennie? (Yes.) Jennie sends the message—her name is Jennie Charlton? (Yes.) The pin incident was not recollected. Mr. Matthews—If you will make inquiries you will find it is correct.

10. Asked a person for a photograph which he had brought with him (photo. produced). Mr. Matthews takes it and says he feels crushed and as if he died from the effects; was this the case with the person represented on the photo.? (No.) Is there not also another child not on the photo., besides the one there represented? (Not that I know of.) Yes, it is a little infant girl, but you have another photo. (Yes.) Give it to me (produced). It is causing confusion; this one has also passed away? (Yes.) He appears to me to have died in good health and had a hard passing away. (Yes.) Do you know William? (Yes.) He says that he is always with him; describes William's order of intellect. (Recognised.) I see the letter S; there are some other letters not very plain; do you know one Sarah and also Jane, connected with them? (Uncertain.) I get a family divided and split up, one goes away and tries to leave the country, Joseph knows all about it; do you know him? (No.) I get many things of which I cannot speak now in public. There is confusion; the two photos. complicate matters and I cannot unravel it now, but if you will ascertain you will find what I say is true.

At a subsequent meeting in the evening, Mr. Ogle said that a friend of his desired to acknowledge the test (No. 6.) respecting Wm. Simpson. He had such a friend in the other world and he quite understood the reference made by the Spirit to the probable sale of some property.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W.C.—The B.N.A.S. will, we believe, arrange a series of physical and other séances during the winter, but in all probability they will be open to none but members.

S.A.—We cannot recommend any particular mediums, but if you read our reports of séances you can select for yourself.

A STRANGE DISORDER.—The *Armorique*, of Saint Brieuc, reports that there is a family at Piedran, of which all the children, seven in number, are troubled with a strange disorder. Physicians have been consulted, but they can do nothing. The children are ordinarily quiet, but at the least excitement they become like wild children. Four of them have been seen dancing on the top of the chimney. The oldest, a tall girl of sixteen, jumped into the well, and, having floundered about in the water, clambered up the side and got out with the nimbleness of a monkey. They all play the wildest and most astonishing tricks. Their excitability shews itself by night as well as by day; and the fits last about two hours. This ought to be a subject of interest to our *satants*, but most probably they will not trouble themselves about it.—*Journal du Magnétisme*.

WHO ARE THESE SPIRITUALISTS?

The following is a list of eminent persons, who, after careful investigation, have fully satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism:—

Archbishop Whately; the late Lord Brougham; the Earl of Dunraven; the late Lord Lytton; the late Mr. Serjeant Cox, President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain; the late William Howitt; the late George Thompson; the late Harriett Martineau; Gerald Massey; T. Adolphus Trollope; S. C. Hall, F.S.A.

The late Abraham Lincoln, President U.S.A.; the late W. Lloyd Garrison; the late Hon. R. Dale Owen, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Naples; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of the U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; the late Hon. J. W. Edmunds, sometime Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York; the late Professor Mæss, the eminent chemist, U.S.A.; the late Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry at the Medical University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A.; Bishop Clarke (Episcopalian), of Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, of the Treasury Department, Washington.

William Crookes, editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, Fellow, Gold Medallist, and Member of the Council of the Royal Society; Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, F.R.G.S., the eminent naturalist, sometime President of the Biological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; W. F. Barrett, Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., Professor of Physics in the University of Cambridge; the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President of the Royal Astronomical Society; Dr. Lockhart Robertson, F.R.S., long one of the editors of the *Journal of Science*; the late Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; the late Professor de Morgan, President of the Mathematical Society of London; the late Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; the late Dr. Ashburner; the late Dr. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; Professor, Ch. Cassal, LL.D.; Captain R. F. Burton, the celebrated traveller.

The late Emperor of Russia; the late Emperor Napoleon; President Thiers; the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor; the late Prince Emile de Sayn Wittgenstein; His Imperial Highness Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; the late Baron L. de Guldenstubbé; Count A. de Gasparin; the Baron and Baroness von Vay; the Baron du Potet; Mons. Léon Favre, Consul-General of France; Victor Hægo.

Professor Friedrich Zöllner, of Leipzig, the eminent physicist, author of "Scientific Treatises," "Transcendental Physics," &c., whose recent researches in this subject have attained a world-wide fame; Gustave T. Fechner, Professor of Physics in the University of Leipzig, also the author of many volumes bearing on the general subject of Psychology; Professor Scheibner, the renowned teacher of mathematics in the University of Leipzig; W. E. Weber, Professor of Physics in the University of Göttingen, and known as one of the main workers in connection with the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy; Immanuel H. Fichte, Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of the University of St. Petersburg; Dr. Maximilian Perty, Professor of Natural Science in the University of Berne; Dr. Franz Hoffman, Professor of Philosophy, Würzburg; Dr. Robert Friesé, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, the well-known astronomer; and many other members of learned societies in this and other countries, and a vast number of persons eminent in literature, science, and art, and in the ranks of social life, whose names we are not at liberty to mention.

Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?—

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS.—*Licht, mehr Licht*, in its number of May 16th, 1880, gave a letter from the well-known professional conjurer, Jacobs, to the Psychological Society in Paris, avowing himself a Spiritualist, and offering suggestions for the discrimination of genuine from spurious manifestations.

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bed-room, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation, is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, Dec. 6, 1877.

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