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 see that the editor of "Light" has made a temperate and well-timed protest against the *Banner of Light's* charge that he is waging a "relentless war" against professional mediums. Few statements could be more absolutely devoid of truth. Personally I have not felt called upon to take any steps to disavow what has been charged upon me by some critics. I am not careful to say of myself that I have a strong sympathy and regard for those who are the servants of an inconsiderate public as the mediums between them and the world of which we know so little. I do not consider those persons to be the wisest and best friends of mediums who expose them to risks of which no one can, in our present state of knowledge, gauge the full significance, and then do them the signal dis-service of defending every impostor who trades in their name. I have no sympathy with that wholesale defence of what assuredly is in many cases, and probably is in most,—having regard to the evidence produced,—impudent imposture. I desiderate conditions under which no true honest man or woman can be exposed to suspicions that may be baseless: and under which no imposture can live. And, in assuming such a position, I respectfully consider that I am furthering the interests of Spiritualism, and defending the cause of honest mediums. I am said, in the last number of the *Banner*, to "place myself on record," in an answer sent to Messrs. Rogers' and Farmer's circular, as opposed to cabinets and darkness. Your tenses, Mr. Editor! I *placed* myself on record six years since: from that record I have never wavered, and I do not expect to live to see the time when I shall recant. Every day's experience deepens my conviction that a wholesale revisal of our methods of investigation is imperatively and urgently required. And I regret to find any influential organ of opinion throwing the weight of its authority into the opposite scale.

I am sure that the *Banner* has no desire to act as a buttress to imposture. Indeed, *ça va sans dire*. I am sure also that in writing as it does it is possessed with a belief in the reality of the phenomena which it considers to be impugned. Let me assure it that I at any rate do not impugn the reality of the phenomenon which is produced under conditions frequently satisfactory and good. I have lately occupied myself with the collection of evidence tending to establish this great fact, and I have been deeply impressed with its weight. But I feel bound to say that I should have been spared much trouble in estimating the value of evidence if the conditions of investigation had been more perfect. And I think no trouble too much to render imposture impossible first of all, and next, to make it sure that an observer knows what he is observing. For assuredly, as things now are, it is nearly impossible in a public circle to say whether a given case of form-presentation is one of materialisation, transfiguration, or mere fraud. It is waste of time to prove that this should not be. And I should have thought, had not experience convinced me otherwise, that every seeker after truth would join in such an attempt as that which is now being made to purge public circles of anything that can conceivably misguide, unless, indeed, he went a step further and felt himself estopped from regulating that which he would rather abolish and prohibit. I cannot hope that any words of mine can influence a course which commends itself to those who act, I must assume, on deliberate judgment; but I would fain hope that at a real crisis we may stand shoulder to shoulder against what discredits us all equally, and not spend ourselves in vain and idle recriminations.

What is it that constitutes "personal identity"? is a question that rather presses on Spiritualists. Does each man continue through his whole existence the same thinking being? Bishop Butler in his dissertation on this subject points out that the question is ambiguous. *Person* or *substance* may include the material elements of the physical body, and, as these are constantly changing, the question whether a man is, in this sense, the same that he was seven years ago, must be answered in the negative. Again, *sameness* is used in two senses. Properly it applies to a single object, which we affirm to be not another. In a looser sense it is applied to objects which are very much alike (as when we say that one house is built of the *same* materials as another). The strict use of *same* does not involve *similarity* (as when we say of a man that he is the same person, but greatly altered). The looser use does involve that notion. It is this loose use of *same* that perplexes the question which, put directly, is, Does each man continue the *same* or does he become *another*?

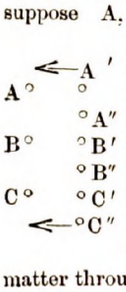
That question answers itself. But go a step further. Does he remain the same after physical death? This is greatly a question of evidence, and, to appreciate its exact value, it is necessary to ask—*What constitutes this sameness?* Clearly *not* the body; that is always changing. Not consciousness (as Locke seems to have held), for consciousness of identity may be lost in disease, and yet the man is the same person. The comparison of two or more acts of consciousness of one's self gives the idea of identity, yet this does not *make* the identity which is prior to it, nor is this consciousness essentially necessary to the idea of identity. Nor, again, is personal identity an identity of material qualities or properties. A body is the same though all its material particles have been changed. Our conviction of personal identity is, as Butler seems to put it, *instinctive and intuitive*. The identity is of the conscious substance or thinking being, that part which, we hold, survives physical death. Now, is it possible for that part which is conditioned in a totally different way after death to prove its identity to us, being what we are? And, if so, what evidence ought to be held sufficient and conclusive? That is what I want to know.

Again, what even in this life is our intelligence? Is it so sure that we are that very simple thing we seem to be? A very slight knowledge of the physical economy of our being leads to a bewildering conception of its mingled complexity and simplicity. But the phenomena of consciousness, individuality, personality, identity, when seriously contemplated, are infinitely more perplexing. What constitutes the identity of any human being, I ask again, and how is that identity demonstrable? In the light of this consideration, the subjoined speculations of a friend seem worth thinking of, though, probably, neither new nor pretending to anything more than a suggestive provocation of thought. "The molecular hypothesis of matter is that all matter consists ultimately (or penultimately) of molecules, composed of two or more atoms, these atoms probably moving with respect to each other as atoms, and the molecules certainly moving with respect to each other as molecules. This movement implies the notion of space between the molecules, and so-called physical porosity is part of the theory. Now these spaces between the molecules are invisible to us, simply because our eyes are not suited to see them,—a pair of eyes that could magnify things sufficiently to enable them to see between these molecules would have a totally different conception of a human being; he would be an enormous engine all whose parts were moving;—but let us imagine these eyes to be still more powerful so that the spaces between the molecules were enormously increased, the

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perception would then be of systems of movement, analagous, it may be, to our solar system. Intelligent beings occupying smaller spaces than the intermolecular distances could pass between these molecules as easily as our earth passes between the sun and Mars; an infinity of intelligences may thus be pouring through us at one time, the intelligence of which we are conscious being, perhaps, only the resultant intelligence of all the other intelligences; and we in our turn, perhaps in our own solar system, may be part of another intelligence to whom the interplanetary spaces are what the intermolecular spaces are to us."

Another speculation. That which my friend sets forth as deducible from the molecular hypothesis of matter throws (as I propounded long ago) some light on that obscure phenomenon known to us as the passage of matter through matter. The case may be put thus:—"If a so-called solid meet another so-called solid the molecules appear to strike each other, though that that is not always the case is clear from the experiments on metals made with Whitworth's planing machines, when two surfaces having been planed to an exceedingly high degree of smoothness, *adhered* so that some of the molecules of the one plane must have passed *in among* the molecules of the other, shewing that this passage is possible. Now, suppose A, B, C to be three molecules, A′, B′, C′, three other molecules approaching them, the attractions between the molecules would, under ordinary circumstances, be such that A′, B′, C′ would hit A, B, C, and the ordinary contact-blow would be experienced—but now let *some force* capable of pulling A′ to A″, B′ to B″, and C′ to C″ be impressed on these molecules. If, then, A′, B′, C′ were made to approach A, B, C, they would pass between them, and the passage of matter through matter would take place. This would seem to have been done in the planing experiment mentioned above; but other intelligences, having greater power of vision, may know how to make this deflection more easily. Hence, the phenomenon so frequently observed when invisible intelligences, acting from a plane of knowledge with which we are unacquainted, manifest their power over matter—that roughly described as the 'passage of matter through matter.'"



The extraordinary deliverance of the *Pall Mall* on the dangers of Psychical Research draws forth criticism from various sources. Among other critics is one "Gilbert Venables," who points out that "to find an enlightened and philosophic writer inveighing against the danger of free inquiry, should excite our special wonder." And then he, in his turn, goes on to excite our special merriment by quoting some anonymous German philosopher who "has truly remarked that 'when men cease to believe in God, they begin to believe in ghosts!'" So, then, to the pious Christian there are no ghosts, "neither angel nor spirit." It is reserved to the Huxleys, and Tyndalls, and the *omne genus* of agnostic materialism to "give these airy nothings a local habitation and a name," and to inform us of the genesis and habitat of spirit! Surely there must be a devil, if only that he may inspire otherwise sane men to talk such utter rubbish when they try to deal with Spiritualism. The close of this amusing letter is too good to be lost:—

"In the present day, the belief in what I may call a 'supernatural' God has very much gone out, and materialists have to be on their guard against a revived belief in ghosts. We must not expect a resuscitation of the mediæval miracle or witch, for such things were superstitious excrescences of belief in God and Devil. Things will be adapted to a highly scientific and rational age. We shall have the jargon of science and the vocabulary of pure reason, mixed with beliefs acceptable to nothing but the blindest credulity. Already the process is far advanced. The day before yesterday, it was mesmerism, electro-biology, and clairvoyance. Yesterday, it was Spiritualism. To-day, we have the divining-rod and psychical research. Before the end of this nineteenth century, there is a fair chance that we shall have arrived at downright witchcraft, managed, of course, not by aid of the Devil, but by subtle and obscure powers of psychic magnetism, resident in old women and black cats. The cry of alarmed materialism is not raised a moment too soon."

Yesterday, we are to observe, it was Spiritualism! To-day and to-morrow, old women and black cats—and a certain Mr. Gilbert Venables. M.A. (Oxon.)

E. W. Wallis's Appointments.—Belper: November 5th. Cardiff: November 12th. Falmouth: November 17th.

FAR SIGHT AND FORE SIGHT.

Fragments from Zollner and Fechner.

The perusal of Fechner's "Life after Death" led me to look up some unpublished parts of my translation of Zöllner's "Transcendentale Physik," which I remembered to have reference to Fechner's speculations. The following fragments may interest the readers of "Light":—

"Fechner in his third volume* discusses in detail the "Relations of the Spirits of the other world to the higher Spirits and to each other" (p. 44), and then (pp. 79-82) gives circumstantial reports from Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell."

Then the so-called *Far-Seeing* (Clairvoyance) of somnambulists is treated of; and Fechner himself remarks here (p. 95) as follows:—

"As far-sight, so also fore-sight, seems sometimes abnormally to overstep the boundary of the other world into this, so far as credit is given to what is related of presentiments, prophetic dreams, and the prevision of clairvoyant somnambulists. The connection of far-sight with fore-sight, which, according to the above, is incident to the other world, is found also in these phenomena of this world, which can be related therewith . . . . Here is an example, how the faculty of foresight is conceived by a somnambulist himself.

"The above-mentioned Richard Görwitz† said of a new-born child, whose birth he had made known from a distance, that in twenty-three years its fate would take a very serious turn.

"Question: What do you mean by fate, Richard?

"Answer: It is the consequence of the past. The least thing, happening even before our birth, has a consequence *for* and a relation *to* us—a consequence which is always widening, and at last will be, or is, *fate*. You know the fate, but cannot trace it back, as I can, and you think now it is *accident*. But that it is not. For the foundation of what you now suffer or enjoy has long been laid. As a flower, as a tree, grows from the smallest seed that we scarcely discern, so grows the fate of man from the deepest concealment, from the bosom of necessity. For all that happens there are sufficient causes. No accident! And when I, in my present (magnetic) condition, see into the future, I see the continuing causes *all at once*, and the *spirit of fate* stands before me! *Only you* call it *fore-seeing;* it is seen, however, not at all in the future, but it is *already now*.

"At p. 135 Richard says: 'The future is a quite peculiar light!'

"Question: What does that mean?

"Answer: It is clear and also not clear; dark and also not dark. It cannot be expressed in your words. The human eye—the spiritual—cannot bear this light.

"Question: Whereby, then, knowest thou the future?

"Answer: *That which comes to pass flows towards me like an ether* in clear perception (Wissen), like a spiritually audible tone.‡

"I may here remark," says Zöllner, "that the above-described 'clairvoyance' admits of a very simple explanation according to analogy of the extended space intuition through the fourth dimension. Just as by rising in the direction of the third dimension our bodily eye with increasing elevation overlooks *more* objects on the surface of the earth (the two dimensional space), so that an observer in a balloon can announce the advent of a railway train to a given spot at a given time to a man standing below much sooner than the latter is aware of it; in like manner for the spiritual eye of the soul, when it rises to the fourth dimension, is widened the three dimensional field of our intuition of space. With increasing elevation of the soul, corporeal things must become transparent for it in a continually greater interval, and it would be even possible to ascertain a measure for the amount of elevation in the fourth dimension, could *measurable* observations be taken of the increasing far-sight, radially in all three dimensions, of a clairvoyant somnambulist gradually put into the magnetic sleep." C. C. M.

* "Zendavesta, or Concerning the things of Heaven and the other world (Jenseits) from the stand-point of Nature." By Gustav Theodore Fechner. Leipzic: Leopold Voss. 1851.

† Fechner quotes here from a book, cited by him at p. 88 in "Zendavesta," entitled "Ideo-Somnambulism or Spontaneous (*natürlich*) Magnetic Sleep of Richard von Dr. Görwitz." Leipzic, 1851.

‡ It is possible that the reader may not be much the wiser for this explanation, emphasised as it is in Zöllner's text. But we may perhaps consider the intuitional presentation of what to us is the future as not less suggestive of a *second dimension of time* than are clairvoyant and other phenomena of a fourth dimension of space.—Translator.

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ON SOME THEOSOPHIC DOCTRINES.

"SHELLS," AND "CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY."

By the Hon. Roden Noel.

(*Continued from page* 480.)

II.

I will conclude by noticing an interpretation of this doctrine of shells, or "elementaries," which I have heard from an able Western exponent of Occultism, and which seems to me far more plausible than that of the writer of the "Fragments," though I shall give reasons for rejecting it. The occult philosophy, as expounded in these papers and elsewhere, appears to assume the real existence of matter—unless, indeed, our vulgar conception of it is merely substituted provisionally in argument for the conception of it as Maya, Illusion, the Hyle, Not-being of Plato and Aristotle.* Thus we are told that these elementaries pick up notions with which to deceive us in their impersonations out of the astral light. Now I do not believe a candid person can read Eliphas Levi or Madame Blavatsky without the irresistible impression that they regard the astral light, *Akasa*, or ether, as *out there*, together with grosser matter, apart from any personal centre of consciousness whatsoever. But I, as good idealist, believe that there can be no pictures either in gross or subtle matter apart from our, or some other personal spirit's perception of them; that such pictures can only be in some personal consciousness. And nearly all competent Western thinkers would agree with me. The Theosophist in question agrees with me also on this head; but he contends that the pictures in the astral light may be memories in the world-soul, and that the elementaries are a temporary aggregate of the cell-souls, whose cell-bodies made up our organism on earth, still saturated with our influence for awhile, but tending to disintegrate.

Now there is no possibility to my mind that such an aggregate of souls could display the unity, and identity, and humanity of consciousness which, with whatever limitations, they admittedly do display, however all might be influenced by us. These innumerable, diverse, and lowly-organised cell-souls, whatever they may be, must be incapable, even now with us, and much more hereafter without us, of displaying any such self-identical unity of human consciousness as may simulate a deceased man. Either, moreover, they must separate after our departure, or they must remain in organic relation with us, or they must be dominated by some other greater Spirit as they were before. But, then, as to these astral pictures in which all events are supposed to be represented—so as to furnish information for the supposed elementaries; are they memories in the world-soul? Now, in such occultist books as I have read, by the world-soul appears to be meant a kind of unconscious principle of life—(see Cudworth, for instance)—and this I hold that a sound idealist philosophy must decidedly reject. But, if by world-soul be meant a superior world-spirit, in whom we and other creatures of the earth are, then I, too, believe in him. Well, a memory in him involves two factors, (1) the self-identical Spirit remembering, and (2) the self-identical person or object remembered acting upon him, consciously or otherwise, to produce such remembrance. That this holds good in all memory I have done my best to prove in my "Philosophy of Immortality." And because, however clear what a man believes to be the truth may seem to himself, he cannot help feeling some diffidence in holding and declaring it, if he has neither received it from any external human source, nor has succeeded in producing the same conviction in other minds, I have welcomed warmly a clear statement of the same view, which I have just read in the translation of an admirable work by Professor Fechner, entitled "Life after Death," reviewed in "LIGHT" by "C. C. M.," who points out the identity of my own and Fechner's belief in this respect.* But if we are right, then the memory of the world-soul, into which these pictures in astral light resolve themselves, involves the continued existence of the person, who, according to this theory of elementaries, has really perished. And at any rate it involves the personal identity of the Spirit, or Spirits who remember. The vibrations in ether connected with our thought-life, being phenomena, involve other thought-lives; in so far as they do not belong to our own Spirits, they belong to other Spirits; they always must belong to *some* personal identity, or they would be nothing at all. So that we must have *some* Ego behind these memories of the world-soul, which is exactly what this theory of "*Shells*" denies. No "memory" without a rememberer.

My conclusion, therefore, is that the intelligences manifesting themselves at séances are either the real persons they pretend to be, or other Spirits personating them. That is the common Spiritualist view, and I assent to it. It is, however, very possible that these Spirits get a good deal of their information by thought-reading and otherwise, being very rarely the persons they pretend to be; also that they may be comparatively unintelligent and lethargic till they come in contact with the medium and sitters; or, on the other hand, they may be numbed and dazed, and forced to drink Lethe by coming back into our sphere, which does not belong to them. With the theory that these phenomena are due to the medium in a subdivided condition I have dealt in my book. But I, of course, am ready to accept what we are told by occultists about the power of adepts voluntarily to work marvels.

It is maintained by these teachers that some can attain to the height of spirituality, become one with the Spirit, who as a rule only "overshadows" us—or keeps away from us altogether in a large proportion of instances. Now is not the previous course of the life and experience of such favoured persons necessary to the attainment of this consummation? If not, what purpose does it serve? And it is admitted that the persons (or beings, if you like) who attain the end are identical with, however different from, the persons who in their earlier career were merely animal, and psychical. But if so, it is perfectly obvious that the Spirit with whom they succeed in being *atoned* must have been implicitly one with them from the very first. They must have *always been* implicitly what they afterwards *become* explicitly. Else there could be none of this admitted identity between the unconverted natural, and the converted spiritual man, and no *process* of conversion or elevation would have taken place; there would simply have been *the substitution* of one being for another person, which would not, of course, concern the first at all; but that is not what is contended, I presume? In such cases, therefore, at all events it *must* be incorrect to speak of "overshadowing" as the part the Spirit has to play in human development, even at any stage thereof. The Spirit, on the contrary, must be the man himself, or the spiritual man would not be able to identify himself with the natural and unconverted man, as he does, nor would he be conscious of any change in himself, as he is. Clearly nothing can *become* totally different from what it essentially is. And what may avail *to bring about* the changes in it except its own idea, or essential self not yet perfectly manifested, though implicit in the very earliest germ, or commencement of its time-life? If, indeed, the Spirit were, as this school sometimes alleges, *unconscious*, then there were no possible connection between man and it, because the unconscious can never become conscious, nor the conscious unconscious, seeing there is absolute contradiction, and no imaginable identity, between these

* Yet surely the writer of these "Fragments" is a very decided, one might say very gross, materialist; hear him—"*the Spirit*, of course, for all its *comparative* ethereality and noncorporeality, *a space-occupying and material entity*, is borne about by magnetic currents, swayed here and there like dead leaves" (!!!); and again: "Thought, memory, and will are the energies of the brain." Have Büchner or Moleschott ever said anything more crassly materialistic? (*Theosophist*, September, 1882. "Fragments," No. III.) A Theosophist in the same number tells us that "Space, Motion, and Duration are the Trinitarian Essence, which Deists call God, but Occultists the One Element, Spirit-matter, or Matter-spirit." Is this strange hodge-podge of ideas philosophy at all? Nevertheless, in the last instalment of the "Fragments" there is much profitable wisdom about occult lore, that it behoves all to read and ponder—though we are not bound to accept the *System of Doctrine* in its entirety here—and enough solemn warning about the possible dangers of mediumship and Spirit-circles to make us pause and beware. The claim to long and peculiar *experience* in these recondite regions must be, of course, admitted with due respect. Later I hope to speak of Theosophic teaching as regards "elementals," which seems crude. The forces of nature are just taken and animated. This is the old animism, or fetishism. There is no hint that occultists are aware of these forces being mere *phenomena*, so appearing because of the peculiar constitution of human faculties, but not at all thus in themselves. No doubt the active powers in nature reveal spiritual agents, for all agents must be spiritual, but these "elementals" are not at all the forces of nature *as they appear to us*, electricity, galvanism, heat, mechanical energy, and the like. These are but our generalisations from phenomena, which are principally subjective; they are not real entities outside us. Here again occult philosophy proclaims itself rather infantine and crude, for all its overweening pretensions to exclusive esoteric knowledge.

* This coincidence in advocating what seems an "original" view on the part of minds absolutely without mutual communication rather confirms that other (not novel) doctrine also common to Professor Fechner and myself, as to our existence in, and communion with, higher Spirits—though he does not state the *doctrine of perception* as it has been given me to see it. This comes near the question debated recently in "LIGHT" as to whether poets are inspired or not by other Spirits. My view would be midway between that of Mr. G. Barlow and that of most Spiritualists. Mr. Barlow claims all for himself, and the latter refer all to somebody else. But even parrots have some part of their own in the words they learn to repeat by rote. The truth is you cannot penetrate to the depths of your own spirit without being there in close communion with the great hierarchy of Spirits, between whom, thank God! there is solidarity. It is only at the surface of a soul that it is alone, and living for itself, with no need of assistance, or desire for it. The most original and profoundest men care least to contend for absolute originality. Their intuitions and sympathies are too universal. But no man can truly receive and assimilate great inspirations, whose own spirit is not great enough to have taken some part in their very formation, and to have responded with kindred tone to the note struck elsewhere. When Mr. Barlow claims inspiration from Nature, he claims it indeed from God and other Spirits. But some are subject to the influence of living genius even more than to that of the dead, though they may not know it. By the way, when Mr. Barlow spoke lightly of "women-singers," methinks he might have remembered Mrs. Browning, and Sappho.

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ideas; there is no potential self-identification possible between them; but out of potential self-identification in thought there is no true identity conceivable.

Moreover, who shall distinguish so absolutely between the evil and the good, the fool and the wise? Must we not be evil in order to be good, and fools in order to be wise? Is the worst man without any spark of goodness? Is the fool without any gleam of wisdom? Is the good man without any shade of defilement, or the wise man without any lapses into folly? Such a Primitive, or occultist Calvinism does not commend itself to me as having more to say for itself than the Calvinism of Christian theology. Here is a man with a great deal that is good and clever about him; yet we are assured the Spirit does not even "overshadow" him, and he is destined to perish utterly. *How he ever got to be, and how he manages to hang together now*, we are not told! But an additional difficulty is that he has so much in him, which in a second man is ascribed by these teachers to an overshadowing by, or union with the Spirit; the second man has only rather a higher (or, if you will, a much higher) degree of the same qualities. If his qualities be totally different in kind, then he is not human at all; we have mistaken his genus; we have nothing to do with him; and then he is not the being at all who was developed out of a lower stage of life. So what was he improved for? except we are all mere shadows in a shadow-pantomime, one a little bigger for the *Karma* of the other, and the biggest dropping off into the Nothing at last. The man may be improved; he may even have certain faculties and abilities added to him; but if it is still *himself* we are speaking about, then the essence of him is not completely altered, only developed, only in the flower instead of in the seed. However different, the seed and flower are one. Without intuition not the simplest act of thought can occur. And without the faculties and experience supposed by Occultism left behind in the case of the most highly illuminated, such illumination is impossible. For universal consciousness there must be particular consciousness—however transformed; there must be, if not memory, then the sublimation of memory—self-identification with our own past, and with all. But if our past be left out, we are, so far, imperfect and truncated. There is perfecting, enlarging and intensifying personalty, not extinguishing it. In this life, if a man remembers, and thinks, and desires with his astral body, and "intues," or exercises some undefined spiritual functions with his spirit, he must be most uncomfortably mixed up indeed!—two Egos, or selves, have to lend each other's functions to one another! Transubstantiation is simplicity itself to such an amorphous conception! And then, when they part company, these two? Occultists evidently conceive of many distinct entities, which give each other a *rendezvous* to form what they funnily call "a human combination," some of which entities are perishable, and some eternal. Thus the Spirit, though totally distinct from a person, can be added to him, or not, as the case may be, and his immortality is secured if such an addition be made, not otherwise. But really! how could you make a perishable article imperishable by glueing, or cementing on to it an imperishable foreign body? And how incorporate one with the other? Put such very new wine into such very old bottles! Or again, how hocus-pocus the mortal into the immortal? The self-identifying *unity* of the Ego or self, amid diverse successive experiences, seems a conception absolutely unknown to Occultism, though it be the very *pons asinorum* of Western philosophy. Nay, Occultism tells us, just as Spiritualists tell us, of an inner or astral *body*, an *aura*, a *perisprit*, that thinks and remembers, is stored with impressions and memories. But this materialistic conception, as I have shewn in my "Philosophy of Immortality," is really quite as crass and absurd as the attribution of such functions to the outer body and brain by the more ordinary kind of physiological materialist. It is I who remember, I who desire, I who reason, I who love, I who work miracles, have visions, intuitions, trances. It is not one of me who does some of these things, and another of me who does the others. For many of these acts that I do involve and imply that the same I is doing others of them at the same moment.*

The astral, or any possible *body* can only be a conception of some one, or many self-identical and self-identifying Egos, or persons, that is, conscious, perceiving, remembering, comparing, judging, classifying, reasoning selves, or foci of self-identifying continuous experience. The "astral body" is *a complex conception of ours, or yours, or someone's*, quite as much as the physical external body is. And, therefore, Occultism must be totally wrong in attributing thought and memory *to it*, still more in maintaining that *on it depends* the sense of self, or personality, the Ego—because, on the contrary, *it* would be impossible *without* an Ego or conscious self to *constitute* it in thought. One strong argument for our immortality (which applies to the "*bad*" as well as to the "*good*") is that this body, every possible body, and every external object of perception or thought, are *phenomena*, that is, *appearances* to us; and therefore *their* dissolution, or *passing away* into *a different form of phenomenon*, cannot be supposed to affect *us*, the part-originators, by the constitution of our thinking faculty, of such phenomena; we are what is termed in Western philosophy *noumena*, the *reals*, while these are but *phenomena*, or *appearances* to us. I do not deny that these phenomena have other bases also, but these, as I have proved elsewhere, must also be of the same spiritual nature as ourselves, personalities.

At what point of development precisely does the mortal become immortal? For this is indeed a gigantic stride for a person to make in a second of time! *Credat Judæus.* This "Conditional Immortality," whether enounced by the aristocratic arrogance, and Pharisaism of Western theology, Eastern Theosophy, or Academic culture [for Goethe told Eckermann that only well-cultured people were immortal], appears to me equally repulsive and absurd. But I cannot wonder that a religion of self-sufficiency, isolation, and contempt, whose end would seem to be the attainment of abnormal personal power, felicity, or extinction, "varying from the kindly race of men," and "passing beyond the goal of ordinance" should be so bitter as it shews itself in accredited organs against the universal religion of Jesus Christ, which is one of service, a Gospel for the weak, the oppressed, the despised, for little children, for humble men and women, for the ignorant, suffering, and poor, holding out to such as these a most powerful helping hand of Divine hope and consolation. But this system is quite as devoid of all strength and consolation for man as is the materialism of the West. For it promises one sort of annihilation after long periods of suffering to the majority, and only another sort of annihilation to the favoured few, who by ages of self-torture and self-repression, by mortification of all desire and affection, even the purest and most innocent, shall have succeeded in becoming absorbed into the Spirit, which is "Parabrahm, Unconsciousness," into "Nirvana," which is extinction. (See the editor's note to the article on Adwaita Philosophy, and the article Nirvana, by the High Priest of Adam's Peak, Ceylon, in the September number of the *Theosophist*.) Some may prefer the prospect of that speedier and more painless annihilation promised us by scientific materialism. It would be sooner over. But between such an atheistic system, and even the most mystical, enlightened form of Christianity there can, of course, be no compromise possible.

The Spirit, we are told in "Isis Unveiled" and elsewhere, does not "overshadow" the child under seven years of age. One can but reply, though it may scarcely sound civil (yet remember the babies cannot take up the cudgels for themselves), in the words of Laertes to another mystagogue, who was speaking lightly of Ophelia, "*I tell thee, churlish priest! a ministering angel shall my sister be, when thou liest howling!*" And, again, with Wordsworth, I answer, "Heaven lies about us in our infancy"; or, appealing to a greater Authority than either of these, I say, "Except ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." The fact is that about the age of seven a child too often begins to *lose* his more manifest divinity. But we Christians, believing God to be the Omnipotent Love, hold also that He can desert neither the very lowliest, nor the very wickedest of His creatures, and that "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance"—hold that the Good Shepherd came, and is ever coming to seek and to save the lost sheep.

(To be continued.)

* A man, I must insist, is not a puddingstone, a conglomerate of qualities juxtaposed, and external to one another. Even chemical combination, and vital union, are far from being this; but a man is more like a mathematical point, wherein the qualities interpenetrate, and whence they radiate. You can more easily sever, and *yet keep alive* flesh and blood than sever these, and yet retain them in separation. Therefore, there can be no elementaries or shells.

Mr. J. J. Morse's Appointments.—Cardiff: Sunday, November 5th, Assembly Rooms; morning at 11, evening at 6.30. London: Sunday, November 12th. 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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TEACHINGS OF "THE PERFECT WAY."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As an admirer of "The Perfect Way," though not a disciple of its teachings, will you allow me to say a few words? Having understood that the writers of this remarkable book said in their lectures that St. Paul was in the *astral*, a state they much condemn, I am somewhat surprised to read in their letter of the 23rd September, a quotation from this Apostle. Now that they have taken St. Paul's words in defence, I would ask what answer they can give to the following, which is not at all in harmony with the teachings of their book :—

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared as with a hot iron ; forbidding to marry, and *commanding to abstain from meats*, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.—*St. Paul to Timothy*, 1 Ep. iv. 1-4.

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities."—*St. Paul to Timothy*, v. 23.

I believe St. Paul to have been a true servant of Jesus Christ, and a receiver of the esoteric mysteries. There are no higher teachings to my mind than those of Jesus Christ, and until a gospel is preached or revealed from the lips of a living Spirit upon this earth who is able to *move amongst men*, and perform the same miracles as our Saviour, I prefer to accept the Gospels as they are now. But I desire to seek the highest truth, and follow the purest life to attain it.

There is no direct evidence amongst the various races or sects of the earth that abstinence from flesh elevates the moral character or ennobles the life generally, though it may be the case in exceptional instances. Travellers testify that some abstainers from flesh are often addicted to the most degrading vices. Wherever Christianity has spread—the religion destined to fill the whole world—though accompanied often with bloodshed, it has carried with it a higher tone of life and morality, and at the same time *ennobled woman*. This, certainly, has not been done through abstinence from flesh. If, in eating flesh, we rebel against God, how is it that He has showered His love upon this favoured nation? Like the Israelites of old, wherever we go we conquer, and to this day the English are the beloved and honoured of the earth.

The Gospels teach us that it matters not what we eat or what we drink, so long as we are temperate, keep our bodies in subjection, and do all to the glory of God.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully, R. J. S.

Croydon, October 25th, 1882.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have not read this book, but judging from your columns I should imagine that it contains some startling doctrines and is being pretty well advertised.

Mr. Tommy, who speaks of it as "that wonderful book," gives in your last issue an insight into its teachings. I quote his words :—

"One of these teachings is the doctrine of the annihilation of the greater portion of the human race, it being distinctly taught that 'few shall be saved from that fate.'"

Certainly if this is a specimen of the contents of "The Perfect Way," Mr. Tommy may well call it "a wonderful book." With all respect to the authors, their ability, and their good motives, I boldly assert that if this is a correct indication of its teachings it is not worth the paper it is written on. Anything more opposed to twenty years of Spirit revelations, in all parts of the world, I have never heard. I do not believe such a doctrine for a moment—at least not upon the *ipse dixit* of anonymous writers. It is said that in the book it is "distinctly taught that few shall be saved from that fate." I ask, by whom is it "distinctly taught"—where and when? If it is "distinctly taught" by the authors of the "The Perfect Way" it is worth no more than their individual and unsupported opinion. Do they give any proof of their teachings? If not, of what value are they? All our notions of Divine justice and mercy, all the experience of the highest and purest of Spirits from the other world, are distinctly opposed to such doctrines, and for writers to launch fresh doctrines upon the world, for which they have not a shadow of proof, but which they give forth with all the assumed weight of a Divine revelation, is, to my mind, pernicious in the extreme. No man has the right to unsettle the minds of others by starting vague and baseless theories for which he can give no proof. Perhaps the authors of "The Perfect Way" may claim to have received their credentials from high and pure Spirits, and as likely as not they may be the dupes of Spirits who, like themselves, love to nurse speculative fancies and are attracted to those who cherish similar proclivities, and love to pose before the world as the apostles of something which is more novel and startling than true.

The wildest, most extravagant, and most monstrous doctrines have been taught, and will continue to be taught, by Spirits with morbid tendencies of mind, if they can find a sufficiently credulous circle of listeners to accept their teachings. We are told to judge of the value of all Spirit teachings upon their merits, as they appeal to our sense of right, and not bow down to any authority whatever professing to have the seal of Spirit affixed to it. Who are the Spirits, and what are their credentials? They may have good intentions and yet be no more competent to be leaders of men and teachers of new truths than any man in Bedlam who broods over his crazy fancies. For these reasons I reject *in toto* the doctrines taught by the writers of "The Perfect Way," if Mr. Tommy's extract is a specimen, unless and until they produce their credentials ; and even if they can prove that they have obtained these as a revelation to a specially select circle of pure-minded Spiritualists, I should not attach the slightest importance to them unless they were confirmed spontaneously by equally high revelations through other mediums.

What is wanted in order to obtain truth is that the minds of the investigators should be perfectly unbiassed. Given a small knot of Spiritualists, one of whom has a craze, and who succeeds in impressing the others with his views, and let these people sit for Spirit communion, and I venture to think they will get Spirit messages without number in support of their wildest theories. Everyone who has had much experience of Spiritualism must know that this is so. A circle of believers in Re-Incarnation will get nothing but communications favouring their own pet ideas, and so will believers in the doctrines of "correspondence." I have seen this again and again. Every communication is tinged and warped by the mental bias of the sitters; and such persons, instead of being the fit recipients of a new Divine revelation to mankind, are, in my humble opinion, the last persons I should trust for the truth.

THE AUTHOR OF "LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE."

October 30th, 1882.

A NUT FOR THE MATERIALIST.

About fifty years ago, Mr. D. P. Parker, of Boston, U.S. —the father of a friend of mine—was the owner of a brig named the John Gilpin, which sailed for the West Indies.

A short time after her departure he dreamed that the vessel went on shore on a bright moon-lit night. The next morning he took note of the circumstance, and chaffed the underwriters on the prospect of their being required to pay the amount of his loss. They laughed heartily when he mentioned his authority for thinking that the vessel was wrecked ; but about four weeks after the date of the dream the mate of the John Gilpin entered Mr. Parker's office and announced the loss of the vessel, off the island of Abico, which disaster happened through the drunkenness of the captain precisely in the manner and at the time represented in the dream.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

The C.A.S. will hold its first conversazione for the coming season on Monday evening next at 38, Great Russell-street. We believe that an excellent programme has been arranged, and it is confidently hoped that there will be a large attendance. The proceedings will commence at half-past six.

MEDICAL CLAIRVOYANCE.—A correspondent sends us some interesting particulars respecting Mr. Edward Gallagher, of Greenfields Villa, Broomfield-road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, whom he describes as a highly-gifted normal seer, and by far the most reliable one that he has met with during more than eleven years of exceptionably favoured and successful personal experience. The seer is descended from a family who have possessed the "second sight" and prophetic faculty for ten generations past. He may be about fifty years of age, and has used the clairvoyant gift from the time when he was five years old, and has recently given up all other sources of income to devote his time to the cure of the afflicted. He clairvoyantly sees the ailments of his patients, and is able to suggest efficient remedies. He is perfectly normal in all conditions of his seership, and has given abundant proofs of his seeing persons, places and events, thousands of miles away, and of his ability to foresee events with great accuracy long before their literal fulfilment.

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TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained direct from our Office, and also of E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

"INSPIRATION" AND "POSSESSION."

In the article last week on "Poetry and Inspiration," space was wanting for the completion of the remarks on the common confusion between inspiration and insanity, or an example could have been given in a passage from Plato's "Phædrus," of which the last sentence is often quoted. The fact is perceived that a poet must be above his ordinary self, but it is not seen that such elevation of soul, when in complete equipoise of moral as well as of intellectual perception, must be the highest sanity, true soundness or health (wholeness) of mind; a perfect self-possession diametrically opposed to in-sanity, which is the loss of self-control, a defect, and not an excess, of power. In the old translation ("madness" being equivalent probably to "inspiration") we have the statement that "the greatest blessings we have spring from madness, when granted by divine bounty. For the prophetess at Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona have, when mad, done many and noble services for Greece, both publicly and privately, but in their sober senses little or nothing. By so much did the ancients testify that madness is more noble than sound sense, that which proceeds from God than that which proceeds from man. There is a third possession and madness proceeding from the Muses, which—seizing upon a tender and chaste soul, and rousing and inspiring it to the composition of odes and other species of poetry, by adorning the countless deeds of antiquity—instructs posterity. But he who, without madness of the Muses approaches the gates of poesy under the persuasion that by means of art he can become an efficient poet, both himself fails in his purpose, and his poetry, being that of a sane man, is thrown into the shade by the poetry of such as are mad."

There is, indeed, a very marked difference between the "mania" or "mantis" of Plato, and the "possession" by Spirits, or necromancy, characteristic of heathen worship, and forbidden to the worshippers of the one true God. But yet there is no real difference in kind. It is only a difference in degree. As is well shewn by Professor Robertson Smith ("Lectures on the Old Testament"), there is a positive difference in kind in the inspiration, or gift of prophecy, which is an orderly growth under the New Dispensation. Here, as St. Paul points out to the Corinthian Church, "The Spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace." The same thing is admirably put in practical form in a recent address by the Bishop of Exeter on "Good Manners," which he takes in its earliest connection with "Good Morals." His thoughts bear so distinctly on topics now under discussion in the pages of "LIGHT" that the passage must be of interest:—

"Self-control is essential to the dignity of humanity. The moment you have sacrificed this dignity you have descended to a distinctly lower level, you have surrendered for the time the Reason which distinguishes man from the brutes, and which is intended to be always supreme over a man's conduct. A man is never allowed, even on the very greatest occasions, to lose his self-control if he is to be worthy the name of a man. What can be a more striking instance of it than what St. Paul says of those who are inspired? You will remember—speaking even of inspiration, speaking even of prophets, of those who are moved by heavenly impulse, even of them—he does not hesitate to say, 'The Spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.' He won't recognise, he won't allow the Christian Church to recognise, that there is any such thing as a man being carried away from himself. It is inconsistent with the dignity of the Christian position; the man must not be carried away out of self-control, but even in the highest fervour of devotion he is still bound to be, in honour of his Master, fully in control of all that he says and of all that he does."

This may, at first sight, seem to be opposed to the idea of the "non-self-consciousness of the highest thought or emotion." But it is not so. This "skilled use" of the mental and emotional faculties is, in reality, a matter of training, and the highest results involve previous discipline. Our finest poetry is given to us by minds cultivated to the highest point of perfection in the art of expression, even though the poem itself may be produced with an apparent absence of conscious effort. The poet who is at the mercy of any wandering influence that may choose to use his mind is not likely to be among the eternals. There is, for instance, a library of so-called "inspirational poetry." But it has not, as yet, taken its place in our national literature.

This power of rational non-self-consciousness may be taken as a true test to distinguish the facts of a real spiritual life from any merely "psychical" phenomena—"spiritism," mesmerism, and other abnormal developments—bearing a strong superficial likeness to these facts. "Inspirations," or "intuitions," quite inexplicable to their possessor, from want of adequate terms in which to describe them, do not in the least affect a man's self-possession. He is more, and not less, for having them, when they are the orderly result of spiritual growth; and, as such, they are different in kind from any "possession" by a power outside him, which reduces him, for the time, to a nonentity. In the true Spiritual order this extension of power co-exists with the harmonious response of the whole physical organism to a will made one with the Divine will, in that conscious self-surrender by which the man becomes, truly, a "fellow-worker with God." Like St. Paul or St. John he may rise to exalted states of experience for which he finds no adequate description; but he never ceases to be a free agent, set free with "the glorious liberty of the sons of God"; at home with the forces of nature, and reading her secrets with unerring instinct, because possessed of the mind of God. Thus the Bible is inevitably the Book of Nature, containing the sublimest poetry, because such poetry is the only adequate expression of man's spiritual perception of the facts of being, facts always embodied in external phenomena, "the invisible things being perceived through the things that are made"—truth revealed by parable and symbol.

Quite different from this true self-possession is the effect of "possession" by the spirit of another, whether in or out of the body. Here the organism becomes abnormally quiescent under the rule of a will outside the man, who is thus driven into irresponsible action, in which he has no real share, sinking into a slavery ever darker and more hopeless. Slavery is the only result of this sort of possession. And we may safely take the willingness thus to subjugate another as the very infallible mark of the Evil One. "All these things will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship *me*," is ever the voice of the tempter as opposed to the voice of the Saviour of men, whose promise is that of freedom: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—"free with the spirit of love and of a sound mind." And this "sound mind" will ever be found associated with the true saintliness, as contrasted with the false semblances of the morbid and ungoverned emotionalism so often mistaken for it.

The selfish and sensual Festus might indeed accuse his prisoner of the "madness" of "too much learning"; but his agreement with Agrippa that "this man hath done nothing worthy of bonds or death" shewed that he could not dispute St. Paul's protest: "I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness." True saintliness is the crown of a life of self-discipline, and the true spiritual gifts belong to self-mastery. The power of intuition before which all hearts are laid bare, the perception of distant scenes and even of the far-off future, is exercised in full consciousness of the act, even if the processes of the action elude analysis; and it co-exists with a sense of communion with the giver of the power, quite foreign to the mesmerised or narcotised priestess or sibyl of the heathen temple. The greatest saints and martyrs have ever been men and women of serenest self-composure. The early mystics—Tauler, Eckhardt, and others, and the great Swedish seer—were men of cultivated minds and disciplined judgment. John Wesley

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could give the minutest direction for the guidance of common life. The Quakers, who more than any other people live under the belief of a guiding spiritual presence, are of all others noted for success in all practical work. We do not find that the great reformers were crack-brained enthusiasts; for the power to rule others comes ever from the power of self-rule. Even of women distinguished for saintly influence this holds good. St. Theresa was rigidly stern in her discrimination between the delusions of hysterical over-excitement in her nuns and that ecstacy of silent prayer, in which she herself was lifted out of the region of self-conscious introspection, to come back to her arduous duties with added strength. And in the quiet steadfastness of the fuller's daughter of Sienna, before whom the crowned heads of Europe and even the Pope himself bent in submission, there was nothing of the mania of the Delphic priestess or the trance of the modern medium.

It is not here desired to question the existence of the "ministering angels," whose help is in the spiritual order as truly as that which we so gladly and gratefully accept from the friends who are still visibly with us. Nor is there any attempt to enter into the as yet unexplained phenomena lying outside the range of this super-conscious perception. What is intended is simply to claim for the Spirits still in the flesh their right to live, *here* and *now*, in *direct* contact with the spiritual world, as distinguished from the world of departed Spirits. It is the consequence of that "new birth," in which the Christian believes, that a man comes thus into possession of his real self—becoming aware of his royal birthright as a son of God—and rising out of the animal self with its relation only to things of sense, to rejoice in that eternal life which has bounds neither in space nor time. He thus trains his own faculties of higher perception to their highest uses, and does not need to reduce himself to be the mere mouthpiece of any other individual Spirit, in a subjection which, as is only too clearly shewn in the lives of so many "mediums," past and present, weakens, if it does not wholly destroy, the vigour of both the intellectual and the moral being.

A. E. R.

DEATH OF MR. THOS. E. JONES.

It is with much regret that we have to record the death of an old and devoted Spiritualist, whose adherence to the cause was all the more valuable on account of his being connected with the newspaper press—Mr. Thomas Edward Jones, editor of the *Tottenham Advertiser*. On the night of the 9th ult. the deceased was running to catch a tramcar at Edmonton, when he was tripped up by some projecting stones and fell, cutting his thumb severely, and on Tuesday morning, the 17th ult., he died of lockjaw. Mr. Jones was formerly editor of the *Ulverston Mirror*, and was the pioneer of Spiritualism in Ulverston, and to a great extent in the Furness district, and was one of those who are always ready to proclaim their principles, whether in public or private. He was at one time a frequent contributor to the Spiritualistic press, and was one of the great supporters of Mr. Tom Eves, a medium who is now never heard of, but who excited much attention in his day. The deceased had a rare generosity, geniality, and openness of disposition which endeared him to all with whom he became intimate, united with abilities, both literary and otherwise, which commanded for him additional respect. His death was universally mourned in the district with which he was connected, where he was not only highly esteemed, but also beloved; and the newspaper Press and various public Boards of the locality concurred in the expression of their regard for his character and their deep sense of the public loss sustained by his departure. The deceased was the publisher of a pamphlet called "Brevigraphy," an exposition of a system of abbreviated long-hand of considerable merit. Shortly before his death he brought out a small publication on chemical agriculture. He was also the inventor of the Challenge Gas Economiser, an apparatus which has proved a great success. He was only forty-one years of age at the time of his death.

THE DIRECTORS OF THE MANCHESTER ATHENÆUM have again distinguished themselves for bigotry and intolerance by refusing to let their hall for Mrs. Britten's lectures on Sunday afternoons and evenings. The sole reason given by the secretary was that they would not let the hall to "Spiritualists." Thus the only creed which gives a rational proof of a future life is thought unworthy of a hearing by those enlightened directors!

LIGHT SUSTENTATION FUND.

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions, and the very kind expressions of encouragement with which they have in almost every instance been accompanied. As the amount is at present insufficient, we respectfully, but urgently, ask for further help. Remittances should be sent to the Secretary of the Eclectic Publishing Company, Limited, 4, New Bridge-street, Ludgate-circus, E.C.; and our arrangements for the future will be greatly facilitated if the friends who purpose contributing will kindly do so AT ONCE!

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Rev. W. Miall	2	2	0
H. W.	2	2	0
R. Baikie, M.D.	2	0	0
"Amicus"	2	0	0
"Amicus" (second contribution)	2	0	0
Mrs. Hammerbom	2	0	0
Mrs. Gunyon	2	0	0
Geo. Wyld, M.D.	2	0	0
Irving Van Wart	2	0	0
Rev. E. T. Sale	2	0	0
John A. Rowe	2	0	0
F. L. G.	2	0	0
J. J. Bodmer...	1	10	0
F. Podmore	1	1	0
J. S. Crisp	1	1	0
Mrs. E. M. James	1	1	0
Miss F. J. Theobald...	1	1	0
"Sunflower"...	1	1	0
C. C. Pearson	1	1	0
Mrs. Arundale	1	1	0
Madame de Steiger	1	0	0
"A Friend"	1	0	0
Mrs. Woodd	1	0	0
H. George Hellier	1	0	0
Mrs. A. J. Penny	1	0	0
Mrs. Lawson Ford	1	0	0
Miss Isabella O. Ford	0	10	0

A CORRECTION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am sure Mr. J. Haynes will not be displeased with me for pointing out a misquotation which he has made in his letter on "Miss Wood's Mediumship."

He says:—

> "Convince a man against his will,
> He'll hold the same opinion still."

I submit that these words represent a mental condition which is impossible. A man cannot be "convinced" of his errors if he still adheres to them. The correct passage is in "Hudibras," Part III., Canto III., verses 547-550, and runs thus:—

> "He that complies against his will,
> Is of his own opinion still,
> Which he may adhere to, yet disown,
> For reasons to himself best known."

Yours, &c.,

London, October 30th, 1882. TRIDENT.

THE VIOLET VOLUNTEERS.—Yet another army of moral and social reformers, the Violet Volunteers being the last in the field. On the evening of October 23, the members of this association held their public inaugural meeting at Quebec Hall, under the presidency of Mr. F. Wilson, who at considerable length explained the principles the volunteers had formulated. He contended that "self-respectfulness" was the only sure foundation of moral and social progress, and that nearly all the evils in the world had been superinduced by poverty of spirit, meekness, and submission to unjust authority. After some discussion and explanation, resolutions embodying the principles fo the Volunteers were adopted.

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MEDIUMS AND MATERIALISATIONS.

Mrs. Frederica Showers writes:—Assuming myself to be "that other S." alluded to by your correspondent "S. W.," permit me through your columns to deprecate a little the credulity that is supposed to be a characteristic of the family of "S.'s," why or wherefore is not made clear to the readers of the contribution headed "Mediums and Materialisations," in your issue of the 21st ult. Notwithstanding the uncomplimentary character of his allusion, I am thankful to "S. W." for giving me the opportunity of stating openly that Spiritualists are gone rather too far in assuming, in my opinion, that the fact of materialisation has as yet been scientifically established. A very superficial survey of the Spiritualistic records of past years will unveil the fact that, though much was asserted, nothing was ever scientifically proven. For my part, but for that which I have witnessed in my own family, I would still be of the opinion that I expressed to Mr. Serjeant Cox in 1874, and which, fortunately for me now, Mr. Serjeant Cox was good enough to publish in the columns both of the *Medium* and of the *Spiritualist*, viz., that the so-called materialised form is but the medium entranced.

The admission, however, that a genuine materialisation has now and then taken place does not justify the acceptance of all the theories that are fortunately being debated, and which are so palpably evil that it is earnestly to be hoped they are only temporarily tolerated in the midst of the search for good, involving, as they do, either the advancement or the debasement of Spiritualism.

You will forgive me too, sir, I hope, for stating further my disbelief in the opinion current that our dead appear at séances and give material and substantial proofs of their existence. I have reason to believe that such proofs have been obtained under very solemn conditions, but I never accept an invitation to any séance of this nature, lest some investigator should put out his hand and grasp either the medium or a mask. A *contretemps* like this would not for a moment shake my belief in Spiritualism; on the contrary, it would, if anything, be confirmatory of some of its bewildering facts. I know some things that many of my friends do not, and I no longer confound the false with the true. As my spiritual education did not commence as some people are hoping to commence theirs, with sitting wearily at séances for materialisation, it did not, luckily, terminate there.

Should others ultimately come to think on these points as I do, should they be driven from the position that many are trying to maintain, to the effect that the dread barrier between the two existences has been utterly broken down, and that our dead friends can spend their evenings with us at séances, they will probably find that their great cause has not been in any way imperilled by abandoning a position which a further examination of the evidence vouchsafed them might shew they ought never to have held.

Though it is human and natural that we should ever fondly cherish the memory of our dead, yet it appears to me that a Spiritualist should have some motive higher than the gratification of his affections and instincts, and discerning that Spiritualism has demonstrated the fact of a communion both with holy and unhappy Spirits, feel as much satisfaction in finding this point placed beyond doubt as in a momentary glimpse of the departed.

I, too, commenced the investigation of Spiritualism in the hope of getting some tidings regarding a departed and beloved child. My heart, too, palpitated with joy whenever unmistakable evidence of Spirit power was afforded me, and sank almost to despair whenever that evidence seemed to weaken. After years of conflict and such experiences as fall to the lot of few, I find the whole question resolve itself into this: Are you now so devoted to the will of God that you can recognise Christ as having come from God to baffle and overcome the power of evil? This is the question that I would humbly answer in the affirmative. "And is this all?" said a clerical friend, who came the other day a long distance to hear and see something of the marvels of Spiritualism in my house; "you are pulling away the scaffolding on which Spiritualism is supported. All you tell me about Christ I believed long ago."

"Well, then," I said, "you have no need of Spiritualism. Its mission in the nineteenth century is what it was in the first—to call the sinner, not the righteous man, to repentance; and this it will not do by extorting the assent of the sceptic to supernatural phenomena. Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. We all begin by asking for external miracles—the happiest among us are those who eventually come to have a distaste, and no longer a craving, for the marvellous."

In the spring of the year 1872 I passed through a very exceptional series of Spirit manifestations. Whenever my daughter and I were alone, or with my servant present, these manifestations could not but occupy our minds as facts, inasmuch as there was little quiet or rest in the house for them. Whenever I brought to bear on them the critical faculties of my acquaintances, who knew nothing of the subject, they were either considerably weakened or tended to cover me with confusion and ridicule. Almost distracted by the failure of my efforts to demonstrate the reality of the supernatural phenomena which followed us at other times with perplexing persistency, I went down one day to say a few parting words to a young gentleman who had called to take leave on the eve of his departure for Australia.

While talking to him, I observed that a large dining table was moving, and imagining that he was trying to practise on what was supposed to be my credulity, I spoke angrily, begging him to be quiet. "I am doing nothing," he said, "but, oh! just look at that table!" I rose, and a minute or two afterwards, he asked permission to dry his feet at the kitchen fire for it was a bright afternoon in spring, and heavy showers alternated with brilliant sunshine. In a few moments he called out from the kitchen, where some soup was being cooked for my dogs, and on going to him, I found a large saucepan on the floor, and its contents spattered over his boots. He looked, and expressed his astonishment, declaring he had never touched the saucepan. While he was yet speaking, the bells in the kitchen were violently rung, and he saw, suspended on them, two large dish covers, which fell as he looked.

I was at the time in a most nervous state. Discovering that the phenomena were true, I daily expected the confirmation of the assertion of Spiritualists that the dead appeared through mediums, and dreading that for which I, in reality, most longed, the reappearance of my beloved young son, who had held an appointment in the Department of Woods and Forests, and had fallen a victim to the unhealthy climate of Burmah at an early age, I unceremoniously took the arm of this young gentleman, whose name, I may now say, was Harcourt Holcombe, and who had been educated at Wellington College, and endeavoured to lead him through the passage, out of the house. "What do you think of Spiritualism now?" I asked. Before he could reply there were three loud raps, and looking up I saw a paper sticking to the wall, near the ceiling. He detached it by putting up his stick, and we perceived the delineation of a skeleton head, with an inscription beneath, in large characters—"Go on, or incur my displeasure." "Oh! these rough manifestations are making me so ill," I said; "do pray go away just now." But it was raining again, and my visitor went into the drawing-room instead, where we were joined by my daughter. Here our attention was almost immediately drawn to a table by three more raps, and I saw a paper fall.

[Mrs. Showers goes on to describe how, in consequence of a communication in rhyme which was found upon this piece of paper, question after question was put, each one being answered in rhyme in the same manner—that is, by a reply given on a piece of falling paper. Some of the messages came from Spirits professedly friendly, some from those who made no secret of their hostility; some encouraged further pursuit of Spiritualism; others denounced it as a "mighty wrong." Mrs. Showers then proceeds:—]

How I subsequently came up to London; how unexpectedly I became a witness for the truth of Spiritualism; how I had to contest the position step by step, not for myself, but for those who had arbitrarily asserted that which they could not prove, and who were in the main indifferent to the higher interests of that cause for which they professed to be fighting, has been published in the *Medium* and the *Spiritualist*. But all that was noblest and best in that Spiritualism to which I bore testimony, was obscured by the enthusiastic eagerness with which the physical manifestations were sought after, and it is only now when repeated exposures and Government prosecutions have placed some wholesome restraint on imposture, that the voice of Truth has a chance of being heard, and that Truth itself has a prospect of being vindicated.

I have only to conclude with the eloquent prayer of the late Mr. William Howitt—"That He who brought order and beauty out of chaos might be pleased to bring light and order out of the present chaos of mind, and lead this glorious verity of Spiritualism to that goal which He has certainly destined for it, and which its earlier leaders so firmly believed in."

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THE DIVINING ROD.

A writer in the *Spectator* for October 12th says, with decisive incredulity, that "it would require an immense body of evidence to shew that any connection whatever existed between hidden springs and any piece of cut wood whatever." A very large body of such evidence does exist, and I suppose the majority of the readers of "LIGHT" can believe in the efficacy of the divining rod. But in all the discussion that has gone on about it, no one, to my surprise, has quoted this saying of Dr. Ashburner's in his notes on "Reichenbach's Researches on Magnetism":—"The phenomena offered by certain somnambules are highly illustrative of the effects of water on certain diseased or susceptible states of the human system. *Running water—a constantly changing series of crystalline molecules—perpetually discharges positive or negative odic force.*" [I cannot give chapter and page for this quotation as it stands in an 1865 note-book without reference to either, nor can I search for its context, my copy of Reichenbach being from home. Possibly the divining rod is there mentioned; I have forgotten, not having opened the book for seventeen years.] Now this odic force affecting a human body susceptible of its influence would naturally act upon the hazel rod held in the hands, if Christine Käpplinger's information regarding the hazel is correct. A contributor to "LIGHT" in an article on Divining Rods, January 21st, 1881, refers her to the seeress of Prevorst as proving the strong effect of different kinds of shrubs on sensitives, and this is what she said herself, during one of her trances, as to the hazel:—

"This shrub is one of the strongest agents for loosening the magnetic band. It has quite a peculiar susceptibility for magical powers. When you magnetised me while I had a little branch (of it) in my hand, your efflux through the little branch was very strong, but it drew all your power to itself."

If this be true, the hazel rod of a medium is likely to receive and reveal the holder's odic charge with as much vivacity as eye-witnesses have observed; and this, according to the conflicting evidence of several recent writers on the subject in the *Daily News*, would doubtless make the hazel rod twist upwards or downwards at its approach to running water as the odic force discharged was positive or negative; others again would be differenced, one would suppose, by the chemical constituents of that running water.

For more than twenty years it has been a favourite theory of mine, for which I never found welcome in any other brain, that just this difference of chemical atoms in the wood of trees made some to be conductors and some resistants of electric currents, and caused the slow and oft divided growth of the close-grained oak, and the rapid, less angular development of beech and lime; for, in my ignorance, I have jumped at the conclusion that at each little knot or thickening from which twigs started in different directions, some arrest in the passage of electricity had changed its course. The action of lightning seems to prove this, shattering trees of slow and oft turned divisions of growth more frequently than those of a different habit. Now the hazel and the willow are two of our straightest and quickest growing bushes. Having confessed to entertaining one unauthorised theory, I may as well finish my exposure (in the eyes of all reasonable people) by asking if this property aforesaid of running water may not account for the notorious efforts of the "will-o'-the-wisp" to allure travellers to the water-side. Witches, we all know, were of old said to be unable to retain their magical disguise when forced to cross running water; their magnetic powers were, probably, dispersed by the stronger odic force they met there. I am old-fashioned enough to believe "will-o'-the-wisp" a possibly existing creature, for a wandering undeveloped Spirit seems to me quite as natural as the formation of inflammable gas in marshy places; such a Spirit, experimentally aware of this test, may wish to prove *what* the human being is; and to see it now and then sink in the water and apparently lose life altogether, may be quite odd enough to cause the laughter tradition tells of.

How ridiculous all this sounds to *common* sense! So in years past did the stated "about twelve o'clock at midnight" for the appearing of ghosts; and sceptics, now that three o'clock a.m. has become their usual time, may say, "Yes, later going to rest necessitates some hours of sleep or dozing before people can fancy strange sounds or apparitions." But what supplies the scoffers with gibes in this case, as in many another, brings corroboration of belief to more patient inquirers. It is now well understood that before an ex-bodied being can make itself visible or audible, *matter* of some sort must be collected—in the séance-room from the medium, in places that are haunted either from the slowly gathered up aura of flesh and blood inhabitants, or more probably from the recovered detritus of past existences in flesh and blood. [I have known two cases where re-papering a house in one instance, a room in another, put a stop to *revenants* being seen in those places by the same people to whom they had appeared before.] A quite undisturbed atmosphere seems indispensable for the formation of these transient images—without the presence of a medium—sound or movement dispelling them at once; and when people go to bed at midnight or later, the air, or rather all that human life throws off into the air, would not have settled down much before three o'clock a.m.

As to the saying of the Abbé Paramelle in to-day's "LIGHT" that "the rod turns indifferently over places where there is not a thread of water, as over those where water is found," let this other reported fact be borne in mind. "There is a peculiar kind of yellow pebble which will deprive the best clairvoyants or mediums of nine-tenths of their power while standing on them or inhaling the aura proceeding from them; whilst another kind of pebble of a white colour will, if the mind of the medium be not actively engaged, induce clairvoyance." (Page 264, section 10, of "The Natural and Supernatural," by John Jones.)

If pebbles of different kinds thus act upon mediums, it is surely very likely that the holder of the divining-rod may be strongly effected by soil containing many of those which induce clairvoyance.

A. J. PENNY.

October 28th.

MADAME BLAVATSKY AND THE HIMALAYAN BROTHERS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Perhaps the expression of a sister's sympathy with the Hindu gentleman whose letter appears in "LIGHT" of October 28th may not come amiss. I, also a believer in, and reverential admirer, of the Himalayan Brothers, was pained by the flippant expression he quotes, in regard to those he appropriately terms "great souls." I beg to assure him there are *some* English gentlemen, as well as ladies, of whom I am one, who are deeply interested in the noble work of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, and would join with them did they feel qualified for the great work they, under the direction of the Brothers, are endeavouring to carry out—the elevation of humanity. Surely it is time for the "enlightened West" (?) to cease expressing doubts as to the existence of these disciples of a pure spiritual life, from whose calm and wise retreat from a lower disturbing world emanates a power which Spiritualists, at least, already feel, and in some instances respond to; a power which is destined to uplift Spiritualism to the place it should hold, and to which it is surely advancing, following out its most natural and inevitable unfoldment. This, Mr. Editor, is not merely the opinion of one individual, but is a conviction shared by many of your readers.

I would ask if the term "heathen" is applicable from us to the followers of a faith quite as noble as our own, and so similar in its fundamental teachings as to prove that the basis of the two forms of religion is the same. Surely our Lord Jesus Himself would rebuke us for our want of brotherly love, to say nothing of lack of justice. Is not the age too far advanced for such sectarian bigotry?

VERA.

October 30th, 1882.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am very sorry that any words of mine should have given pain to your correspondent, "A Hindu." But, indeed, his own letter is the best refutation of the calumny which he supposes me to have uttered. The sophisticated European intellect need not, assuredly, dread corruption from such tutors as these. To anyone of less native simplicity than your correspondent, it must, I think, have been obvious that my allusion to Madame Blavatsky and the Brothers was a harmless jest; and my remarks upon Oriental subtlety a reminiscence of trivial newspaper comment upon the ruse by which the Egyptians were hoodwinked in the late war, and the Suez Canal secured. That my light words should be construed into a serious imputation upon Madame Blavatsky and the Hindoo Theosophists never occurred to me. Still less did I intend to sneer at the Brothers, for whom I entertain a respect which is quite independent of any belief in their existence. As history, it is fine: as fiction, it is magnificent.

I can only express my regret that my sorry jests should have given occasion for such grievous misinterpretation.—I am, &c.,

London, 31st October, 1882. FRANK PODMORE.

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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. XXXII.

I want to put a question about elementaries. A correspondent writes:—"They seem to me to be a sort of parasitical intelligences attached, like barnacles, to the intelligence of the medium, and drawing their information, like blood, from the latter." Have we all got them? or are they the special attendants of mediums? What of this?

There is no attachment necessarily, or localisation such as you speak of. The astral light is full of them, and they enter into your sphere, and into the sphere of particular mediums, remaining or not as may be. You lose the idea that you live amongst and are permeated by a world of spirit of which these form a part. They do not always know what is in your mind, and it is always possible for you to secrete knowledge from them, as you know by experiment. But usually they enter into your sphere and, being in it, become possesed of your knowledge. They are not localised, but frequent the atmosphere of physical mediums from a desire to produce physical manifestations.

Not parasites, as such: save that they frequent physical circles from love of producing the phenomena, but simply dwellers in the great ocean of Spirit?

Yes, you would be ignorant of their existence were it not for the setting open of the door between the two worlds. They rush in, and that is what the Chief puts forth. You open the door, and you get the presence of those who come, elementaries first of all. Men wish to have the return of their friends. It is well; but first they must learn to control the elementaries, to make them know and keep in their proper place, which is one of subservience and obedience to man. Yes. Dwellers in the ocean of Spirit.

That seems the great difficulty—how to control them?

Cultivate the discerning of Spirits, so that you may know their presence. Cultivate power of will, so that you may exercise your natural prerogative of command over those inferior to you. By virtue of your immortal principle you are their master, unless you allow them to dominate you. You wil lnot need to vex yourself. They will not trouble you.

The natural servants of man, if he knows his power? Is that so?

Exactly. They are, as you have been told, like the higher animals, who, in domestication, look up to man almost with worship. They like to breathe his atmosphere, and, when dominated, are his slaves. When allowed, however, to act as they please, they are troublesome, and, as it were, like a spoiled pet. You cannot have the truth better put.

This is not Imperator. Is it M——?

Yes. We write his ideas, using such words as best convey them. He is sometimes difficult to understand. But we express what he says as well as we can.

Has he been away? I have not heard from him for a long time.

He does not always remain. You have a false idea. We do not always remain in your sphere, but are attracted into it when occasion requires. We are not able to write now. Cease. We will communicate further when we are able.

No. XXXIII.

Cultivation of the will is the great thing, it seems. It is hard to know the best means.

No; we have told you before. Will is the active Ego which can be trained by exercise to do what otherwise it could never accomplish. Every man originally has a potential will, which is too often allowed to lie dormant and so to lose its power. You know that the same is the case with any of the bodily functions. A muscle unused becomes stiff and useless. There is no need to dwell on this. You would know how will is best trained; you have the answer in what we have said of late. What is your will? Is it not that central self which is to be eternal and immortal? How is this self to be trained? Have we not told you? By conflict ceaseless, by perpetual striving, by constant wrestling with the foes. Will in conflict is the knowledge which is power. It is only by energising that man realises his power. It is only by exercising it that he progresses.

I have been thinking that the old notion, embodied especially in the prayers of the Church, was pretty much the same. Very many collects put forth the condition of conflict as the ground on which help is requested. "O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers that, by reason of the frailty of our natures, we cannot always stand upright." . . . . . "Stir up the WILLS *of Thy faithful people." . . . . . "The frailty of man without Thee cannot but fall." . . . . "we, by Thy mighty aid, may be defended and comforted in all dangers and adversities." . . . . "daily endeavour ourselves to follow. . . . . His most Holy Life." There are many more. The notion is of* MAN IN CONFLICT SUSTAINED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. *Your idea is the same, taking the Holy Spirit to be Spirit influence generally.*

It is precisely that, and therein are we most in accord with that system of theology with which you have so often imagined us to be in utter dissent. The central idea, as you put it, is man, an incarnate Spirit, fighting his progressive way against obstacles and adversaries, sustained by the comfort and consolation of his guardians. That which the orthodox theology has called the Holy Ghost, is in our system the Divine Effluence, the Light that lighteth every man that is born into the world, unless he wilfully shuts it out from his soul. That Light is shed by the Guardian of the Soul. You have the truth.

How far does that Spirit influence extend? It was the purport of many of the prayers that I have quoted to ask for the Holy Ghost, as a distinct indwelling Presence. Is that so in your meaning? How far are our thoughts and words our own, or suggested?

You have asked a question which we are not able to answer in general terms. The influence varies according to time, place, person, and need. It is different in different persons and at various times. It amounts in you to inspiration, in the sense that we do suggest and formulate thoughts, ideas, and words without the exercise of your volition. It varies from the utterance of set speech, or the writing, as now, of connected argument, to the merest suggestion of an idea which lies in the mind and fructifies and bears fruit normally. It may take the form of fostering the normal ideas of the mind, and bringing them to riper fruitage than they would naturally reach. It may take the form of diverting the channel of thought: or of suggesting new ideas. With one over whom we have such control as we have over you, the amount and degree of the inspiration is governed by the passivity of your mind and the absence of antagonistic influences such as illness of body, preoccupation of mind, or surroundings unfavourable to us.

I have often thought so. Is this the same with all: with non-mediums?

In kind but not in degree. All are amenable in some sort; but some in a very minor degree, of which they would themselves be unconscious. Like all other faculties this must be consciously recognised in order to be developed. It is in vain that we scatter seed unless some pains are taken to give it conditions of germination. Therefore there are some whom the Guardians cannot reach, though they can and do exercise general protection over them. It was one of the first things we told you, this Inspiration, and the results gained to men by it.

To my consternation! I said it was reducing man to the level of a gas-pipe.

You would not say so now. The vehicle of inspiration is a vessel made to honour; though not to the selfish worldly honour which arrogates to itself the exclusive title. When you lose notions of self; when your individuality becomes valuable only so far as it enables you to gain and disseminate truth; you will no longer complain that you are a vehicle of truth only. The dissemination of truth, the learning it and getting it as a possession, will obscure all else. Craving the drink which is to save and nourish life, you will not care to ask where is the spring from which it starts, what the vehicle through which it is conveyed. You will drink and be satisfied.

Yes. I see that. The great thing is to use all suggested thoughts, and to keep a conscious ideal before one. And you say there is no fear of what M—— calls "Spiritual solitude."

It is the one thing impossible. There is no such thing possible in any state to which you can come. There are spheres of desolation, in which the abandoned dwell; but you know not of them; nor need you inquire now. May the Supreme guide us and you. Cease. It is enough. + IMPERATOR.

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SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

GOSWELL HALL.

On last Sunday morning we had another visit from Mr. F. Wilson, the Comprehensionist, who gave an exposition of the principles of an organisation hereafter to be known as the "Violet Volunteers," who are to have a centre, district centres, sections, and associations. The ideas and objects in view are good, but we are inclined to think that a centre, or, perhaps, an association, will afford adequate accommodation for all recruits for some time to come. Next Sunday morning the scheme will be further elucidated. In the evening, Mr. J. Veitch delivered an able and interesting lecture on "Three Epochs of Christian Belief," in the treatment of which he shewed a thorough acquaintance with the ancient, middle-age, and modern historians, tracing, in an interesting manner, the progress made down to the present time, and eulogising those who were most conspicuous in the promotion thereof. His last and strongest point was made in favour of Spiritualism, which was claimed to be the most rational, comprehensive, and universal religious system that has yet been presented to the world. Mr. Veitch is a young man possessed of excellent talents, and, as a normal speaker, is a great acquisition to the cause; and to his credit be it said that his platform work is to him a labour of love, all of it being done on the voluntary principle. The forthcoming soirée promises to be a great success, Mr. Greenwell having been quite deluged with kind offers to take part in the programme, many of which it has caused him regret to have to decline. To make the success complete only requires a sharp demand for tickets.

RES-FACTA.

QUEBEC HALL.

At the usual weekly meeting on Sunday Mr. MacDonnell gave a discourse on "The Devil." Evil was denied as a reality, but admitted relatively to human existence. The necessity for using some term to express a negative condition was the cause of thus personifying what really was not an entity, and the child-like mind of the ignorant masses readily accepted, under fear, what a little thought would have made them laugh at.—COR.

CARDIFF.

On Sunday last we were again favoured with two excellent discourses from the controls of Mr. E. W. Wallis. The subject for the morning—"Inspiration: an Examination and an Explanation"—was dealt with very exhaustively and lucidly. The controls stated that inspiration may be classed under two heads, viz., general and particular—general, inasmuch as Nature herself not only furnishes the air we breathe, thereby supplying mankind with the element necessary for physical inspiration, but makes provision for the process of inspiration on the mental and moral planes also. There is, corresponding with our physical atmosphere, a mental atmosphere, where thought is, as it were, held in solution, and from which, in exact accordance with the desires and aspirations of men and women, thoughts and ideas are inspired, or breathed in, to the extent of mental and moral capacity to receive; and this process is as natural and spontaneous as that of physical inspiration—and hence all mankind are of necessity its recipients. But the mode of inspiration usually suggested by this word among Spiritualists may be designated particular, insomuch as mankind are also susceptible of breathing in, and in turn, breathing out, or giving utterance to the thoughts and ideas of those with whom they are in sympathetic accord in Spirit life, in some cases the source from which it comes being recognised, in others not so. The man who would disclaim all participation in the process of inspiration, general or particular, and claim to have originated with himself alone all the thoughts and ideas to which he may have given expression is egotistical in the extreme. But the other extreme by which some would make mankind the abject subjects of Spirit influence in *all* things, is equally to be deprecated. The lecture was concluded by a very interesting explanation of the difference between inspirational and trance mediumship—the controls stating that while at present their medium was not conscious of the reception of the thoughts which they used his organism as a vehicle to give expression to, they looked forward to the not very far distant period when he would be able to participate in their efforts, by *consciously* receiving ideas from Spirit life, being illumined and exalted thereby, and delight in consciously reproducing. The evening lecture, "After Death, What?" was equally well handled, and attentively listened to by a good audience. On Sunday, November 5th, Mr. J. J. Morse will be with us again. Subjects—morning, "Science *versus* Satan"; evening, "Ancient Spiritualism."—E. A.

EXETER.

A large number of persons in this city have become interested in Spiritualism, the inquirers being more numerous than we have been able to accommodate in the private circles at present held in connection with the public work. We have now, however, taken a room in which we intend to hold a series of circles to accommodate all the inquirers as they come.

The following particulars will afford evidence that we are making a little progress:—

At the circle on Monday evening there were fourteen present, and the meeting was a most enjoyable and successful one, the principal feature being descriptions of spirits through the medium, Mrs. C., whereby the sitters were able to identify their own departed relatives.

Every Thursday a circle is held at Newton St. Cyrs, five miles distant from Exeter; last week there were eight present, and the results were very good.

Sunday morning circle at the hall—seventeen present; some interesting phases of mediumship were brought to light.

Sunday evening the hall was well filled, whilst a discourse was delivered on "Peter and Cornelius—a chapter of New Testament Spiritualism." At the private circle which followed there were seventeen present, all being in sympathy. After a brief address through Mr. P., trance medium, a young gentleman was unexpectedly controlled as a writing, speaking, and clairvoyant medium; and, from what took place, this friend seems to give promise of mediumistic power of a high order. The previous Sunday two lady mediums took part in the meeting; last Sunday Spiritual communications were given through two mediums of the opposite sex.—OMEGA.

KEIGHLEY.

On Sunday last, October 29th, Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, again visited this town, in pursuance of his regular engagement, and delivered the two final lectures of the series for the present year. In the afternoon an excellent congregation assembled, entirely filling the body of the Temperance Hall, in which the meetings were held. The subject discoursed upon by the "controls" was "Spiritualism: Its Mission," and the purport of the address was that the mission of Spiritualism was to bring proof and certainty of immortal life, to lead to a careful and reverent reconsideration of religious creeds bearing upon man's future state, and to help mankind more clearly to realise that all actions in this life exercised a definite influence on his condition in the life hereafter. The various points were effectively presented, and a deep impression was evidently produced.

In the evening the company completely filled the body of the hall, and occupied the gallery, there being upwards of 400 persons in the meeting. The subject of the evening address was "Man's Religion *versus* God's," and the general opinion was that it was the best discourse that the speaker had delivered during the five years he has periodically visited Keighley. It was an able and eloquent plea for the broad lines of truth, justice, and universal love as applicable to all sorts and conditions of men, as opposed to narrow definitions, such as are expressed by the intolerant and bigoted. The address was listened to with breathless attention, and seemed to sink deeply into the minds of all present. Mr. J. Pickles, president of the Society, presided on each occasion, and at the close of the evening meeting made some very feeling references to the services Mr. Morse had rendered to Spiritualism in this town, and as this closed Mr. Morse's visits for 1882, he asked those in the company who appreciated his (Mr. Morse's) services, and who desired to see him in their midst again, to express that desire by a rising vote, at which the entire congregation rose to their feet. Mr. Morse made a brief response, but was evidently quite overcome with the, to him, unexpected and spontaneous mark of esteem he had just received. The service then terminated in the usual manner.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—We are sorry to record that a considerable amount of discord prevails in the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society. For some time past certain of the official members have had to make a firm stand against overbearing assumption, and every successive quarterly meeting shews that matters are coming nearer and nearer to a serious climax. Some time ago a party succeeded in expelling one member and driving several others to sever their connection with the Society, either as officials or members. At the quarterly meeting held last Monday, Mr. George Wilson, the late secretary, distinctly charged the president with making their position insufferable as committee men, through his overbearing and arbitrary action. Endeavours were made to put Mr. Wilson down, but, to the credit of the members, they insisted upon hearing him. One portion of the secretary's report was rejected by fourteen votes against eleven. It had reference to the séances of Michael Chambers, and spoke of their being conducted in an unsatisfactory manner. The library shewed a list of 308 volumes of books. The financial balance-sheet revealed an addition of £9 13s. 2d. to the debt of last quarter, making at the present time a balance due to the treasurer of £32 16s. 6½d.

GATESHEAD.—On Sunday, October 22nd, the Society at Gateshead had a somewhat unique discourse from a gentleman, Mr. Edmunds, of Sunderland, who gave an interesting and well arranged lecture on "The Religion of Buddhism." On Sunday last, another gentleman from Sunderland, Mr. Thomas Gowland, discoursed upon "Nature's Laws and Human Progress." The address, though essentially secular, was listened to

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with much pleasure. Mr. H. Burton occupied the chair on both occasions. We observe that a concert will be given in the rooms of the Gateshead Society on the 13th November, for the benefit of the Society. We are told that Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, is expected in the beginning of December.

NORTHUMBRIA.

WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

LONDON.

Sunday, November 5.—Central London Spiritual Evidence Society, Goswell Hall. 11.30 a.m., Lecture, Mr. F. Wilson. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. S. Goss. (See advertisement.)

,, November 5.—Quebec Hall. 11.15 a.m., Séance. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. Wilson. (See advertisement.)

Monday, November 6.—Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C. 6.30 p.m., Soirée. Tickets 1s.

,, November 6.—Quebec Hall. Meeting.

Tuesday, November 7.—Quebec Hall. 8.30 p.m., Lecture, Mr. Wilson.

Wednesday, November 8.—Central Association of Spiritualists. 8 p.m., Members' Free 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 MANCHESTER SPIRITUALISTS.—A few new sitters are wanted to join a select and harmonious circle meeting on Friday evenings, solely for trance addresses and clairvoyance, &c. Address, by letter, F. T., 230, Chapel-street, Salford, Manchester.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* has lost its temper over the Society for Psychical Research, which it vulgarly designates "the new sect of Psychical Researchers." Here is one of its latest effusions:—The following passage from a letter in the newly published "Life of Clerk Maxwell" is worth the attention of the new sect of Psychical Researchers:—"Simpson rages at present in the Electro-Biology. Dr. Alison is very wroth about it. He says he has known two cases of nervous people whose minds were quite disordered by it. I hope it is not in fashion at Cambridge, or at any rate that you do not meddle with it. If it does anything, it is more likely to be harm than good; and if harm ensue, the evil might be irreparable; so let me hear you have dismissed it. You have plenty of better things in hand where you are." This was written thirty years ago, and in the interval more foolish impostures and time-wasting delusions than electro-biology have come "into fashion at Cambridge."

BABES IN THE WOOD—A STRANGE DREAM.—I have a pathetic little story to tell about two poor little Maori children, three and four years old. A party of Maories were digging for cowri gum on the Kairara field in the north. These little ones strayed away into the bush close by. When they were missed their friends sought for them, but could find no traces. A number of Europeans joined in the search day after day without success, although fully 300 Maories were out as well. On the eighth day a bushman, an Englishman, told his companions that he had had a strange dream, in which he had seen the bodies of the poor little ones lying under a big rata tree, and also the course they had taken over the ranges, crossing two creeks. Immediately a party was made up, and he guided them to the spot he had beheld in his dream, and there lay the bodies of the two little children about five feet apart. A Maori cur which had accompanied them was lying close to the oldest, but the remains of the younger had been sadly mangled by the horrid cur. The bodies were at once buried on the spot, and a great tangi held, the Maories firing 400 shots over the graves. The little ones were both boys. How is this dream to be accounted for? Many people profess no faith in dreams, and yet every now and then the understanding is staggered by some such striking incident as that just related. Is it not Schiller who says "The immortal soul does not partake in the weakness of matter. During the body's sleep it unfolds its wings, and wanders, God knows where. What its acts none can say; but inspiration sometimes betrays the secret of its nightly wanderings"? There is no doubt that the dreamer in this instance—by the bye, his name is Mariner—will ever be held in high estimation by the natives as a wise man or a prophet.—*New Zealand Special Correspondent of "The People."*

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S LECTURE APPOINTMENTS.—SOWERBY BRIDGE: Sunday, November 5th. HALIFAX: Sunday, November 12th, and Monday, November 13th. BRADFORD: Sunday, November 19th. SOWERBY BRIDGE: Sunday, November 26th.—Address, The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

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 Guldenstubbe, &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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