

THE
Spiritual Magazine.

MARCH, 1872.

MR. OWEN'S NEW WORK.*

THIS long expected work fully sustains the high reputation of its author as a philosophical writer, careful alike in his authentication and relation of facts, and in the conclusions he deduces from them. His style is chaste and forcible, free from all exaggeration and tawdry rhetoric. Whilst free and independent in the handling of religious questions, he is also earnest, reverent, and catholic; bold in the expression of what he feels to be the truth regardless of conventional opinion, yet careful to avoid all needless irritation and offence.

It would be difficult to point to any man of our generation better qualified to investigate both the phenomena and the philosophy of Spiritualism than Mr. Owen. He has sounded the heights and depths of sceptical and materialistic philosophy, and has been recognised as one of its foremost champions. As reformer and statesman he has achieved high distinction. It was while United States Minister at Naples, in March, 1856, that the circumstances occurred which led him to enter upon that investigation of Spiritualism some of the results of which are now before the world in this volume, and in his *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*. While engaged in these spiritual studies he was appointed military agent of the State of Indiana, and together with Judge Holt was appointed a Government Commissioner of Ordnance and Ordnance Stores, and was the Chairman of the Government Commission charged with the duty of reporting on the condition of the recently emancipated freemen of the United States.

From this brief sketch it will be seen that he is no romantic

* *The Debatable Land between this World and the Next. With Narrative Illustrations.* By ROBERT DALE OWEN, Author of *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World.* London: TRUBNER & Co.

visionary, but a man of practical affairs, honoured and trusted for his intelligence, ability, and integrity. This practical tone of mind he has carried into his speculative researches. What he says of another in this volume may be fairly applied to himself :—“This, then, is no dreamer, secluded in his study, shut out from the world, and feeding on his own thoughts: no theorizer with a favourite system to uphold: and though a man of decided convictions, not even an enthusiast.”

Such a man, after sixteen years’ most careful observation, combined with extended and patient inquiry and deep thought over the store of facts he has thus accumulated, is pre-eminently entitled to a candid and considerate hearing. Nor (if we may judge by the reception of his former work, written twelve years ago, and which has reached a sale of 20,000 copies) is that claim likely to be disregarded, more especially as the present work is of even wider range and more pregnant interest than his former volume.

The author conclusively shows that his subject is intimately connected with the present attitude of the religious world, and it is therefore very appropriately prefaced by an Address to the Protestant Clergy. This Address occupies nearly one-third of the volume; and we think a more weighty utterance, one presenting graver issues, has never been addressed to them. Let them ponder these broad facts which Mr. Owen brings before them. “Protestanism conquered in the space of forty years an empire reaching from Iceland to the Pyrenees, from Finland down to the summit of the Italian Alps.” From this time, however, downward to the present, a space of three hundred years, there has been for Protestantism nothing but retrogression, until now in place of this overwhelming majority there are in Europe three Catholics for every Protestant. Especially has this progress of Romanism been conspicuous within the last half century; and in the very heart of Protestantism. In England the statistics on this subject should alarm the clergy, but in free America it has progressed even more rapidly. Should its present rate of increase there continue, in less than the third of a century the Roman Catholics will form an actual majority of the population of the United States. How is it that for three centuries Protestantism not only has made no progress, but has not even been able to hold its own, and is still steadily and rapidly declining in both hemispheres? That is the problem to which Mr. Owen invites the candid and earnest consideration of the Protestant Clergy. We shall not follow him in his analysis of the causes which have lead to this result, clear and masterly as it is, but must refer the reader to the book itself, which were it on this account alone, would well repay careful perusal. Its discussion

leads the author by gradual and easy stages to the subject which occupies the main body of the work, and that which will doubtless be most attractive to the majority of its readers, the direct evidence of a future life supplied by Modern Spiritualism. The author has here brought together in narrative form some of the more salient and suggestive of those spiritual phenomena, spontaneous and evoked, which have occurred under his own observation, or have come to him in an authentic form, and of which he truly says they are "attested, I venture to affirm, by evidence as strong as that which is daily admitted in our courts of justice to decide the life or death of men." These narratives are also further designed to illustrate in some measure the action of intermundane laws at present but dimly discerned, and which can only be explored in the phenomena they govern.

It would be unjust alike to our readers and to the author to present any of these narratives in the way of abstract; they require to be read at length, and in the words of the author. We can only indicate the general character of the work, refer briefly to some of the more salient experiences related, and present what the author conceives to be some of the more important bearings of Spiritualism, and the leading principles on which he deems all intelligent Spiritualists are united.

As most of our readers are aware, the experimental investigations "into the phenomena alleged to be spiritual," which certain eminent scientists are now prosecuting, and the tests by which they have demonstrated what they are pleased to call a "new force," have long been anticipated by Spiritualists. Mr. Owen, for instance, relates experiments made in 1860 in the presence of himself, the late Dr. Robert Chambers (then on a visit to the United States), and other persons. These experiments included the rising from the floor without contact, and under bright gas light, of a table weighing 121 pounds, and which on several occasions thus remained suspended in the air six or seven seconds, and then gradually settled down without jar or dropping to the floor. The table was also made light and heavy at request; a large steelyard was procured, and the table was suspended by it in exact equipoise, about eight inches from the floor. Mr. Owen says:—

"The table remaining suspended, with the constant weight at the figure 121: we asked that it might be made lighter. In a few seconds the long arm ascended. We moved the weight to the figure 100: it still ascended; then to 80; then to 60. Even at this last figure the smaller arm of the steelyard was somewhat depressed, showing that the table, for the moment, weighed less than 60 pounds. It had *lost more than half its weight*, namely, upward of 61 pounds: in other words, there

was a power equal to 61 pounds sustaining it. Then we asked that it might be made heavier; and it was so: first, as the figures indicated, to 130, and finally to 144 pounds. The change of weight continued, in each instance, from three to eight seconds, as we ascertained by our watches."

On another occasion the author was visiting a private family, who a month before had no knowledge of Spiritualism and scant faith in any of its phenomena; but one of the family suddenly found himself possessed of mediumistic powers.

Mr. Owen gives the following as part of a record of what he witnessed at two sessions with this family. The first occurred in the afternoon. The room was darkened with heavy curtains drawn close, but sufficient light came through to enable those present to see the outlines of objects. Mr. Owen says:—

" We sat at a heavy deal table, made expressly for the purpose, very thick and strong; the legs more than two inches square; size two feet seven inches by one foot eight inches, and weighing 25 pounds.

" At first there was a trembling motion, then a tilting from side to side, gradually becoming more powerful, and at last so violent that it was snatched from our hands. Then, at our request, the table was made so heavy that I found it scarcely possible, with all my strength, to move it even half an inch from the floor; the apparent weight some 200 pounds. Then, again at our request, it was made so light that we could lift one end of it with a single finger; its weight seeming 10 or 12 pounds only. Then it was laid down on its side; and, no one touching it, I was unable to raise it. Then it was tilted on two legs and all my strength was insufficient to press it down.

" Finally, after being jerked with such sudden violence that we all drew back, fearing injury, and merely reached our fingers on the edge of its top, it was projected into the air so high that when we rose from our chairs we could barely place our fingers on it; and there it swung about, during six or seven seconds. Besides touching it, we could see its motion by the dim light.

" We sat again in the evening at ten o'clock, in the same room, darkened: only three at the table, N—, Charles, and myself.

" Then—probably intensified by the darkness—commenced a demonstration exhibiting more physical force than I had ever before witnessed. I do not believe that the strongest man living could, without a handle fixed to pull by, have jerked the table with anything like the violence with which it was now, as it seemed, *driven* from side to side. We all felt it to be a power, a single stroke from which would have killed any one of us on the spot. Then the table was, as it were, flung upward into

. the air, again so high that, when we stood up, we could just touch it, and shaken backward and forward for some time ere it was set down. Again it was raised, even more violently than before, and swung backward and forward, as far as by the touch we could judge, in an arc of seven or eight feet, some five or six times. A third time it was hurled into the air, sometimes out of our reach, but we felt it *turn over and over, like a revolving wheel, eight or ten times.* As nearly as we could judge without reference to our watches, it was some *twelve or fourteen seconds* in the air before it descended. Sometimes we were able to touch it, sometimes not."

What is called the "spirit-rap" is now so common that we need here hardly quote instances. Mr. Owen testifies:—

"I have heard them as delicate, tiny tickings, and as thundering poundings. I have heard them not only throughout our own land, but in foreign countries; as in England, France, Italy. I have heard them in broad daylight and in darkened rooms; usually most violent in the latter. I have heard them in my own house and in a hundred others; out of doors; at sea and on land; in steamer and in sail-boat; in the forest and on the rocks of the sea-shore."

Besides the moving of ponderable bodies by occult agency, the rapping sounds, and many other physical manifestations witnessed by himself, Mr. Owen quotes from a little book called *Bealings Bells*, written by Major Moor, F.R.S., a remarkable cluster of narratives of the kindred phenomenon of bell ringing, which the strictest investigation could trace to no human agency. This occurred for fifty-three days successively, at Major Moor's country seat, Great Bealings, Woodbridge, Suffolk. As remarked by Mr. Owen:—

"It is abundantly evident from Major Moor's book that he spared no pains, throughout the seven and a half weeks during which the strange annoyance lasted, to detect fraudulent artifice, had artifice under such circumstances been possible. He avers—'The bells rang scores of times when no one was in the passage or back building, or house or grounds unseen: I have waited in the kitchen for a repetition of the ringings, with all the servants present, when no one could be in concealment. But what matters? Neither I, nor the servants, nor any one, could or can work the wonderment that I and more than half a score of others saw.' Finally, the Major declares—'I am thoroughly convinced that the ringing is by no human agency.'"

A similar disturbance occurred at Greenwich Hospital, and as in other examples the details come from a witness present, Lieutenant Rivers, R.N., a comrade of Nelson. Major Moor's narrative brought him letters containing fourteen different

examples of mysterious bell ringing from various parts of England, every one of them unexplained, and most of them attested by the signatures of those who witnessed them, with permission to give their names to the public.

In the chapter on "Direct Spirit-Writing" Mr. Owen refers to the experiences of Baron Guldenstubbe, who in ten months obtained more than five hundred specimens, of which in his book, published at Paris, in 1857, he lithographed sixty-seven; and Mr. Owen relates an experience he himself had of seeing a luminous hand write; and also of his seeing writing appear on the hand and arm.

The chapter on "Animals perceiving Spiritual Phenomena," we commend to Dr. Carpenter and his followers, if he has any. That pedagogic physiologist tells us that when men think they see spirits it is all hallucination. When cats, dogs, and birds, as well as men, see spirits, as Mr. Owen shows they sometimes do both severally and collectively, are they also, like him, under hallucination, deluded victims of dominant ideas and unconscious cerebration?

Of the reality and objective character of Spiritual apparitions Mr. Owen has had the evidence of sight, hearing, and touch, combined with other proofs, such as the sounds produced by them, the moving of heavy bodies, the bringing of objects outside the room through closed, locked, and sealed doors, and replies to questions—sometimes to unspoken thoughts. If evidence like this is not conclusive we should like to know what would be considered so. The whole chapter entitled "My own experience touching Apparitions," should be read with more than ordinary care. But perhaps the most remarkable example of this kind of experience on record is given in the chapter which follows, headed, "A near relative shows herself throughout five years to a surviving friend." This friend is Mr. Livermore, the well-known banker of New York, of whom we read:—

"Mr. Livermore is, in the strictest sense, a practical man of business. He has been engaged, during most of his life, and up to the present day, in enterprises, financial and industrial, of an extensive, sometimes of a colossal character; and in these—this the world can appreciate—he has been uniformly successful. During the very time of his spiritual experiments he was conducting vast operations involving constant watchfulness and responsibility.

"This, then, is no dreamer secluded in his study; shut out from the world, and feeding on his own thoughts: no theorizer, with a favourite system to uphold; and though a man of decided convictions, not even an enthusiast."

These experiences were observed throughout three hundred and eighty-eight recorded sittings, and in every instance the locality of these séances was selected by Mr. Livermore, often in his own house. Doors and windows were sealed with sealing-wax, and the medium's hands were held during all the most important manifestations. Dr. Gray, a leading physician of New York, and others witnessed these manifestations. Imposture or hallucination in this case are alike out of the question. It may be remembered that many of these manifestations were recorded in the early volumes of this Magazine at the time of their occurrence, chiefly in letters from Mr. Livermore to Mr. Coleman. Mr. Owen's account is compiled from the careful and voluminous records made at the time by Mr. Livermore.

Mr. Owen gives some striking illustrations in evidence of spirit identity as in the homely but very convincing narrative of a spirit who had died, suddenly coming to his relatives and arranging his worldly affairs. Still more curious, and very circumstantially related, is "A Case of Identity Three Hundred Years Old." In this instance the proof of identity seems as complete as a case of this kind can be. The chapter headed "A Beautiful Spirit Manifests Herself," will be read with special interest as bearing on this point. In this example, among other evidence of identity, is proof from a stranger five hundred miles distant, and the facts of which are fully detailed. This is a chapter of the author's personal experiences, and of which he therefore writes of his own immediate knowledge.

Mr. Owen concludes his work with two chapters on "Spiritual Gifts of the First Century appearing in our own times;" and in which some well-authenticated instances of spiritual healing are related, and a summary in which he gives us "The conclusion of the whole matter;" with a final chapter on "What underlies Christ's Teachings, as Foundation Motive." On this latter point we cannot forbear to quote the following paragraph:—

"This matter of basic motive underlying a religion is of vast practical importance. We meanly appreciate Christ's spiritual polity if we fail to perceive that it trusts for a world's reform, to awakening in man the slumbering love of the Right, for its own sake; not to arousing his cupidity or playing on his fears. If a child, passing from under his teacher's hand, grows to manhood honest merely because he thinks that honesty is the best policy, he may be a fair dealer, and so far commendable; but he is not a disciple of Christ. If a professor of religion exhibits the liveliest zeal for his Church, actuated by no higher principle than that which caused Louis XIV. to repeal the Edict of Nantes—namely, to save a worthless soul from hell—he may

be a useful Church member, but he is not a Christian. There *is* no Christianity except that which has for foundation the indwelling love of the Right."

Mr. Owen compares and contrasts the Christianity of the Gospels with the Lutheran and Calvinistic theology with which it is so commonly confounded; a fatal mistake, one which has caused the name Christian to be applied to bigots and persecutors whose temper of mind was wholly foreign to that of Christ, and who (however zealous for orthodoxy) scarcely maintained even a pretence of obedience to His gentle precepts; and which on the other hand has led many to imagine that in renouncing the dogmas of the churches they ceased to be Christians, when in truth they may have been far more deeply penetrated with the spirit of Christ than those who branded them as heretic and infidel. Our author looks forward hopefully to the time when purged from the errors and corruptions that have gathered around it, Christianity will become the universal and progressive religion of civilised men, who will be neither Romanists nor Protestants, but simply Christians. In reference to the objection that "the alleged phase of modern revelation is anti-Christian in tendency," Mr. Owen says:—

"If after a varied experience of sixteen years in different countries I am entitled to offer an opinion, it is, that if such spiritual communications be sought in an earnest becoming spirit, the views presented will, in the vast majority of cases, be *in strict accordance with the teachings of Christ*, such as we may reasonably conceive these to have been from the testimony of his evangelical biographers. They touch upon many things, indeed, which he left untouched; but the spirit is absolutely identical. They breathe the very essence of his divine philosophy.

"I speak here of those ideas as to which, in all trustworthy spirit-messages, there can scarcely be said to be variance of sentiment. As to side-issues and non-essentials, it would seem that the same variety and uncertainty of opinion exist in the next world as in our own."

Mr. Owen considers that the following may be taken as—

THE GREAT LEADING PRINCIPLES ON WHICH INTELLIGENT SPIRITUALISTS AGREE.

"1.—This is a world governed by a God of love and mercy, in which all things work together for good to those who reverently conform to His eternal laws.

"2.—In strictness there is no death. Life continues from the life which now is into that which is to come, even as it continues from one day to another; the sleep which goes by the name of death being but a brief transition-slumber from which, for the

good, the awakening is immeasurably more glorious than in the dawn of earthly morning, the brightest that ever shone. In all cases in which life is well spent, the change which men are wont to call death is God's last and best gift to his creatures here.

" 3.—The earth-phase of life is an essential preparation for the life which is to come. Its appropriate duties and callings cannot be neglected without injury to human welfare and development, both in this world and in the next. Even its enjoyments, temperately accepted, are fit preludes to the happiness of a higher state.

" 4.—The phase of life which follows the death-change, is, in strictest sense, the supplement of that which precedes it. It has the same variety of avocations, duties, enjoyments, corresponding in a measure to those of earth, but far more elevated; and its denizens have the same variety of character and of intelligence; existing, too, as men do here in a state of progress. Released from bodily earth-clog, their periscope is wider, their perceptions more acute, their spiritual knowledge much greater, their judgment clearer, their progress more rapid than ours. Vastly wiser and more dispassionate than we, they are still, however, fallible; and they are governed by the same general laws of being, modified only by corporeal disenthralment, to which they were subjected here.

" 5.—Our state here determines our initial state there. The habitual promptings, the pervading impulses, the life-long yearnings, in a word the moving spirit, or what Swedenborg calls the 'ruling loves' of man—these decide his condition on entering the next world: not the written articles of his creed, nor yet the incidental errors of his life.

" 6.—We do not, either by faith or works, *earn* Heaven, nor are we sentenced, on any day of wrath, to Hell. In the next world we simply gravitate to the position for which, by life on earth, we have fitted ourselves; and we occupy that position *because* we are fitted for it.

" 7.—There is no instantaneous change of character when we pass from the present phase of life. Our virtues, our vices; our intelligence, our ignorance; our aspirations, our grovellings; our habits, propensities, prejudices even—all pass over with us; modified, doubtless (but to what extent we know not), when the spiritual body emerges, divested of its fleshly incumbrance; yet essentially the same as when the death-slumber came over us.

" 8.—The sufferings there, natural sequents of evil-doings and evil-thinking here, are as various in character and in degree as the enjoyments; but they are mental, not bodily. There is no escape from them except only, as on earth, by the door of repentance. There, as here, sorrow for sin committed and desire

for an amended life are the indispensable conditions, precedent of advancement to a better state of things.

“ 9.—In the next world Love ranks higher than what we call Wisdom, being itself the highest wisdom. There deeds of benevolence far outweigh professions of faith. There simple goodness rates above intellectual power. There the humble are exalted. There the meek find their heritage. There the merciful obtain mercy. The better denizens of that world are charitable to frailty and compassionate to sin, far beyond the dwellers in this: they forgive their erring brethren they have left behind them, even to seventy times seven. There is no respect of persons. There, too, self-righteousness is rebuked, and pride brought low.

“ 10.—A trustful, childlike spirit is the state of mind in which men are most receptive of beneficent spiritual impressions; and such a spirit is the best preparation for entrance into the next world.

“ 11.—There have always existed intermundane laws, according to which men may occasionally obtain, under certain conditions, revealings from those who have passed to the next world before them. A certain proportion of human beings are more sensitive to spiritual perceptions and influences than their fellows; and it is usually in the presence, or through the medium of one or more of these, that ultramundane intercourse occurs.

“ 12.—When the conditions are favourable, and the sensitive, through whom the manifestations come, is highly gifted, these may supply important materials for thought, and valuable rules of conduct. But spiritual phenomena sometimes do much more than this. In their highest phases they furnish proof, strong as that which Christ’s disciples enjoyed; proof addressed to the reason, and tangible to the senses, of the reality of another life, better and happier than this, and of which our earthly pilgrimage is but the novitiate. They bring immortality to light under a blaze of evidence which outshines, as the sun the stars, all traditional or historical testimonies. For surmise, they give us convictions, and assured knowledge for wavering belief.

“ 13.—The chief motives which induce spirits to communicate with men appear to be—a benevolent desire to convince us, past doubt or denial, that there *is* a world to come; now and then the attraction of unpleasant memories, such as murder or suicide; sometimes (in the worldly-minded) the earth-binding influence of cumber and trouble: but far more frequently the divine impulse of human affection, seeking the good of the loved ones it has left behind, and, at times, drawn down perhaps by their yearning cries.

“ 14.—Under unfavourable or imperfect conditions, spiritual

communications, how honestly reported soever, often prove vapid and valueless; and this chiefly happens when communications are too assiduously sought or continuously persisted in: brief volunteered messages being the most trustworthy. Imprudence, inexperience, supineness, or the idiosyncrasy of the recipient may occasionally result in arbitrary control by spirits of a low order; as men here sometimes yield to the infatuation exerted by evil associates. Or, again, there may be exerted by the inquirer, especially if dogmatic and self-willed, a dominating influence over the medium, so strong as to produce effects that might be readily mistaken for what has been called possession. As a general rule, however, any person of common intelligence and ordinary will can, in either case, cast off such mischievous control; or, if the weak or incautious give way, one who may not improperly be called an exorcist—if possessed of strong magnetic will, moved by benevolence, and it may be aided by prayer, can usually rid, or at least assist to rid, the sensitive from such abnormal influence."

Mr. Owen adds:—

"In all this there is no speculative divinity. And I admit the probability that if, through spiritual source, you were to inquire whether the theological guessings of Arius or of Athanasius touching the essence of the Godhead come the nearer to the truth, you might get no reply, or perhaps the answer: 'We are uninformed as to that matter,' with the remark added, it may be: 'We do not entertain such discussions here.'"

We feel that we have but faintly indicated the character and value of this truly important work, but what we have said may suffice if it should lead the reader to obtain and carefully study it. It should be in the hands and in the mind of every clergyman, every Spiritualist, every man interested in the great religious questions of our time, and in that great question of all time—IMMORTALITY. Its value as a work of reference is enhanced by a copious index. There is only one drawback to our pleasure in reading it—the text is too heavily loaded with notes. These notes are interesting and useful, but they seriously interrupt the reading, and many in consequence will yield to the temptation to skip them altogether. In future editions a large proportion of them might we think with advantage be incorporated with the text.

Mr. Owen intimates that should his life be spared we may expect another volume on Spiritualism from his pen. We hope this expectation may not be disappointed; and that so long a time will not intervene ere it appears as has elapsed between the publication of his former volume and the present work.

T. S.

SPIRIT FACES.

A FURTHER confirmation of the remarkable manifestations in Moravia, New York, of which we gave an account in our last number, appears in the *Rochester Evening Express*. We observe that the account is copied into *Woodhull and Clafflin's Weekly*, with the editorial remark that it is so copied "because we are personally acquainted with the writer, and are willing to vouch for her truthfulness."

The writer says, "Three of us who stand ready to give our signatures, if so required, resolved on a visit to Moravia . . . We started with strong health and high spirits for a fresh new experience; and for the privilege, as we confidently expected, of detecting a great humbug, thereby ridding the world of a growing nuisance."

After describing farmer Keeler, Mrs. Andrews the medium, and some of the visitors who had come on the same errand as themselves, the writer proceeds to relate what they witnessed. They first examined the *séance* room, but found in it nothing but a piano, a lamp, several chairs and an old-fashioned settee.

At the first *séance* they sat for an hour, but obtained nothing except the shaking of the piano and a perceptible vibration of the floor; none of the promised "lights," "faces" or "voices."

On the next occasion, however, the writer and her friends were more fortunate. She says:—

"At the second *séance*, after the examination of the room as before, and with the same arrangement of the circle, we saw immediately innumerable electric lights darting about like shooting stars. Often, close together, they would move about in singular unison with each other. Our heads and hands were touched gently, and sometimes flutteringly. Then a muffled voice was heard in the room, about our heads, and saying, "Oh, my daughter, this is something serious!" Then raps for the medium to be removed to the cabinet and the lamps to be lighted for us—when two hands together, as in prayer, were thrust from the window of the cabinet, and withdrawn quickly. We were impressed with the lifeless colour and the stiffness, though one hand appeared immediately and moved the things quite naturally and gracefully. Then eight hands appeared at once, some being children's hands. Other well formed hands were shown during the *séance* in different ways and positions from above and below, with mementoes, which were acknowledged to bear a meaning to some who witnessed them. Soon

a gentleman's face appeared four times—the same face as often with the addition of a moustache, and pointed to one of our party whom it recognized.

"Then the old lady dimly appeared but once—recognized by our sensible sceptic. Another with glasses—unrecognized. Then a young lady with very long brown hair, in loose curls, appeared six or seven times at different sides of the aperture, looking towards only one of our party; then in sweet, plaintive tones, though with apparent effort and breathlessness, was distinctly pronounced the name of our Missionary.* He had made the recognition from the first appearance. Then a sermon was given through the trumpet. It was elevated in sentiment, fine in expression, but spoken with laboured breath; about five minutes in length. Then hands motioned the cabinet door to be opened, the medium released, and we dispersed."

Another confirmation has been received in a letter from Miss Hay, an English lady now in Boston, well known to us and to many London Spiritualists; she relates that she visited the farm house at Moravia, and among other spirit-faces, she distinctly saw her aged mother, lately deceased, and other relations.

Mr. Guppy, of Morland Villa, Highbury-hill Park, has been making experiments with a view to obtain, if possible, similar manifestations through the mediumship of Mrs. Guppy, and already with some degree of success. Some square windows were cut at different elevations on the wooden sides of a dark room used for photographic purposes, with a little curtain behind each window to exclude the light. About a dozen guests were recently invited to witness the experiments, among them Miss Kate Fox, but owing to ill health that lady was unable to attend, or more decided manifestations would probably have occurred, as the spirits specially desired her presence. Mr. Guppy asked all his guests in turn to enter the empty dark room and search it, which being done Mrs. Guppy and another lady were told by the raps to enter it. The company sat outside the cabinet, the full moon shone directly through the window, so that everything in the room even to the pattern of the paper pasted over the cabinet could be distinctly seen. The two ladies inside kept their faces at the opening of the lower window, laughing and talking to their friends outside. Suddenly a third face appeared at one of the upper openings, and all three faces were seen at the same time for perhaps two minutes by all the witnesses; but the light was not strong enough for those outside to identify the features of the spirit. The face was small and much whiter than the faces of the two mediums below; there

* One of the writer's party of three.

was something white upon the head, like lace, or a small cap. Raps said, "*I am Lily.*"

"Lily" was the late Mrs. Ritchie, better known as Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt. She was a Spiritualist, and before her death she often said she would come back again at séances if she could.

After the face had been at the opening about two minutes, it moved away sideways with a tremulous motion. After some minutes it came tremulously back again, and the Countess de Pomar (a friend of Mrs. Ritchie) said, "Are you Lily? There is not enough light for me to identify you." The face bowed three times, then went away. After prolonged intervals it appeared two or three times more, but only for a moment each time. Once a larger face appeared for an instant, said to be the face of "Katie."

The ladies in the cabinet said they saw the spirit at full length, apparently floating in the air, and to them she appeared phosphorescent. To the witnesses outside the face of the spirit was as opaque as the faces of the mediums below, and if it could have borne a strong light, might undoubtedly have been photographed.

ANOTHER PHASE OF SPIRIT-MANIFESTATION.

It is well for the student in Spiritualism to collate and compare the various phases of spirit-manifestation with the view of seeing what light they may throw upon each other, and that we may eventually arrive at some better understanding of the laws which govern them. The experiences of Mr. Livermore, as related in Mr. Owen's new work; and Mr. Crossland's Essay on *Apparitions*, may furnish some suggestions on this head. As a further contribution, we extract a very remarkable experience from a pamphlet by the Rev. A. K. MacSorley, a clergyman of the Church of England, and published in 1865. It is entitled *An Appeal to the Clergy for the Investigation of Spiritualism, with the personal Experiences of the Writer, by one of themselves.* Among other interesting experiences narrated is the following, which we have slightly abridged.

"One evening my wife and I were invited to spend the evening with a friend, whose son was one of our mediums. There were eight of us altogether. A séance was held. A paraffin lamp was burning, and we were told by the spirit to lower the light and screen the fire; then we were bid to mark well the medium's forehead. After a short time all except one of the company saw a light in the medium's forehead.

"The light was about the size of a goose's egg across his forehead, of a dim nature not at all bright, but there it was. Shortly afterwards the medium was again made to write 'Pray.' We all knelt down, and I prayed aloud, 'O Father, grant that we all may be under a good and gracious influence, so that we may receive light and truth, that we may do nothing contrary to Thy holy will. Open our brother's eyes that he may also receive light as well as us, to Thy honour and glory, for Thy name's sake, amen.' We had no sooner risen from our knees and taken our seats, than he said, 'I also see the light.' The medium then wrote on the paper, "Thank God you have seen the spirit-light, now we shall be able to show ourselves to you." I turned up the light, and read out the paper, and then put it down again. After remaining a little longer quiet, the medium again wrote, "Mr. K., mark well the medium's action from his head to his waist, and keep very quiet." We all sat very quiet in great expectation, waiting for what was to come. We heard a great rattle like some electrical machine and the room began to tremble. The medium stood up, we could see him distinctly, he stood erect, his arms stretched out in the form of a cross; then he lifted his hand to his head, slipping his fingers through his hair some half dozen times. Presently he turned to the wall and shook hands apparently with some one, then he turned right round, and appeared to do the same with some one else, then with another also, then he appeared to embrace a fourth, then shook hands with some one else, and so on for a considerable time, as if he had been meeting with a considerable number of friends, who had all met together for some gladsome occasion. Then, after having saluted them all, he again stood quiet. We could now see from his head to his waist quite clearly; the light was clearer. Presently his appearance was changed, and there stood before us a man of about middle age, with a bushy beard of sandy colour, broad face, high cheek bones, broad full forehead, and benevolent countenance.

"He looked round with a pleased air at each of us, and then disappeared. Next came a young, pale, thin-faced man, with no beard and but very little whisker, black hair, and mild, pleasant-looking countenance. He had a pair of bands round his neck, as a clergyman would have at times. I thought I knew him, but to this day I cannot recall him to my recollection. After staying about the same time before us, he disappeared, and then a female of a most beautiful appearance took his place. She was standing as if in the attitude of prayer, with a heavenly countenance brightly beaming forth, her eyes looking upwards, and her hair nicely done up as with a coronet, but it was all hair, and she had a sweet flower at one side of her head. My

wife cried out, ‘Surely I have seen her before; is she not an actress?’ She disappeared, and the medium wrote on a bit of paper, ‘No; she was no actress, but a pure and simple-minded girl, who loved her God and her fellow-creatures. Go you and do likewise.’ I then turned up the light, read the writing, and again lowered it. The next that came was a female—one that I had good reason to know while she was in the form. As soon as she appeared the master of the house exclaimed, ‘Oh, Mr. K., is not that your daughter?’ I replied, “ You forget that my daughter is in the flesh ; she is very like her ; I know her well.” She came near to me and smiled sweetly. My wife knew her at once, having been intimate with her while in the body, and she said to her, ‘ If you are she whom I think you are, let me know.’ She drew near to her, and stooped down quite close to her, bowing her head and smiling, she stopped with us longer than any of the others, and after again bowing, disappeared. She was my first wife, and the mother of her Mr. S. thought she was so like. After she went, we saw one after another, male and female, as many as three dozen. All seemed heavenly and happy, apparently delighted that they could thus manifest themselves to us. When all had gone, the medium wrote again, “ Now, Mr. K., we have fulfilled our promise to you ; we have shown you one-third of our circle. The arrangements were not prepared for the others to show themselves. Go on and let the truth be known, and we shall always be with you. Good night.”

NO ANTECEDENT IMPOSSIBILITY IN MIRACLES. A REPLY TO MODERN OBJECTORS.*

By ALFRED R. WALLACE, F.Z.S., F.R.G.S.

THE SUPERNATURAL AND MODERN THOUGHT.

IT is now generally admitted, that those opinions and beliefs in which men have been educated generation after generation, and which have thus come to form part of their mental nature, are especially liable to be erroneous, because they keep alive and perpetuate the ideas and prejudices of a bygone and less enlightened age. It is therefore in the interest of truth, that

* This Paper was read before the London Dialectical Society, and subsequently at one of the *Winter Soirées* in the Beethoven Rooms, Harley Street. As only an extract from it is given in the *Dialectical Society Committee's Report on Spiritualism*, we publish it *in extenso*, as a fitting pendant to our review of the Report in previous numbers.

every doctrine or belief, however well established or sacred they may appear to be, should at certain intervals be challenged to arm themselves with such facts and reasonings as they possess, to meet their opponents in the open field of controversy, and do battle for their right to live. Nor can any exemption be claimed in favour of those beliefs which are the product of modern civilisation, and which have for several generations been held unquestioned by the great mass of the educated community; for the prejudice in their favour will be proportionately great, and, as was the case with the doctrines of Aristotle, and the dogmas of the schoolmen, they may live on by mere weight of authority and force of habit, long after they have been shown to be opposed alike to fact and to reason. There have been times when popular beliefs were defended by the terrors of the law, and when the sceptic could only attack them at the peril of his life. Now we all admit that truth can take care of itself, and that only error needs protection. But there is another mode of defence which equally implies a claim to certain and absolute truth, and which is therefore equally unworthy and unphilosophical—that of ridicule, misrepresentation, or a contemptuous refusal to discuss the question at all. This method is used among us even now, for there is one belief, or rather disbelief, whose advocates claim more than papal infallibility, by refusing to examine the evidence brought against it, and by alleging general arguments which have been in use for two centuries to prove that it cannot be erroneous. The belief to which I allude is, that all alleged miracles are false; that what is commonly understood by the term *supernatural* does not exist, or if it does, is incapable of proof by any amount of human testimony; that all the phenomena we can have cognizance of depend on ascertainable physical laws, and that no other intelligent beings than man and the inferior animals can or do act upon our material world. These views have been now held almost unquestioned for many generations; they are inculcated as an essential part of a liberal education; they are popular, and are held to be one of the indications of our intellectual advancement; and they have become so much a part of our mental nature, that all facts and arguments brought against them are either ignored as unworthy of serious consideration, or listened to with undisguised contempt. Now this frame of mind is certainly not one favourable to the discovery of truth, and strikingly resembles that by which, in former ages, systems of error have been fostered and maintained. The time has therefore come when it must be called upon to justify itself.

This is the more necessary, because the doctrine, whether true or false, actually rests upon a most unsafe and rotten

foundation. I propose to show you that the best arguments hitherto relied upon to prove it are, one and all, fallacious—and prove nothing of the kind. But a theory or belief may be supported by very bad arguments, and yet be true; while it may be supported by some good arguments, and yet be false. But there never was a true theory which had no good arguments to support it. If therefore all the arguments hitherto used against miracles in general can be shown to be bad, it will behove sceptics to discover good ones; and if they cannot do so, the evidence in favour of miracles must be fairly met and judged on its own merits, not ruled out of court as it is now.

It will be perceived therefore, that my present purpose is to clear the ground for the discussion of the great question of the so-called supernatural. I shall not attempt to bring arguments either for or against the main proposition, but shall confine myself to an examination of the allegations and the reasonings which have been supposed to settle the whole question on general grounds.

DAVID HUME, AND HIS FALSE DEFINITION OF A MIRACLE.

One of the most remarkable works of the great Scotch philosopher, David Hume, is *An Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, and the tenth chapter of this work is "On Miracles," in which occur the arguments which are so often quoted to show that no evidence can prove a miracle. Hume himself had a very high opinion of this part of his work, for he says at the beginning of the chapter—"I flatter myself that I have discovered an argument which, if just, will with the wise and learned be an everlasting check to all kinds of superstitious delusion, and consequently will be useful as long as the world endures; for so long, I presume, will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all history, sacred and profane."

After a few general observations on the nature of evidence, and the value of human testimony in different cases, he proceeds to define what he means by a miracle. And here, at the very beginning of the subject, we find that we have to take objection to Hume's definition of a miracle, which exhibits unfounded assumptions and false premises. He gives two definitions in different parts of his essay. The first is—"A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature." The second is—"A miracle is a transgression of a law of nature, by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent." Now both these definitions are bad or imperfect. The first assumes that we know all the laws of nature—that the particular effect could not be produced by some unknown law of nature

overcoming the law we do know; it assumes also, that if an invisible intelligent being held an apple suspended in the air, that act would violate the law of gravity. The second is not precise; it should be "some invisible *intelligent* agent," otherwise the action of galvanism or electricity, when these agents were first discovered, and before they were ascertained to form part of the order of nature, would answer accurately to this definition of a miracle. The words "violation" and "transgression" are both improperly used, and really beg the question by the definition. How does Hume know that any particular miracle is a violation of a law of nature? He assumes this without a shadow of proof, and on these words, as we shall see, rests his whole argument.

THE TRUE DEFINITION OF A MIRACLE.

Before proceeding further, it is necessary for us to consider what is the true definition of a miracle, or what is most commonly meant by that word. A miracle, as distinguished from a new and unheard-of natural phenomenon, supposes an intelligent superhuman agent either visible or invisible;—it is not necessary that what is done should be beyond the power of man to do. The simplest action, if performed independently of human or visible agency, such as a tea-cup lifted in the air at request, as by an invisible hand and without assignable cause, would be universally admitted to be a miracle, as much so as the lifting of a house into the air, the instantaneous healing of a wound, or the instantaneous production of an elaborate drawing. My definition of a miracle therefore is as follows:—"Any act or event implying the existence and agency of superhuman intelligences," considering the human soul or spirit, if manifested out of the body, as one of these superhuman intelligences. This definition is more complete than that of Hume, and defines more accurately the essence of that which is commonly termed a miracle.

HUME'S FIRST ARGUMENT A RADICAL FALLACY.

We now have to consider Hume's arguments. The first is as follows:—

A miracle is a *violation of the laws of nature*; and as a firm and *unalterable experience* has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable that all men must die; that lead cannot *of itself remain suspended in the air*; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be, that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a *violation of these laws*, or, in other words a *miracle*, to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle, if it ever happened in the *common course of nature*. It is no miracle that a man seemingly

in good health should die on a sudden ; because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle that a dead man should come to life ; because *that has never been observed in any age or country*. There must, therefore, be an uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle ; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior.

This argument is radically fallacious, because if it were sound, no perfectly new fact could ever be proved, since the first and each succeeding witness would be assumed to have universal experience against him. Such a simple fact as the existence of flying fish could never be proved, if Hume's argument is a good one ; for the first man who saw and described one, would have the universal experience against him that fish do not fly, or make any approach to flying, and his evidence being rejected, the same argument would apply to the second, and to every subsequent witness, and thus no man at the present day who has not seen a flying fish ought to believe that such things exist.

Again—painless operations in a state produced by mere passes of the hand, were, twenty-five years ago, maintained to be contrary to the laws of nature, contrary to all human experience, and therefore incredible. On Hume's principles they were miracles, and no amount of testimony could ever prove them to be real. But miracles do not stand alone, single facts opposed to uniform experience. Reputed miracles abound in all periods of history ; every one has a host of others leading up to it ; and every one has strictly analogous facts testified to at the present day. The uniform opposing experience therefore on which Hume lays so much stress does not exist. What, for instance, can be a more striking miracle than the levitation or raising of the human body into the air without visible cause, yet this fact has been testified to during a long series of centuries.

A few well-known examples are those of St. Francis d'Assisi, who was often seen by many persons to rise in the air, and the fact is testified to by his secretary, who could only reach his feet. St. Theresa, a nun in a convent in Spain, was often raised into the air in the sight of all the sisterhood. Lord Orrery and Mr. Valentine Greatorex both informed Dr. Henry More and Mr. Glanvil, that at Lord Conway's house at Ragley in Ireland, a gentleman's butler, in their presence and in broad daylight, rose into the air, and floated about the room above their heads. This is related by Glanvil in his *Sadducismus Triumphatus*. A similar fact is narrated by eye-witnesses of Ignatius de Loyola, and Mr. Madden, in his *Life of Savonarola*,

after narrating a similar circumstance of that saint, remarks that similar phenomena are related in numerous instances, and that the evidence upon which some of the narratives rest is as reliable as any human testimony can be. Butler, in his *Lives of the Saints*, says that many such facts are related by persons of undoubted veracity, who testify that they themselves were eye-witnesses of them. So we all know that at least fifty persons of high character may be found in London, who will testify that they have seen the same thing happen to Mr. Home. I do not adduce this testimony as proving that the circumstances related really took place; I merely bring it forward now to show how utterly unfounded is Hume's argument, which rests upon universal testimony on the one side, and no testimony on the other.

HUME SELF-CONTRADICTORY.

I now have to show that in Hume's efforts to prove his point, he contradicts himself in a manner so gross and complete as is perhaps not to be found in the works of any other eminent author. The first passage I will quote is as follows:—

For, first, there is *not to be found*, in *all history*, any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time attesting facts performed in such a public manner, and in so celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: all which circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance in the testimony of men.

A few pages further on we find this passage:—

There surely never was a greater number of miracles ascribed to one person, than those which were lately said to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Jansenist, with whose sanctity the people were so long deluded. The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf, and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the usual effects of that holy sepulchre. But what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were *immediately proved upon the spot*, before judges of unquestioned integrity, attested by *witnesses of credit and distinction*, in a learned age, and on the most eminent theatre that is *now in the world*. Nor is this all. A relation of them was published and dispersed everywhere; nor were the Jesuits, though a learned body, supported by the civil magistrates, and determined enemies to those opinions, in whose favour the miracles were said to have been wrought, ever able distinctly to refute or detect them. Where shall we find such a number of circumstances, agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses, but the absolute *impossibility*, or *miraculous nature* of the events which they relate? And this, surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation.

In the second passage he affirms the existence of every single fact and quality which in the first passage he declared never existed, and he entirely changes his ground of argument by appealing to the inherent impossibility of the fact, and not at

all to the insufficiency of the evidence. He even makes this contradiction still more remarkable by a note which he has himself given to this passage, a portion of which is as follows:—

This book was wrote by Mons. Montgeron, Councillor or Judge of the Parliament of Paris, a man of figure and character, who was also a martyr to the cause, and is now said to be somewhere in a dungeon on account of his book. . . .

Many of the miracles of Abbé Paris were proved immediately by witnesses before the officiality or bishop's court at Paris, under the eye of Cardinal Noailles; whose character for integrity and capacity was never contested, even by his enemies.

His successor in the archbishopric was an enemy to the Jansenists, and for that reason promoted to the see by the court. Yet 22 rectors or curés of Paris, with infinite earnestness, press him to examine those miracles, which they assert to be known to the whole world, and indisputably certain; but he wisely forebore. . . .

All who have been in France about that time have heard of the reputation of Mons. Herault, the lieutenant of police, whose vigilance, penetration, activity, and extensive intelligence, have been much talked of. This magistrate who, by the nature of his office, is almost absolute, was invested with full powers, on purpose to suppress or discredit these miracles; and he frequently seized immediately, and examined the witnesses and subjects to them: *but never could reach anything satisfactory against them.*

In the case of Mademoiselle Thibaut he sent the famous De Sylva to examine her; whose evidence is very curious. The physician declares, that it was impossible that she could have been so ill as was proved by witnesses; because it was impossible she could in so short a time have recovered so perfectly as he found her. He reasoned like a man of sense, from natural causes; but the opposite party told him that the whole was a miracle, and that his evidence was the very best proof of it. . . .

No less a man than the Duc de Chatillon, a duke and peer of France, of the highest rank and family, gives evidence of a miraculous cure performed upon a servant of his, who had lived for several years in his house with a visible and palpable infirmity.

I shall conclude with observing, that no clergy are more celebrated for strictness of life and manners than the regular clergy of France, particularly the rectors or curés of Paris, who bear testimony to these impostures.

The learning, genius, and probity of the gentlemen, and the austerity of the nuns of Port-Royal have been much celebrated all over Europe. Yet they all give evidence for a miracle, wrought on the niece of the famous Pascal, whose sanctity of life, as well as extraordinary capacity, is well known. The famous Racine gives an account of this miracle in his famous history of Port-Royal, and fortifies it with all the proofs, which a multitude of nuns, priests, physicians and men of the world, all of them of undoubted credit could bestow upon it. Several men of letters, particularly the Bishop of Tournay, thought this miracle so certain, as to employ it in the refutation of Atheists and Free-thinkers. The queen-regent of France, who was *extremely prejudiced against the Port-Royal*, sent *her own physician to examine the miracle*, who returned an *absolute convert*. In short the supernatural cure was so incontestable, that it saved, for a time, that famous monastery from the ruin with which it was threatened by the Jesuits. *Had it been a cheat, it had certainly been detected by such sagacious and powerful antagonists, and must have hastened the ruin of the contrivers.*

It seems almost incredible that this can have been written by the great sceptic David Hume, and written in the same work in which he has already affirmed that in all history no such evidence is to be found. In order to show how very remarkable the evidence is to which he alludes, I think it well to give you one

of the cases in greater detail, as recorded in the original work of Montgeron, and quoted in Mr. William Howitt's *History of the Supernatural* :—

Mademoiselle Coirin was afflicted, amongst other ailments, with a cancer in the left breast, for 12 years. The breast was destroyed by it, and came away in a mass; the effluvia from the cancer was horrible, and the whole blood of the system was pronounced infected by it. Every physician pronounced the case utterly incurable, yet, by a visit to the tomb, she was perfectly cured; and what was more astonishing, the breast and nipple were wholly restored, with the skin pure and fresh, and free from any trace or scar. This case was known to the highest people in the realm. When the miracle was denied, Mademoiselle Coirin went to Paris, was examined by the royal physician, and made a formal deposition of her cure before a public notary. Mademoiselle Coirin was daughter of an officer of the royal household, and had two brothers in attendance on the person of the king. The testimonies of the doctors are of the most decisive kind. M. Gaulard, physician to the king, deposed officially, that, "to restore a nipple absolutely destroyed, and separated from the breast, was an actual *creation*, because a nipple is not merely a continuity of the vessels of the breast, but a particular body, which is of a distinct and peculiar organisation." M. Souchay, surgeon to the Prince of Conti, not only *pronounced the cancer incurable*, but, *having examined the breast after the cure*, went of himself to the public notary, and made a formal deposition, "that the cure was perfect: that each breast had its nipple in its natural form and condition, with the colours and attributes proper to those parts." Such also are the testimonies of Seguier, the surgeon of the hospital at Nanterre; of M. Deshieres, surgeon to the Duchess of Berry; of M. Hequet, one of the most celebrated surgeons in France; and numbers of others, as well as of public officers and parties of the greatest reputation, universally known, all of whose depositions are officially and fully given by Montgeron.

This is only one out of a great number of cases equally marvellous, and equally well attested, and we therefore cannot be surprised at Hume's being obliged to give up the argument of the insufficiency of the evidence for miracles and of the uniform experience against them; the wonder being that he ever put forth an argument which he was himself able to refute so completely.

ANOTHER ARGUMENT OF HUME'S A PALPABLE FALLACY.

We now have another argument which Hume brings forward, but which is, if possible, still weaker than the last. He says:—

I may add, as a fourth reason, which diminishes the authority of prodigies, that there is no testimony for any, even those which have not been expressly detected, that is not opposed by any infinite number of witnesses; so that not only the miracle destroys the credit of testimony, but the testimony destroys itself. To make this the better understood, let us consider that, in matters of religion, whatever is different is contrary: and that it is impossible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, and Siam, and of China, should, all of them, be established on any solid foundation. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed; so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system. In destroying a rival system it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles on which that system was established; so that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts; and the evidences of these prodigies, whether weak or strong, as opposite to each other. According to this method of reasoning, when we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his successors, we have for our warrant the testimony of a few barbarous Arabians. And, on the other hand, we are to regard the authority of Titus, Livius, Plutarch,

Tacitus, and in short of all the authors and witnesses, Grecian, Chinese, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religion; I say, we are to regard their testimony in the same light as if they had mentioned that Mahometan miracle, and had in express terms contradicted it, with the same certainty as they have for the miracle they relate.

Now this argument, if argument it can be called, rests upon the extraordinary assumption that a miracle, if real, can only come from God, and must therefore support only a true religion. It assumes also that religions cannot be true unless given by God. Mr. Hume assumes, therefore, to know that nothing which we term a miracle can possibly be performed by any of the probably infinite number of intelligent beings who may exist in the universe between ourselves and the Deity. He confounds the evidence for the fact with the theories to account for the fact, and most illogically and unphilosophically argues, that if the theories lead to contradictions, the facts themselves do not exist.

I think, therefore, that I have now shown that—1. Hume gives a false definition of miracles, which begs the question of their possibility. 2. He states the fallacy that miracles are isolated facts, to which the entire course of human testimony is opposed. 3. He deliberately and absolutely contradicts himself as to the amount and quality of the testimony in favour of miracles. 4. He propounds the palpable fallacy as to miracles connected with opposing religions destroying each other.

RECENT OBJECTIONS TO MIRACLES.

We will now proceed to some of the more modern arguments against miracles. One of the most popular modern objections consists of making a supposition and drawing an inference, which looks like a dilemma, but which is really none at all.

This argument has been put in several forms. One is, "If a man tells me he came from York by the telegraph-wire, I do not believe him. If fifty men tell me they came from York by telegraph wires, I do not believe them. If any number of men tell me the same, I do not believe them. Therefore, Mr. Home did not float in the air, notwithstanding any amount of testimony you may bring to prove it."

Another is, "If a man tells me that he saw the lion on Northumberland House descend into Trafalgar Square and drink water from the fountains, I should not believe him. If fifty men, or any number of men, informed me of the same thing, I should still not believe them."

Hence it is inferred that there are certain things so absurd and so incredible, that no amount of testimony could possibly make a sane man believe them.

Now, these illustrations look like arguments, and at first

sight it is not easy to see the proper way to answer them ; but the fact is that they are utter fallacies, because their whole force depends upon an assumed proposition which has never been proved, and which I challenge any one to prove. The proposition is, that a large number of independent, honest, sane, and sensible witnesses, *can* testify to a plain matter of fact which never happened at all.

Now, no evidence has ever been adduced to show that this ever has happened or ever could happen. But the assumption is rendered still more monstrous when we consider the circumstances attending such cases as those of the cures at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, and the cases of modern scientific men being converted to a belief in the reality of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism ; for we must assume that, being fully warned that the alleged facts are impossible and are therefore delusions, and having the source of the supposed delusion pointed out, and all the prejudices of the age and the whole tone of educated thought being against the reality of such facts, yet numbers of educated men, including physicians and men of science, are convinced of the reality of the facts after the most searching investigation. Yet the assumption that such an amount and quality of independent converging evidence *can* be all false, must be proved to be a fact if the argument is to have the slightest value, otherwise it is merely begging the question. It must be remembered that we have to consider, not absurd beliefs or false inferences, but plain matters of fact ; and it cannot be proved, and never has been proved, that any large amount of cumulative evidence of disinterested and sensible men, was ever obtained for an absolute and entire delusion. To put the matter in a simple form, the asserted fact is either possible or not possible. If possible, such evidence as we have been considering would prove it ; if not possible, such evidence could not exist. The argument is, therefore, an absolute fallacy, since its fundamental assumption cannot be proved. If it is intended merely to enunciate the proposition, that the more strange and unusual a thing is the more and the better evidence we require for it, that we all admit ; but I maintain that human testimony increases in value in such an enormous ratio with each additional independent and honest witness, that no fact ought to be rejected when attested by such a body of evidence as exists for many of the events termed miraculous or supernatural, and which occur now daily among us. The burden of proof lies on those who maintain that such evidence can possibly be fallacious. Let them point out one case in which such cumulative evidence existed, and which yet proved to be false ; let them give not supposition, but proof.

Another modern argument is used more especially against the reality of the so-called spiritual phenomena. It is said, "These phenomena are so uncertain, you have no control over them, they follow no law; prove to us that they follow definite laws like all other groups of natural phenomena, and we will believe them." This argument appears to have weight with some persons, and yet it is really an absurdity. The essence of the alleged phenomena (whether they be true or not, is of no importance) is, that they seem to be the result of the action of independent intelligences, and are therefore deemed to be spiritual or superhuman. If they had been found to follow strict law and not independent will, no one would have ever supposed them to be spiritual. The argument therefore, is merely the statement of a foregone conclusion, namely, "As long as your facts go to prove the existence of distinct intelligences, we will not believe them; demonstrate that they follow fixed law, and not intelligence, and then we will believe them." This argument appears to me to be childish, and yet it is used by some persons who claim to be philosophical.

SCIENTIFIC MEN IN ERROR WHEN THEY DENY THE FACTS
OF INVESTIGATORS.

Another objection which I have heard stated in public, and received with applause, is that it requires immense scientific knowledge to decide on the reality of any uncommon or incredible facts, and that till scientific men investigate and prove them, they are not worthy of credit. Now I venture to say that a greater fallacy than this was never put forth. The subject is a very important one, and the error is a very common one, but the fact is the exact opposite of what is stated; for I assert that whenever the scientific men of any age have denied the facts of investigators on *a priori* grounds, they have *always been wrong*.

It is not necessary to do more than refer to the world-known names of Galileo, Harvey, and Jenner; the great discoveries they made were, as we know, violently opposed by all their scientific contemporaries, to whom they appeared absurd and incredible; but we have equally striking examples much nearer to our own day. When Benjamin Franklin brought the subject of lightning conductors before the Royal Society, he was laughed at as a dreamer, and his paper was not admitted to the *Philosophical Transactions*. When Young put forth his wonderful proofs of the undulatory theory of light, he was equally hooted at as absurd by the popular scientific writers of the day. The *Edinburgh Review* called upon the public to

put Thomas Gray into a straight jacket for maintaining the practicability of railroads. Sir Humphry Davy laughed at the idea of London ever being lighted with gas. When Stephenson proposed to use locomotives on the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, learned men gave evidence that it was impossible that they could go even twelve miles an hour. Another great scientific authority declared it to be equally impossible for ocean steamers ever to cross the Atlantic. The French Academy of Sciences ridiculed the great astronomer Arago, when he wanted even to discuss the subject of the electric telegraph. Medical men ridiculed the stethoscope when it was first discovered. Painless operations during the mesmeric coma were pronounced impossible, and therefore impostures.

But one of the most striking, because one of the most recent cases of this opposition to, or rather disbelief in facts opposed to the current belief of the day, among men who are generally charged with going too far in the other direction, is that of the doctrine of the "Antiquity of Man." Boué, an experienced French geologist, in 1823, discovered a human skeleton eighty feet deep in the lees or hardened mud of the Rhine. It was sent to the great anatomist Cuvier, who so utterly discredited the fact, that he threw aside this invaluable fossil as worthless, and it was lost. Sir C. Lyell, from personal investigation on the spot, now believes that the statements of the original observer were quite accurate. So early as 1715, flint weapons were found with the skeleton of an elephant in an excavation in Gray's Inn Lane, in the presence of Mr. Conyers, who placed them in the British Museum, where they remained utterly unnoticed till quite recently. In 1800, Mr. Frere found flint weapons along with the remains of extinct animals at Hoxne, in Suffolk. From 1841 to 1846, the celebrated French geologist, Boucher de Perthes, discovered great quantities of flint weapons in the drift gravels of the North of France, but for many years he could convince none of his fellow scientific men that they were works of art, or worthy of the slightest attention. At length, however, in 1853, he began to make converts. In 1859-60, some of our own most eminent geologists visited the spot, and fully affirmed the truth of his observations and deductions.

Another branch of the subject was, if possible, still worse treated. In 1825, Mr. McEnergy, of Torquay, discovered worked flints along with the remains of extinct animals in the celebrated Kent's Hole Cavern, but his account of his discoveries was simply laughed at. In 1840, one of our first geologists, Mr. Godwin Austin, brought this matter before the Geological Society, and Mr. Vivian, of Torquay, sent in a paper fully

confirming Mr. McEnergy's discoveries, but it was thought too improbable to be published. Fourteen years later, the Torquay Natural History Society made further observations, entirely confirming the previous ones, and sent an account of them to the Geological Society of London, but the paper was rejected as too improbable for publication. Now, however, for five years past, the cave has been systematically explored under the superintendence of a Committee of the British Association, and all the previous reports for forty years have been confirmed, and have been shown to be even less wonderful than the reality. It may be said that "this was proper scientific caution." Perhaps it was; but at all events, it proves this important fact, that in this, as in every other case, the discoverers have been right, those who rejected their observations have been wrong.

Now, are the modern discoverers of some phenomena usually termed supernatural and incredible, less worthy of attention than these already quoted? Let us take, first, the reality of what is called clairvoyance. The men who have observed this phenomenon, and have carefully tested it through long years or through their whole lives, will rank in scientific knowledge, and in intellectual ability, as quite equal to any observers in any other branch of discovery. We have no less than seven eminent medical men, Drs. Elliotson, Gregory, Ashburner, Lee, Herbert, Mayo, Esdaile, and Haddock, besides persons of such high ability as Miss Martineau, Mr. H. G. Atkinson, Mr. Charles Bray, and Baron Reichenbach. With the history of previous discoverers before us, is it more likely that these eleven educated persons, knowing all the arguments against the facts, and investigating them carefully, should be all wrong, and those who say *a priori* that the thing is impossible should be all right, or the contrary? If we are to learn anything by history and experience, then we may safely prognosticate that, in this case as in so many others, the disbelievers in other men's observations will be found to be in the wrong.

FALLACIES OF MR. LECKY.

We now come to the modern philosophical objectors, most eminent among whom is Mr. Lecky, author of the *History of Rationalism* and the *History of Morals*. In the latter work he has devoted some space to this question, and his clear and well expressed views may be taken to represent the general opinions and feelings of the educated portion of modern society.

He says:—

The attitude of ordinary educated people towards miracles is not that of doubt, of hesitation, of discontent with the existing evidence, but rather of absolute, derisive, and even unexamining incredulity.

He then goes on to explain why this is so :—

In certain stages of society, and under the action of certain influences, an accretion of miracles is *invariably formed* around every *prominent person or institution*. We can analyse the general causes that *have impelled men towards the miraculous*; we can show that these causes have never failed to produce the effect; and we can trace the gradual alteration of mental conditions *invariably accompanying* the decline of the belief.

When men are *destitute of the critical spirit*, when the notion of *uniform law is yet unborn*, and when their imaginations are still incapable of rising to abstract ideas, histories of miracles are always formed and always believed; and they continue to flourish and to multiply until these conditions are altered. Miracles cease when men cease to believe and expect them.

Again :—

We do not say they are impossible, or even that they are not authenticated by as much evidence as many facts we believe. We only say that, *in certain states of society, illusions of this kind inevitably appear*.

Sometimes we can discover the precise natural fact which the superstition has misread, but more frequently we can give only a general explanation, enabling us to assign these legends to their place, as the *normal expression of a certain stage of knowledge or intellectual power*; and this explanation is their refutation.

Now, in these statements and arguments of Mr. Lecky, we find some fallacies hardly less striking than those of Hume. His assertion that in certain stages of society an accretion of miracles is invariably formed round every prominent person or institution, appears to me to be absolutely contradicted by certain well-known historical facts.

The Church of Rome has ever been the great theatre of miracles, whether ancient or modern. The most prominent person in the Church of Rome is the Pope; the most prominent institution is the Papacy. We should expect, therefore, if Mr. Lecky's statement be correct, that the Popes would be pre-eminently miracle-workers. But the fact is, that with the exception of one or two very early ones, no miracles whatever are recorded of the great majority of the Popes. On the contrary, it has been generally among the very humblest members of the Romish Church, whether clergy or laity, that the power of working miracles has appeared, and which has led to their being canonized as saints.

Again, to take another instance, the most prominent person connected with the Reformed Churches is Luther. He himself believed in miracles. The whole world in his day believed in miracles—and miracles, though generally of a demoniac character, continued rife in all Protestant churches for many generations after his death; yet there has been no accretion of miracles round this remarkable man.

Nearer to our own day we have Irving, at the head of a church of miracle-workers; and Joe Smith, the founder of the miracle-working Mormons; yet there is not the slightest sign of

any tendency to impute any miracles to either of these men, other than those which the latter individual claimed for himself before his sect was established. These very striking facts seem to me to prove that there must be some basis of truth in nearly every alleged miracle, and that the theory of any growth or accretion round prominent individuals is utterly without evidence to support it. It is one of those convenient general statements which sound very plausible and very philosophical, but for which no proof whatever is offered.

THE DECLINE OF BELIEF IN MIRACLES.

Another of Mr. Lecky's statements is, that there is an alteration of mental conditions invariably accompanying the decline of belief. But this "*invariable accompaniment*" certainly cannot be proved, because the decline of the belief has only occurred once in the history of the world; and, what is still more remarkable, while the mental conditions which accompanied that one decline have continued in force or have even increased in energy and are much more widely diffused, belief has now for twenty years been growing up again. In the highest states of ancient civilisation, both among the Greeks and Romans, the belief existed in full force, and has been testified to by the highest and most intellectual men of every age. The decline which in the present century has certainly taken place, cannot, therefore, be imputed to any general law, since it is but an exceptional instance.

Again, Mr. Lecky says that the belief in the supernatural only exists "when men are destitute of the critical spirit, and when the notion of uniform law is yet unborn." Mr. Lecky in this matter contradicts himself almost as much as Hume did. One of the greatest advocates for the belief in the supernatural was Glanvil, and this is what Mr. Lecky says of Glanvil.

He says that Glanvil "has been surpassed in genius by few of his successors."

The predominating characteristic of Glanvil's mind was an intense scepticism. He has even been termed by a modern critic the first English writer who has thrown scepticism into a definite form; and if we regard this expression as simply implying a profound distrust of human faculties, the judgment can hardly be denied. And certainly it would be difficult to find a work displaying less of credulity and superstition than the treatise on *The Vanity of Dogmatising*, afterwards published as *Scepsis Scientifica*, in which Glanvil expounded his philosophical views. . . . The *Sadducisimus Triumphatus* is probably the ablest book ever published in defence of the reality of witchcraft. Dr. Henry More, the illustrious Boyle, and the scarcely less eminent Cudworth, warmly supported Glanvil; and no writer comparable to these in ability or influence appeared on the other side; yet the scepticism steadily increased.

Again Mr. Lecky thus speaks of Glanvil :—

It was between the writings of Bacon and Locke that that latitudinarian

school was formed which was irradiated by the genius of Taylor, *Glanvil*, and Hales, and which became the very centre and seedplot of religious liberty.

These are *the men* and these the *mental conditions* which are favourable to *superstition and delusion!*

The critical spirit and the notion of uniform law are certainly powerful enough in the present day, yet in every country in the civilised world there are now hundreds and thousands of intelligent men who believe, on the testimony of their own senses, in phenomena which Mr. Lecky and others would term miraculous, and therefore incredible. Instead of being, as Mr. Lecky says, an indication of "certain states of society"—"the normal expression of a certain stage of knowledge or intellectual power"—this belief has existed in all states of society, and has accompanied every stage of intellectual power. Socrates, Plutarch, and St. Augustine alike, give personal testimony to supernatural facts; this testimony never ceased through the middle ages; the Early Reformers, Luther and Calvin, throng the ranks of witnesses; all the philosophers, and all the judges of England, down to Sir Matthew Hale, admitted that the evidence for such facts was irrefutable. Many cases have been rigidly investigated by the police authorities of various countries, and, as we have already seen, the miracles at the tomb of the Abbé Paris, which occurred in the most sceptical period of French history, in the age of Voltaire and the Encyclopædistes, were proved by such an array of evidence, and were so open to investigation, that one of the noblemen of that court, convinced of their reality after the closest scrutiny, suffered the martyrdom of imprisonment in the Bastile for insisting upon making them public. And in our own day we have, at the lowest estimate, many millions of believers in modern Spiritualism in all classes of society; so that the belief which Mr. Lecky imputes to a certain stage of intellectual culture only, appears on the contrary to have all the attributes of universality.

MR. TYLOR'S OBJECTION THAT BELIEF IN MIRACLES IS AN EXAMPLE OF THE SURVIVAL OF SAVAGE THOUGHT.

The philosophical argument has been put in another form by Mr. E. B. Tylor, in a lecture at the Royal Institution, and in several passages in his other works. He maintains that all Spiritualistic and other beliefs in the supernatural, are examples of the survival of savage thought among civilised people; but he ignores the facts which compel the beliefs. The thoughts of those educated men who know, from the evidence of their own senses, that things called supernatural are true and real facts,

are as totally distinct from those of savages, as are their thoughts respecting the sun, or thunder, or disease, or any other natural phenomenon. As well might he maintain that the modern belief that the sun is a fiery mass is a survival of savage thought, because some savages believe so too; or that our belief that certain diseases are contagious is a similar survival of the savage idea that a man can convey a disease to his enemy. The question is a question of facts, not of theories or thoughts, and I entirely deny the value or relevance of any general arguments, theories, or analogies, when we have to decide on matters of fact.

Thousands of intelligent men now living know from personal observation that some of the strange phenomena which have been pronounced absurd and impossible by scientific men, are nevertheless true. It is no answer to these, and no explanation of the facts, to tell them that such beliefs only occur when men are destitute of the critical spirit, and when the notion of uniform law is yet unborn; that in certain states of society illusions of this kind inevitably appear, that they are only the normal expression of certain stages of knowledge and of intellectual power, and that they clearly prove the survival of savage modes of thought in the midst of modern civilisation.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

I believe that I have now shown—1. That Hume's arguments against miracles are full of unwarranted assumptions, fallacies, and contradictions; 2. That the modern argument of the telegraph-wire conveyance and drinking stone lion are positively no arguments at all, since they rest on false or assumed premises; 3. That the argument that dependence is to be placed upon men of science and upon them only, is opposed to universal experience and the whole history of science; 4. That the philosophical argument so well put by Mr. Lecky and Mr. Tylor, rests on false or unproved assumption, and is therefore valueless.

In conclusion, I must again emphatically declare that the question I have been discussing is—in no way whether miracles are true or false, or whether modern Spiritualism rests upon a basis of fact or of delusion,—but solely, whether the arguments that have hitherto been supposed conclusive against them have any weight or value. If I have shown, as I flatter myself I have done, that the arguments which have been supposed to settle the general question so completely as to render it quite unnecessary to go into particular cases, are all utterly fallacious, then I shall have cleared the ground for the production of

evidence, and no honest man desirous of arriving at truth will be able to evade an enquiry into the nature and amount of that evidence, by moving the previous question—that miracles are unprovable by any amount of human testimony. It is time that the “derisive and unexamining incredulity” which has hitherto existed should give way to a less dogmatic and more philosophical spirit, or history will again have to record the melancholy spectacle of men, who should have known better, assuming to limit the discovery of new powers and agencies in the universe, and deciding, without investigation, whether other men’s observations are true or false.

THE TESTIMONY OF NATURE AND OF HUMAN NATURE AGAINST THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL TORMENTS.

A Lecture. By Rev. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

I FIND the most exquisite delight in coming to the light in which we are to view the subject this evening. I never weary of the appeal to Nature; I never suspect it; I never question whether I may trust it. Nature is to me a revelation from God. It is not God’s word “written,” but God’s word transacted—God’s word vitalised. Nature is also the most *direct* revelation of God. I am in no doubt about the genesis of *it*. Whence the written word came I know not; but whence the living word came I know. Do we, then, find in Nature anything about an eternity of torment, implacable severity, and undying wrath? No; we find the very opposite. We find that though Nature is stern, she bears no grudges. She condemns not one of her children to hopeless misery. She is wonderfully forgiving: you have only to dismiss your folly and do right, and all is forgiven. The moment of your repentance is the moment of her mercy. Break her laws a hundred times, and then change your mind and obey them, and she will treat you as graciously as though you had never sinned at all. The moment you begin to do right, she will begin to bless. I do not say that all the *consequences* of wrong-doing will be swept away in a moment; all I say is, Nature knows nothing of the spirit of revenge, and gives no hint of a God who will punish eternally, and never listen to the bitter cry for help.

But, to-night, I must confine myself to *Human Nature*—

to the testimony of the human heart and the human conscience on this subject. For, if Nature is a revelation from God, Human Nature is much more clearly a revelation, speaking with more solemn sanctions, and in more penetrating tones. God made me. That is the first article of my faith; and, inasmuch as the maker is careful to leave some mark on his work that shall bear witness to himself, so I believe God has dealt with me; and I feel sure that this question of future torment is now exciting the religious world simply because the witness that God has placed in the human conscience and the human heart is speaking, and will not be still. Human Nature is asserting itself; and, in asserting itself, it is bearing witness to and for God. I know that we are imperfect and sinful beings, but the good God has not given us wholly up to evil; and He has kept alive in our souls enough of the Divine Nature we derived from Him, to make us competent judges of what is just and unjust, merciful and cruel, right and wrong. I do not care to deny that our Human Nature is a fallen Human Nature; but let any man beware how he denies that Human Nature is still a witness for Truth and God. He who denies this, runs the risk of obliterating all abiding distinctions between good and evil, because he denies that we are able to judge of what in God would be right or wrong. The foundation of all faith and morals, then, is this,—the capacity of Human Nature to distinguish between eternal good and evil. Here, then, is the standard to which we appeal;—the standard God Himself has set up in every heart; so that, in this matter, I have only to ask myself whether it possibly *can* be true. If it does not appear to me as being true; if, on the contrary, it seems to me unjust and false, I have no alternative,—I am bound to deny and reject it.

In the first place, then, I point to the fact that the doctrine of eternal torment is repugnant to Human Nature. As a matter of fact, is not the testimony of Human Nature dead against this doctrine? Is there any man anywhere who would eternally torture any one? And is it not a fact that the better we become the less inclined we are to anything of the kind? What does that great fact say, as to the revealed will of God? There is a very simple test here which really is, in itself, conclusive,—that there is scarcely a defender of the doctrine to be found who does not feel its awfulness, and who, when pressed, does not frankly declare, “I wish it were not true.” I have conversed with, perhaps, some thousands of persons who have defended the doctrine, but I think I never met with one who said—The doctrine is true, and I am *glad* of it. One of the most popular and most respectable of modern commentators, Albert Barnes, says of the difficulties Human Nature finds in believing such

doctrines as this:—"These are real, not imaginary difficulties. They are probably felt by every mind that ever reflected on the subject, and they are unexplained, unmitigated, unremoved. I confess, for one, that I feel them, and feel them more sensibly and powerfully the more I look at them and the longer I live. I do not understand these facts" (what a sorrowful thing that he was not able to go a step further, respect the leadings of God's spirit in his own nature, and utterly *deny* these supposed "facts,") —"I do not understand these facts, and I make no advances towards understanding them. I have never seen a particle of light thrown on these subjects, that has given a moment's ease to my tortured mind, nor have I an explanation to offer, or a thought to suggest, which would be of relief to you." (And mark you, this from a man who has travelled right through the land of commentators and divines !) "I confess, when I look on a world of sinners and of sufferers, upon death-beds and graveyards, upon the world of woe, filled with hosts to suffer for ever and ever, and see my friends, my parents, my family, my fellow-citizens; when I look upon a whole race, all involved in this sin and anger; when I see the great mass of them wholly unconverted; and when I feel that God only can save them, and yet he does not do it, I am struck dumb. It is all dark, dark, dark, to my soul, and I cannot disguise it." That is the testimony of an honest and earnest man. He clings to a doctrine because he thinks it revealed, but his Human Nature rebels against it; and he goes stumbling on, unable to fling it away, and yet unable to call this frightful evil, good. I respect a mind like that. I respect a mind that is oppressed with the burden of this doctrine. I sympathise with a thoughtful writer who said that this doctrine had driven many people mad, and that he very much respected those who went mad when they believed it. People who believe it *ought* to go mad. If they were in deadly earnest, if they really looked their own doctrine in the face, if they realized the tremendous fact (if fact it is,) that millions are now screaming in a hopeless hell of torment, if they realized the fact (if fact it is,) that millions more are rushing headlong to their doom, and that only the thin veil of the senses prevents us hearing the cries and seeing the tortures of the lost, if they believed and realized this, they *ought* to go mad. Shame upon their intelligence, shame upon their hearts, that they do not.

But the truth is, the doctrine is not realized. It is accepted, but it is not faced; it is held, but it is not vitally believed. A late writer has said, "I hardly like to refer to a class of Christians who apparently regard this terrible teaching with satisfaction. The sufferings of a slave excite their liveliest pity: they would make any effort to save a condemned murderer from

the gallows ; the vivisection of a poor dog would fill them with horror ; and yet they can complacently contemplate a dogma which declares the eternal torments of myriads of their fellow human beings ! I have heard it taught and advocated by those who have been sipping their wine and enjoying their dessert !” I say this is shocking, and indicates that the doctrine is not realized, and is not, therefore, vitally believed. If men believed it, they would scarcely be able to waste an hour in pleasure or repose : they would live, they would die, beseeching men to avoid the eternal wrath of God.

The testimony which I read just now, as indicating the voice of our common Human Nature, is one that has been often heard. Dean Milman, in his History of Latin Christianity, says, “To the eternity of hell torments there is and ever must be, notwithstanding the peremptory decrees of dogmatic theology—a tacit repugnance ;” and another fine mind declared that if he could see his way out of it, it would be “a prodigious relief.”

What are all these cries but the protests of Human Nature against a lie ? And how is it that, in our own day, the doctrine is crumbling to pieces in all the Churches ? and that the Unitarian, who once stood alone in denying it, has now a host of companions all round ? The New Testament is the same, the creeds are the same, the doctrines to be believed are the same. Yes, but Human Nature is not the same as to the force and energy of its testimony ; and men, driven by the sheer necessities of their own natures, are working their way out of it.

And still further, as regards this testimony of Human Nature, who is not familiar with the fact that, in the time of trouble or in the hour of death, belief in this doctrine utterly breaks down ? No phrase is more common at such a time than the phrase “ He is better off.” And it is strange that this is said of nearly every one. Indeed of *every* one, by *some* one. For the worst man, when he is dead, will have some one to bemoan him—some poor ill-used wife who, in that dark hour, will feel in her sad worn heart, the re-birth of what was once a young passion, though she had long unlearnt her early dream of love ; or some sorrowful mother who will forget all her poor boy’s wilful ways, and remember only that he was her son ; or some pitying neighbour or merciful heart who will say, even for the wickedest —“ Poor soul ! he is surely better off.” Yes, thank God, in the testing time of trouble men are wiser and more merciful than their creeds. The truth is, the doctrine cannot be carried out. The preacher in the pulpit may call upon his hearers to do this or accept that on pain of being eternally lost ; but if his hearers become hearers no more, but John and James who lie dead at home, the whole thing is changed, and the *heart* tells

the truth though it belies the creed. Now we must try to teach the people that what they give up in the time of trouble, when they are flung back upon the natural God-given emotions and instincts of the human heart, they ought to give up at other times.

I say, then, no one can consistently think by this doctrine and act by it in daily life. I ask any believer in it, whether he ever yet looked upon a man or woman on whom he could lay his hands and say—"This man or this woman will, I believe, be tortured by God in an eternal hell?" Do you think I shall be? If not, why not? I reject the doctrine of the Trinity, I hate the doctrine of salvation by shed blood, I detest the doctrines of election and reprobation, I believe none of the orthodox doctrines they say are necessary to salvation; and yet I defy you to really believe that in a few years or days, I shall begin my eternity of torment. John Milton was not a Trinitarian, Dr. Channing denied all the orthodoxies, Florence Nightingale thinks pretty much as I do, Thomas Carlyle thinks Calvinism itself deserves hell-fire, the poet Longfellow is a Unitarian, so was Charles Dickens, and so is Lloyd Garrison. Do you believe any of these will be eternally tormented? Or if you have given up the idea that men will be damned for their opinions, what do you say of the last collier or dock labourer who died drunk, and knew nothing of the way of salvation? Will he be eternally tormented? If you had the tormenting of him, would *you* never help him or let him off? The poor fellow was perhaps the child of a drunken collier or dock labourer like himself, was born into the very midst of the dirt, the poverty, the passion, and the darkness, of a drunkard's home; he had a few chances and scarcely any aid, and drink and degradation rocked his cradle and led him up to riper years. Will the just God torment *that* man for ever? What does Human Nature say to that? Why, Human Nature says that if the angels in heaven do not help that man, and if they do not spend eternity in trying to give him a chance of rising, instead of crushing and tormenting him, the angels are very ungracious beings, and sadly need some of the gracious men and women now on earth to teach them better. The fact is, the doctrine breaks down the moment you try to apply it; or if any one succeeds in really believing and applying it, he becomes a bigot and a persecutor. He then becomes honest and consistent, I admit, but he then becomes hateful and unbearable: and every man *ought* to be hateful and unbearable who believes and applies the doctrine that God will torment lost souls for ever in hell.

This leads me to note in the next place that this doctrine makes God less humane than man. I need not dwell on this;

but distinct mention of the fact is desirable. Unless all our emotions, feelings, and affections, are deceptive, we must believe that they represent the eternal realities of mercy, pity, love, and good-will: and yet we, who are so imperfect, shudder at the very thought of doing, ourselves, what is imputed to God. All modern legislation in the way of providing for punishment is becoming sober and merciful, and aims rather to reform than merely to wreak vengeance on the offender. It is only in a rude, a savage, and a stupidly indolent stage of existence, that society punishes every offence with death, and falls upon the culprit with hate and rage. As society advances, all this is altered, and punishment becomes a great art, that takes note of a thousand things that mere brute vengeance knows nothing of. Now, the doctrine of eternal and indiscriminate torture in hell belongs to a stage of civilization we have got far beyond: only, in theology and the Church, we move more slowly than in politics and the State. Hence the fact, that we have always to be punishing and striving in religion when the work is almost done in secular affairs. But this fact (for fact it is,) that the doctrine of eternal torments in hell pictures man as more humane than God, is one that is destined to tell greatly upon the public mind in aid of the coming change.

I would here interpose a few words concerning the "glorying in the Gospel," as it is called, which, in the circumstances, seems to me so shocking and repulsive. Orthodox persons, sincerely enough I doubt not, called the Gospel "good tidings;" but, though it may be that to the saved, what is it to the lost? And it seems to me that the fate of the lost ought to go a long way towards moderating the joys and the glorying of any one who believes he is among the saved. It seems to me that common humanity should lead a saint to go into heaven with a very moderate amount of glorying, if he knows that so many of his brethren are going to be eternally damned. An orthodox minister who has very lately come round to our view of the matter, puts this well. He says:—"Suppose a case in illustration. I am a poor man. I receive a letter which assures me of my being entitled to vast wealth. In the same letter it is announced, and on equal authority, that my brother, 'the son of my mother,' about whom my affections twine, whom I have learned to regard as a part of myself, is a convicted felon, is doomed to the just but galling penalty of life-long disgrace—expatriation and hard labour. Shall I go among my friends exhibiting this letter, exulting in its contents as being emphatically 'good news,' and never wearying of sounding its praises? What and if, having respect to my welfare, it so describes itself? 'Blood is thicker than water.' 'Love is stronger than death.' If my

estate might go to purchase my brother's pardon—good ; if not, it brings me no joy, and the document announcing it mine is to me no gospel. Congratulations on my inheritance are in the worst taste, for I can never contemplate my own good fortune without being reminded of his stricken, agonised, and hopeless condition." I speak of this because there has been, and is (in Churches calling themselves Christian, and on the part of men calling themselves Christian teachers), a kind of exultation, shall I say a gloating, over the idea of salvation—ay ! and of damnation, which is utterly repugnant to anything deserving the name of humanity.

I pass on now to notice, in conclusion, the most startling and serious point in this appeal to Human Nature. It is hard to see how Human Nature can endure the doctrine of eternal torments *here* ; but it is almost infinitely more difficult to see how Human Nature can do it, when purified and perfected hereafter. And yet this is what we are told is the fact ; we are even told, in every variety of affirmation and illustration, that the saved in heaven acquiesce and even glory in the damnation of the lost in hell. A popular orthodox tract says :—" The lost are tormented within sight of angels and the Lord of angels, and yet no one goes forth to their rescue." It is enough to make one say—Then the Lord keep me from ever becoming an angel, if the effect of the transformation is to give me a heart of stone ! Jonathan Edwards says :—" However the saints in heaven may have loved the damned whilst here, their eternal damnation will only serve to increase a relish of their own enjoyments." And the great modern Calvinist, Mr. Spurgeon, says :—" What will you think when the last day comes, to hear Christ say, Depart ye cursed, and there will be a voice just behind him saying, Amen ; and as you enquire whence came that voice, you will find it was your mother. Or, young woman, when thou art cast away into utter darkness, what will you think to hear a voice saying, Amen—and, as you look, there sits your father, his lips still moving with the solemn curse ?" " What will you think ?" asks Mr. Spurgeon. The question has been answered by one who, in rejecting Mr. Spurgeon's Calvinism, has been led to reject Christianity altogether :—What will the lost think when they see their sainted parents calmly acquiescing in their damnation ? " Why, that it has been their lot to be born of parents unworthy of the holy epithets of father and mother, and that one consolation in the bitter cup of agony still remained, in the fact that they were separated for ever from such heartless wretches. Is there a Christian parent who can echo this language of Mr. Spurgeon ? If so, we tell him that he is a disgrace to humanity, a blot on the age in which he lives, a hideous pest to the society

among which his lot is cast." And yet, we are told, this is what will come of being transformed into an angel! We ought to speak very plainly of these things. I take my own case. My father was a Calvinist of the hardest type; he died when I was very young, but I can remember enough of him to make me long to meet him again. I believe he would have risked his life to save me from misery. He has been in heaven now for some twenty years; and does any man mean to tell me that under the sweet ripening influences of heaven, that kind heart has so changed that if I am damned for denying all he believed, he will look on unmoved, and that, to use Mr. Spurgeon's words, when I look on his longed-for face, I shall only see his cold lips "moving with the solemn curse?" Do you mean to tell me that that is what heaven has done for my good father? Then I shall be glad to be banished from heaven, from the heaven that kills human love, from the heaven that turns beating hearts to stone, from the heaven that has turned my father into a fiend.

I want to know how you are going to explain away all that. I want to know how you are going to account for this ghastly unconcern of the angels, and this wicked selfishness of heaven? For if this doctrine be true, *all* are changed. God is changed, for He loves, and pities, and forgives no more. Christ is changed, for he no longer yearns over the miserable and despairing, and cares no longer to seek and save that which is lost. The sweet and holy souls of earth who found all their delight in doing good are changed; and our own dear friends who would have laid down their lives for us here, are changed, and changed for the worse! I want to know how you are going to account for it, so as to save heaven and the angels from eternal infamy and shame! A great Calvinist once *did* try to explain it, and this is what he said:—"God will, in mercy, extinguish the susceptibilities of the saved." In other words,—God will take away the bright love out of the mother's heart for her poor lost child, and will take out of the father's heart all care for his damned and despairing child. In other words, again, he will take from us the only things that now sanctify and bless our lives. O my God! great and gracious One, whom Jesus taught me to call my "Father"—help me never, never again to believe it! Help me to think of Thy dear redeemed children as making the Universe radiant with Thy love, and as spending eternity in redeeming it from every trace of misery and sin.

They tell me that I shall be lost for this faith,—they with their Calvinism, with their God-dishonouring and man-darkening Confession of Faith,—they tell me I shall be lost, because I will not believe that which crushes my heart, smites my reason,

and robs me of my just and loving God. Be it so. I am ready for my fate. It is no disgrace for a man to be lost, if he has done his best. The only disgrace is in being willing to win salvation at *any* price. I also desire to find my way to heaven, but there is one price I will not pay even for that,—I will not sacrifice my reason, my conscience, and my humanity ;—and, that I may become an angel, I will not be content to become a fiend.

But I fear not the result. Already I seem to see the golden light of the beautiful spirit-world ; already I seem to hear the music that fills its happy skies ; already I seem to catch a glimpse of the glorious hosts whose unceasing delight it is to help some fallen spirit to rise. O, let me but come to your sweet companionship ; make me an hired servant of the humblest messenger of mercy : let me only have the reward of "*going on*," then my heaven will be complete in the hope that, one day, hell itself will be conquered, and that a redeemed and purified humanity will fill and hallow the universe of our Father, Friend, and King.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.

IF there is any body of men who might reasonably be expected to be conspicuously free from prejudice, ever ready to welcome new discoveries, to give a fair hearing to new facts and the discussion of their issues, that body should be the Royal Society of England, instituted for "improving human knowledge." This body would seem of all others the fittest tribunal to which Mr. Crookes could submit his recent experimental investigations, and the "New Force," the existence of which he considers these investigations have established. Well, last summer, Mr. Crookes sent in a paper to the Royal Society detailing his investigations into what he considered to be a new force. This paper was returned to him, but as its rejection seemed to be the act of the Secretary rather than of the Council of the Society, Mr. Crookes sent in a second paper, most carefully stating his experiments, without entering into any speculations as to the origin of the phenomena he had demonstrated. As remarked by a contemporary, "No experiments made under such stringent conditions had ever before been submitted to the Royal Society, the care having actually been taken to add the testimony of scientific witnesses—a course not

usually supposed to be necessary." This paper was submitted to the Council of the Royal Society, and has been officially and unanimously rejected. History will surely record with regret that a Society which has done such eminent service in the advancement of knowledge, should in this instance, by its own act have brought upon itself deserved discredit in refusing to entertain the consideration of phenomena which for nearly a quarter of a century have arrested public attention throughout the world, and which certainly are deeply significant, whatever view we take of their nature and origin. It cannot be pleaded on behalf of the Royal Society that Mr. Crookes comes before it unaccredited by scientific position and attainments, for we may fairly presume that it was from their sense of his eminent fitness in these respects that they did him the unusual honour of electing him a Fellow at his first nomination, when there were only fifteen Fellows to be elected out of fifty candidates. The rejection of a paper on a subject of such grave importance, by one so well qualified to deal with it,—a paper so carefully prepared, detailing a series of experiments conducted with the utmost caution, and verified by witnesses whose competence is above suspicion, is a humiliation of science by a body which is its most conspicuous representative. But this act of the Royal Society is only the latest of a long list of illustrations that might be cited to show that it is not to learned bodies, and men of great reputation that we must look for the advancement of new and unpopular truths, which have to win public acceptance not only without their aid, and in the face of their neglect, but too often in spite of their opposition.

AN AMERICAN JOURNAL ON "PSYCHIC FORCE."

It is possible, if not probable, that Professor Crookes and his associates may have contributed to science a permanent discovery in his recent experiments with Mr. Home as a medium. It certainly has never been clearly demonstrated what is the force or element used by the will when the hand is controlled to write or strike by an individual. Voluntary actions are merely registered as one class of motions, and involuntary as another, and the moving element used as an instrnment in the former has never been clearly defined. Experiments have fully proved that it is not electricity nor magnetism, which in their natural and abstract condition are not subject to the will. That there is an element or force which is subject to the human will is also quite certain, and it may be properly termed psychic force, as the will pertains to the soul, and this element may be used by the soul while in the body to regulate its motions, and,

for aught we know, in some instances by souls when free from their bodies to control the bodies of susceptible persons whom we call mediums. There is often evidence of partial control by a foreign intelligence, and sometimes a blending of this with the mind of the medium, in which there is a mixture and comparison of ideas and actions. The element is evidently not intelligent, but is wholly or partially controlled by intelligence from some source. The professor evidently does not wait to admit the control of any foreign intelligence, while we have the best evidence of such control ; but we are not certain that he has not hit upon the very element that the soul of each person uses to control its own body, as well as that of others in the case of mediumship. Science is surely feeling her way along toward spiritual ground, and will ere long fairly plant her standard on the spiritual shore, and take observations from that point ; and the Psychic Force may be the chain that will enable her to measure over the gulf of death, which has heretofore been her barrier to further discoveries.—*Banner of Light.*

MANIFESTATIONS IN HYDE PARK HOTEL.

Mrs. Berry has a *suite* of apartments in the above hotel, and has had a cabinet constructed for the purpose of obtaining spirit manifestations in her own rooms. This cabinet is just sufficiently large for two persons to be seated in, and is enclosed by two gates, secured by a slip bolt, and a stout iron bar fastened by a padlock, of which at these *séances* Mrs. Berry keeps the key. Between these gates and a pair of outer doors is a space of seventeen inches, and in each of these doors is an aperture six inches in diameter, with a curtain inside to shut out the light. Candles are placed for the light to fall full upon these apertures, through which, when the spirits have drawn aside the curtain, hands are shown ; in the evening to which we are about to refer not only full-formed hands but baby hands were thus shown. Articles placed in the cabinet, or taken by the occult agency from the rooms, or from outside the house, whence is sometimes wholly unknown, are thrown out or handed to those present. But a manifestation of a still more remarkable kind occurred on the evening of Wednesday, January 24th. The mediums, Messrs. Herne and Williams, were in the cabinet, which was bolted, barred, and padlocked, as described. After other manifestations had occurred of the kind indicated, the mediums were thrown through the doors, or, as Mrs. Berry expressed it to us, came rolling out ; the gates, it was found on examination, remaining fastened and the iron bar undisturbed, the key of the padlock still in Mrs. Berry's pocket. On entering the adjoining room,

the heavy couch, with other articles of furniture were found turned over on the floor, without injury to them, and so noiselessly that the movements had not been heard. On the following Wednesday evening the spirits showed their power by smashing the cabinet. The seat was torn down, the gates knocked to pieces, the iron bar was bent nearly double, and the hinge which fastened it to the gate broken across. How these things were done, like many other things, is a mystery. We give the account as we had it from the lips of Mrs. Berry, and from the Rev. G. C. D., a clergyman of the Church of England, who witnessed these things. We have seen the wreck of the cabinet and the bent iron bar and broken hinge. We think it would have been impossible for the mediums to have bent the bar as we saw it, even had they been free and outside the cabinet, instead of prisoners locked up within it.

A LADY CARRIED AWAY BY SPIRITS.—WRITING ON THE SKIN.

Dr. H. Clifford Smith writes :—

On Saturday, 17th February, I went to the rooms of Messrs. Herne and Williams, 61, Lamb's Conduit-street. Eight persons were present. Having taken our seats, Mr. Williams closed the folding doors, leaving the gas burning brightly in the front room. He locked the doors, and handed the key to a lady who was present, and took his seat.

Two minutes could not have elapsed before I felt the passage of some drapery overhead, and directly afterwards all exclaimed that some person was on the table, and various conjectures were made as to who it could be. A light was obtained, when I, who was nearest to her face, recognised her as Miss Lottie Fowler. She was in a deep trance. The pulse, however, which I felt immediately, was full, but rapid and fluttering, as a person's under the influence of great excitement. Afterward this subsided, and became gradually weak and feeble, but rapid, as in a person in an extreme state of exhaustion.

During her trance, she was frequently influenced by a spirit, "Anne," who spoke distinctly in her own characteristic way, and endeavoured to describe the manner in which she was brought. She stated that her medium would sleep and remain in the trance condition until half-past eight, but that we were to continue sitting and wait for further manifestations. It would take me too long to enter into all the interesting particulars of the *séance*, or of the conversation held with "Anne." Suffice it to say that Miss Fowler with some difficulty recovered consciousness at half-past eight precisely. The time, which I carefully noted, when she was so suddenly brought into our midst was a quarter-past seven.

Miss Fowler when she awoke from her trance became greatly excited—would not credit what had happened. When she was come sufficiently to herself she gave the same account which the spirit "Anne" had previously given—to the effect that she had left her home in Keppel Street, Russell Square, at seven o'clock, proceeded to the corner of Tottenham Court Road, and there entered an omnibus going up Oxford Street, as she was on her way to Mrs. Gregory's. She felt sick, but that was all she could call to memory; she knew nothing more after that until her return to consciousness in our midst.

During her entrancement the spirit stated that Messrs. Herne and Williams were about to have a new development of mediumship, and that they would each have a name written on their hands during the evening. When a

light was obtained, each had a name written on the skin of the hand and arm in blood-red letters. The next morning Mr. Williams called to see me, and whilst we were conversing about the matter, the name of a dear friend of mine in spirit-land gradually appeared on the back of his hand.

SPIRITUALISM AT THE EAST END OF LONDON.

On Wednesday, February 21st, a company of about 200 persons sat down to tea at the Assembly Rooms, New Road, Commercial Road East, when a purse and some books were presented to Mr. Cogman, in acknowledgment of his services as a medium, who has laboured more especially at this end of London, and has thrown his house open for *séances* for the last seven years. The chair was taken by Mr. Burns, and addresses were delivered by Messrs. Shorter, Powell, Goss, and other speakers; and there was some talk of a Society of Spiritualists being formed in this part of the metropolis, where a wide field of useful work would be open to it.

SPIRITUALISM IN CHELSEA.

Modern Spiritualism has lately been the subject of discussion before the Chelsea Literary and Scientific Association. It was introduced by an Address from Mr. J. W. Jackson, who said he had lately seen a great deal of the phenomena of Spiritualism, and who gave details of many private *séances* he had attended, when heavy objects had been moved without contact, spirit-voices had been heard, direct spirit-writings had been obtained, and other phenomena had been witnessed. Mr. Coleman also related many of the remarkable incidents of his experience, and counselled the Association to appoint a committee of its members to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism, and report thereon to the Association. Dr. Carpenter has also recently lectured on Spiritualism to the Association, but his lecture had little to do with the subject, and the only novelty in it was a gross misrepresentation of one of the experiments made by Mr. Crookes, and described by him in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. This misrepresentation was exposed and corrected by Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, which had reported Dr. Carpenter's lecture, but as is too commonly the case with the newspaper press, that journal has not been so ready to give currency to the truth as to the falsehood, and it has not published Mr. Wallace's letter. Dr. Carpenter declined all discussion; he would not deign to notice a written question put before him by the chairman, and when at the close of his lecture Mr. Coleman rose to speak, Dr. Carpenter hastily decamped.

Notices of Books.

CROOKES VERSUS CARPENTER.*

MR. CROOKES has issued a temperate, dignified, and able reply to the calumnious falsehoods of the *Quarterly Review* and the smaller critics and detractors who have followed its injurious lead. The public may now learn from the pamphlet under notice how their misplaced confidence in the veracity of the *Quarterly Review* has been abused; and if Dr. Carpenter has any sense of honour or of shame, he must wince under this scathing exposure of his heedless or wilful misrepresentations. Mr. Crookes shews that in ten distinct instances the *Review* has deliberately calumniated him. We need not follow Mr. Crookes, for the superficial character of the *Quarterly Review* article and the spiteful nature of the attack on Mr. Crookes and other eminent men of science is too obvious to dwell upon. It is only the scientific position of the writer, and the literary reputation of the *Quarterly Review* which has given to it an ephemeral and factitious importance. An eminent chemist, a disbeliever in Spiritualism, in a critique on the article by Dr. Carpenter, remarks:—

My object is not to discuss the personal question whether book-making and dredging afford better or worse training for experimental inquiry than the marvellously exact and exquisitely delicate manipulations of the modern observatory and laboratory, but to protest against this attempt to stop the progress of investigation, to damage the true interests of science and the cause of truth, by thus throwing low libellous mud upon any and every body who steps at all aside from the beaten paths of ordinary investigation. The true business of science is the discovery of truth, to seek it wherever it may be found, to follow the pursuit through bye-ways and highways, and having found it, to proclaim it plainly and fearlessly, without regard to authority, fashion, or prejudice. If, however, such influential magazines as the *Quarterly Review* are to be converted into the vehicles of artful and elaborate efforts to undermine the scientific reputation of any man who thus does his scientific duty, the time for plain speaking and vigorous protest has arrived. My readers will be glad to learn that this is the general feeling of the leading scientific men of the metropolis; whatever they may think of the particular investigations of Mr. Crookes, they are unanimous in expressing their denunciations of this article in the *Quarterly*.

We hope that what has befallen Dr. Carpenter will operate as a salutary warning against that spirit of rash and reckless assertion so common among journalists in writing on Spiritualism and of those who certify to the genuineness of its phenomena, and that it will also be a lesson to Dr. Carpenter himself, bringing home to his mind the wholesome conviction that even he may not with impunity violate the commandment—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

* *Psychic Force and Modern Spiritualism: A Reply to the "Quarterly Review," and other Critics.* By WM. CROOKES, F.R.S., &c. London: LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.

Correspondence.

W. FISHBOUGH ON SPIRIT-LIFE.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—If Spiritualism be a great truth, the cause cannot advance under the shadow of untruth. Now Mr. W. Fishbough's article in the *Spiritual Magazine* for January is all very true so far as it goes in regard to dreams and clairvoyance, &c. But he endeavours to explain and account for the state of the soul emancipated from the trammels of the body by taking up an old imaginary conception of a great exaltation of power occurring to the released spirit—a change as great as when the butterfly puts off its grub state for a new and glorious existence, leaving earth and all that is earthly for its new and brighter life in the circumambient air. But which ancient conception is entirely set aside by the facts of modern Spiritualism, and clearly acknowledged to be so by all Spiritualists, showing that all progress is gradual, and that the emancipated spirit is hence in its first stage not very different from what it was during its life in the body. But what says Mr. Fishbough? “The spiritual state and world therefore, we repeat, is precisely that which we all know as the dream-state and world, with this important difference, that the former is disentangled from all those phantasms, inconsistencies, incoherencies, and insanities which, owing to bodily connections, characterise ordinary dreams, and the soul is free, lucid, operative in all its faculties, and exists in a sphere appropriate to its abstract nature, and entirely disengaged from the outer sphere of life.” Now such a statement entirely ignores the facts of Spiritualism, for he would have us believe that certain exceptional exaltations of power, such as are exhibited in clairvoyance, would on the soul's release immediately become the permanent nature, and as in Milton's distinction between angels and men, instinct would take the place of reason; but no spirit has yet shown this permanent exaltation of power and lucidity. The most marvellous part of the dream, and its more special character—at least in regard to my own dream—is that which is creative and visionary: in the most clear complete perception of the things imagined; for instance, the most distinct perception—all at once—of original and varied patterns in form and colour of all the objects in a room—for instance, the pattern of the carpet, furniture, curtains, the paper of the wall, &c., and certainly not the transcript of anything I have ever actually seen; and the whole seen at once and with a distinctness as to impress me with astonishment on first waking and recalling the fact, but the images mostly fade away before the real impressions of the actual; but on some occasions such perceptions have remained sufficiently long for me to produce the same in drawing and colours, and which may have some bearing of the source of what is called spirit-drawing, and indeed of all that is actually original in design, and touching upon what is called inspiration, but which is a phase of the dream that Mr. Fishbough has not noticed.

H. G. A.

“MR. BREVIOR'S REPLY.”—A BRIEF REJOINDER BY THE REV. J. JONES.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—Mr. Brevior has exercised an undoubted right in criticising my sermon, nor can I complain of the tone in which he has written; but having carefully read his article, I am bound to say that I am of the same opinion still; while, to some of his assertions and deductions, I must altogether demur. I will do so, in as condensed a form as I am able—both for my own sake and yours, Mr. Editor.

1.—*The sermon is said to have resulted in calling attention to Spiritualism.*

True; but also in winning numbers of persons to regard Spiritualism as the work of demons. I have proof of this, which Mr. Brevior has not.

2.—*Mr. Brevior represents Spiritualism as prohibited only to Jews.* But if it was a sin before Jewish times, then it was prohibited to those who were not Jews; and if it is likewise prohibited after Jewish times, it is a sin still. In proof of the former, it was the crime of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, and for which they were exterminated (Deut. xviii., 9—14). In proof of the latter, the Christian Church is enjoined to avoid the demon-worship or necromancy of the heathen (1 Cor. x., 20).

3.—The reference to 1 John iv., 1, does not apply to Spiritualism—the testing of the spirits is not in reference to the two classes of human souls departed this life, but to *God's Divine Spirit* on the one hand, and Satan on the other, as acting through the Prophets, hence the second verse—"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God."

4.—Mr. Brevior asserts that the Bible distinguishes between lawful and unlawful spirit-communion. We reply that the Bible has in no single instance authorised communion with departed human souls, *either good or bad*. The only spiritual communion it enjoins is with the Great Spirit Himself. Every prohibition of necromancy is in regard simply to the **DEAD**, irrespective of their character.

5.—*Vegetarianism and Celibacy.*—Mr. Brevior charges me with straining the point, because such practices are not universal among Spiritualists, but in my sermon I have distinctly stated that it was yet in its "*incipient stage*." Of this I furnish the proof, and there is then no straining of the case.

6.—*Demons described as Frogs.*—In reply to this I would beg to remind Mr. Brevior that I quoted the symbolic language of the Bible (Rev. xvi., 13). The reference to "frogs" is intended to point out the moral *uncleanness* of the demons. As to their gathering earthly kings to battle, we have a precedent in the case of Ahab—quoted in my sermon.

7.—*The Doctrine of Immortality.*—Mr. Brevior intimates that I underrate the significance of the theory. If he will refer to the passage in the sermon he will see that I have guarded against this by specifying "mere *abstract* belief," as of little worth. In proof of this, our jails and haunts of crime are filled with those who believe that there is a future, but it exerts but little influence upon them.

8.—*The Kingdom of Satan Divided.*—In claiming that evil spirits teach morality, &c., I am said to represent a divided state of things, such as was portrayed by Christ when he spoke of devils being cast out by Beelzebub: but the cases are not parallel, for this teaching of morality, &c., in order to thereby lead to the ensnaring of men, is not an act of *division* on the part of evil spirits, but one in which they are all *agreed*. Hell concurred in Satan (according to the Apostle) transforming himself into an angel of light, as an act of imposture to suit their ends. North and South America at war was a divided kingdom; but North and South agreeing to despoil England in any way is union on their part. In this sense hell is ever united in all its tricks and impostures.

9.—*The Treatment of Evil Spirits.*—Mr. Brevior introduces a narrative in order to advocate kind treatment towards demons. If any personage in this world knew how best to deal with them, it was Jesus Christ. How did he act? He rebuked them and unceremoniously ejected them from human beings, and in no single instance did he deal gently with them, and that because they were hopelessly lost and hopelessly bad.

10.—*As to the Question of Apostacy.*—Let me say that while reserving the right of freedom of conscience and of private judgment, yet the Christian Church in all its branches and in all ages agrees substantially in these points, which Spiritualism casts aside or tramples under foot.

I conclude by again most urgently and respectfully warning my fellow-men of the soul-destroying results of this modern necromancy, for it is altogether the **WORK OF DEMONS**.

JOHN JONES.