Light:

A Journal devoted to the Highest Interests of Humanity both Here and Hereafter.

"Light! More Light!"—*Goethe.*

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I am happy to find myself in substantial agreement with the opinions expressed by Mr. Hazard respecting materialisations in the *Banner* of October 28th, so far as they relate to the necessity for a careful selection of suitable sitters, and the maintenance of harmonious conditions in the circle. I do not learn, indeed, for the first time that such conditions are essential to success, and I do not now for the first time express that conviction. But is the holding such an opinion as a proven truth incompatible with a desire to purge public circles of that which now defiles them, discredits the mediums, and discourages the investigator? Is it necessary that one should take sides on this question, and become a heated partisan instead of remaining a cool and cautious observer? Must I have the goblet presented to me with the accompaniment of a pistol, "Swallow that; the whole of it; and be quick about it"? And if I want to know the component parts of what I am to take into my system, and venture any criticism, however mild, am I rightly held up as one who lacks "fairness and calmness," and should be toned down at once before he gets worse? I protest that I see no sort of reason in such a course. I believe with the *Banner* that "Spirit-snatching" (if I may so call it) is mischievous and foolish and useless. I believe also that attention requires to be directed to the due composition of a circle as well as to the conditions of investigation. And none the less for that, I believe that the present foolish conditions of investigation, with the concomitants of credulous enthusiasm on the part of some Spiritualists and greed of gain on the part of some medium, have grievously hurt and discredited a cause which I, in my own way, no less than the *Banner*, though at a humble distance, strive to support and advance. And so I take off my hat to the *Banner of Light*, and wish it a prosperous voyage on an even keel.

This question of the due preparation of medium and circle for the proper production of this most astounding phenomenon, so little understood amongst us, is of great importance. What is it that we do? It is alleged that a visitor from the unseen world comes among us and takes flesh, incarnates himself temporarily in our midst. Nothing less than that is the tremendous allegation. What do we do in face of this strange claim? We act as might beseem inhabitants of Topsyturvidom, who see everything upside down. One or two things among many perplexities are fairly clear. We must have a carefully prepared circle to insure any success in the experiment. How do we endeavour to secure this necessary pre-requisite? By inviting anybody who chances to have half-a-crown in his pocket to step in and see the show! He may be one of those strange persons who grow furious under any attempt to prove to them that they have a soul. Never mind! Has he got half-a-crown? He may have dined "not wisely, but too well," and be in a spirituous rather than a spiritual state. He may be a moral leper. It does not matter, so that he has got the money.

Another thing is clear. We do not know how what meets our eye is produced. It may be that a veritable body of flesh and blood, organised as ours is, with its heart and circulation, and all its complex organisation, is built up out of material gathered from the bodies of those present. But what a tremendous statement! What methods of scrupulously exact investigation can be too minute, too often repeated, to carry such a claim! Yet, what are our methods? We begin by carefully putting the medium—the *fons et origo* of the whole business, as is alleged—out of sight, in a dark place where no one can observe the processes by which materialisation is perfected; and, what is far worse, in a position where a trickster may find every chance of simulating the phenomena, and where an honest man will almost certainly get the discredit of so doing. If, under such preposterous conditions of investigation, any form does appear, it occurs to some seeker after truth to make a rush at it, seize it, and then to triumphantly write to the papers an account of another "exposure." There is no need to pursue the story. It is familiar by dire experience to most of us. They who think that what they have seen is a piece of imposture are sure of finding place for their crude views in one organ of opinion; and they who hold as a cardinal article of faith that a medium can do no wrong are equally sure of a place in another. And so our time is wasted, and our knowledge is *not* increased. This is enough to discredit our methods altogether, and it has that effect. The worst of it is that any fair and reasonable attempt to point this out is held by some Spiritualists to be a veritable sin against the Holy Ghost. That is the worst feature in the whole matter. "Set thy house in order, else thou shalt die and not live," is (slightly altered) a good text just now for sermons to Spiritualists.

Some time since—I believe in the month of August last—a Natal paper published, and the *Medium* transferred to its columns, an account of some experiments made by a Durban gentleman with a magnetic compass. These were similar in kind to those conducted by Professor Fechner, and Professor Erdmann, of Leipzig, with Madame Ruf, a sensitive of Reichenbach's, and also to those of Professor Zöllner with Slade.* I believe an account of these experiments was sent home to Mr. Crookes, and the account given is most circumstantial. The compass was hermetically sealed, and the needle was made to reverse its poles by passes made upon the glass which covered it. It was also fixed in a given position by an effort of will, and even made to travel round the glass disc as though glued to it, scratching the glass as it moved slowly over it. These very precise statements—there were others which my brief notes do not particularise—are susceptible of verification. Could not the Society for Psychical Research determine the question whether this fact alleged by three independent observers is attributable to the action of Psychic Force, or is caused by some physical law of which we are ignorant? It is an experiment that can be conducted (as so few psychical experiments can without difficulty) under conditions of exact observation, and it is one (like Psychography) which is susceptible of easy demonstration.

It was stated in one of the newspapers that the reason why Arabi made no attempt to destroy the Suez Canal was that his private soothsayer had dissuaded him from such a course. The Mussulmans are very fervent believers in the efficacy of dreams, visions, omens. A new Indian novel, "Under Orders," gives an interesting account of a prophet weaving his spells in a picturesque, ruined old mosque. It gives also a vivid description of Indian life, with its white men and black men as distinct and almost as antagonistic as those of a chess-board.

Mrs. Showers sends me details of a personal experience which she kindly allows me to place on record. The case is an extremely interesting one of Psychography, obtained, too, without the presence of a recognised medium. A lamp and four candles were burning in the room. I give the narrative in t l writer's own words :—

"We passed last winter at Trouville, in Calvados, and were for a time the sole occupants of a large mansion there. The family consisted of General Showers and myself, and a youn

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* "Transcendental Physics." Second Edition, p. 23 sq.

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gentleman who had recently arrived from India, whom I will call Mr. H. The old *concierge* used to occupy some chambers in the square of the courtyard, and our servant always went home a little after eight o'clock. Trouville in winter is almost like a city of the dead, and almost all the houses facing the sea were unoccupied, except ours. Shortly before that terrible snowstorm of January, 1881, my husband had occasion to come to England, and as the sea was most tempestuous when he left my anxiety was considerable when no letter came to announce his arrival in London. I was so uneasy that I hardly liked to express my fears to my companion lest anything he might say should strengthen instead of lessening them. We sat together one evening, with the house securely locked after our servant had left, and there were several lights in the room, which was a large one. Suddenly we heard loud raps proceeding from a window near my husband's room. Mr. H. noticed them, saying, 'What is that noise?' I replied that he had probably touched one of the large, heavy tassels, and that it was still vibrating, and occasioning the sounds. 'Oh, no,' he observed, 'it can't be that; the noise is too loud.' It went on for some time, and then ceased, and commenced again the next evening at the same hour. My friend was then writing, but was the first to notice the rapping. 'There is that noise again,' he said; but I took very little notice, never for a moment dreaming that it was a Spirit manifestation. A little after I sat down to the piano, and Mr. H. took his seat by me. Suddenly there was a crash in a corner of the room, as if someone had dashed down a sack of coals. We both jumped up, and my heart began to beat as the thought flashed into my mind that the noise might have some connection with the rapping which had come from my husband's room on two occasions, and I could not help thinking some evil tidings were in store for me. Though my hands were trembling, I continued to touch the keys of the piano. Then, by some invisible hand, my husband's case of spectacles was taken off the chimney-piece at the opposite end of the room, and thrown towards me. This put an end to all doubt had any existed. "Oh, Herbert," I said, 'there is a Spirit in the room. What shall we do?' In a few seconds a flapping sound—not indistinct, but as I had heard a golden eagle beat its wings on one occasion when it was shot by my brother—made us turn to the part of the room from which it seemed to proceed, and Herbert picked up a piece of cardboard. We had had but few Spirit manifestations for years, and I did not think they could occur without my daughter. Moreover, my husband's return had somewhat taken my thoughts off Spiritualism—at least, from the physical part of it—as he would not allow any séances, and had a decided objection to hearing the subject mentioned. Nevertheless, I remembered what I had been taught by 'Peter,' and told Herbert to run for a pencil, as the Spirit evidently wanted to write. I must tell you that my state of mind was one of abject terror, for I can never avoid associating these spontaneous manifestations, of which I have had many, with sorrow and tribulation. Herbert quickly returned with the pencil, and I put it on the cardboard, which was placed under a round table, turning away my head towards the piano, by which Mr. H. was standing. His exclamations of astonishment almost made me falter in my purpose not to look round, for that the eyes of certain people interfere with the manifestations, I know to be a fact, from my own experience. 'Look, look,' he cried, 'oh, only look! that pencil is standing up—it is writing—it is writing—do look!' and it was too much for my resolution. I turned round, and the pencil fell. We took up the paper, and read the commencement of a message. You can see how firmly that hand commenced to write—how it began to falter as his exclamations grew louder and more urgent, and how at last the pencil fell as I turned round. Nevertheless, what more absolute proof could have been afforded me?"

Subsequently General Showers returned quite safely. The words written on the card were: "Your husban . . ," the *d* not being completed. The writing does very clearly shew what influence the excited gaze of the observer had upon the psychical power. It fluctuated slowly, getting apparently less and less manageable until Mrs. Showers' gaze snuffed it out altogether.

There is something extremely suspicious in the statement that not only Irving Bishop, but his late assistant or "secretary," who is now known as Stuart Cumberland (though he has not yet blossomed into a "landed proprietor" like his master), is telling the numbers on bank notes by Thought-reading. He learned whatever he knows from Bishop, and it is extremely unlikely that he possesses any of the psychical powers which probably enable Bishop to combine trick and reality together. Two such natural phenomena do not come into conjunction in the usual course of things. It is probable, therefore, that both act on the same principle, and that the so-called Thought-reading is on the same level with the other stage-performances and tricks that form their stock-in-trade. It may be well to keep an eye on these conjurers, and to avoid crediting them with powers that *both*, at any rate, do not presumably possess. M.A. (Oxon.)

A STRANGE STORY OF CLAIRVOYANCE.

The following letter appears in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian*:—

Sir,—Your report of Mr. Irving Bishop's performance at the Free Trade Hall has much interested me, and has recalled to my mind a circumstance which occurred thirty-three years ago at Bolton, and which, with your permission, I will relate. At that time there was a "doctor" in the town who kept a small druggist's shop. He was also a mesmerist and clairvoyant. Seeing some account of his doings in the journals of that day, I determined to consult him about a brother I had in America, and from whom I had not heard for some time, and about whom I was uncertain whether he was alive or dead. I therefore waited upon the doctor and acquainted him with my wishes. He said my request was a very peculiar one, and he was afraid he could not give me the information I sought, but he would try. He inquired if I had anything upon me which my brother had possessed or which had passed through his hands—a letter, lock of hair, or even anything. Unfortunately I had not a single thing upon me which had ever been in my brother's possession. The doctor thought under the circumstances he could not serve me, and was about to dismiss me to fetch a letter or something of my brother's when he said, "Wait, let us see what personal connection will do." He therefore invited me into a small back parlour, and presently brought into the room a young woman who acted as his general servant, and who could neither read nor write. He immediately threw her into the mesmeric state, and then he instructed me to take the girl's hands in mine that he might establish through me a link by which my long-lost brother might be traced. I had no sooner taken hold of the girl's hands than she exclaimed, "Oh, doctor, this gentleman has such a strange book in his pocket; it is not printed like any of yours, and it's about spirits." Well, the fact was, I had a small phonographic magazine in my pocket, published by Isaac Pitman, and printed in phonographic characters, and in this magazine was an article on mesmerism and spirit intercourse. Now, I had not shown this book to the doctor (he could not read phonography), nor said anything to him about it, and it was hidden away out of sight. How was it that a completely ignorant girl, who could not read the simplest spelling-book, should be able to see, hidden down in my pocket, a book invisible even to my own eyes, and be able to tell its nature and contents, although printed in characters which the doctor could not read, and which even very few of our most learned and scientific men could read at that time? Having so clearly and powerfully demonstrated her powers, all scepticism was banished from my mind. The doctor then briefly told her my business—that I wanted to know whether my long-lost brother in America was alive or dead, and if alive where living and what doing. For a quarter of an hour she was silent, all which time I held her hands in mine. She then began to complain of excessive heat, although comparatively cool in the room. She said she had passed over a vast expanse of water, and had seen a lot of ships which were very nice, but now she had come to a country which was very hot (it was July), and the clocks seemed to be all wrong, for they were about four and a-half hours late. (Of course she knew nothing about the difference in time between here and America.) Presently she exclaimed, "I have found him, but he is very sickly. He is just recovering from a three months' sickness, and is having a short walk." She described his personal appearance, &c., so accurately that I did not doubt she had discovered my long-lost brother. She told me he was married, and had a little girl, and described his wife and child to me. She said he was not a householder, but lived with his wife's parents. She even described his library, and told me which were his favourite books, all which statements I afterwards verified and found to be true as gospel.—Yours, &c.,

J. Roylat.

C. A. S. Fortnightly Discussion Meetings.—Once more we remind our readers that at 7.30 p.m. on Monday next, at 38, Great Russell-street, Mr. Thomas Shorter will introduce the question—"Is it desirable that Spiritualists should encourage professional mediumship for physical manifestations?" As the matter is one which is now exciting a good deal of interest an animated discussion may be looked for. Mr. Shorter's great abilities and his long services in the cause of Spiritualism should ensure a large attendance. The admission to these discussions is perfectly free.

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MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCES IN NEW YORK.

The *Banner of Light* quotes the following remarkable narrative from the *New York World*, the editor of which vouches for the accuracy of the story, having been put in full possession of the names and addresses of the principal parties concerned, and being satisfied that the narrator of the incidents—a professional gentleman well known in Harlem—is a man of the highest character. This gentleman says :—

The following is a reproduction of notes, made at the time, of a strange and curious experience I passed through, last spring, in this city.

In response to a professional appointment I, on Thursday, the 1st of June last, at about 1.30 p.m., called at the place appointed, but, contrary to my customary experience, was not promptly admitted. However, upon my answering a call from within of "Who's there?" the door was presently opened, when I was quite surprised to see a barricade before me. Upon inquiry I learned that, beginning with the morning of Wednesday, the previous day, at about 6.30 o'clock, the inmates had been startled by a furious knocking at their private door, followed soon afterwards by a violent ringing of the street bell which hangs in the rear of their hall. The building forms a large double flat with a broad entrance, each flat having a private hall-way.

When the inmates answered these startling summonses, no one was found. Upon their returning to their rooms again, the same performance was at once re-enacted. Finally, the maid, taking courage, went down close to the door, and upon a repetition of the knocks, opened the door suddenly, only to be baffled as before. This somewhat amazed her, but did not deter her from watching and promptly chasing up the demonstrations. The knockings and ringings were readily distinguishable all over the premises, and others had been similarly annoyed, especially those living on the top flat, but to a less degree. The family, excepting the daughter and maid-servant, were absent from home, and were not expected until Thursday night. From the bath-room a view of the street entrance is readily obtained, and upon each recurrence of the terrible noises, the maid would rush to the bath-room window, but her perseverance and courage yielded nothing, as no creature was ever seen. These two demonstrations were continued all through Wednesday, I was told, stopping entirely at about 6.30 p.m.

Upon hearing this, as I thought it a rather amusing recital, I was at once interested. But I was speedily brought to a realisation of the fact that something more than ordinary was up, for the knocking commenced while they were rehearsing their annoyances and informing me that the noises had again commenced that morning, and at the same time as on the day before —Wednesday. Before I came, beginning to grow somewhat alarmed at their inability to ferret out the matter, two policemen had been summoned, who made a thorough search of the premises and of the entire building, but to no purpose, as the demonstrations continued even while they were about. Somewhat disturbed, and a little frightened, I suspect, the "cops" advised the barricading of the private door, which had so surprised me upon my advent. As I listened to the story, I felt convinced that some clever rogue was at the bottom of the mischief. My personal experience began with a startling sample of the knockings, shortly followed by a violent ringing of the street bell. I at once said that the only course was to remove the barricade, and test the matter with the door opened. We accordingly unbarred the door, and returned to the parlour, where I seated myself in full view of the open door, and about ten feet away from it, with the daughter and the maid standing beside me. We had not long to wait. The loud knocking came as before, but the door did not move, neither did anyone pass the door. The knocks were deliberately given, always in four strokes, differing from the sound of knuckles, and seemingly given with some blunt instrument—yet, withal, loud and penetrating. They sounded like blows struck with a large billet of wood. Occasionally the knocks would pass to the upper floor, but the trouble seemed centred on the first floor. Every one in the building was now on the look-out, in the hope of putting an end to the perplexing annoyance. Presently, to our further surprise, a new feature was developed. Closely following a violent tug at the bell, a loud rapid beating on the door was noticed, as if it was being whipped with a long, flat strip of wood. At this moment, in the hat-rack, I discovered a light cane, and, jokingly placing it upright in a way of which all were witnesses, and could remember, I returned rather incredulously to my watch. Instantly on my returning to the parlour, as before, came the boisterous whipping sound, but this time the door was shut to. Astounded, we rushed to the hat-rack, where, incredible as it may seem, the cane was discovered, not standing as I left it, but lying across the slab of the stand precisely as one would carelessly toss it there. No one, I think, was frightened, but we all confessed to a great deal of bewilderment. Finally, as the knocks continued, whether the door was opened or not, we closed it, and awaited further developments. Puzzled neighbours came in and out for "information," but all were equally mystified. Every one had an opinion to offer, but no solution was forthcoming, all attempts to fathom it proving fruitless. About five o'clock that day a more impressive feature made its advent. A distinct call (resembling a woman's voice), was heard uttering the daughter's name, "Mar-ie!" with a strong accentuation and prolongation of the second syllable.

The knocks now came from other sources than the door, sometimes from a closet within a few feet of me in the hall, and the call was again heard, perfectly distinct—so much so that the daughter and all of us remarked upon its close resemblance to her mother's voice.

These mysterious demonstrations continued until the gentlemen of the household reached home. At first they ridiculed the whole thing, but in a few moments, upon hearing the decided knocks, followed by the call of the name, they were convinced that something extraordinary was going on, and the matter was at once given over again to the police. The demonstration again stopped for the day at about 7 p.m. At no time did they occur at night, excepting one evening, when a few thumps were given between 8 and 9 o'clock. I called early on Friday morning to see if anything new had happened. The mistress of the household had returned home late on the previous evening and had heard nothing of the peculiar goings on except at second-hand until early on Friday morning, when true to the record of the previous day, operations commenced again at about the same hour, causing more amusement than dread, however, as it was now growing to be monotonous.

Presently, however, a new freak occurred : this was a tapping on the glass of the windows as if with a lead-pencil used lengthwise, as I found upon experiment. Intending only to remain a few moments, I was about leaving when a scream from the maid, who was coming from the kitchen, caused all of us hastily to rush to the hall, where the maid was seen trembling and quite terrified, for the first time, and pointing to a heap of overcoats which had fallen from the hat-rack, quite in front of it—not at the side, as would seem more natural—and had been scattered in their fall three or four feet apart. We were now all standing together, including the maid, in the hall at the parlour entrance, no person being in the rear of the premises. Noticeable now was the fact that all the knockings and so on soon had ceased, and that the mysterious force had apparently settled itself down to a different and more startling kind of work, for, even as we stood contemplating this unaccountable performance, the plush cover, used for a round table standing in the rear of the hall, just where it bends, and before reaching the curtain which shuts from view partially the kitchen entrance, was seen deliberately to slide off in a heap to the floor. Examination soon revealed the fact that no draught of wind could have affected it. Even a strong draught could by no possibility have caused such a result, for its going off was too deliberate. We again took our stand at the upper end of the hall, as before, for a further comparing of notes, when we were startled by a great crash. A clothes-stick, about three feet long, which had been hanging in the kitchen behind the door, forty feet or more away, was hurled over the top of the portière, of which I have spoken, and fell within ten feet of us, one end of the stick covered with flakes of lime from striking the ceiling. Quickly following it, and before we could digest this rather alarming demonstration, a slight racket near us attracted our attention, when, upon hastily turning about, the umbrellas and the cane standing in the hat-rack were flung up as though shot from a mortar, and were scattered over the floor in different directions several feet apart. I will admit we were now in a "state of mind." No one was visibly scared, but all of us were greatly impressed and dazed at such unheard-of doings. Before we had "toned down" again, quickly, and while we all stood in a huddle in the hall, a leaf from the oaken dining-table, which had served in the capacity of a barricade at the outset of the troubles, and which, for convenience sake, had been left leaning against the casement of the dining-room door, was hurled with tremendous force through the hall, a distance of about

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twenty feet, and striking the wall, where it left a deep incision, fell to the floor with a dreadful crash.

Immediately following this, and before we could recover our senses, this same table, which had figured before in regard to its coverlet, came tumbling over and over towards us, and stopped only when within ten feet of us, just about where the oak leaf had landed. These successive crashes aroused the occupants of the entire building, who anxiously came round us for an explanation. We could only point to the confusion on the floor, and added further fuel to their amazement by telling them that the demonstrations had taken place before our very eyes and without the aid of hands. These violent scenes now ceased, but the terrible strain was beginning to shew itself upon some members of the family. A neighbouring druggist and others, with some persuasion, prevailed upon a certain member of the family to retire and accept the hospitality of friends in an adjoining department until these startling scenes should be ended. No sooner had willing hands assisted the fainting lady to other apartments, than a dreadful scream resounded throughout the premises. We thought the afflicted lady had been seized with some spasmodic attack, but the persons who had volunteered their valuable aid to remove her returned, and others ran up from below to see if any one was injured or what had happened to call forth such a shriek. Then the fact was patent to all of us that this scream was only another of the torments of this inexplicable scene. It was a piercing shriek, quite audible by everyone upstairs and down, and created a profound impression. The climax was now passed. In the afternoon the knocking was resumed at less frequent intervals and the call returned. A new and more harmless feature also made its appearance—that of a soft, insinuating whistle; short, yet deliberate, with a rising inflection. It seemed to come from the middle of the house, but patient watching and listening afforded no clue. Occasionally the knocks and violent cane-rappings would put in an appearance, but at noticeably rarer intervals. During these exciting episodes, detectives were examining the cellar and all its approaches, and were supposed to be making a thorough search, but without results They were inclined to ridicule the whole business. Operations on Friday again ceased for the day, before dark.

My intense curiosity and the fascination of the mystery again led me to call early on Saturday morning. Upon my arrival I learned that nothing up to nine o'clock had occurred. About ten o'clock the familiar four-stroked, imperative knock resounded upon the front door again. Soon afterward the head of the house, who was at home this day, was about to take his departure on a marketing tour, and had passed out of the door. Forgetting something he returned, leaving the door open, upon which the gong set up a lively gait even as we looked upon it, though, strange to say, the handle did not move. Neither could we imitate the ringing upon immediately testing it. This was the only time at which the private gong was tampered with, and it was the only demonstration that gave colouring to the theory of electricity advanced by some. Among the many who called to gratify their curiosity was a gentleman who appeared to have same practical ideas, and was accordingly admitted. He claimed to have been an English detective at one time. However, he took hold with a will and was impatient for something to turn up. It was twelve o'clock before his patience was rewarded, when the old knockings again asserted themselves. He was now all attention, and going to solve it at once. Presently he was further regaled with a few "lead-pencillings," a "whistle" or two, and one peremptory "call," which rather staggered him. He worked well. Going to the elevator he took out the planking, examined the floors, inserted his knife about the floors and wire connections, and did every conceivable thing to find a clue, and yet, whenever his back was turned, or he would rest a moment to think it out, something would greet him. Either a "whistle" or the "taps" would return to mock him. Finally, he gave it up as the most remarkable performance he had ever witnessed, and went away, promising, however, to return and yet solve it. All Saturday afternoon the whistling continued, apparently now coming up the elevator. We would sit near it and open the elevator door. The whistling would come forth as clear as a flute. When we stood in the doorway it would stop. But let us just withdraw our heads and we would get it again, always seemingly within a few feet of us. One of the party stationed himself in the bottom of the elevator in the cellar, but with the same result—we never caught anything. Our watching was not quick enough. For five mortal hours three of us and a policeman puzzled our brains over it, all to no avail. It was so lifelike and natural that it seemed fathomable. Sometimes it attempted a few notes in *arpeggio*. We whistled in the elevator at various points, but our imitations were very feeble and ludicrous. The sound ceased about five o'clock, but returned about 7 p.m., when, upon the piano's being used, this thing, whatever it was, whistled snatches in perfect time and tune, always taking as a preference, however, the dominant harmonies, which to me seems a remarkable and strange feature. Others were called in to hear it, and were as greatly mystified.

On Sunday, the last and only whistling took place about noon. It resembled now the blast of a fog-horn and was decidedly startling, inasmuch as it was thought the torment had ended for good. One other whistle was heard like blowing in the neck of a bottle. With these two startling toots the visitor departed. I should have mentioned before that the bell-hanging was entirely destroyed, and had to be repaired before it could be used again. All the demonstrations were confined to the private hall, and everything of a metallic nature in the hall contributed its mite of noise. A bronze door-knob was shaken and turned several times. The crank of a tube-whistle was seen to move, and added its tiny rattle once or twice. Taken altogether it was a memorable experience; more so, as all the demonstrations were enacted before our eyes, and our unceasing efforts to unravel it always resulted in failure.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND.

Amount already acknowledged	£168	18	6
Since Received.			
A. von Hoffmann	5	0	0
W. C. Pickersgill	2	0	0
J. Dawbarn...	1	1	0
Colonel Joshua Brayn	1	0	0

We can give no absolute assurances as to the future of "LIGHT" till the Subscription Fund has reached the sum of £200. There should be no difficulty in realising the small amount which is yet required.

MATERIALISING SEANCE.

A Test in the Dark.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I do not wish to trouble you with repetitions, but some new phenomena in our circle may be worthy of notice.

On Saturday night we had in rapid succession thirteen materialisations; several of persons recognised by one or more of the spectators. One male figure, at first about five feet high, elongated to seven feet, and then gradually shrank or shortened itself, until nothing was left but a small white mass upon the floor, which quickly vanished.

Another figure began with a little white cloud on the carpet, and grew slowly to the full form of a tall man. Some of the female figures were extremely pretty and graceful, and beautifully attired.

I may add that the conditions were such as to make any fraud impossible, and any idea of it would have been an absurdity.

I wish to give you also a little test which I and a lady beside me got in the dark, and which a person who was blind might have considered satisfactory. The Spirit "Johnny," at my request, brought a large, heavy musical-box across the room, and laid it on my knees. We, the lady and myself, both put our hands on the cover, so as to completely enclose the powerful machinery. It winds with a ratchet lever inside, so there was not even a key-hole. It was well wound, and playing with great power. I said, "Stop!" and it stopped instantly, in the midst of a tune. "Go on!" It started. "Stop!" It was silent. "Play three notes." It played them slowly, one after another.

The test as to the exercise of force with intelligence, in a manner not easy to conceive, was simply perfect. The invisible "Johnny" took the instrument from my knees, and it was soon playing at the other end of the room. I should like to see how a sceptic would explain this little experiment. How were we deceived? How were we deluded?

T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.

32, Fopstone-road, S.W.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—CARDIFF: Sunday, November 19th. LONDON: Sunday, November 26th.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.

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SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

Second Series.

This series of Spirit-Teachings, like the former, is made up of selections from a great mass which have been automatically written during a series of years. They are selected on no other principle than that of printing what has been valuable to the person for whom they were originally given, in so far as this can be done without trenching on what is merely of personal and private application. The latter consideration excludes a great mass of what would otherwise be interesting and valuable matter. The phraseology has been preserved, as far as possible, intact, names only being omitted. The series follows directly on the first, from which, indeed, it is separated only by the accident of its publication in another journal, and after some considerable interval of time. The publication is resumed in deference to many repeated requests. M.A. (Oxon.)

No. XXXIV.

I want my ideas about prayer systematized. We cannot grasp any reasonable idea of prayer. We put aside the anthropomorphic idea of God, of a Person to be prayed to. I gather from you that that is a human conception. Is prayer heard, and by whom? Is it answered, and how? It is part of what I may call your religious system. Can you put clearly what you mean by it, and the place you assign to it?

May the blessing of the Blessed One be on you. You have asked many questions, and most of them have been answered before. No doubt we have always insisted on prayer, and we have explained to you that it is the means whereby the aspiring spirit of man is placed in harmony with the higher intelligences. It is the connecting of the telegraphic wire through which the message comes. In communing one with another you assume an attitude of attention, so as to receive and hear what your friend says. Prayer is the attitude of attention whereby the Spirit communes with the Guardians. The reflex action, as we have long since explained, is that which is most real. The attitude of spirit engendered by a habit of conscious prayer is one most peaceful and receptive. The very recognition of the unseen agents, independently of the power it gives them to reach you, is productive of spiritual conditions. Very often the mere ejaculation of prayer is like the cry that gives vent to pain, and relief ensues. Prayer, you know, is not such as men have imagined; a formal supplication sent up to a personal God, a petition presented to the King of Heaven. It is, in its essence, the voice of Spirit communing with Spirit. It may be formulated in petition; it may be the inarticulate cry of a burdened soul; it may be the half-despairing utterance of one who finds all else fail—it may be all or none of these. Whatever form it takes it is the means of establishing a link between us and you, of directing your will and drawing spiritual help down to those for whom you pray, whether yourself or others. Nay, when combined with the energy of faith, it is a potent disengager of spiritual forces which operate, as Jesus said metaphorically, even to the moving of mountains, or to the saving of bodily life. There are Spirits who love to answer the cry of such faithful ones, and they cluster round and work zealously for the praying souls who doubt not, but earnestly believe that they can reach the ear of a present God. This is the reason of the many direct answers to prayer that you know of. The answer does come, and if it do not come direct from the dwelling-place of the Supreme, but is rather the kindly service of His ministers, what is that to them? It is to them the voice of the Most High, and they are content. Great power is entrusted to such ministers, for the purpose is beneficent, and we desire to foster prayer as one great safeguard against a materialistic and gross temper of spirit. The man who habitually recognises round him the nearness of a spiritual Presence to which he can call, no matter by what name he may call it, is in no risk of denying Spirit-existence altogether as many do. The very recognition fosters the presence; the habit of prayer is a talisman; and if it be but a gesture of desire, a mute cry of supplication, a direction only of thought, be assured it is not vain. No doubt there is far more than this, of which you can know little as yet. There is a direct power in prayer, a power analogous to that of the will, which you little realise. There is a power of benefiting your fellows, which brings to you the graces that are most angelic:—brotherly love, charity, and their kind. Prayer, indeed, is one of the highest necessities of true spiritual growth, and should be the habit of your soul. We care nothing for set prayers; for seasons of supplication: we ask only that your lives be lives that recognise our nearness; that you commune with us when you can; that your aspirations be continual; and that you defend yourselves in all you do by a recognition of the Presence in which it is done. We ask that you use the language of Spirit to sanctify your daily acts: no more. We do not want formalism, sanctimoniousness, cant, hypocrisy. You know that. We only desire regular recognition and use of the means whereby alone, as you now are, you can bring into harmony your sphere and ours. Much more we might say: but that is enough to shew you that prayer is the very breath of your Spirits, and, under one of its many forms, a necessity of their health and progress.

In a certain way, too, it seems beneficial to Spirits. So many ask for prayer.

As we have said, the direction of your beneficent will draws round them ministering Spirits, who can help and protect them.

The old notion of prayer was not erroneous then?

It is a talisman of power.

These ministering Spirits. Is it their work to answer prayers? They must have enough to do.

These are your material notions. You have no idea yet of the effluence of Spirit, the atmosphere that we can surround you with, when you enable us so to do. To what do you refer the strange peace that steals over your spirit as you strive to commune with God? You cannot see how that your uplifted soul has entered into the sphere of the peaceful ones, and that their unruffled calm has permeated your spirit, and shed some of its stillness there. Vexed and wearied with the strife, so profitless, so hard to wage, you cry in anguish for some help, some support, some countenance and consolation. That cry has reached a friend, and forthwith the help is ministered; or, sick at heart in anxious care for some dear friend, you think on him and pray. Swift as your thought goes the Helper to your friend, and, if he does but lift his spirit in prayer, the aid is surely given. Too often the help is delayed by the unspiritual state of the tempted or suffering one; and the ministers find their labour vain. But in all these cases it is the effluence of Spirit that brings help and peace. Material benefits are given, at times, by those Guardians who are able to grant such requests; but not usually. Generally, prayer brings blessing in such ways as we have told you of.

This effluence is pretty much what theologians meant by the Holy Ghost?

It is the truth on which they built that dogma. They personified the Supreme, and then His attributes. If it had not been for external circumstances they would have gone on till the Christian Heaven would have had gods as many as Olympus. Man in his ruder state must have a personality to place before him. He cannot conceive an impersonal God, nor entertain love for an unembodied Intelligence. Hence the crystallisation of ideas into dogmas, creeds, formularies. Hence the countless incarnations that permeate all forms of faith. Hence the deifications of Greece and Rome. The heaven of the ruder religions was ever peopled with mankind, whether it was that gods came down incarnate and ascended up again, or that men rose high above their kind and were made gods. In this sense, in obedience to this instinct, the effluence of Spirit was made into a God and called the Holy Ghost. You do not require to have it pointed out to you that when Jesus left His friends, His spiritual influence was substituted for His personal presence: nor that the outpouring at Pentecost was the spiritual effluence of which you and our friends have long been the recipients.

Yes. Prayer for material benefit. Rain? Disease?

It is usually of no use, being selfish at root. But as we have said, the prayer of faith, specially if it be winged with the anguish of love, that sees the dear one slipping away, may have a potency to you miraculous. It is the most powerful Spiritual force.

Yes. I can imagine that will, love, and despair, all united, must disengage force. "I will not let thee go, except Thou bless me." "The energy of despair" is proverbial.

Love is the most potent motive power in your world. Will is the engine here. Co-operating, I can see what a mighty power they would form. Cease; the conditions are far from good. Your bodily health is bad, and you need rest. We shall not tax your powers more than is needful. + Imperator.

Mrs. Hardinge-Britten's Lecture Appointments.—Bradford: Sunday, November 19th. Sowerby Bridge: Sunday, November 26th.—Address, The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

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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 séances.

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LETTERS ON THEOSOPHY.

(FROM AN ANGLO-INDIAN TO A LONDON THEOSOPHIST.)

No. III.

[There appeared in the *Theosophist* of last month a paper—"Fragments of Occult Truth" (No. IV.)—which dealt with the evolution of man. To my great regret it was found impossible to transfer it to these columns. It is equally impossible to present any intelligible summary of its contents. I can but hope that when these letters—the most able and clear presentation of truth from the point of view occupied by the writer and those whom he represents that we have yet had—are gathered into a volume, all who interest themselves in these matters will find opportunity of studying them consecutively. I may say, however, that the broad idea presented is that the evolution of man is not a process carried out on this planet alone, but is effected through various lives on various planets. This earth is but a link in a mighty chain of worlds, through which all individual spiritual entities have, alike, to pass. These worlds differing in their essential conditions of existence provide the spirit with various schools of training. On this earth, where spirit and matter are pretty evenly balanced, we have one set of conditions, low in the scale of progression. In other worlds, where spirit predominates, we have training of another sort. Evolution is accomplished by a "spiral" progress through these worlds, and is so far from being complete that the man of the future will hold a position in respect to us similar to that which we hold with respect to the ape of the Darwinian. This is the broad idea which is strikingly elaborated in the paper to which I am referring. The reader must, for the present, be referred to it for further information. What I have written is sufficient to make intelligible what follows.—M. A. (OXON).]

When we come to examine the evolution of man on our own planet the explanation has to be drawn out on a larger scale than that which served for a sketch of the whole cosmogony. Our career on the preceding planets of the descending series is, for the present, over and done with. Few of us know enough of our lives there to be curious about details. But here, the phenomena of the world about us and the period we are passing through are all replete with interest. Our wish would be to get explanations of the conditions out of which these have originated, and of the results to which they are tending, that should be as enlarged and precise as our knowledge of the actual present. But, in truth, an explanation on that scale of the phenomena immediately preceding and immediately following our present life would evidently require an exhaustive knowledge of all natural laws and operations lying outside the physical group we have grown familiar with. And the exposition of this knowledge would involve the complete development of sciences, the very alphabet of which is hidden from the world as yet; in short, it is no less impossible to comprehend all Nature's detail—the infinitely little—completely, than it is to fathom the infinitely great. But just as the principles of evolution carried on through the series of worlds, of which our planet is one, have been found susceptible of an explanation, which, if not minute, is sufficiently definite to be intelligible, so it is possible now to sketch on a somewhat larger scale, corresponding to the nearer approach of the subject, the process of evolution carried on in the case of this single planet. The area of Nature to be dealt with is less enormous, and, therefore, a treatment of its phenomena down a corresponding level of detail gives us a closer insight into the process under investigation.

And a striking illustration of the uniformities of Nature is brought out by the first glance at the occult doctrine in reference to the development of man on the earth. The outline of the design is the same as the outline of the more comprehensive design covering the whole chain of worlds. The inner details of this world, as regards its units of construction, are the same as the inner details of the larger organism, of which this world itself is a unit. That is to say, the development of humanity on this earth is accomplished by means of successive waves of development which correspond to the successive worlds in the great planetary chain. The great tide of human life, be it remembered—for that has been already set forth—sweeps round the whole career of worlds in successive waves. These primary growths of humanity may be conveniently spoken of as Rounds. We must not forget that the individual units constituting each round in turn are identically the same as regards their higher principles—that is, that the individualities on the earth during Round 1 come back again after completing their travels round the whole series of worlds and constitute Round 2, and so on. But the point to which special attention should be drawn here is that the individual unit, having arrived at any given planet of the series in the course of any given Round, does not merely touch that planet and pass on to the next. Before passing on he has to live through a series of races on that planet. And this fact suggests the outline of the fabric which will presently develop itself in the reader's mind, and exhibits that similarity of design on the part of the one world as compared with the whole series, to which attention has already been drawn. As the complete scheme of nature that we belong to is worked out by means of a series of Rounds sweeping through all the worlds, so the development of humanity on each world is worked out by a series of races developed within the limits of each world in turn.

It is time now to make the working of this law clearer by coming to the actual figures which have to do with the evolution of our doctrine. It would have been premature to begin with them, but as soon as the idea of a system of worlds in a chain, and of life-evolution on each through a series of re-births, is satisfactorily grasped, the further examination of the laws at work will be greatly facilitated by precise reference to the actual number of worlds, and the actual number of rounds and races, required to accomplish the whole purpose of the system. For the whole duration of the system is as certainly limited in time, be it remembered, as the life of a single man. Probably *not* limited to any definite number of years set irrevocably from the commencement, but that which has a beginning progresses onwards towards an end. The life of a man, leaving accidents quite out of the account, is a terminable period, and the life of a world-system leads up to a final consummation. The vast periods of time concerned in the life of a world-system dazzle the imagination, as a rule, but still they are measurable; they are divisible into sub-periods of various kinds, and these have a definite number.

By what prophetic instinct Shakespeare pitched upon seven as the number which suited his fantastic classification of the ages of man, is a question with which we need not be much concerned, but certain it is that he could not have made a more felicitous choice. In periods of sevens the evolution of the race of man may be traced, and the actual number of the objective worlds which constitute our system, and of which the Earth is one, is seven also. Remember, the occult scientists know this as a fact, just as the physical scientists know for a fact that the spectrum consists of seven colours, and the musical scale of seven tones. There are seven kingdoms of nature, not three, as modern science has imperfectly classified them. Man belongs to a kingdom distinctly separate from that of the animals, including beings in a higher state of organisation than that which manhood has familiarised us with as yet; and below the mineral kingdom there are three others which science in the West knows nothing about; but this branch of the subject may be set aside for the present. It is mentioned merely to shew the regular descent of the divisions in nature.

Man, returning to the kingdom we are most interested in, is evolved in a series of Rounds (progressions round the series of worlds), and seven of these Rounds have to be accomplished before the destinies of our system are worked out. The Round which is going on at present is the fourth. These are considerations of the utmost possible interest connected with precise knowledge on these points, because each Round is, as it were, specially allotted to the predominance of one of the seven principles in man, and in the regular order of their upward gradation. But here, again, is a realm of inquiry that for the present can only be glanced at.

An individual unit arriving on a planet for the first time in the course of a Round, has to work through seven races on that

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planet before he passes on to the next, and each of these races occupies the earth for a long time. Our old-fashioned speculations about time and eternity, suggested by the misty religious systems of the West, have brought on a curious habit of mind in connection with problems bearing on the actual duration of such periods. We can talk glibly of eternity, and, going to the other end of the scale, we are not shocked by a few thousand years; but directly years are numbered with precision in groups which lie in intervening regions of thought, illogical Western theologians are apt to regard such numbering as nonsense. Now we at present living on this earth—the great bulk of humanity, that is to say, for there are exceptional cases, to be considered later—are now going through the fifth race of our present fourth Round. And yet the evolution of that fifth race began about a million of years ago. In a very interesting volume of Western science Professor James Geikie, writing of "The Great Ice Age," is good enough to push back the origin of man on earth to interglacial epochs in a way which expands the biblical five or six thousand years into something over 100,000. The book is not at hand as I write, and I forget the exact figures reached. But what is this calculation beside the facts of the case as revealed by Occult science? Will the reader, in consideration of the fact that the present cosmogony does not profess to work with eternity, nerve himself to deal with estimates that do concern themselves with millions of years, and even count such millions by considerable numbers?

A. P. S.

(To be continued.)

GARIBALDI'S DREAM.

"I was ill with rheumatism, and in the midst of the storm I fell asleep in my cabin, having lain down over the coverlid. In sleep I was transported to my native place, but instead of the heavenly air of Nice, where everything bore a smiling aspect, I found myself in the gloomy atmosphere of a cemetery. In the distance I perceived a melancholy procession of women carrying a bier, and they advanced slowly towards me. I felt a fatal presentiment, and struggled to approach the funeral train, but I could not move. I seemed to have a mountain upon my chest. The cortège reached the side of my couch, laid down the bier, and vanished. I sought in vain to raise myself on my arms. I was under the terrible influence of a nightmare; and when I began to move, and feel beside me the cold form of a corpse, and recognise my mother's blessed face, I was awake, but on my hand there remained the impression of an ice-cold hand. The mournful howling of the tempest, and the groans of the poor 'Carmen' beaten unmercifully against the shore, could not entirely dissipate the effects of my terrible dream. On that day, and in that hour, I lost my parent, the best of mothers."—*From Guizoni's Life of Garibaldi.*

THE DIVINING ROD.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—May I narrate, briefly as I can, my experience with the divining rod? When I was twelve years old, I saw one day a man in my father's field walking about with a crotched stick in his hands, which, at times, bent down slowly towards the earth. Of course I asked him what he was doing, when he explained the process of finding water. Being a born experimenter, I went into the next pasture and cut a witch-hazel crotch, and on walking about found that it behaved in my hands as it did in those of the water-finder. I followed the water-vein a quarter of a mile to the river bank, and found an outflowing spring. Led blindfold around wells, I tracked the water-courses to and from them. Then I tried similar experiments as to metals. In a wood yard, covered with chips, I repeatedly found a silver dollar hidden under a chip. I did the same when blindfolded. I had no doubt that very deep veins of water, and nearer metals, for I tried iron as well as silver, acted in some way upon me or the rod I held in my hands. Having satisfied myself of the fact, I have never since repeated the experiment.

T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.

32, Fopstone-road, Earl's Court, London, S.W.
November 11th, 1882.

MISS WOOD.—The correspondence between the C. A. S. and Miss Wood was laid before the Council on Tuesday last. At present no agreement has been arrived at, and should the negotiations fall through the correspondence will be published.

"SHELLS."

Mr. Noel has concluded his very able and elaborate attack on the Adept Psychology by opening up the whole question of Buddhist metaphysics. I do not think that subject can be adequately treated in these columns. We may, perhaps, deal with the connection of Idealism and Occultism upon easier terms: at least, in this article, I shall confine myself to the conception of the "shell" as such, leaving the further question of "elementaries," "astral light," and so forth for next consideration. It must be observed that I am not an authorised exponent of these ideas, and that I can only give my own understanding of them, with especial reference to the objections raised by Mr. Noel.

It is the vice of all materialistic psychology that it makes the unity of consciousness consist in the sum of its states, deriving consciousness—the apprehension of phenomena—from phenomena themselves. Mr. Noel believes that he has detected these gross errors in the teaching now in question, and that there can be no material or ideal combination, offering to observation the phenomena of personality, out of connection with that principle of unity and self-identification which we call the Ego. A "shell" consciousness without the Ego is impossible; and on the other hand the Ego cannot be so lost or merged in the "shell" as to perish with the disintegration of the latter, as is alleged in the case of "elementaries."

There are therefore these two questions to be distinguished and dealt with separately. I will state the first in my own way as follows: Can the modes of personal consciousness, including memory, sentiment, and habitual intelligence, be so organised as to become independent of their originating principle, automatically responsive to appropriate excitants, and subsisting for a time by the coherence and momentum imparted to them?

Now I must first pre-suppose the admission of an ethereal or psychic body or form, the Kama Rupa, which I used to call the Linga Sarira. I entirely accept the opinion of Hinton and Mr. Noel, that all the phenomena of force we call "matter," whether physical or ethereal, are presentations to us of a real life and consciousness behind. And I find my argument greatly facilitated by that idea. For I infer from it that the more ethereal and subtle the form of "matter," the more evidently is it a manifestation of life and living powers. And an ethereal body will thus be far more plastic, and far more tenacious of the impressions it receives from our thought and intelligence, than are our present physical bodies. The living forces of nature in this more sensitive and responsive state, will be more easily mesmerised, as it were, and combined by our personality into a perfect, enduring, and reactive representation of it. In accordance with Hinton's theory, I follow Mr. Noel in conceiving organism as an immense number of rudimentary cell consciousnesses or wills in strict and absolute subordination to the functional purposes of a higher life principle or formative idea. And that seems to me also quite in conformity with what Koot Hoomi tells us* of the living energy of our thoughts after they have passed out of our present consciousness. As to this I shall have something more to say by-and-by, in dealing with Mr. Noel's objection to the "astral light," and the pictures or images therein. Now as regards the power of lower forms of life to combine for a common purpose of which they are individually unconscious, it matters not whether the purpose or function is the representation of human intelligence and the reproduction of its phenomena, or of merely animal life. I am not for a moment losing sight of Mr. Noel's great objection, which is after all only that which presents itself to everyone in a less philosophical form. But until we have clearly before our minds what organism implies, and to how much it is applicable, I cannot shew how, and under what limitations, its survival may be asserted. Now I start with this principle, which, I believe, no psychologist of any school will at the present day deny, *that organism is the basis of all spontaneity.* I call spontaneity the organic consciousness. But in so speaking be it understood that I advance nothing necessary to make out my case, which would be satisfied by a wholly *unconscious* automatic reproduction of the phenomena of life. A theory much stronger than this—viz., human automatism—that consciousness is altogether a collateral and unessential fact—not long ago engaged the attention of some scientific men in this country. But believing with Mr. Noel that all phenomena of every kind result from conscious energies, I say that what we call our spontaneous acts and thoughts—that is to say, acts and thoughts which, by habitual repetition, have become independent of our voluntary

* Sinnett's "Occult World," p. 130.

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origination till they can even obtrude themselves against our will, just like objects of external perception—belong to an organic consciousness to which we have ourselves transferred them. The *Ego* is incessantly labouring at the construction of an organism whereby its voluntary activity may be exchanged for a spontaneous one. All education and training have this for their aim. None of the higher voluntary results can be obtained till the lower ones have become thus organically spontaneous. And the whole of our living is nothing else than this process of thus imaging ourselves forth upon a reactive basis, which Mr. Noel and I, at least, believe to be conscious forces of nature, co-ordinated, actuated, inspired, and disciplined—in one word, *organised*—by our formative energies.

Now, so far as this process is complete, there is an organised representation of ourselves resulting in characteristic phenomena which no longer require our voluntary origination. But these phenomena, Mr. Noel will say, however elicited, are still phenomena of *our* consciousness. Not altogether so even now, for there is a stage beyond the spontaneous, the automatic. Many physical acts, of which some required an elaborate conscious training, are ever afterwards performed without any observable consciousness at all, unless attention is accidentally directed to them, which, by the by, usually impairs their facility. And often, nay constantly, in a long train of associated ideas, each of which suggests its successor, intermediate links do not emerge into consciousness at all.* We may go so far as to say that the degree of consciousness of every process which must still be called mental is in an inverse ratio to its facility.

But though the *tendency* is thus to automatism, it is usually only the lower results of the personal life which become thus completely organised. In exceptional cases, possibly, where there has been great brain power, even more difficult processes of intelligence may be spontaneously reproduced—spontaniety, be it repeated, always testifying to organic co-ordination. This is the opinion of Mr. Thomas Lake Harris,† no less than of our Eastern teachers. And the "shell" would, for a long time at least, retain enough to give fragmentary "tests of identity," when in psychic *rapport*, though rarely enough to stand a tolerably severe cross-examination. And I may mention here that long before I had heard of the "shell," the idea was suggested to my mind by my own experience, and that of others, in Spiritualistic investigations. It was really the most tenable hypothesis by which to account for the curious abundance of isolated tests, with the invariable inability to follow these up by particulars which would be equally within the memory of the deceased individual. Had I been myself a medium, that is, in *direct rapport*, I have no doubt that these further "tests" would have been supplied in any quantity from my own mind. But when the facts did not admit the supposition of scraps of information picked up by the medium for purposes of imposition, the phenomenon was that of a disentegrating memory.

However that may be, I submit that we have got thus far without quitting the region of experience and ascertained psychology; viz, that there is a large class of mental acts and phenomena which originated in, but are reproduced independently of, our will and higher faculties. Nor will it be denied that these are just such as are most habitual to, and therefore most characteristic of, the individual, and most expressive of his personality. I can only conceive these associated tendencies of mine as an organic representation of myself, as in a more external manner my physical body is so. And just as my body, though a phenomenon for my consciousness, has an enduring cause outside my consciousness, so that other organism, constructed by me, reacts upon my consciousness in those subjective phenomena which I no longer originate and can very imperfectly control. Spontaneous subjectivity is objectivity. The power of organism to impose phenomena on consciousness is just like the power of any other "object" to do so. That tree is a phenomenon which as such exists only in the consciousness of the percipient. But there is a living energy acting on me to make me see the tree. And there is a living energy acting on me to make me feel my external body in sensations, and also to give me that complex experience which is my spontaneous, involuntary personality. But there is this distinction between the two cases. The phenomenon of the external sense is the resultant of two factors which may be quite unlike. But in the other case they are my own modes which I have objectified by the mere fact of constructing them.

Now I will not call this subtle organism of habitual modes the personality, because Mr. Noel understands by that the transcendental unity of the *Ego*, and I do not want to dispute about words. But if its objective existence is conceded at all, we must conceive it as an association of forces far more vital, far more intimately blended and complicated, than those which combine for the phenomena of physical life in the outer body. Its separation from the *Ego* would be the withdrawal of the latter from objective personal consciousness. It is just this withdrawal which, even in this life, we are trying to effect in every effort of self-control and self-reconstruction. But there is a great body of mere innocent habit in which we dwell contentedly. The complete arrest of our spontaneous life would be return to a state of absolute subjectivity, until we had evolved new modes by that voluntary energy in which the *Ego* most truly consists. It is this intermediate state of subjectivity which I understand by what the Adepts, through their expositor, call *Devachan*. But before we can attain it, after physical death, there is a longer or shorter period required for disengagement from those objective modes, including all the interests and dispositions for which there are no longer the occasions and opportunities afforded by our life here. When this separation has been effected completely, these collective modes do not at once disintegrate, but maintain their union for a time, and in the state of union are what is called the "shell."

Now the perpetuation and vitality of such an organism would consist in its co-ordination, and consequent ability to respond to those excitants, which, in association with the *Ego*, eluced the phenomena of personal life. The "shell" has no self-consciousness, for it has no self; it has no originating power, no plan or purpose. But the habits of its co-ordination continue, and it may be drawn by those attractions into *rapport* with living intelligences. That is its opportunity. Then come the indispensable excitants, and the consequent automatic responses. The same questions which would have elicited from your friend, had he been living and present, *merely spontaneous* answers, without the necessity of reflection, you will get with equal readiness from his "shell." If your friend was a ready scholar, the "shell" will quote you Greek and Latin.* And so on.

It is to another class of "shells," the "elementaries," that will-power, intelligence, and consciousness are attributed by the author of the "Fragments of Occult Truth." With these I propose to deal next week in reply to Mr. Noel, when the larger and more difficult question of the "Loss of the Spirit" will have to be met.

But Mr. Noel will find nothing, I think, in these teachings to imply that the "shell" is a personality with a distinct self-consciousness, unless it represents the actual individual, as in the case of the elementary. And, therefore, I really cannot see how an objection from the essential unity of individual consciousness can apply to the organism now in question. There are numerous analogies in life and nature for co-ordinations surviving the principle of integration. The State may be without a government, yet the routine executive functions may be uninterrupted for a while.

That there can be any phenomenal consciousness without the unity of apperception, the synthesis which must be accompanied, as Kant says, by the *Ich denke*, and which thus presupposes the distinction of subject and object, I cannot at all represent to myself. And it is also quite true that to get that *Ich denke out of* the elements or "manifold" of a phenomenon thus combined in and for consciousness alone is the impossible mistake of materialism. So, as already said, I do not conceive these "shells" as conscious, that is, with a unity of consciousness. But there is another possibility, for we are told (Theos., Oct. 81): "Until the shells are dissipated there is a certain sympathy between them and the departed Spiritual Ego," which may be disturbed by incitements to the "shell." Well, I conceive that to mean that the disengagement is after all never quite complete while the "shell" lasts—the consciousness of the Ego, though abstracted, can yet return to its old habit when the feeble organism is moved to activity. To expect in the first instance a perfectly unexceptionable mode of statement from pupils who are themselves at the same time learning to understand (for that is how these teachings come to us) would not be reasonable. And as I also am in that case, I bespeak a liberal indulgence, and some independent thinking on the part of the reader, for this explanation.

C. C. M.

* Psychologists at first supposed that the links were only forgotten, not suppressed; but all are now agreed that this was a mere assumption.

† "If a man possessed great intellectual powers and put them forth through a long life, he has built a great geist, if not a great name; he has sent forth a splendid representation of himself into the world of shadows."—*Concerning Geists.*

* "The geist of Homer talks good Greek."—T. L. Harris.

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THEOSOPHIC DOCTRINES.

C. C. M. has, in his turn, rather misunderstood *me*. I did not mean to charge intentional inculcation of materialism, in the vulgar sense of the word, on the writer of the "Fragments"; but perhaps my language in the note cited by C. C. M. was ill-chosen. And I am quite ready to admit that in the passage concerning "the spirit drifting about like dead leaves," I probably misunderstood him, the interpretation of C. C. M. being very likely the correct one; only I must add that, if so, for a writer who so scrupulously divides a man into distinct compartments, such language was very loose and misleading.

But on the second point I suppose I should differ from C. C. M. as much as from the writer. For he characterises the statement that "thought, memory, and will are the energies of the brain" as "the enunciation of a physiological truism." That it is so I have yet to learn. It is the doctrine, doubtless, of Moleschott, Maudsley, and Bain; but so far from its being "a physiological truism," I should have said that this is just the most flagrant instance of physiological science obtruding beyond her province into the domain of psychology, and uttering a fatal untruth in so doing. Undoubtedly there is good scientific evidence that the motion of nervous molecules accompanies our present modes of thought and volition; but there is no possibility of going beyond this in the direction of materialism. And to my mind it is quite as materialistic to ascribe thought and will to a subtle ethereal body as to ascribe the same to the more palpable molecules we call brain. All these are, by the very definition of them, creatures of thought: thought is not their creature. Is that true or not? On it hangs, if not everything of value to us, yet a very great deal.

What I charge on Occultism—and upon much of the so-called philosophy of Spiritualism itself—is unconscious materialism, none the less real and mischievous for not being avowed. Even if the writers regard matter as an "illusion," yet if they also regard will, thought, memory, and personality as functions, or products of this illusion (*illusion, I wonder, of whom or what?*) then I must charge them with materialism. It does not signify, after all, what your metaphysical idea of matter may be, whether you call it illusion, or something evolved from an unconscious Absolute Principle, *Pakriti*, or some other; the question is: Are personality, and personal functions, functions or results of matter, gross or subtle? These writers, unless I totally misunderstand them, reply in the affirmative. The true position is that matter, gross and subtle, is the product of personality and its functions. The inference from the former position is that, when all the bodies, gross and subtle, have disappeared, then thought and personality have gone with them—and that inference is drawn by these writers. This is only a subtler and more insidious materialism. "*Gross*" was, perhaps, a wrong word to apply. When our personality is perfected, then we shall no longer appear to possess bodies like those we now have. Bodies are the finite self-expression of Persons. The molecular motion of nerves or ether or any other subtle agent is, and can only be thought, will, perception, in us or in some persons.

(For "*intentional* self-identification" in the note to my last paper, read *intuitional*, &c.)

In dealing with physics, or physiology proper, of course, we are at liberty to use the language of the science, and to ignore idealism. Not so, however, when we mix up psychology, and philosophy, with these sciences; for then we misstate facts—we misrepresent truth, and mislead dangerously. Whatever Occultism may be, Idealism is no mere subtle curiosity of speculation.

RODEN NOEL.

THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Now that the work of the autumn and winter seasons is about to commence, the time is opportune for a few words to our readers on the duty of supporting the C.A.S., and strengthening the hands of its council. The Fortnightly Discussion Meetings, which will be begun on Monday next, will afford opportunities for the consideration of a number of important questions, of special interest not only to pronounced Spiritualists but to those also who are candid inquirers and sincere seekers after truth; and that all who purpose joining in the coming year may have the advantages to be derived from these meetings and other proceedings of the Association, it has been decided that those who pay their subscriptions now for 1883 will be entitled to enter upon full privileges at once. Forms of application for membership may be had on application to the secretary, Mr. Thomas Blyton, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C.

A MURDER SEEN IN A DREAM.

On the evening of the 8th of February, 1840, Mr. Nevell Norway, a Cornish gentleman, was cruelly murdered by two brothers of the name of Lightfoot, on his way from Bodmin to Wadebridge, the place of his residence. At that time, his brother, Mr. Edmund Norway, was in the command of a merchant vessel, the "Orient," on her way from Manilla to Cadiz, and the following is his own account of a dream which he had on the night when his brother was murdered:—

"Ship 'Orient,' from Manilla to Cadiz, Feb. 8th, 1840.

"About 7.30 p.m., the island of St. Helena, N.N.W., distant about seven miles; shortened sail and rounded to, with the ship's head to the eastward. At eight, set the watch and went below. Wrote a letter to my brother, Nevell Norway. About twenty minutes or a quarter before ten o'clock went to bed, fell asleep, and dreamed I saw two men attack my brother and murder him. One caught the horse by the bridle and snapped a pistol twice, but I heard no report. He then struck him a blow, and he fell off the horse. They struck him several blows, and dragged him by the shoulders across the road and left him. In my dream there was a house on the left hand side of the road. At four o'clock I was called, and went on deck to take charge of the ship. I told the second officer, Mr. Henry Wren, that I had had a dreadful dream, and dreamed that my brother Nevell was murdered by two men on the road from St. Columb to Wadebridge; but I was sure it could not be there, as the house there would be on the right hand side of the road, but it must have been somewhere else. He replied, 'Don't think anything about it; you West country people are so superstitious; you will make yourself miserable the remainder of the passage.' He then left the general orders and went below. It was one continued dream from the time I fell asleep until I was called at four o'clock in the morning.

"EDMUND NORWAY, Chief Officer Ship 'Orient.'"

So much for the dream. Now for the confession of William Lightfoot, one of the assassins, who was executed, together with his brother, at Bodmin, on Monday, April 18th, 1840:—

"I went to Bodmin last Saturday week, the 8th instant (February 8th, 1840), and in returning I met my brother James, at the head of Dunmeer Hill. It was dim-like. We came on the turnpike-road all the way till we came to the house near the spot where the murder was committed. We did not go into the house, but hid ourselves in a field. My brother knocked Mr. Norway down; he snapped a pistol at him twice, and it did not go off. He then knocked him down with the pistol. I was there along with him. Mr. Norway was struck while on horseback. It was on the turnpike-road, between Pencarrow Mill and the directing-post towards Wadebridge. I cannot say at what time of the night it was. We left the body in the water, on the left side of the road coming to Wadebridge. We took some money in a purse, but I did not know how much. My brother drew the body across the road to the watering."

At the trial, Mr. Abraham Hambly deposed that he left Bodmin ten minutes before ten, and was overtaken by Mr. Norway about a quarter of a mile out of Bodmin. They rode together for about two miles from Bodmin, where their roads separated.

Mr. John Hick, a farmer of St. Minver, left Bodmin at a quarter past ten, on the Wadebridge road. When he got to within a mile of Wadebridge he saw Mr. Norway's horse galloping on before him without a rider. The clock struck eleven just before he entered Wadebridge.

Thomas Gregory, Mr. Norway's waggoner, found his master's horse standing at the gate of the stable yard. Two spots of fresh blood were on the saddle. He took the pony and rode out on the road. Edward Cavell went with him. They came to a place called North Hill. There is a lone cottage there, by the right-hand side of the road going to Bodmin, which is unoccupied. They found the body of Mr. Norway in the water near this cottage.

The evidence of the surgeon, Mr. Tickell, showed that the head was dreadfully beaten and fractured.

It will be seen that Mr. Edmund Norway, in relating his dream the following morning to his shipmate, observed that the murder could not have been committed on the St. Columb road because the house, in going from thence to Wadebridge, is on the right hand, whereas the house was in his dream, and in reality is, on the left.

I asked Mr. Edmund Norway whether, supposing he had not written a letter to his brother, Mr. N. Norway, on the evening of the 8th of February, and had nevertheless dreamt the dream in question, the impression made by it would have been such as to have prevented his writing to him subsequently. To which he replied that it might not have had that effect, but he could not say with any precision whether it would or not. At all events, the dream must be considered remarkable from its unquestionable authenticity, and its perfect coincidence in time and circumstances with a most horrible murder.—*From "Early Years and Late Reflections." By Clement Carlyon, M.D., Vol. II., page* 289.

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THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC PHYSICAL SEANCES.

The following Declaration on the conduct of public or promiscuous séances for physical manifestations was drafted by a committee appointed for that purpose by the Council of the Central Association of Spiritualists, and having been presented to a meeting of the Council, held on Tuesday, November 14th, 1882, was unanimously approved, and ordered to be printed and circulated. Persons wishing to have their names added to the list of signatures are invited to intimate their desire to the Resident Secretary, Mr. Thomas Blyton, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C.

Conduct of Public Physical Seances.

Few Spiritualists can have failed to note, with regret, the deterioration which has of late years taken place in the conditions under which physical phenomena have been sought in public séances.

These conditions—so favourable to fraud on the part of dishonest mediums, and so calculated to excite suspicion in the minds of observers—have led to the most disastrous results. We are not speaking without full warrant when we say that there is hardly a public medium for physical manifestations in this country against whom, at one time or other, charges of imposture have not been brought. We fear that in some cases no reasonable doubt can be entertained that fraud of the grossest kind was really perpetrated; while in other cases there is reason to believe that—whatever may have been the appearance to inexperienced spectators—there was no conscious deception on the part of the medium.

But in either case the name of Spiritualism has been brought into discredit, and we are forcibly driven to the conclusion that our methods of procedure must be amended. We must demonstrate our abhorrence of imposture by disavowing and discouraging all conditions which do not plainly shut out even the suspicion of its possibility.

Obviously these remarks can have little reference to family circles, which are naturally held sacred by those who regard them as affording opportunities for veritable "communion with the dead." But it is open to grave question whether—even in the case of family circles—*inquirers* should ever be permitted to make their first acquaintance with Spiritual phenomena by introduction to séances held for physical manifestations in the dark, or where a cabinet is used for the seclusion of the medium.

We are chiefly concerned, however, with what are known as public or promiscuous séances for physical manifestations. These have been of late years generally marked by the following characteristics:—(1) The séance has been conducted in imperfect light, or in total darkness. (2) The medium has been isolated from the circle, by being placed either in a cabinet or behind a curtain. (3) The sitters have been, either wholly or in part, unacquainted with the subject and with each other. (4) There has not infrequently been a manifest want of harmony, consequent upon differences of opinion as to the nature and value of the tests employed.

These conditions, usually found in combination, effectually preclude careful and dispassionate investigation; open wide an avenue to fraud; suggest suspicion of its presence even where it does not exist; and in many cases, we fear, expose the medium to very injurious influences.

Such conditions should be allowed to prevail no longer. "Mixed" circles should be as little mixed as possible—mere wonder-seekers, and men whose moral atmosphere is known to be impure, being carefully excluded. Above all, darkness should give way to light. In the early days of Spiritualism public dark circles were the exception, and there is no need for them now. There is abundant evidence that, with mediums of the present day, satisfactory phenomena, including even "form" manifestations, can be obtained without isolation—the medium, where a cabinet is used, being placed near, but *outside of it*, and in full view of the sitters. But even if this were not so, it is neither wise nor honourable to expose mediums to the risks which have been shewn to attend séances held under the conditions that have of late been prevalent; and it were far better that we should have no public manifestations of physical phenomena than that they should be sought under circumstances which, to say the least, inevitably conduce to suspicion.

In view of all these considerations, believing that fraud is not of the essence of this confessedly obscure subject, but rather an accident dependent on faulty conditions of research; feeling that Spiritualists have the remedy for the evil in their own hands, and that without its conscientious application they cannot hope to maintain ati a fair reputon before the world; we earnestly recommend—*That in all public circles held for physical phenomena, the medium be so placed, and in such light, as to be continuously under observation by each member of the circle.*

Edwin Adams, Cardiff
W. P. Adshead, Derby
Alexander Aksakof, St. Petersburg
G. P. Allan, London
W. R. Armstrong, Newcastle-on-Tyne
R. Baikie, M.D., late H.E.I.C.S., Edinburgh
*T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., Newcastle-on-Tyne
Frederick A. Binney, Manchester
John L. Bland, President of Hull Psychological Society
Hannah Blundell, Manchester
John James Bodmer, London
Hugh Booth, Sowerby Bridge
Colonel Joshua Brayn, Jersey
Emma Hardinge-Britten, Manchester
William Brown, Burnley
Henry Burton, Newcastle-on-Tyne
Alexander Calder, London
Robert Scammell Clarke, Hon.Sec. Plymouth Free Spiritual Society
John Colley, Hon. Sec. Birmingham Christian Spiritualist Society
John Cowie, Dumbarton
John Crake, Houghton-le-Spring
William Day, Ipswich
David Duguid, Glasgow
James Dawbarn, London
Thomas Dawson, Hon. Sec. Gateshead Spiritualist Society
§W. Eglinton, London
J. Crossley Eno, Dulwich
Thomas Everitt, London
John S. Farmer, London
Lewis Firth, Hon. Sec. Rochdale Spiritualist Society
Richard Fitton, Manchester
Charlotte FitzGerald, London
D. G. FitzGerald, M.S.Tel.E., London
Elizabeth FitzGerald, London
*Hannah Ford, Leeds
George Forster, Hon. Sec. Seghill Spiritualist Association
H. E. Frances, Hon. Sec. Brixton Psychological Society
William Gill, Brighton
Henry Goodchild, Hon. Sec. Middlesborough Association of Spiritualists
Thomas Grant, Maidstone
G. F. Green, London
Joseph N. Greenwell, Hon. Sec. Dalston Association
S. C. Hall, F.S.A., London
*Mrs. F. V. Hallock, Chiswick, London
William Hardy, Hon. Sec. Sheffield Psychological Association
Samuel Hayes, Hon. Sec. Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists
Georgiana Houghton, London
Hugh Hutchinson, President Islington Home Circle
John Enmore Jones, London
H. A. Kersey, Newcastle-on-Tyne
W. F. Kirby, London
Edward Larrad, President Leicester Spiritualist Society
John Lamont, Liverpool
P. G. Leymarie, President Société Scientifique d'Etudes Psychologiques, of Paris
J. E. Lightbown, Hon. Sec. Manchester and Salford Society of Spiritualists
R. W. Lishman, Hon. Cor. Sec. Central London Spiritual Evidence Society
"M.A. (Oxon.)." London
Iver MacDonnell, London
James McDowall, Glasgow
John McG. Munro, Hon. Sec. Glasgow Association of Spiritualists
Thomas McKinney, Peterborough
*C. C. Massey, London
William Miall, London
William Morris, London
J. J. Morse, London
Hay Nisbet, Glasgow
Roden Noel, London
W. G. Pickersgill, London
Thomas Pinkey, Durham
Richard Pearce, London
*Edward R. Pease, London
Cornelius Pearson, London
*Frank Podmore, London
*Thomas Pole, Clifton
Charles Poole, Hon. Sec. Yorkshire District Committee of Spiritualists
John Pringle, Hon. Sec. Hetton Spiritual Society
S. R. Redman, London
George Ridley, Hon. Sec. North Durham Spiritualist Society
A. J. Riko, The Hague
E. Dawson Rogers, London
George Rogers, President Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists
John Rouse, Croydon
Adam Rushton, Minister, Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists
‡Thos Shorter, London
J. Bowing Slowman, Plympton
S. T. Speer, M.D. (Edin.), London
M. A. Stack, London
Lucia C. Stone, Bridport
Edith L. Stone, Bridport
Morell Theobald, London
Ellen Miall Theobald, London
E. A. Tietkens, London
I. Thompson, Manchester
*E. Louisa Thompson Nosworthy, Liverpool
Charles Tomlinson, London

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George Tommy, Bristol
W. Towns, London
Jno. P. Turner, Leamington
Mary Wainwright, London
†Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.G.S., Godalming
E. W. Wallis, Nottingham
W. Winlow, Hon. Sec. Ashington Spiritual Society, Northumberland
Oswald Wirth, Paris
George Wyld, M.D., London
J. F. Young, Llanelly

* Is of opinion that public miscellaneous séances for physical manifestations should be altogether discontinued.

† Would prefer that the word "conscious" should be omitted from the last sentence of the second paragraph.

‡ Is of opinion that public miscellaneous séances and professional mediumship for physical manifestations should be altogether discouraged.

§ Is opposed to *all public* séances, whether in the light or the dark, unless the conditions are favourable to a complete investigation.

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I shall be glad if you will give insertion to the enclosed letter, written by a Hindu Spiritualist. During my residence in Calcutta I became acquainted with many intelligent natives, the writer amongst the number, and the interest caused by my visit led them to start a society of their own. Since March last they have been trying to obtain manifestations, but with varying results. Their persistence is to be commended, and it will be a favour to me if any of my friends or those interested in propagating Spiritualism abroad as well as at home, will correspond with the writer, or send the Society such books upon the subject as may be instructive. India is a splendid field for Spiritualism, and, as my correspondent shews, they prefer its simple faith to the impenetrable mysteries of Occultism. Any interest taken by our European friends in propagating Spiritualism in India must have a beneficial effect upon the natives, and from this one society many others may spring up all over the country.—Yours, &c., W. EGLINTON.

I beg to inform you that your kind note of July 23rd last has been thankfully received by us with much delight. We deem it a high favour that amidst your numerous engagements you were good enough to remember your poor friends in Calcutta and to snatch a few moments for writing to them. We cannot, however, sufficiently thank you for the very warm interest you take in our society, and are more than ever obliged to you for your most encouraging assurance that you will ask Mr. Meugens when he will return to this country to favour us with his advice. I need scarcely say that that gentleman will add not a little to the great obligations we already owe you, and that we will be ever thankful to him, and will ever remember him as one of our well-wishers and benefactors.

We read with great pleasure your contributions to "LIGHT." Your dissent from the theosophical explanation of the psychical manifestations has much interested us. If the existence of the soul be accepted, it is agreeable to common sense that a soul free from material body has greater facility to exercise its will-power than one fettered in crude matter. The assertion of the Theosophists that 90 per cent. of the Spiritual phenomena are produced by "spooks and elementals," is something beyond our ordinary comprehension. Their explanations of well-authenticated communications and materialisations are not satisfactory. The account of your adventure with Koot Hoomi created almost a sensation here. We prefer your explanation of it by the theory of *double* to that of the Theosophists. The contributions of "M. A. (Oxon.)" to "LIGHT" are very learned and instructive. He says in one place that Spirits of the lowest order cast antagonistic influences over circles to retard manifestations. Can it be one of the causes of our failures?

We were very happy to learn that the members of the new Society for Psychic Researches had come to good results in their investigations in "Thought-reading." As the Society contains eminent persons, we may hope to see them do full justice to what they have taken up in their hands, and thus further the cause of Spiritualism. We eagerly await the fruits of their labour.

Since I wrote to you last the state of things has not much improved with us. We conduct the weekly séances according to your early advices, and other hints which we get from the writings of many contributors to "LIGHT." Mr. Farmer, in his lecture before the members of C.A.S., strongly advised them to have the séance-room well ventilated and sufficiently lighted. We therefore do not now sit in closely shut-up rooms, but as we get enough of diffused light from outside to see one another, we keep no extra light in the room, preferring the other hypothesis, viz., ether in rest facilitates the operations of the Spirits.

Will you kindly explain in your next the meaning of the phrase "negative and positive elements in the arrangement of sitters in a circle," as we have no distinct notion of it?

We think that it would be well if we had with us what may be called a regular guide-book for conducting séances properly. We do not know whether any such book is extant, nor can we hope to get such a book here at Calcutta.

Will it be convenient for you (if a book of this nature is available) to drop a few lines to Mr. E. A. Pittis, 9, Dowgate-hill, Cannon-street, London, asking him to buy and send a copy of the book to Messrs. Bisso, Nauth, Law, and Co., 2, Larkin's-lane, Calcutta, who will have made the necessary arrangements with him? To prevent having two copies of the same work, I add a list of books of our very small library:—(1) Kardec's "Spirit-Book and Medium's Book"; (2) Crookes's "Phenomena of Spiritualism"; (3) Zöllner's "Transcendental Physics"; (4) Harrison's "Spirits before our Eyes"; (5) James's "Mesmerism"; (6) Heidenhain's "Animal Magnetism"; (7) Wilson's "How to Magnetise"; (8) a set of "Psychic Notes."

We indeed learnt with regret of the late troubles in Egypt, but never doubted the ultimate triumph of British arms. We are glad that Arabi is a prisoner now and the war is virtually over.

Trusting that you are in good health,
I remain yours sincerely,
PRIYA LAL MALLIK.

The Colootollah Spiritualist Society,
57, Sovaram Bysak's-lane, Calcutta.
September 25th.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday evening last Mr. J. J. Morse occupied the platform, when his guides delivered an interesting discourse on "Spiritualism: a Religious Democracy." The forms of religion at present in vogue were classed under three heads—viz., Conservative, Sensational, and Rationalistic, all of which were discussed at considerable length with the view of shewing that from the two former we were to expect virtually nothing, while from the latter a great deal might be anticipated, but not of a kind to meet the necessities of the age, as without some accompaniment of a spiritual nature we should land in crass materialism. To this end was the advent of modern Spiritualism attributable. Spiritualism as a religious democracy, requires no priesthood, declares that every man must fight his own battles, and that each one must be answerable for the use or abuse of the faculties given him. The humblest individual who does his duty to himself and the world at large, has as much title to happiness hereafter as the greatest in the land. Spiritualism declares that death does not end all, and its essentials are, recognition of God, immortality, and eternal progression. An earnest appeal for hard and earnest work concluded a highly interesting and instructive discourse.—RES-FACTOR.

QUEBEC HALL.

Social philosophy in the department of the "Duties of Parentage and Parents" formed the subject of Mr. MacDonnell's Sunday lecture at this hall. It treated, as all-important, early considerations of monetary competence and soundness of health, as essential to happiness in married life, and, without endorsing the views of Malthus in all respects, supported his suggestion of later marriages than are usual while poverty prevails. The appeals to fatherhood and motherhood were highly appreciated; and from the delicate, excellent manner in which the subjects were treated, we believe that much good must have been done. We are glad to find that some of the foundation evils in our civilised life have, at least, one enemy who can fearlessly drag them out, and expose and denounce them in becoming terms.

At a meeting held on Monday, November 13th, Mr. Whiteley in the chair, it was resolved, "That this meeting, having fully considered the circumstances connected with Quebec Hall, and more particularly Mr. Dale's statement of his inability to give any further time to conducting the affairs of the hall, the hall be closed on payment of next quarter's rent, at Christmas, and that all property of the hall be held by Mr. Dale as his property."—Signed, WILLIAM WHITELEY.

CARDIFF.

On Sunday, the 12th inst., two lectures were delivered here by the controls of Mr. E. W. Wallis. That in the morning, entitled "An Hour's Communion with the Dead," was admirably treated. The controls stated that in this age, which might be termed the mechanical, rationalistic, or scientific age, there is an evident tendency to regard all manifestation of *feeling*, all expression of *affection*, as being puerile and effeminate. The most

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sacred emotions of the heart are laid bare by the dissecting-knife of scientific analysis, and the irrepressible yearning of those who have felt the pangs of bereavement towards the "loved ones gone before," is thrust back and frozen up by the cold, calculating spirit of the age. The controls forcibly urged that the *all-round* phases of man's nature should be developed; that the emotional, affectional and intuitional side of his being should not become dwarfed and stunted through the persistent exercise of the purely intellectual and critical faculties, and *vice versâ;* and that only with the judicious blending of the intellectual and the emotional in seeking communion with the so-called dead, could the best results be ensured. The evening lecture, "God and the Devil," was handled in a masterly manner, and was well received by a fairly large audience. Prior to the lecture Mr. Rees Lewis read some communications given in Australia through the mediumship of Mr. George Spriggs. Two of these may be regarded as test messages, since they purport to come from two residents of this town, who have not "passed over" sufficiently long to enable the news to travel to Australia and back again in the ordinary way. Mr. Wallis very kindly gave his time and services for a lecture on the following evening in aid of the Society's funds. The subject chosen by the audience, "Love in its Universal Aspect," was ably dealt with. At the close of the lecture several questions were put to the controls and received concise and appropriate replies. On Sunday next Mr. J. J. Morse will lecture here. Subjects: Morning at eleven o'clock, "Goodness as a Moral Force." Evening at 6.30, "Modern Spiritualism."

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—The affairs of the Newcastle Society grow more and more unsatisfactory. Mr. George Wilson, the late secretary, was on Sunday last summoned to attend the committee, where a proposition awaited him from the president that he be expelled the committee, which was carried by a narrow majority. Mr. Wilson, we may state, has been an official for the last five years, and has invariably been returned either at the head of the poll or nearly so. He is a gentleman who is held in high esteem among, and highly respected by, the members in general. After the vote of expelling Mr. Wilson from the committee five other members immediately gave in their resignation: Mr. Gillespie (librarian), Mr. Frost (secretary), and Messrs. Coltman, Bristol, and Kay.

GATESHEAD.—Last Sunday evening Mr. Stevenson lectured to the Gateshead Society upon "What Relationship has the Salvation Army to Spiritualism?" The subject created a deal of interest, and brought forth some pertinent remarks from Mr. Routledge and the chairman, Mr. Burton. On the following evening a very successful concert was held in the hall of the Society by a troupe of minstrels, who gave a great deal of pleasure to the goodly audience, and produced a substantial surplus towards the debt fund of the Society. On Sunday next Mr. Rowe, of North Shields, lectures at the above room.—NORTHUMBRIA.

WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

LONDON.

Sunday, November 19.—Quebec Hall. 11.15 a.m., Séance. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. MacDonnell. (See advertisement.)

Monday, November 20.—Quebec Hall. 8.30, Meeting.

,, November 20.—Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C. 7.30 p.m., Discussion Meeting.

Tuesday, November 21.—Quebec Hall. 8.30 p.m., Lecture, Mr. Wilson.

Wednesday, November 22.—Central Association of Spiritualists. 8 p.m., Members' Free Séance.

Thursday, November 24.—Dalston Association. Weekly Séance.

PROVINCES.

Public meetings are held every Sunday in Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Leeds, Bradford, Gateshead, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leicester, Nottingham, Belper, &c., &c. See our list of Societies on advertisement page.

Societies advertising in "LIGHT" will have attention called to their advertisements, as above, without extra charge.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A.S.—Please be patient. You will know very shortly.

S.W.—Have not been able to find room for your letter; and, even if we had, we are not quite sure that it would be wise to insert it.

We have received a large number of letters on "The Teachings of the Perfect Way." Some of them are much too long. Others we may, perhaps, be able to use next week, and then the discussion must be considered closed.

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., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

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

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

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

SOCIAL POSITION.—H.I.H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H.S.H. the Prince of Solms; H.S.H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H.S.H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the 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.

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, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"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. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER, AT BERLIN.—I herreby 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 bedroom, 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; Butlerof, 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, December 6th, 1877.

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