

THE
Spiritual Magazine.

APRIL, 1872.

MR. ALFRED R. WALLACE ON EXPECTANT ATTENTION AND POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS, AND ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MESMERIC AND SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

IN the *Academy*, February 15th, is an able review of a work by Edward B. Tylor on *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art and Custom*. Mr. Wallace analyses these two volumes, and examines their leading positions with a keenness of logic, a comprehensiveness of grasp and critical acumen which goes to the heart of the question in dispute. He points out that—

“The minute anatomy of the brain has been long ago exhaustively investigated, while the comparative study of its form and size in different races and individuals has been carried on by means of extensive collections of crania and casts; yet, although the brain is almost universally admitted to be the organ of the mind, by neither of these lines of research nor by any combination of them, have any definite conclusions been arrived at as to the relation of the brain to the various mental faculties. Up to the present day our physiologists dispute as to whether the forehead or the occiput is the seat of the intellect, yet they scout the idea of giving up their hitherto barren line of investigation in favour of that experimental method of comparing function with development—which, the much-abused phrenologists maintain, leads to complete success. Equally unsatisfactory is the practice of leaving out of view, in theories of mental development, the numerous well-established cases of abnormal mental phenomena which indicate latent powers in man beyond those usually recognized. These are looked upon as obscure diseases of the nervous system, and although their occurrence is very rare to individual experience, the records of them are now sufficiently

voluminous to furnish comparable cases to almost all that occur. They can thus be grouped into classes, and this fact, of each one forming an item in the group of analogous cases, is supposed to preclude the necessity of any attempt at a rational explanation of them. This is the method very largely adopted by Mr. Tylor, who in treating of the beliefs, customs, or superstitions of mankind, seems often to be quite satisfied that he has done all that is required when he has shown that a similar or identical belief or custom exists elsewhere."

On the question of the essential unity of mankind Mr. Wallace remarks:—

"One of the most important results of Mr. Tylor's researches and that which is most clearly brought out in every part of his work, is, that for the purpose of investigating the development of man's mental nature race may be left out of the question, and all mankind treated as essentially one. If we accept this as the result of a long and, as far as this particular question is concerned, almost exhaustive study, it forms a powerful argument against the polygenetic school of anthropology; for had the several races of man been derived from several distinct animal forms, or in any other independent way, it is hardly possible to conceive that no fundamental differences whatever should be exhibited in the nature and quality of their mental faculties."

But what will perhaps most interest our readers is the observations of Mr. Wallace concerning "Animism," or the Doctrine of Souls; with which more than half Mr. Tylor's work is occupied. We quote this part of the article entire:—

"We are overwhelmed with elaborate details of the endlessly varied ideas and beliefs of men as to the soul, spirits, and gods. We are constantly told that each such belief or idea "finds its place," with the implication that it is thus sufficiently accounted for. But this capacity of being classified necessarily arises from the immense variety of such beliefs and from the fact that they are founded on natural phenomena common to all races, while the faculties by which these phenomena are interpreted are essentially the same in every case. Any great mass of facts or phenomena whatever can be classified, but the classification does not necessarily add anything to our knowledge of the causes which produced the facts or phenomena. We find at times great looseness of statement when Mr. Tylor attempts to account off-hand for superstitions. He tells us, for example, that when the devil with horns and hoofs and a tail had once become a fixed image in the popular mind, 'of course men saw him in this conventional shape.' Now this general statement is simply not true. In the records of witchcraft trials it will be found that witches generally described the devil as 'a man'—'a dark man'—'a

black man'—'a gentleman in black clothes'—'a gentleman richly dressed,' and seldom, if ever, as appearing in the full conventional form. The theory of expectant attention determining the form taken by a delusion does not cover these facts, and this is even more strikingly shown by another discordance of a similar nature. It is certainly a popular belief that the devil is hot, and that his touch burns. Yet the witches, whether in Scotland, England, or France, almost invariably describe him as cold to the touch; and this statement, so often made by persons who could have had no knowledge of what others had said, curiously agrees with the phenomenon described by modern Spiritualists, of a cold wind passing over the hands during a *séance*. Such a correspondence of testimony in a direction exactly opposed to popular belief points to some substratum of unrecognised facts even in witchcraft, and it is not satisfactory to find the value of this testimony misstated to make it fit in with a foregone conclusion. A recognition of the now well-established phenomena of mesmerism would have enabled Mr. Tylor to give a far more rational explanation of were-wolves and analogous beliefs than that which he offers us. Were-wolves were probably men who had exceptional power of acting upon certain sensitive individuals, and could make them, when so acted upon, believe they saw what the mesmeriser pleased; and who used this power for bad purposes. This will explain most of the alleged facts without resorting to the short and easy method of rejecting them as the results of mere morbid imagination and gross credulity. Again, we are told that "the ghost or phantasm seen by the dreamer or visionary is like a shadow, and thus the familiar term of the *shade* comes in to express the soul." But the dreamer sees what appear real substantial bodies, not shadows or images; and it is only the waking seer who, by seeing other objects through the phantasms or by testing their unsubstantiality by means of touch, can arrive at the conclusion that they are of a spiritual or shadowy nature. So, the general belief in the ghost of a man being seen in or near the house where he lived, is not at all accounted for by dreams, which are bound by no limits of locality, and generally show persons in the most incongruous places. Accounts of the other world seen in visions are said to be 'just what the seer has been taught to expect;' but at p. 47, vol. ii. the seer is *surprised* to find the tress, shrubs, and paths such as she had been used to on earth. It was not therefore what she had been 'taught to expect;' and the remark becomes both valueless and misleading instead of helping us to understand how such visions originate.

"Although the details given on these subjects are so nume

rous and so heterogeneous as to be wearisome in the last degree, they are yet altogether one-sided. They have been amassed with one object and selected no doubt unconsciously, so as to harmonize with the *à priori* convictions of the writer. All narratives tending to prove that anything which goes under the general term supernatural really exists as facts, are either entirely omitted, or just mentioned in such a manner as to imply that they are necessarily impostures or delusions, and therefore unworthy of discussion. There is however on record a mass of facts or alleged facts ranging through every period of history down to the present day, and going to prove that the so-called supernatural is not all delusion, and that many of the beliefs of all ages classed as superstitions, have at least a substratum of reality. In the works of Dr. Kerner, Ennemoser, Görres, and Dale Owen, and in Mr. Howitt's *History of the Supernatural*, are collections of these facts which, although by no means exhaustive, are yet far more extensive than those Mr. Tylor has cited to support his argument; while many of them are so thoroughly well established that they cannot be explained away. It is therefore at least a possible solution of the problem of animism, that the uniformity of *belief* is due in great part to the uniformity of the underlying *facts*; and a work on the development of religion and mythology should fairly grapple with the question, 'How much of truth is at the bottom of the so-called superstitious beliefs of mankind?' But our author avoids all such inconvenient enquiries by means of his infallible nostrum. A fact or a belief occurring once only might require explanation, but if a second or an analogous fact or belief can be found elsewhere, the whole thing becomes clear. 'Second sight,' for instance, occurs among savages as well as in Scotland. Nothing more is required, according to Mr. Tylor, to prove that it has no existence at all, except as a mere 'belief.' Those curious phenomena which have been recently investigated by Mr. Crookes and other Fellows of the Royal Society, and which are declared to be realities by members of the French Institute, by American judges and senators, and by many medical and scientific men in this country, are treated in exactly the same way. Something closely related to them is recorded by classical writers, and occurs now among savage tribes. It is therefore clearly a case of 'survival of old beliefs,' and no further notice need be taken of it. Mr. Tylor even goes so far as to say that for his purpose it really matters little whether they are true or not. In order to arrive at true results as to the origin, nature, and development of men's beliefs, it matters not whether their foundation is fact or imagination! This belief of Mr. Tylor seems to the present writer as com-

pletely an hallucination as any to be found recorded in his volumes.

“It is pertinent to recall the fact that even matters of pure science, when they have run strongly counter to popular opinion, have been treated just as Mr. Tylor treats superstitions. Less than twenty years ago the evidence for the antiquity of man was in this category. It was then ignored or sneered at as beneath discussion. It was treated just as if it were an ‘epidemic delusion;’ yet every iota of it turned out to be fact, and fact of the highest importance and of surpassing scientific and human interest. This was a purely scientific question, but there is another which had all the aspect and characteristics of a superstitious delusion, and was yet a truth. About twenty-eight years ago the phenomena of insensibility to pain in the mesmeric trance attracted attention. Experiments of this kind were often exhibited in public, and most painful surgical operations were performed on subjects who manifested no indications of feeling. The present writer well remembers the universal shout of indignation at these experiments. They were declared to be gross impostures or delusions from beginning to end. The apparent unconsciousness was all sham, and the medical men who performed the operations, and gave a detailed account of them, were accused of being parties to the imposture, and even of having bribed the patients. It took many years to establish this fact, of insensibility to the most excessive stimuli and the most intense pain produced without the use of any drug or any violence; but it was established. It remains, however, a fact of which modern science can give no intelligible account, and which it therefore ignores as much as possible.

“These examples (and many others might be adduced) should teach us, that it is unsafe to deny facts which have been vouched for by men of reputation after careful enquiry, merely because they are opposed to our prepossessions. A work like the present, one-sided though it be, furnishes much evidence to support the views of those who maintain that a considerable portion of the so-called superstitions of mankind repose upon facts; that these facts have been almost always misunderstood and misinterpreted in past ages, as they are now by the ignorant and among savages; and that, until they are recognised as possible realities, and studied with thoroughness and devotion and a complete freedom from foregone conclusions, it is hopeless to expect a sound philosophy of religion or any true insight into the mysterious depths of our spiritual nature.”

In reply to a communication of Mr. Tylor in *Nature*, February 20th, Mr. Wallace replies in that journal of March 10th:—

“Mr. Tylor suggests that the phenomena that occur in the

presence of what are called mediums, are or may be of the same nature as the subjective impressions of persons under the influence of a powerful mesmeriser. Five-and-twenty years ago I was myself a practised mesmeriser, and was able to produce on my own patients almost the whole range of phenomena which are exhibited in public as illustrative of 'mesmerism' or 'electro-biology.' I carried on numerous experiments in private, and paid especial attention to the conditions under which the phenomena occur. During the last seven years I have had repeated opportunities of examining the phenomena that occur in the presence of so-called 'mediums,' often under such favourable conditions as to render trick or imposture simply impossible. I believe, therefore, I may lay claim to some qualifications for comparing the mesmeric with the mediumistic phenomena with especial reference to Mr. Tylor's suggestion, and I find that there are two great characteristics that broadly distinguish the one from the other.

" 1.—The mesmerised patient never has *doubts* of the reality of what he sees or hears. He is like a dreamer to whom the most incongruous circumstances suggest no idea of incongruity, and he never inquires if what he thinks he perceives harmonises with his actual surroundings. He has, moreover, lost his memory of what and where he was a few moments before, and can give no account, for instance, of how he has managed to get out of a lecture-room in London, to which he came as a spectator half an hour before, on to an Atlantic steamer in a hurricane, or into the recesses of a tropical forest.

" The assistants at the *séances* of Mr. Home or Mrs. Guppy are not in this state, as I can personally testify, and as the almost invariable *suspicion* with which the phenomena are at first regarded clearly demonstrates. They do not lose memory of the immediately preceding events; they criticise, they examine, they take notes, they suggest tests—none of which the mesmerised patient ever does.

" 2.—The mesmeriser has the power of acting on 'certain sensitive individuals' (not on 'assemblies' of people, as Mr. Tylor suggests), and all experience shows that those who are thus sensitive to any one operator are but a small proportion of the population, and these almost always require previous manipulation with passive submission to the operator. The number who can be acted upon without such previous manipulation is very small, probably much less than one per cent. But there is no such limitation to the number of persons who simultaneously see the mediumistic phenomena. The visitors to Mr. Home or Mrs. Guppy all see whatever occurs of a physical nature, as the records of hundred of sittings demonstrate.

“The two classes of phenomena, therefore, differ fundamentally; and it is a most convincing proof of Mr. Tylor’s very slender acquaintance with either of them, that he should even suggest their identity. The real connection between them is quite in an opposite direction. It is the mediums, not the assistants, who are ‘sensitives.’ They are almost always subject to the mesmeric influence, and they often exhibit all the characteristic phenomena of coma, trance, rigidity, and abnormal sense-power. Conversely, the most sensitive mesmeric patients are almost invariably mediums. The idea that it is necessary for me to inform ‘Spiritualists’ that I believe in the power of mesmerisers to make their patients believe what they please, and that this ‘information’ might ‘bring about investigations leading to valuable results,’ is really amusing, considering that such investigations took place twenty years ago, and led to this important result — that almost all the most experienced mesmerists (Prof. Gregory, Dr. Elliotson, Dr. Reichenbach, and many others) became Spiritualists! If Mr. Tylor’s suggestion had any value, these are the very men who ought to have demonstrated the subjective nature of mediumistic phenomena; but, on the contrary, as soon as they had the opportunity of personally investigating them, they all of them saw and admitted their objective reality.”

BIBLE SPIRITUALISM.

THERE seems to be a growing controversy between Bible and anti-Bible Spiritualism in England, with some danger of sectarian odium and intolerance. This does not promise to be directly useful to the cause of Spiritualism as a mission of religious evolution.

Christian Spiritualists should remember that neither the Romanists nor Protestant churches have been able during the present century to convert unbelievers to the religion of the Bible, nor to a belief in the existence of a future life; and that anti-Bible Spiritualists, entrusted with a special mission, have converted within the last twenty years hundreds of thousands, and possibly several millions of unbelievers or so-called Atheists, to a belief in the continuous existence of disembodied human spirits and the immortality of the soul. This is a magnificent result, achieved by spirits in the other world influencing certain mediums in this, who were themselves in sympathy with anti-Bible rationalistic modes of thought.

The reasoning faculties of this class of minds are on a lower phase of religious understanding than that of Bible Spiritualism, though hardly inferior in any sense to the irrational theology of nearly all the religious sects of Christendom, Roman, Lutheran, or Calvinist. It is the Bible Spiritualism of these sectarians which is so highly offensive to the anti-Bible class of modern Spiritualists, and causes them to feel a strong antipathy for all sects of Christianity, and even for the Bible itself, so often and perversely invoked by these dogmatic and intolerant sects. Moreover it is this so-called rationalistic antipathy to the Bible itself and to all sects of Christians, which gives a marked preference to missionaries of modern Spiritualism amongst the most unbelieving class of minds. We Bible Spiritualists should appreciate this anti-Bible mission for what it is worth, and not feel angry with its want of higher understanding, which higher plane of reason, is beyond the present reach of such a class of minds, and if applied to them would be utterly incomprehensible.

Our advice then is, that Bible Spiritualists learn to tolerate and even to appreciate the modes of thought of anti-Bible Spiritualists for the sake of the good which the latter can do, where the former are powerless. Let each class of minds find work for itself where the harvest is ripe and the reapers are few.

We do not wish to insinuate that Bible Spiritualists are not to think for themselves, and even criticise the views of all sects and parties, and from this point of view we may offer a few observations on the divergent sects of modern Spiritualism. There are two distinct classes of mind busy in the movement, and two sects in each of these, namely:—

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| Bible Spiritualists | } | 1. Reincarnationists. |
| | | 2. Anti-reincarnationists. |
| Anti-Bible Spiritualists | } | 1. Free-lovers. |
| | | 2. Anti-free lovers. |

In France the reincarnationists of the school of the late Allan Kardec are very numerous, while they are very few in England; in America the free-lovers are said to be very numerous amongst anti-Bible Spiritualists, while they are very few in England, and indeed we may say would not be tolerated in society. Free-lovers and reincarnationists being out of the question in England, the dissidence is between Bible and anti-Bible Spiritualists, and this difference of opinion is open to controversy with or without intolerant bigotry or enmity, on either side.

Dupuis, Volney, Voltaire, Paine, Godfrey Higgins, Andrew Jackson Davis, and many others are accepted luminaries of anti-Bible Spiritualists, in opposition to the Bible, as a divine revelation and a religious authority. Some of them admit the God of nature as divine authority, and these are called Deists,

while others deny that there is a God of justice and benevolence in nature, or such a God could never have created tape-worms, and hundreds of other parasitical torments of the human body; not to mention rattle-snakes and tigers to worry and devour harmless creatures.

The God of Nature has certainly created some strange creatures, and the God of the Bible revealed some strange things, and human reason must endeavour to understand the motives of divine reason in all such cases; but certain minds revolt against the horrors of these things, and say they cannot be divine, they must be diabolical; as if that made any difference to the problem to be solved.

Dupuis, Volney, Voltaire, and Paine were learned men, we know, because we have read some of their works; Godfrey Higgins may be very learned for ought we know, we have not read his works. Andrew Jackson Davis is a very good man, with a frank and friendly bearing, as far as we knew of him in New York City, where we sometimes met him in society in 1856, 7, and 8; but he is not a learned man, though a medium for some learned spirits, who have impressed him to write books on various topics, in a copious and popular style very acceptable to many unlearned readers, though superficial and tedious to those who know more than the writer on questions of purely natural science.

Andrew Jackson Davis has no doubt been used as an instrument to convert Atheists to a belief in the immortality of the soul, and the existence of a spiritual world; and his own natural state of mind fits him for this mission. He told me himself, that the Bible has become stale and unprofitable spiritual food for mankind; that new spiritual food is necessary for the regeneration of the human race. He does not understand the Bible—not many do, perhaps. His mind is not capable of understanding very deep spiritual truths. I told him so, on one occasion; in consequence, of which, he said, as we were leaving the house, that he had a crow to pluck with me. I told him to choose his own time, but I have heard nothing from him since. Perhaps he will do it now. He will remember the occasion in the winter of 1857-8, when Mr. Alcott came to New York, and we were all invited to meet him at the house of a gentleman whose name I forget, but who was a dentist by profession.

I hope Mr. A. J. Davis will feel inclined, because I see in the *Medium* of February 23rd, and March 1st, that a letter on "The Parentage of Jesus and Free-love" indignantly blamed by Mr. Gerald Massey, has called forth a profession of faith from the editor, in which he reiterates in his own way the faith he has long maintained, and which being duly analysed

amounts to this,—there is no God but God, and Andrew Jackson Davis is his prophet.

A controversy on this subject would perhaps be useful in clearing to some extent, the mental atmosphere of modern Spiritualism.

HUGH DOHERTY, M.D.

Paris, March 3, 1872.

SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN LONDON.

UNDER date of March 12, 1872, Mr. Samuel Guppy, of 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, writes:—

“On the 4th inst., I accompanied my wife to Mr. Hudson, photographer, 177, Palmer Terrace, Holloway Road, to have her picture taken for some *cartes de visite*. After her sitting was finished I asked her to try an experiment, to see if I could get a spirit-photograph. I arranged the drapery, sitting myself in front of the screen of black cloth, my wife being behind it. While so sitting, waiting for Mr. Hudson to bring the prepared plate, a wreath of artificial flowers was placed on my head. Mr. Hudson brought the plate, took and developed the picture which showed a draped figure, in white, standing behind me. My wife was dressed entirely in black, and neither she nor I had any idea of trying for spirit-photographs when we went to Mr. Hudson; in fact, the idea only entered my head five minutes before I put it in execution. We tried again, and got another curious figure of white drapery, with an opening in it resembling the ace of spades. The third time we tried I arranged the drapery so that instead of one large background two curtains met. This time the black curtain appears to have been drawn aside, and there is white drapery with a dark place in the centre.

“Two days after, Mr. Hudson had sent me the proofs, and Miss Houghton called on my wife and seeing the proofs, begged her to step over with her to Mr. Hudson’s and make a trial. Three pictures were taken of Miss Houghton. In the first there is a veiled figure behind Miss H., and a spirit-hand near Miss H.’s shoulder; in the second there is a veiled figure, in which there are indistinct traces of a face; in the third there is no figure; but Miss H. felt her hairpin (a tortoiseshell, with a cross) removed, and above her head are three illuminated points representing a cross.

“As far as I know, these are the first positively and indubitably spirit-photographs taken in this country. They are

neither very handsome nor very perfect, but they show a spirit-power of acting on the salts of silver much stronger than anything I have seen from America. Mr. Hudson will show the pictures to any person who calls on him."

We have also received the following letter with the photographs referred to, and which correspond with the description given :—

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

20, Delamere Crescent, W., March 11th, 1872.

SIR,—I went on Thursday, March 7th, to Mrs. Guppy's, and in the afternoon Mr. Guppy showed me three photographs, and told me that the spirit who usually converses audibly with them, had given particular instructions as to the needful arrangements to be made, which they had carried out at the photographic studio of Mr. Hudson, which is very near their own residence, and those photographs were the result of their first trial. Mrs. Guppy was in a kind of extemporised dark cabinet, behind Mr. Guppy, who, while sitting in readiness to be photographed, (of course in the full light of day), felt a wreath of flowers lightly placed upon his head, and so the portrait was taken, while a large veiled figure is seen standing behind him. I believe they were artificial flowers which Mr. Hudson had in his room for the use of any sitter who might wish for such an ornament. In the other two photographs there are also gleaming white figures to be seen behind Mr. Guppy, but not very defined.

Mr. Guppy then suggested that as it was such a fine afternoon, we might as well go over to Mr. Hudson's, and make the experiment with me as the sitter. Mrs. Guppy was not very well, and therefore feared the attempt would be useless, but my spirit friends urged it, so Mr. Guppy and I started immediately to get everything ready, leaving Mrs. Guppy to follow us, and she arrived at the very moment that she was wanted. While Mr. Hudson was in his dark room preparing the plate, she told me that after I had come away, she had had a message from the spirit to the effect that mamma would try to manifest herself, and to place her hand on my shoulder. Of course as soon as Mr. Hudson began to develop his negative, we questioned eagerly whether there was anything to be seen on it, and hearing that there was, went in to see as soon as we could be admitted without risk of damaging it by letting in the light; and behind me there is a veiled figure with the hand advanced almost to my shoulder; there is also behind the hand, a glimpse of a face belonging to another spirit, but being out of focus, it is not very distinguishable, although I do recognise it.

A second plate was then prepared—and there, within a brilliant light appear two figures as far as the bust, but the

brightness of the light has probably prevented them from being defined, so that it was only by studying them with a powerful magnifying glass that I have been able to identify them as papa and mamma, thus united as it were in one medallion. The form of the light which is somewhat of an oval, reminded me of the first experiences of the gifted medium Dr. Willis, that I heard him relate on the occasion of his public reception at the Spiritual Institute, Southampton-row. He then told us that one night when going into his own room he had seen a bright, egg-shaped light, which gradually increased in size, and then seemed to open, when within it he saw his mother, as far down as the waist; she then spoke to him, giving him some family details of which he knew nothing, but afterwards ascertained the truth of them from his grandmother, and he was thus convinced of the reality of a spirit-world.

We asked Mr. Hudson to prepare another plate, but while he was doing it, we heard raps, and received a negative in answer to our desire for another spirit photograph, and notwithstanding my pleading, we were told that there would not be another, but I still wished to try, and asked if I was wilful in making the attempt, to which the answer was a brisk *yes*. But the plate had been got ready, and I was very anxious for the appearance of one of my two little baby sisters, whose birthday it was, and I felt the dear little hands playing about my head, and just as Mr. Hudson was focussing me, I felt the tortoise-shell dagger withdrawn from my head, and as he again covered the lens after taking the negative, the dagger was dropped into my lap. On our questioning Mr. Hudson as to the result, he said:—"There is no spirit—but in the air, above the head, I see a cross." I then explained to him what it was, and, as he had not noticed it, I gave it to him to look at when we joined him in his sanctum.

You may imagine how anxious I was to receive the proofs, which came to me on Saturday night, and I enclose you one of each, so that you may possess the earliest English specimens. They are not very successful as far as my portrait is concerned, for it was so late in the day that the lights and shadows are unsoftened by half-tints, but I consider that they each have a great value for their spiritual significance: the first, for the clearly defined *hand*, the symbol of *power*, thus implying that this phase of manifestation will do a great work for Spiritualism. In the second, the complete union of the true husband and wife exemplifies the happiness to be attained by those who have led unsullied lives; while the third contains a test for the sceptical, the dagger being, as it were, self-sustained in the air, although from the background being black (by the direction of the spirits),

the dark tortoise-shell is not very visible, except for the bright gleams of light on the three balls, and on the hilt-guard.

GEORGIANA HOUGHTON.

We may here add that the manifestation of spirit-faces at Mr. Guppy's house, referred to in our last number, has again been witnessed; they appear with increasing distinctness, and one is said to be the same as that of the draped figure on the photographs of Mr. Guppy.

MR. G. H. LEWES ON DICKENS.

DICKENS possessed singularly sensitive spiritual faculties. He lived in an atmosphere uncongenial to the development of his gifts, and he probably regarded them with some suspicion himself; but his writings afford ample evidence that he was wiser than he knew and in his conversation he frequently described experiences which proved how open were his relations with the other world. Than Mr. G. H. Lewes there is not perhaps among our contemporaries an author with a more decided aversion to Spiritualism; the dictionary does not appear to contain terms sufficiently emphatic for his scorn and contempt; yet in an article entitled "Dickens in relation to Criticism," in the *Fortnightly Review* for February, he has to testify that—

"Dickens once declared to me that every word said by his characters was distinctly *heard* by him. I was at first not a little puzzled to account for the fact that he could hear language so utterly unlike the language of real feeling, and not to be aware of its preposterousness; but the surprise vanished when I thought of the phenomena of hallucination."

Of course, Dickens's experience had to be explained away as "phenomena of hallucination;" but we may thank Mr. Lewes for the fact whilst dispensing with his explanation.

Mr. Forster has related the intense grief of Dickens at the death of Mary, his sister-in-law—a grief which for two months interrupted the composition of *Pickwick*. Writing from America and describing his delight at Niagara Falls, he says:—

"What would I give if you and Mac were here to share the sensations of this time! I was going to add, what would I give if the dear girl whose ashes lie in Kensal Green had lived to come so far along with us; *but she has been here many times, I doubt not, since her sweet face faded from my earthly sight.*"

Mr. Lewes cites these lines, and the question occurs with what intention does he suppose Dickens wrote the words we have

put in italics? Did Dickens really mean that Mary had visited Niagara many times? Or does Mr. Lewes imagine he was desecrating sincere affection with sentimental fibs?

"Several years afterwards," continues Mr. Lewes, "in the course of a quiet chat over a cigar we got on a subject which always interested Dickens, and on which he had stored many striking anecdotes—dreams. He then narrated, in his quietest and most impressive manner, that after Mary's death her image not only haunted him by day, but for twelve months visited his dreams every night. At first he refrained from mentioning it to his wife; and after deferring this some time, felt unable to mention it to her. He had occasion to go to Liverpool, and as he went to bed that night, there was a strong hope that the change of bed might break the spell of his dreams. It was not so however. That night as usual the old dream was dreamt. He resolved to unburthen his mind to his wife, and wrote that very morning a full account of his strange experience. From that time he ceased to dream of her. I forget whether he said he had never dreamt of her since; but I am certain of the fact that the spell had been broken then and there."

Mysterious are the conditions and affinities of spiritual communion! "The spell was broken," but why?

"Here is another contribution to the subject of dreams," adds Mr. Lewes, "which I had from Dickens shortly before his death. One night after one of his public readings, he dreamt that he was in a room where every one was dressed in scarlet. (The probable origin of this was the mass of scarlet opera-cloaks worn by the audience, having left a sort of *after glow* on his retina.) He stumbled against a lady standing with her back towards him. As he apologised she turned her head and said, quite unprovoked, 'My name is Napier.' The face was one perfectly unknown to him, nor did he know any one named Napier. Two days after he had another reading in the same town, and before it began, a lady friend came into the waiting-room accompanied by an unknown lady in a scarlet opera-cloak, 'who,' said his friend, 'is very desirous of being introduced.' 'Not Miss Napier,' he jokingly inquired. 'Yes; Miss Napier.' Although the face of his dream-lady was not the face of this Miss Napier, the coincidence of the scarlet cloak and the name was striking."

It was striking indeed; but whilst Mr. Lewes accounts for the scarlet cloak, he leaves the more remarkable incident of the name unaffected. And so it nearly always is with what are called "scientific" explanations of spiritual phenomena. Some of the circumstances are dealt with more or less plausibly, but the central position is left unattacked.

A PAINTING MEDIUM AGED FOURTEEN.

THE March number of *Human Nature*, contains the account of a boy aged 14, named Charles Sivan, who never received an hour's instruction in painting, but who has produced more than fifty paintings under the control of spirits. The boy's uncle, Mr. Thomas Wilson, ironmonger, Market-square, Aylesbury, gives the history of the case, as follows:—

“The mediumship of my nephew commenced about six years ago in the following accidental manner. He was suffering very much from toothache, and, having just read something of Spiritualism and healing mediumship, I said in sport to my wife, that I would try my healing powers on the boy. I accordingly placed one hand on his head, and with the other commenced stroking down his face on the side where the aching tooth was located. In a few minutes he dropped off to sleep, and I laid him on the sofa. In a short time I perceived his hand moving about in an extraordinary manner; but, having read Barkas's ‘*Outlines of Spiritualism*,’ given me by a relative from Newcastle-on-Tyne, I had made myself acquainted with some of the phases of mediumship—that of writing amongst the rest. I accordingly put a pencil into the boy's hands, and immediately there was rapidly written, ‘Let the boy alone; he is all right,—Mary.’ I asked the lad what he meant, when he replied through the pencil: ‘It is not the boy who is writing, but I, your sister, dead now about twenty-two years!’ After he had lain on the sofa about two hours, his hand again wrote, giving me instructions how to wake him. I did so, and the first question the boy asked was, ‘Where is that lady who has been laying hold of my hand?’ I desired to know what he meant; and he described the form, features, and every particular of outline, height, and size, of my deceased sister, as accurately as I could have done myself. The toothache had also vanished. Since that time he describes the particular controlling spirit who influences his hand, as standing by his side, and placing one hand upon his. Though entranced, he knows that his hand moves about; but he cannot tell afterwards whether he has been writing, drawing, or painting. After discovering his mediumship, I got a few friends to assist me from time to time in sitting at the table. One of these friends, Mr. Parker, has continued to sit with us very regularly from the first up to the present time. In this way, nearly all the various phases of mediumship have been produced—table moving, rapping, seeing spirits in the trance, and so on.

“When his mediumship had continued about two years, he

began to see spirits as he went about the house or town. I have known him to describe as many as six different spirits on his passage from the shop to the bedroom. I have seen a table in the parlour dance about very considerably, no one being nearer it than, at least, six feet. About two years ago he commenced to draw with the lead pencil, and produced very crude sketches, regularly, for some time. Then strange-looking animals, with short descriptions, stating that they belonged to one or the other of the planets. He attended school, at Bexley Heath, for twelve months, part of 1870 and 1871. In the early part of last year he again sat at the table, and the drawing proceeded as before. Water-colours were then asked for, and a great many little things were done, getting better from day to day, until about May last, when oil-colours were required. Since then, a list of pictures, fifty-one in number, have been produced. This series was commenced in April, 1871."

Then follows a list of the paintings, and of the several artists who produced them, as given to Mr. Wilson by the spirits at his request.

The editor visited the medium, and describes some of the paintings, and gives some further particulars elicited from Mr. Wilson. We are told that several spirits control the medium besides the painters; and their autographs have been given, as well as sketches illustrating their identity. Mary Wilson the writing spirit, who gives all the instructions, affixes to her signature a hand holding a pen in the act of writing on a scroll. Wm. Wilson was a doctor, and used to carry a skull and cross-bones depicted on a card and fixed in the top of his hat. John Wilson was a carpenter, and does the framing, fixing, and other mechanical operations. H. Seymour was the son of a former employer of Mr. Wilson, who thus describes the symbol opposite that name:—"The £5 note in front of H. Seymour's signature I consider an excellent proof of identity. The writer of that signature went to reside at Brighton for a time, and during his residence there he wrote to me to loan him £5. I did so, and the first time I saw him afterwards he honourably returned it. I had forgotten the transaction until I read the meaning of the symbol drawn opposite his name, for I could not understand the meaning of it myself. The boy knew nothing of this transaction, as it had never been mentioned before him, or even brought to my mind, as the money was honourably paid to me, and I had therefore no longer need to entertain thoughts of the transaction." Henry Angus was a relative of Mr. Wilson's, who used to tease him for a tin teapot, and in memory of the joke, he had it placed opposite his name. William Angus, another relative, was an undertaker, and proves his identity by

the coffin. However, all of these signatures are recognised by Mr. Wilson and others as genuine, and fac-similes of the writing produced while in earth-life by the persons whom they represent.

Some of the paintings are copies of works of eminent artists. We are told—

“ On the morning after the copy of Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage was produced it was found written, ‘ Mr. Turner has been doing a little painting. When you go to London, he wishes you to take it with you to the National Gallery, and compare it with one which is on view there.’ Mr. Wilson tried in vain to get the name of the picture, but no further information was afforded him, so he had no alternative but take his picture to London, and see whether his spirit communications were a hoax or the truth. At that time he had not received so many tests as now, and his faith was necessarily not so strong. Accordingly he came to London, and brought the small picture with him, and on looking over the Turner collection, he at once found the original, the copy of which, done by the medium, was found to correspond with it exactly in every particular, even to a dead branch that appears among the foliage of the tree in the foreground. Whilst Mr. Wilson was verifying this picture he discovered another, entitled ‘ Crossing the Brook,’ which the boy-medium had faithfully reproduced in like manner. Thus was Mr. Wilson thoroughly confirmed in the truthfulness of the spirit-communications, as he was entirely ignorant of the existence of such pictures until he verified the statement of the spirits by examining the originals in the National Gallery.

“ Mr. Wilson states that he has had one instance of direct spirit-writing, and about four years ago the boy wrote about twenty pages of poetry.

“ A great number of people have seen these paintings, and two eminent artists have likewise inspected them, and say they manifest many points of excellence. The composition of the pieces are considered of a kind far beyond a school-boy’s conceptions, or, indeed, any but a painter of considerable ability.”

In connection with the article is a lithographed sheet of *fac-similes* of the signatures and emblematic sketches attached thereto by the spirits through the hand of the medium. Each signature is distinctive, quite unlike either that of the boy or of his uncle, which are given; and as far as we have traced them corresponding to the known autographs of their respective writers.

"A CHAPTER FROM A LIFE'S HISTORY."

THE subjoined narrative has been forwarded by a friend of the editor, with the following note:—

My dear Sir,—A relation of mine having lately had some, to us, rather singular spiritual experiences, I have induced her to throw the facts together in the form of a letter, thinking that they may interest your readers. If you consider the paper worth a place in your pages it is at your service. I need only add that the whole is given honestly as literal and unvarnished truth without the least addition. A few of the phenomena I myself witnessed and for the rest I am fully prepared to vouch. The writer has an enquiring mind and is more prone to doubt than to believe. Indeed, even now, she often tells me she is far from being thoroughly convinced and has many doubts and suspicions yet to be cleared up.

Yours faithfully,

D. A. L.,
B.A., B. Sc., Lond.

My dear Friend,—As I think I have before told you, my spiritual experiences commenced on Christmas Day, 1870. For the next two months I sat at least once a week at my little table, sometimes quite alone, and sometimes with Louisa. The manifestations were good, and I had every reason to believe that I was often in actual communication with a sister who left this life some eight or nine years ago. This being so satisfactory, you will be surprised, perhaps, to hear that I never once received any information respecting a dear friend who had left me but recently, and between whom and myself there had existed a strong sympathy of thought and feeling; and, what is quite as extraordinary, Lewis Banks never came to me.

Of course you have often heard of Lewis, and of the "shameful manner" in which I treated him, and no doubt have shared the feelings of indignation caused by my "heartless behaviour," &c.; but you have never heard how it all happened; you do not know the real truth, because until now I have never revealed it. No; seven years ago I locked up the secret so firmly that its existence was not even suspected. Ah! they never would have called me "heartless" had they guessed what an aching sore I carried about with me. Why did I not tell them? How could I? The more I suffered, the more I hid my sufferings. What! tell parents and sisters that which I had withheld from *him*? Rather bear invectives and reproaches—rather total estrangement.

After the lapse of seven years, it is difficult, yea, all but impossible, to find the real motives by which I was actuated, therefore I think it is better to give you merely a relation of the facts, and leave you to draw your own conclusions.

The real cause of the whole affair was our first-cousinship. Had that not existed, there would have been more reserve in our intercourse with each other;—at all events we should have examined our ways, and have clearly defined our intentions, before indulging in confidential communications. Then again, why did fate, in the shape of mutual relations, throw us so much together? We were in the same German class; each wrote essays and poems to be criticised by the other; we discussed religious questions; we went deeply into the subject of capital punishment; and finally, we took different sides on the American War. So strong were our opinions on this last question, that interminable arguments never worked a conversion on either side, and when I went away to begin life as a governess so much remained to be said that a brisk correspondence was a positive necessity. I will not say that nothing but arguments filled our letters; there were collateral points—points full of interest and tempting beyond measure to minds of a discursive order—and by-and-by we dropped the American War entirely.

Then gradually I saw that our correspondence was assuming quite a different phase; Lewis's letters were taking another tone—one clearly not dictated by cousinly feeling. This was a dilemma which would have puzzled an older head than mine. I did not want Lewis for a lover, but I did want him for a friend, and I took the very worst measures to bring this about. I wrote and told him that unless he could carry on the correspondence on purely Platonic principles, it must come to a full stop at once. He remonstrated, and many letters passed between us; I admitted to him that his friendship was much to me; he suggested that it might be more; then, doubting the strength of my own principles and feeling silence to be my only safe course, I said firmly, "I will write to you no more." You will laugh, perhaps, when I say that I did not contemplate silence; how could I, when to write or not to write was provoking such an active exchange of letters? It was a point we contested warmly, in fact we began to treat it like a scholastic question, one quite external to our correspondence, and I was determined to maintain my position until compelled by sheer exhaustion of argument to yield it. As the Midsummer holidays approached, Lewis proposed to let the matter stand over for a *vivâ voce* discussion.

Two weeks of the holiday passed and then came Lewis. Like two children we took the pleasure of the moment, we walked and talked, gathered wild roses and dug ferns, made hay and even flew kites; but, as if by mutual consent, we never touched upon the very question which we had met to decide. With the

last week came a change; there was no more of the child in Lewis; on every possible occasion he approached the subject; I grew skilled in the art of fencing, and he gained no advantage. His sister gave him all the help she could; I saw it and was annoyed; in our last walk she continually tried to leave us alone, but I followed her like her shadow. Somewhere in the depths of a wood we sat down to rest, Lewis carved my name on a tree and begged me to come and see it. I barely glanced at it then, little thinking that one day I should clasp the tree in a very agony of spirit, and ask in the bitterness of my soul—

‘Is there never a chink in the world above,
Where they listen to words from below?’

Still the question remained undiscussed. How fervently did I wish that it might be left always in that condition, or that Lewis and I might once more become the friends we had been! But either alternative seemed now alike impossible. Even on the last morning I escaped a *tête-à-tête* with Lewis, until he took care to render escape impossible—then, when fairly brought to bay, I longed to say “Yes,” yet felt impelled to say “No.”

“Mary, will you write to me?” “As a cousin, yes.”

“As a cousin I cannot write; will you write upon my terms?” “No, I will not.”

“Write then as a cousin.” He said this so eagerly that I replied at once, “No, I’ll not write at all.”

I ought certainly to have pointed out, or even hinted at the host of difficulties which I saw opposing the fulfilment of his wish; but I did not. I left him to attribute my refusal to caprice. He brought before me the pleasure I had confessed to feel in the correspondence, the happy days we had spent together; and even suggested that my conduct to him, until the last week, had given him encouragement. I could deny none of the charges, so I merely said, “I won’t write again.” I suppose I felt that the time for argument was past, for when he persuaded and entreated me to be more true to myself and him, I grew harder and harder, and reiterated “No, no, no!” Yet I went with him to the railway station, and was so kind and friendly that at the last moment he whispered—“Once more, Mary, will you write?” “Once more, Lewis, no; I will not.”

One letter more I had from Lewis, written, he said, because he could not believe me to be so false and faithless as I seemed. Miserable me! I never answered that letter; no, I tore it into scraps, and more than that, I tore up every letter he had ever written me. I made a bonfire of them; I poked and pounded them into little bits, and when at last they were consumed, I

cried and sobbed, because the world was so wide and empty without a friend.

The silence grew intolerable, yet I told myself day by day that I was quite right not to break it; so month after month passed by, autumn came, then November wet and cold and miserable; I shudder now when I think of those days. A little after four o'clock one Sunday afternoon, I was pacing my room, a very personification of gloom and misery, when suddenly, unaccountably, I felt that I was not alone; I started, looked round, but I saw no one and heard nothing; the impression deepened and became so definite that I even named the presence, for I exclaimed aloud "Oh Lewis, Lewis! what a troublesome world this is!" At first I almost expected an answer, then I laughed, for Lewis was miles away. Ah me! on that Sunday afternoon soon after four o'clock Lewis passed away from this life with my name on his lips. Just think of the awful silence which followed, a silence of seven long years; then realise if you can that this silence has been broken. You will be interested to hear how; I am now going to tell you, and if you find the narration tax your power of belief, you must remember that I am not drawing upon my memory, but writing from notes which I made after every communication.

In the July of this present year, I discovered that Phœbe Martin had had some strange experiences, and was investigating Spiritualism. I called upon her, and in the course of conversation she produced a planchette, saying that she was a writing medium. Although the weather was unfavourable we sat together hoping to get some writing; but planchette could not or would not write, and we were fain to content ourselves with tilted answers to our questions. Presently a decided change took place in the tilts, they became firm and decided. Phœbe looked curiously at me and then said, "He always tilts so."

"Who tilts so?" "Lewis Banks."

"Has he then been to you?" "Yes, he has written messages to his mother through me."

"And you are sure it is he?" "Quite. I have tested him severely."

Perfectly incapable of saying anything to him, I at first left Phœbe to ask just what she liked, then rousing myself a little I suggested a few questions which might serve as tests. These being correctly answered, Phœbe asked for a message. "Mind Mary b——" here we lost a letter, and it seemed impossible to get more; planchette then moved vigorously, and after some scribbling produced the word "dear," and then what seemed to us "Julia is——," but we could get no more.

On July 23, I sat with my sister Ellen; several spirits had

been to us, when, as before, the firm raps commenced and Lewis Banks announced himself. He answered several test questions, wrote his own name and mine and those of several other relations. He told us that he was not happy, that he was sorry he left this world; he advised us to investigate Spiritualism and promised us all the help he could give. He said he could neither read my thoughts nor influence me, and that he had no idea that any change had taken place in my religious opinions.

July 24.—Ellen and I sat for an hour and a half. Soon the firm raps commenced; we asked for the initials of the name of our communicant, and "L. B." was written at once and very clearly. I asked for full initials, after two false attempts they were written. I then asked for my second name, which was given correctly; but immediately afterwards came the startling question, "Do you love me?" Imagine such a question coming in such a manner! Will you wonder that I was perfectly unable to answer it?

Lewis came again to us the next day, but seemed unable to write much. When asked to spell the cause of failure he gave this, "Ellen is not a writing medium." "What sort of a medium is she?" "Trance." In answer to many questions, we elicited that he himself would entrance her on the next evening, and that through her he would say something to me which he could neither write nor spell. When asked why Ellen was a trance medium, he spelt: "Passive brain, kind temper, will keep quiet." Of course we kept the appointment next day, but the attempt, if attempt were made, was a total failure; Ellen never even felt an inclination to sleep.

Lewis's next visit to me was made under peculiar circumstances. In the waiting room of a railway station when I was showing a planchette to a friend, he came and without the least reserve wrote an affectionate message to "Dear Mary, my own old love." It now occurred to me that perhaps Lewis would not speak freely in the presence of Ellen, therefore on the first Sunday in August I determined to sit alone. Planchette soon wrote the initials, "L. B.," then the name in full, then answers to some test questions. Then Lewis said that he was in the room, that he could hear what I said, but could not see me; that he could not read my thoughts though he was conscious of some of them. I said, "How do you know me if you do not see me?" "Your thoughts help to bring me."

I then told him that I had never intentionally been unkind to him; would he write me a message? "Lewis loves you better than ever; he longs to have you with him; he loves no one else better; he has loved you always; he loved you better than his life; he could not live without your letters, so live he

did not. Love me. Will you be my own, Mary, my dear love?"

I saw none of these words as they were written, for I had purposely covered my eyes; when I read them I did not realize them enough to answer them but felt that I must make the most of so good an opportunity for gaining interesting information. I therefore asked a question which had often occurred to me relative to his absence from all my *séances* in the spring; this led to the next, "Why did you not know that I was investigating Spiritualism?" "Because," he wrote, "I could not read your thoughts."

"Where do you live, and how do you spend your time?" "Lewis lives with those who love knowledge dearly; he spends his time learning new things; he studies diligently as he worked on earth. Good-bye, Mary, my own dear love." These messages were with the exception of one word entirely written with my left hand. If you wish, you may see the original papers; indeed I should like you to do so, as the writing is well worth an examination; it is all in text hand and looks much like that produced by guiding a child's hand. Do you think that Lewis himself guided my hand? Why does he give information in the third person and ask questions in the first? My theory is that in the former case, he is satisfied with suggesting to his agent the ideas which he wishes to be communicated, whilst in the latter he so strongly infuses the ideas with his own feelings that "Lewis" becomes "I or me." Soon after this, Ellen and I went to visit a friend for a day or two. We had a few good *séances* with planchette, and one evening four of us sat at a small round table. Lewis came there, fortunately only giving his initials, when he spelt me an affectionate message. As it was far too affectionate to be pleasant in company, I interrupted, and asked him to send a message which would interest all; this he refused to do, and when asked why, said he cared to interest no one but me. I could not, and would not ask him questions, because so doing would have revealed what I wished no one there to know. Ellen elicited from him that he had much to say, though he would not say it then; that he was not in heaven but near me, where he intended to remain until I joined him, and that he would not be perfectly happy until that event took place. This was getting too close, so I suggested that he should try to write, knowing very well that writing would not be successfully performed on so warm an evening.

August 16.—Ellen and I sat alone, and our first visitor was our sister Annie; she was answering a most interesting question when she was supplanted by Lewis Banks. I told him I wanted to talk to Annie, but he would not consent to give place

to her. Presently he either thought better of it or was compelled to go and Annie returned. Again she left off abruptly, and Lewis wrote his initials, and told us he wanted to say something which he could neither write nor spell, but would give through Ellen. Here Annie returned; it seems to me that there was a little tussle—I cannot say, but first one and then the other wrote; at any rate Annie came again for a short time. After a while planchette began to move wildly, and finally wrote “Lewis.” Again he said he had something to say which he would only say through Ellen. The planchette was like a thing possessed, knocking about the table and moving two legs at once in answer to questions about the conditions to be observed, so that Ellen might be really entranced. He did not appear to be effecting this, so I suggested that he should get some help; planchette jerked indignantly, and then wrote, “Mesmerize her yourself.” This I could not do, and presently Lewis said he would try again; it was plainly of no use, I therefore asked him to write a few words before he went away; at once came, “My dear Mary, I love you very much. Do you love me?” Again I did not answer; do not blame me, could you yourself answer such a question asked by an invisible, intangible presence? In our last *séance* with our friends Lewis came, and as before wrote affectionate messages, but when he began to call me, “My good angel,” and “Mary, my wife,” I thought it was quite time to dissolve the sitting.

On the 20th August, Ellen and I sat alone again, and again came Lewis, vigorous as usual; we tested him almost unnecessarily, and then I asked him to write directly through my hand. Holding the pencil as before in my left hand, it wrote; “Ellen is awake, mesmerize her. Lewis has much to say but he will not say it before any one—he loves you too much, do you not know it, Mary, my old love?” There was a pause and then my hand moved again, but Lewis was evidently not the motive power. “Annie does not believe in love lasting beyond the grave, she thinks that we ought to leave all and go on to God; she thinks Ellen and you ought not to dream away life.” “What do we do wrong?” “You do not think often enough of God.”

“Is there a God?” “Yes.”

“Have you seen Him?” “No.”

“Does He care for us?” “Yes, God does bless those who do what is right.”

“Do Ellen and I please you?” “No.”

“With whom are you best pleased?” “Ellen—because she does her best.”

“Why are you not pleased with me?” “You dream of what you might be and do, but you do nothing, you have great powers, you must exert them.”

"What must I do?" "Rouse yourself, be yourself; not all things to all men, learn to think of others."

"I am not strong in body?" "You are well enough."

"What would be the effect of taking your advice?" "You would be happier."

Then followed a severe castigation for Ellen. The most extraordinary part of the above communication is, that although utterly out of season now, it exactly applies to our state when Annie left us nine years ago.

On the 26th August I sat again with Phœbe Martin. At first planchette moved irregularly, then suddenly it altered its style and wrote "L. B." Would he write us a message? Yes, he would. "Do you love me, Mary, my dear——"

Evidently more was coming, but I said, write something for Phœbe, and I held the pencil in my left hand, Phœbe placing her hand very lightly on my wrist; she had not read the first message, and from her position could not read these words as they were written. "Do you love me, Mary, dear?"

Again I asked for a few words for Phœbe; this time he complied with my wish, and through my hand wrote something which to me was perfectly unintelligible, and which puzzled Phœbe much. Presently she said, "I believe I have the clue. It is very strange, no one except myself can possibly know anything about this." Anxious to ascertain if her guess was right, she asked him, "Can you read my thoughts?" "Yes."

"Will you answer some mental questions?" "Yes."

My hand now wrote "No," or "Yes," several times, and Phœbe said that the message did refer, as she had anticipated, to some domestic perplexity, and concerning which Lewis had counselled her to seek good advice. We asked, Would he write her the name of some one likely to be useful? He wrote a name at once, and then without a pause added, "You are lonely, are you not, Mary, my good angel wife? Good-bye, Mary, my dear.—Lewis." I may add that Phœbe took the advice given her, with some degree of advantage; I have never heard what the difficulty was.

On the 7th of September Phœbe came to see me with the purpose of getting some more writing, either with planchette or directly through my hand. In many respects our *séance* was a failure; it seemed that so many spirits were present that no one could get a fair chance. We tried with planchette and with the pencil only. Lewis monopolized me and wrote, "Do you love me?" four distinct times; at last he added, "Lewis must be answered, he has waited such a very long time." Phœbe said, "Answer him," and as I could not, she asked him what he would do if he were answered. He wrote, "You must not ask, you

would be——” But here under the impression that nothing was being written we removed the paper. It was now that the confusion commenced. We ascertained by tilts that many of Phœbe’s friends, and most particularly her father, wished to send messages to her; but when I held the pencil Lewis wrote, and when Phœbe held it there were no intelligible results; while, if to help her, I laid even a finger on her wrist or planchette, Lewis wrote at once more or less distinctly.

I spent Sunday, the 24th September, with Phœbe. To this fact I attribute our greater success, when in the evening we had a short *séance*. Directly our hands touched planchette it wrote “L. B.” Then when we were talking came an affectionate message to “Mary, my dear wife,” ending with the usual question, “Do you love me?” Phœbe said to me, “Mary, whatever you do, never let Mrs. Banks hear of this.” I asked her if it were likely I should; and then we began to discuss the affair, our hands still resting on planchette, which first moved a little and then became perfectly still. Phœbe having heard the story from the Banks family was very hard upon me. I explained a little, told her that I had tried to act for the best, and owned that I might have done it in a better way. At last I said that the Banks’s had been cruel to load me with invectives, for “Had I nothing to bear in losing such a friend as he was?” “Then you did care for him.” “Care for him, of course I did; but he was my first cousin and we were mere children.” “If he had not been?” pursued Phœbe. “What is the use of talking about what might have been? Who knows what might have been if he had had more patience, and had not died.”

Planchette now began to move, and in answer to Phœbe’s question, “Who is here now?” “Lewis Banks,” was very clearly written.

“Have you heard our conversation?” “Yes.”

“Has it answered your question?” “Yes.”

“Satisfactorily?” “Yes.”

I felt that it certainly behoved me to speak now; a question appeared more easily framed than a sentence, so I asked, “Have you anything more to say to me now?” “Yes, remember, Mary, that you belong to me for ever.

Phœbe owned that she began to feel nervous. “Suppose, said she, “that after all it is not he who is claiming you.” I asked Lewis to give us a decided proof of his identity; in reply he wrote, “Do you remember what John Rock called us?” I did not and therefore asked him to write it, but after many vain attempts to do so he said he would spell the word. “Fools,” was the result. It is so long since that I do not remember distinctly, but I certainly seem able to recall that John Rock did

make some remark which being repeated to me made me very angry. Altogether I consider this one of the best tests we have had. Lewis's last message to me that evening was, "Good-bye, dear; I am waiting and longing for your coming."

The next evening, being quite alone, I brought out planchette for a while; but when it had written "Lewis Banks, I am so happy to think that we can——," fearing that my own mind was dictating the message, I removed my hand.

October 5th.—Phœbe and I sat for an hour and half but did not get one whole message. The *séance* exactly resembled one that we had had a short time before; the communicating spirits would not act in conjunction. Phœbe's father and Lewis Banks both attempted to write, but no sooner was a message commenced by one of them than the other tried to begin. In vain we begged them to give place to one another—"In honour to prefer one another." Phœbe even proposed that each one should have possession of our powers for ten minutes, which proposal was received with indignant thumps. We then asked them to unite their powers and give us a message; this they either could not or would not do.

I spent October 10th with Phœbe, and in the face of great difficulties we contrived to have a short *séance*. Lewis came and wrote something to "Mary, my dear wife" about being very glad that she did love him. Here I said, "Will you not tell me something about life with you? First of all, why do you always call me wife?" He wrote "Because——" Then an interruption occurred, and the sentence was never finished.

Here then the matter rests. Time and opportunity have not served for another *séance*. If they ever again coincide, I shall at once repeat my last question. You will naturally want to know how this strange experience has affected me. I fear my answer will hardly satisfy you. Seven years is a very long interval; I have changed wonderfully in that time; is it not reasonable to suppose that he has changed too? In my opinion he knows as little of my part in the last seven years, as I know of his; his ignorance is to me unaccountable, and it sometimes suggests to me the idea that it is not the myself of this present moment whom he loves, but a "Mary" of his recollection or even perhaps of his imagination. The opportunities for communication being very few, and the difficulty of the process very great, I do not expect to get many questions answered respecting the conditions of life with him; yet failing these answers can I reasonably pledge myself to him?

I should much like to test Lewis further; at present tests do not satisfactorily establish his identity, for when he refers to anything we know, we attribute it to thought-reading, and

when on the other hand he brings forward anything we have either forgotten or never knew, we say at once "It is not he." I confess that at times I am deeply moved—these times I am thankful to say are very rare; thankful because they unfit me for my daily work. I have no time just now either to regret the past, or to anticipate the future; the present demands all the energies of my mind.

Yours, &c.,

A. E. R.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

REV. CAPEL MOLYNEUX ON MINISTERING SPIRITS.

THE Rev. Capel Molyneux says, in his published sermon on the text, "Why weepest thou?" "When Mary was weeping, the Lord she deplored stood close to her. . . . Now, I dare not for a moment say it is so; but who shall say that when a soul is weeping for a departed saint, that saint may not be standing close to it at the very time? We are to be 'as angels,' if we are God's people, and angels are ministering spirits. I am sure that angels are round about us continually. I delight to think of that; in this church I delight to think about it. I believe there are plenty of angels here now. Well, why may not some of these angels be departed souls? You weep for some departed child of God; perhaps he or she may be close to you at this moment!"

SPENSER ON THE RELATION OF THE SOUL TO THE BODY.

Mr. Gillingham's theory "that the soul fills and builds every atom of man's structure," is not a very novel one, as may be seen by the following quotation from Spenser:—

"For of the soul the body form doth take,
For soul is form and doth the body make."

A GUARDIAN ANGEL.

St. Frances was a holy woman who lived in Rome in the *seventeenth* century, and the legend concerning her states that she was favoured with the visible presence of her guardian angel. She has left us the following description of her heavenly companion:—"He is about as tall as a child of nine years of age, his

face is full of sweetness, his eyes are turned towards heaven; he wears a long shining robe, and over it a mantle white as snow. When he walks by my side his feet are never soiled by the mud or dirt of the streets." When St. Frances fell into any fault her good angel disappeared, but as soon as she repented, he came back. At the point of death she was heard to exclaim, "The angel has finished his task. He stands before me; he beckons me to follow him." Having uttered these words, her soul was borne by her angel guardian to heaven. St. Frances is commemorated by the Western Church on March 9th.—*The Penny Post*.

MARLOWE A SPIRITUALIST.

Tradition asserts that the poet Marlowe was an Atheist. It also affirms that he studied the black arts and practised Necromancy. Tradition, if cross-examined on any such subject as this, gets very confused and contradictory. I do not doubt, however, that Marlowe was a Spiritualist, and in some form or other practised spirit-communication. It was partly by aid of this clue that I was enabled to identify Marlowe as the rival poet of Shakespeare's Sonnets, in my book called *Shakespeare's Sonnets and his Private Friends*. This is Shakespeare's reference to his great rival, in Sonnet 86:—

"Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all-too-precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it *his spirit by Spirits taught to write*
Above a mortal pitch that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor *his compeers by night*
Giving him aid, my verse astonished!
He, nor *that affable familiar Ghost*
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
But when your countenance *filled up* his line,
Then lacked I matter: *that enfeebled mine!*"

By this we learn that the rival poet is accredited with being taught by spirits to write above a mortal pitch; that he has spiritual visitants in the night hours, who give him aid in his work; that he is especially reputed to have an attendant spirit—a plausible *familiar* spirit—who "gulls him nightly with intelligence." All this supernatural aid Shakespeare acknowledges that his rival receives, but it was not this which made him keep silence in fear of being eclipsed. He grants the facts of this abnormal inspiration, but does not think very highly of it. He takes the common view that the spirit must be a lying one, and the intelligence false. Still, here is Shakespeare's testimony

that his rival competitor for a patron's approval practised spirit-intercourse, and it is for that evidence I allude to the subject and cite the sonnet. The rival poet I have shown to be Christopher Marlowe, to whom Thomas Thorpe also—in his dedication to Edward Blunt of Marlowe's translation of Lucian's first book—alludes as a "familiar spirit."—*Gerald Massey.*

AN APPARITION AT THE TIME OF DEATH.

The following is taken from the *Renaissance Chronique des Arts et de la Literature*, published in Belgium, in 1840-1:—

"Two gentlemen visiting this country many years ago were occupying a hut on the frontiers, when a strange form, youthful but cadaverous, in the garb of an officer, noiselessly entered by the door. Both were greatly alarmed, and, seizing their pistols, demanded the name of the intruder. No response came, but the apparition, regarding them fixedly, raised his sword, which gleamed in the light of the fire, heaved a deep sigh, and then slowly withdrew. "That was my brother," said one of them. The other laughed at him, but they remained no longer there, and continued their way through the forest till the sun rose to dispel their fears. On their return from their mission, a letter was received from England announcing to one of them the death of the aforesaid brother at the time he was seen in the American cabin."

THE WRECK OF THE RANGOON.

The *Rangoon*, a fine large steamship bearing the Australian mails, passengers, &c., failed to reach her destination—the Western coast of the Australian continent. With reference to this missing vessel, we clip from the *Ballarat Star*, a newspaper of large circulation upon the Victorian metropolitan gold-field, the following statement. It must be borne in mind that this paragraph was published some time before any information whatever could possibly arrive in the colony respecting the fate of the *Rangoon*:—"On Tuesday evening (Nov. 21st) a circle was formed by some Spiritualists, and in answer to a question put concerning the mail, the following answer in effect was given:—"The English mail will never reach Victoria. The steamship has foundered. All the passengers were saved. The mails were lost.'" And now follows the sequel. On the 27th (Monday), six days after the message had been given through the medium, and three days after it had appeared in print, the *Melbourne Argus* gives a detailed account of the foundering of

the *Rangoon*. The account had arrived overland *via* Adelaide, to which port the news had been brought by the succeeding mail-ship, the *Bebar*. The loss of the mail, the safety of the passengers, the foundering of the vessel, were each and all correctly stated. It may be added that after the wreck three or four coolies perished in the waves; but it should also be stated that these men had come off from the shore to the steamer for the purpose of pillage, after the wreck had taken place, and were in no way connected with the ship. The sea ran too high for them, and they were drowned.

HOW A BOAT'S CREW WAS SAVED.

The springing a leak and loss of the *Sachem* of Gloucester, occasioned by her sinking on Georges, September 8th, was attended by a singular circumstance, which we find published in the *Cape Ann Advertiser*, that paper assuring the reader that it is correct in every particular, and will be fully substantiated by the master of the vessel, Captain J. Weuzell, from whose log-book the particulars were gleaned:—The vessel left Brown's Bank on the 7th of September at 9 p.m., for Georges, with a fresh north-west breeze. At midnight the steward, John Nelson, arose from his berth, and going aft where the skipper was, remarked in an agitated voice—his whole appearance indicating great fear—"Skipper, we are soon to have a severe gale of wind, or something else of a dangerous nature is going to overtake the vessel, and we had better make land if we can, or at least keep clear of Georges, so as not to have it so rough when the danger comes." Captain Weuzell asked him what made him think so, as everything was clear at the time, and there were no apprehensions of trouble or danger. Nelson replied, "I have been dreaming, and twice before I have had the same kind of dreams when at sea, and both times have had narrow chances of being saved. The first time we were run into the day following the dream, and left in a sinking condition. With great efforts in baling and pumping we reached the coast of Norway. The other time we experienced a terrible gale, had our sails blown away, and the vessel half full of water ran before it under bare poles, until we met the north-east trade winds when we patched her up and made out to get into Havana." He then told the purport of the dreams, which were of females dressed in white, either standing in the rain or near a waterfall, or attempting to cross a brook. The figures in each dream were the same, but the surroundings were different. The steward is a reliable man, and was so much in earnest that the captain,

although seeing no signs of a gale of wind, and not inclined to be superstitious, concluded it best to be on his guard, and charged the man forward to keep a strict watch. The wind was now increasing, with a heavy sea rising, and at half-past one a.m. the vessel was about five miles from Georges Banks. She was hove to under a close-reefed foresail, and they were furling the balance reef, when a white light was observed to leeward, supposed to be on board a fisherman lying at anchor. Suddenly one of the crew sang out from the fore-castle, "The vessel is filling with water!" Telling him not to alarm the men, the captain went down and found six inches of water on the top floor. The pumps were immediately manned, and baling with buckets commenced, after which the captain went sounding around in the hold to find the leak, but the vessel was rolling so hard and the water made so much noise among the barrels and in the ice-house that it was impossible to hear anything else. . . . They spoke the schooner *Pescador* and told them their condition. With all their pumping and baling they could not gain on the leak; and the crew were determined not to remain on board another night. The tide swept them down to leeward of the *Pescador*, and efforts were made to speak her again, but they could not reach her. Their movements were seen on board the *Pescador*, and upon asking them to send their boat to take them off, they did so at once. . . . At two p.m. the *Sachem* rolled over on her side, raised herself once, then plunged under head foremost, the master and crew feeling thankful to God that they had escaped and were safely on board the good schooner *Pescador*. These are the facts, and our readers can account for the dreams and the disasters in any manner that best pleases them. We publish the statement because we consider it somewhat remarkable that the dreams should be the harbingers of disaster on three occasions.—*Boston Herald*, November 13th, 1871.

SPIRITUALISM IN CAIRO.

A Society of Spiritualists has been formed in Cairo, Egypt, under the direction of Madame Blavasky, a Russian lady, assisted by several mediums. *Séances* are held twice a week, namely, on Tuesday and Friday evenings, to which members alone are admissible. It is intended to establish, in connection with the Society, a lecture room, and a library of Spiritualistic and other works, as well as a journal under the title *La Revue Spirite du Caire*, to appear on the 1st and 15th each month.

A STRANGE STORY.

The following strange story is taken from *The South London Courier* of Saturday, March 2nd, 1872. It is printed in that journal in large type, and on the leading article page:—

In the present day it is rare to hear of a *bonâ fide* ghost; but the following story is authenticated in a private circle of friends, to some relations of whom the ghost made his attentions particularly disagreeable. It is, of course, impossible to vouch for the exact truth of every detail of the ghostly story; but the facts are fully believed and certified by the circle above alluded to. The facts are as follows:—A few months ago a couple about to be married took a house in Berkeley-square, and upon concluding the transfer, &c., they were solemnly warned by the agent that a certain room in the house was haunted by a ghost. Of this they thought nothing, however, but, partly out of curiosity and partly out of necessity, the mother of the bride said she would have no fear to sleep in the haunted room, as she was at the house superintending the arrival of furniture, &c. The brave lady was not alone in the house at the time of her venture, as there were servants also sleeping there. At the usual time the lady retired. Nothing alarming was heard by the servants during the night, but the next morning, when they went to call up their mistress, they found her dead—in her bed—with open eyes wildly staring at the ceiling. A medical man, who was called in, could give no satisfactory cause of death, which seemed to have taken place through some violent shock to the brain and nerves. But the newly-married couple, much shocked as they were by the untimely death of their relative, were quite incredulous as to its having been caused by any supernatural agency, or that the supposed ghost had anything to do with it; nay, even the husband of the lady said that he would have no objection to sleep in the haunted room, and he at length prevailed upon his wife to consent to his making trial of the powers of the ghost. But the lady stipulated that she should sleep outside the room in the adjoining passage, and that she should have the protection of a fierce bulldog and a pair of pistols, while two policemen were to be within call in another room. The gentleman retired to rest without any anxiety, the only precaution he took being the taking with him a pair of revolvers, in case of any emergency. He also agreed to ring a bell twice should the ghost appear, and he require the assistance of the police. About half-past twelve p.m. the anxious wife heard the bell ring, first rather rapidly, and then faintly and feebly. She flew into the haunted room and found her husband dead, with his eyes fixedly gazing at the ceiling. Such are the facts. We have not inserted a story merely to gratify our readers, but we have simply recounted the facts as they actually happened. We do not believe in ghosts, and we have no doubt that the whole mystery will ere long be cleared up; but, until we hear the explanation, we cannot help thinking the story a very remarkable one.

The editor of the *Spiritualist* after quoting the above, adds:—

We wrote to the editor of the *South London Courier*, Mr. J. E. Muddock, of 121, Fleet-street, E.C., and asked him for information which would enable us to inquire into and verify the strict accuracy of the narrative. Last Monday we received a reply in which he stated:—"While not being able to give you names and particulars at present respecting the Berkeley-square ghost, I vouch for the accuracy of the facts as narrated, and you are at liberty to use my name, if you think proper." In a subsequent letter, Mr. Muddock says:—"I believe that in each case a coroner's inquest was held, and the verdict returned was 'Died by the Visitation of God.'"

The story seems to be the same as that which some time ago appeared in *Temple Bar*, under the title of "The Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth."

INTERVIEWING THE SPIRITS.

Under this head the New York *Evening Standard* of January 17th, gives a long account of *séances* with Dr. Henry C. Gordon, of that city written by one of its staff: One of the *séances* is thus described:—

This *séance* took place in the day-time. He and I alone sat at the table which was an ordinary round dining table, covered with a striped tea-cloth. On the table were a Bible, a small hand-bell, a tray of pencils, some common reporting paper, and a small portfolio. The medium and I sat facing each other at opposite sides of the table, and sideways to the light. After sitting a moment he became influenced, and after a process of jerks and spasmodic contortions, passed into what is supposed to be the "trance." He knew neither my name nor occupation, but immediately reaching across the table put his hand on mine, and calling me by name, saluted me as "brother." "Who are you?" I asked. "Do you not know——?" he answered, giving the name of a little sister who died many years ago. The name was a common one, and this "test" did not affect me much. Next, the medium drew himself up, and with a peculiar motion of the head and drawing down of the moustache, that strongly reminded me of a friend recently deceased, commenced writing rapidly. Page after page of the paper was filled; at the bottom of the fifth he signed a name and shoved the script across to me. The communication began with a term of endearment with which my friend, whom he had appeared to personate, used to address me. I glanced at the signature, and there was the name of my friend in full and *fac simile* of his own sign-manual. The contents of the communications were such as I would have supposed could be addressed me by no one but my friend. They referred to matters which I have every reason to believe were known to none but ourselves. I sat considering a moment, when the medium said: "If you do not believe that I (my friend) am present, if you have not faith after this test, you may ask and we will try to give you a test that shall satisfy you." "May I ask mentally?" "Yes." The hand-bell was just before me, and I involuntarily wished that it might be rung without hands; the wish was hardly out of my mind ere the bell arose about six inches from the table, was rung twice, and then gently descended to its place. This closed the *séance*; the doctor opened his eyes, came to himself, and not being engaged for the moment, very cheerfully answered the questions I asked."

THE POLICE BAFFLED.

The *Gazetta de Torino* relates the following:—"Not far from Savigtiano, is a house owned by M. Mussa, which, for some time has been mightily disturbed by spirits of very turbulent and disorderly character. Windows are stoned, and crockery is hurled at visitors by unseen hands. These disturbances at length reached the ears of the prefect of police, who sent four carabinieri with a marshal to install themselves in the house and arrest the disturbers. The *poltergeists*, however, paid no respect to official dignities or police authority, and went on as usual, broke the windows and crockery, tipped over the tables, and did all sorts of mischief. Under these circumstances, what was the poor marshal to do? His orders were peremptory to arrest the disturbers of the peace. Not having fulfilled his instructions, he was liable to the military rules for disobedience."

THE QUESTION OF IMMORTALITY AMONG
SCIENTISTS.

By MARY F. DAVIS.

It is a generally conceded proposition, that some idea of a future life is so prevalent, even among rude and barbarous nations, that it may be claimed as universal. Huxley says: "There are savages without God in any proper sense of the word, but none without ghosts." C. O. Whitman, in the *August Radical*, disputes the validity of this claim, and cites examples of such mental darkness among the lowest savage tribes, as would preclude any idea of immortality. "Is it any wonder," he says, "that such hopeless stolidity never indulges speculation about eternal existence?" Nay, verily. But it is a wonder that our author should take the absence of such speculation on the part of these savage beings as an index of the universal native conviction of the mind on this question. He seems not to be aware that, by showing the lack of ideas on all subjects in these undeveloped minds, he fully explains their lack of the idea of immortality.

Creatures so low in the scale of being as not to understand "the simplest arithmetical calculations," are scarcely the ones to illustrate the sweep of human reason in its normal activity. The author says: "Children and idiots have no conception of immortality." Have children and idiots any conception of other ideas which we find ourselves possessed of when the powers of the mind, which are latent in infancy, and dormant in idiocy and among the lowest savages, come to reveal themselves more fully? If children do not enunciate the axioms of mathematics, does this prove that these axioms have no lodgment in the mind? And if they express no thought of the moral law, does this show that it is not written on the heart? "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." A certain amount of mental activity must precede even self-consciousness, and the actual contents of consciousness cannot be discovered until such command of the faculties is attained, as to make introspection possible. Therefore the assertion that "whatever is innate appears clearest in children, idiots, and the lowest savages," is necessarily without foundation, and the apparent absence of any special intuition from a mind wholly unawakened, forms no basis on which to predicate the theory that it is actually destitute of such intuition.

But the whole doctrine of "innate ideas" is called in question by modern science. The theory of "evolution" is rapidly superseding it. In fact, mind itself is considered by materialistic scientists as evolved from matter. The phenomena of

thought, reason, affection, and moral ideas are regarded as caused by the various forces operating upon matter in the human form of organization. Carl Vogt considers that the brain secretes thought as the liver does bile; and others aver that soul is a product of matter. C. O. Whitman says: "Is the mind a distinct and independent entity or a mere attribute of matter?" This is the real question that awaits a scientific answer. Assumption cannot settle it; speculation cannot solve it; intuition cannot grasp it; reason cannot compass it; dark circles can shed no light upon it; reported resurrection cannot determine it." Thus the board is swept clean, and we are left to await the slow processes of scientific inquiry for a settlement of our doubts. The affirmations of reason, which is "the flower of the mind," are to pass for nothing; the intuitions which have an outlook toward the hidden realm of causes, are to have no voice; the testimony of the senses, those swift messengers of the soul, which constitute the primal dependence of science itself, must be cast aside. Yet to the ear of the spirit, thus prone and abject, comes a voice saying: "We lie open on one side to the deeps of spiritual nature, to the attributes of God." Reason is not doomed to remain under the sway of the understanding. It would fain stand abreast of science, but it will accept its fiat only after it has explored the *whole field of investigation*.

A poet-philosopher of our day, Mr. Emerson, has uttered the following memorable words: "All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being, in which they lie—an immensity not possessed, and that cannot be possessed." This is an affirmation of the higher consciousness, and is as valid, to those who "dwell in the same thought on their own part," as the declarations of science are to its earnest investigators.

In this view, mind is something far other than "a mere attribute of matter;" and, strange to say, the fundamental assumptions of modern science unwittingly confirm this high claim of deductive philosophy for the spiritual nature of man. These primary assumptions are, first, matter; second, spontaneous molecular activity; and hence, as one writer asserts, a latent pantheism lurks in the scientific system. "Comprehensively stated, humanity represents the highest self-consciousness of matter; and if self-consciousness is a mode of molecular motion, then molecular motion is latently conscious." In

other words, science, in its baldest materialistic phase, lays the foundation for a purely spiritual philosophy. The "formative principle," which it is forced to admit the existence of, can be none other than the Divine Energy, or Supreme Intelligence, that pervades the trackless universe, and, ascending from chaos through material forms, at last finds completest expression in the highest type of organic life, and by means of this incarnation gives immortal personality to each separate human soul.

This tacit contribution of material to spiritual science is clearly shown by William J. Potter, in the June *Radical*, in a discourse of inestimable value, entitled "The Doctrine of Immortality in the Light of Science." He points out certain "fatal defects" in the argument of those scientific men who positively deny the possibility of the soul's continuance. The first defect appears in connection with the scientific doctrine of the unity of force. Materialists "resolve human consciousness and all its contents into the action and interaction of physical and chemical forces," but, by their own confession, they are unable to tell the nature of force itself. "Since we do not know," says Mr. Potter, "what are the contents of this original germinal energy, this elementary matter or force, why may we not believe that in it was the element of mind? Nay, must we not so believe, on the principle which these scientists make so much use of in their investigations and deductions, that 'the cause equals the effect?' This axiom expresses the very essence of the doctrine of 'correlation of forces.' Whatever appears in the effect must exist in some shape in the cause. And since mind, consciousness, personal intelligence and will have been evolved in the processes of nature, it follows, on the ground of this material philosophy, that there must have been something corresponding to them, equivalent to them, and equal to their production in the primal germ—that is, an element of consciousness, mind, will—not as something separate from the germinal matter, but involved in it as one of its native latent capacities."

This is a masterly and unanswerable argument in favour of the supremacy and perpetuity of mind, constructed on the basis laid down by the materialists themselves. The second defect on their part, instanced by Mr. Potter, is their failure to present testimony from all sides of human nature, even while professing to make facts the entire substrata of their argument for the dissolution of consciousness with the body. Their facts all belong to the physical side of human experience. All the phenomena connected with what is called religion they leave out of the account; yet these facts make up half the recorded history of mankind, and have an important bearing on the question of immortality. "And there is another class of phenomena," says

our brave and candid author, "which, however much of fraud, delusion and charlatanism may be mixed up with them, will persist, I believe, in forcing themselves upon human attention until science shall give them a just investigation and recognition. I refer to the phenomena of mesmerism, clairvoyance, animal magnetism, along with which whatever is well authenticated in 'Spiritualism' is so placed. * * * I believe it will be found, in the end, that this class of phenomena to which I now refer, and which are so closely related to the mysterious connection that exists between mind and body, will, when investigated and classified, have an important bearing on the revelation of things pertaining to the future that are now inscrutable to reason."

This manly attitude toward an unpopular theme is worthy of imitation on the part of all professional scientists, and, would they at once assume it, the antagonism between "Intuition and Science," drawn in such bold relief by F. E. Abbot, in the *Index* of April 15th, would, ere long, disappear. Mr. Abbot says that the scientific school "insists that universal causative power, the intelligible unity of nature, the 'creative idea' in organic development, the moral sentiment in man, the religious affections, the spiritual instincts, sensibilities and aspirations, the ideal hopes and struggles, the conscious freedom of the human soul, considered as a part of nature, are just as real facts, to be scientifically studied and interpreted, as any other facts." This is doubtless the position of one class of Free Religionists, but not of the main body of scientists. They not only ignore this spiritual half of human experience, but reject with impatient scorn the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, for the neglect of which Mr. Potter takes them to task. This vast body of well-attested phenomena science has no right to overlook.

When a person tells me that, on one occasion, ten years before the advent of Spiritualism, her room at midnight was suddenly irradiated with a soft white light, and, from its midst the glorified face and form of her departed mother advanced toward her bedside, with an expression of more than mortal love, and when I learn that this occurred when the daughter was healthy in body and mind, and that she was fully awake, and her senses on the alert, it is my business not to scout her testimony, or dismiss it with a scientific platitude concerning optical illusion, but to inquire what law of spiritual being underlies so transcendent and beautiful a phenomenon. Such facts as this, and others of a more public nature, abound in the record of human experience for the past twenty-three years, and invite scientific inquiry into that occult realm which by its aid may be rescued from superstition and dogmatism. C. F. Varley, the

electrician, disdains not to devote his most earnest attention to its investigation, and Gerald Massey, the poet, publicly admits the establishment of his faith in immortality by the revelations of Spiritualism. F. E. Abbot, and his co-workers on the broad platform of Free Religion, show a noble courage and devout trust in principles, by assuming an attitude of perfect acquiescence in the final decisions of science, be they for or against man's personal continuance after death. But, while yielding so much to science, let them demand of it what is demanded by one of their number whose truth-inspired words we have quoted. Let them insist, as do rational Spiritualists, that it shall take a larger outlook, so as to scrutinize the whole area of spiritual phenomena, and they will help hasten the time when life and immortality will be brought to light anew by a religion based on science.—*Banner of Light*.

SPIRITUALISM *VERSUS* DEMONISM.

FINAL REPLY TO THE REV. JOHN JONES.

By THOMAS BREVIOR.

Mr. JONES's Rejoinder to my Reply to this Sermon though quite in order and to the question, traverses so wide a field that, like him, I must use the utmost brevity. I shall reply to his points *seriatim*.

1.—No doubt many of Mr. Jones's congregation who have not investigated Spiritualism for themselves, and who know little or nothing of it but from his sermon, may thereby have been led to regard Spiritualism as "the work of demons;" but outside independent thinkers, more struck by the proofs given by him of its truth than by the evidence furnished of its alleged demoniacal character, have inquired further, and in consequence have come to a very different conclusion on this point, I speak advisedly.

2.—What was the Spiritualism referred to as prohibited? and why was it prohibited? It was Heathen Spiritualism; prohibited because leading to and bound up with polytheism and idolatry, with all their inhumanities and abominations; and was specially prohibited to the Jews in order to the more effectually cut them off from the worship of "strange gods," into which they so frequently relapsed. This is evident from the very texts to which Mr. Jones refers. If he suspects my interpretation of them, let me quote the words of an able and learned divine of his own communion, writing for the same object, though not in the same dogmatic spirit,—the Rev. Charles Beecher, who,

in a *Review of the Spiritual Manifestations*, read before the Congregational Association of New York and, Brooklyn—in his chapter, “On the teachings of the Bible,” thus sums up his argument on this head:—“Both the law and the history therefore concede the reality of the practice doomed with death, and the reason of the penalty is manifest. Polytheism was the disease to be cauterised. The worship of the dead was the root of Polytheism. Converse with the dead was the root of worship. Odylic arts (*i.e.* the understanding and supply of proper conditions) were the root of converse. Therefore the law struck at the root, by prohibiting the whole on pain of death.” “The Baalim” of the Old Testament he tells us “were lords, heroes, deified dead men. Hence it is said ‘They joined themselves unto Baal Peor; they ate the sacrifices of *the dead* ;’—the two lines of the parallelism repeating the same idea in a different form,” and he adds, it was to these “deified dead men,” to whom, as testified by Moses and the Psalmist, “they sacrificed their sons and their daughters.” Now if Mr. Jones can prove that Modern Spiritualism is identical with this, leading to the same results to polytheism, idolatry and human sacrifices; to the worship of Moloch and Dagon, Baal and Astarte; or in causing men to render to any spirits the worship that should be given to God alone,—he is right in warning us against it: otherwise under the same name he is confounding two things totally different; just as an Atheist, under the common term “Religion” might confound Thugism with Christianity.

3.—Mr. Jones tells us that 1 John iv., 1-3., does not refer to departed souls, but to God’s Divine Spirit on the one hand, and to Satan on the other. This is a curious illustration of the futility of appealing to texts. I had thought nothing could well be plainer than that “every” must mean *several*, and could not apply to God who is a unity, or to Satan, who, if regarded as a person, must also be a unity. The phrase “of God,” as applied to the “spirits,” seems clearly to distinguish them *from* God. Mr. Jones would amend the reading thus—“Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is God’s Divine Spirit; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is Satan.” This may be an improved version of the text, but it does not seem to be what the Apostle intended us to understand by it. The passage is really levelled at those—whether spirits or men—who in the Apostle’s days denied the proper humanity of Christ: a Gnostic heresy long extinct. While then the injunction, “Try the spirits whether they be of God,” is a general principle of permanent and universal application, the particular illustration of that principle given in the two verses that follow refers to a mere

obsolete and almost forgotten controversy, and has no application to the Spiritualism of to-day.

4.—Every spiritual communication that came to them through “authorised” means, and every natural gift, even mechanical skill, was by the pious Hebrews ascribed directly to “the Great Spirit Himself.” Hence when we read that “they inquired of the Lord,” we find on examination it simply means that they inquired of “the Seer,” “the Prophet,” “the Man of God,” as those whom we now call “spiritual mediums” were then termed. These might be consulted on very worldly affairs, and as professional mediums receive their fee; as in the case of Saul who consulted Samuel about his father’s lost asses, taking him the fourth part of a shekel of silver (about sevenpence). Mr. Jones may say that “the Great Spirit Himself” answered these inquiries: of that I leave the reader to judge. But now, what shall we say of angels holding converse with prophets and holy men as recorded in Scripture? Was this “authorised,” or not? The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews evidently thought it was, for he says of the angels, “Are they not *all* ministering spirits *sent* forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation?” This, then, is their *appointed* and *universal* mission. But I may perhaps be told that these are not “departed human souls.” Well, the same writer in enumerating the Old Testament saints and martyrs who all “died in faith,” speaks of them as a “great cloud of witnesses,” “an innumerable company of angels” and “spirits of just men made perfect.” The Bible does not leave us in doubt whether angels are departed human spirits or not. To give only one or two instances out of many, the angel Gabriel, is distinctly called “the *man* Gabriel.” The angel from whom the seer of Patmos received his revelations told him, “I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets.” And with all reverence I refer to another example, Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, and in presence of his disciples, conversed with “*two men*, which were Moses and Elias;” surely these were “departed human souls,” and one of them the promulgator of that law of prohibition to which Mr. Jones refers. Both the founder of the old dispensation and the founder of the new by their example thus “authorising” communication with “departed human souls.” More than this, Jesus himself after his death appeared to his disciples and held converse with them. It was this repeated spiritual manifestation of Jesus, “seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, of above five hundred brethren at once; after that, of James; then of all the apostles;” which was alike the foundation and the chief evidence of the Christian faith. “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain.” The Apostle Paul exhorts the early Christians to “desire

spiritual gifts," concerning which he says, "I would not have you ignorant." He bids them to "covet earnestly the best gifts," and among these spiritual gifts he enumerates "the gift of healing," "the discerning of spirits," "working of miracles," "and divers kinds of tongues;" all of which are exemplified in Modern Spiritualism. The Apostle ascribes these "gifts" of mediumship not to "Satan" or to "demons," but to "the same God which worketh all in all." I fear that in this respect the Pastor of Chadwick Mount Chapel is an "apostate" from "the faith once delivered to the saints."

5.—*Spirits commanding to abstain from meats and forbidding to marry*—There is not a tittle of evidence for this; but were the evidence conclusive, what then? Fasting has always been looked upon in the Christian Church as favourable to spiritual development; and many have held the same of celibacy. Moses commanded to abstain from certain meats. Paul thought the celibate life better than marriage. Daniel was a vegetarian; Jesus a celibate. But what are the facts in regard to Modern Spiritualism? My acquaintance with Spiritualists is of long standing, and is pretty extensive, and I do not know an instance of a Spiritualist becoming a vegetarian in obedience to the command of spirits, though I have known instances in which by their counsel persons have ceased to be so. My friend, Mr. William Tebb, who last summer travelled through the Eastern, Western, and Middle States of America, everywhere making special inquiries as to Spiritualism and Spiritualists, assures me that he found fewer vegetarians among Spiritualists there than here; and another friend, Mr. J. H. Powell, who has just returned from America, where for the last four years he has lectured and laboured extensively among the Spiritualists, confirms this statement. If then the resolution to abstain from animal food said to have been passed at a Convention of Spiritualists is faithfully reported by the correspondent of the *Morning Herald*, it would seem to have been inoperative; and further, there is no evidence to show that *demons* had anything to do with it. As to celibacy, the only body of Spiritualists I knew of who practise it are the Shakers, (who are not vegetarians). As a community their institution antedates Modern Spiritualism by nearly three quarters of a century; and they base their faith and practice on the example of Jesus and the teachings of the New Testament. Truly these practices are "as yet in an incipient stage." Very! My readers can judge whether I was not justified in stating that on this as on other points, there is in the sermon I received an obvious string of facts to fit the texts, and an equally obvious string of texts to fit the facts.

6.—John the Revelator “saw three unclean spirits, like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet;” and I am reminded that these frogs are a symbol of the “moral *uncleanness* of the demons.” Understood literally or figuratively, metaphorically, parabolically, symbolically, or diabolically, I repeat the question—What has this eighteen-century-old vision to do with Modern Spiritualism? Take the examples cited by Mr. Jones in his sermon. Mr. S. C. Hall, and seven friends saw his “venerable and truly Christian sister,” who had “passed from earth about eight months ago,” “the likeness was exact—” “she was looking so beautiful, so happy.” Not at all you see in any sense like a frog coming out of the mouth of a dragon. This visit was in redemption of her promise to her brother a short time before her departure, that she would do so if it was for his good, and if God permitted it; a promise made at his request that after death, if permitted, she would visit him for his comfort, and to help him on his way to Christ. We also read in the sermon that “*séances* in Paris are, under the direction of the spirits, opened with prayer. *Séances* in London, under similar instruction, are opened with the reading of the 23rd Psalm, and closed with the Doxology. Nay more, the spirits seem to be of a most reverential type, for at a *séance* held near London, the following message was received from the spirits:— ‘We do all we can to convince you that we live, and that God is love.’” Another communication, more lengthy, but similar in spirit, is also quoted in the sermon. Now if “the reference to frogs is intended to point out the moral uncleanness of the demons,” it is here clearly and grossly misapplied; and the frogs, unless required to croak in the pulpit, may safely be dismissed to the marshes. These three spirits like frogs we are told by the Revelator “go forth to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty—” and Mr. Jones quotes the story of a lying spirit that went forth three thousand years ago to Ahab, King of Israel, and persuaded him to go to battle that he might fall at Ramoth Gilead, in order to prove that this passage in the book of Revelations applies to Modern Spiritualism. Marvellous logic, fearfully and wonderfully made!

7.—Mr. Jones explains that he specified “mere abstract belief” in immortality as “of little worth;” and he refers me in proof of this to “our jails and haunts of crime, filled with those who believe that there is a future;” *naively* adding “but it exerts but little influence upon them.” Just so: but what if it exerted its proper and legitimate influence; and why has it failed to do so? Is it not because under the teaching of the churches

it has become what Mr. Jones calls "a mere abstract belief," a traditionary or dead faith; ministers of religion either denying the living evidences of immortality, or warning their congregations against them as "the work of demons." In place of doubtful speculations, and evidence from ancient records and dead languages, Spiritualism presents proofs of the living presence and action of those whom the world calls "dead." It removes denial and doubt by actual demonstration; for wavering conviction it gives the certitude of assured knowledge. "It has gathered up into its chariot crowds of the materialists and sceptics of the world, and such like are still rallying around the unfurled banner, on which is inscribed the motto *Immortality*." And in connection with this faith Spiritualism presents the most powerful motives to virtuous life. It shows that we must not trust in the righteousness of any other, but that we must ourselves be righteous; that moral qualities are personal, and not transferable; that character determines destiny; that well being follows well doing; that degradation and misery are inseparable from conscious, wilful illdoing; not as arbitrary penal infliction, but as natural, necessary, inevitable consequence. It shows this not as speculation, or "mere abstract truth," but as exemplified by those who are in the actual experience of it. Is this, then, a fitting subject of warning and denunciation by a Christian minister? But I wot that it is in ignorance he has done this, and that with better knowledge, and restored to his right mind he may yet accept the invitation, "Come over and help us!" The reference to our jails and haunts of crime is unfortunate for a minister of the orthodox faith, for these places are filled with those trained in the popular theology, including our congregationalist minister's favourite dogmas of "natural depravity," and "endless doom."

8.—I have no special correspondence with, nor am I in possession of the secrets of that region of the spiritual world so familiar to theologians, described by them as "Satan's kingdom;" and of which, indeed, they appear to have exclusive information. Mr. Jones, for instance, is as well posted in its internal affairs as he is in the recent politics of America. He can tell us in what respects hell is a "divided kingdom," and wherein "evil spirits are *all agreed*;" and he speaks with the confidence and authority of personal knowledge of "the sense in which hell is ever united in all its tricks and impostures." Now what hope is there of a man thus "wise in his own conceit." How can mortal man or angel convince him of his error? Every avenue of conviction in this respect is closed against them. It is vain to appeal to Christ's test "by their fruits ye shall know them." These fruits are all delusions—Dead Sea apples. In

vain do spirits teach morality; that is only for "the ensnaring of men." In vain do they seek "to lead back the world in this materialistic epoch to belief in the doctrine of immortality," and succeed in converting "many a bold materialist," "crowds of the materialists and sceptics of the world." In vain do "they do all they can to convince us that God is Love"—that is only Satan transforming himself into an angel of light. In vain is it that "*séances* are under the direction of the spirits opened with prayer, and closed with the Doxology." It is all of no use. He is "of the same opinion still." These are only the "tricks and impostures" in which "hell is ever united." Spite of his disclaimer of Spiritualism, Mr. Jones must possess the "spiritual gift" of "discerning of spirits," in a degree that constitutes him on this plan the greatest medium of the age. But we, poor mortals, who are not thus supernaturally gifted, who possess only reason and common sense, how can we hope to pierce these wonderful disguises in which all hell is united? If Satan can thus transform himself into an angel of light, may he not transform himself into a congregationalist minister? May not Chadwick Mount Chapel after all be only a branch of Pandemonium—a veritable synagogue of Satan? There are some doctrines taught there which certainly have a very diabolical look—"natural depravity," and "endless doom," for instance.

9.—The narrative inserted in my "Reply" showed that the Christian law of kindness is as operative in the other world as in this. It is far from being a solitary instance of this. In the *Seeress of Prevorst* (written before the advent of Modern Spiritualism), several such examples will be found. But "Christ rebuked the demons and unceremoniously ejected them from human beings," as I think, because such violent usurpation was disorderly and mischievous; as Mr. Jones affirms "because they (the demons) were hopelessly lost, and hopelessly bad." From what source Mr. Jones obtains this piece of information I cannot say. I cannot find that Jesus anywhere gives the reason here assigned to him, but I do find it recorded by one of his Apostles (1 Peter chap. iii., 19, 20) that "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah;" and I apprehend that Jesus would not so have preached to these disobedient spirits in prison if he knew that "they were hopelessly lost, and hopelessly bad."

10.—What are "these points" in which Mr. Jones says, "the Christian Church in all its branches, and in all ages agrees substantially," and which "Spiritualism casts aside or tramples under foot?" Does he mean the doctrines preached in

Chadwick Mount Chapel? And are we to understand that "these points" agree with those of Unitarians, Universalists, Swedenborgians, Irvingites, Mormons, Shakers, Quakers, Anglicans, Greek Church, and Romanists?—to specify only *some* of the branches of the Christian Church in the present age. When I can learn what "these points" of substantial agreement are, I shall be better able to say whether Spiritualism casts them aside and tramples them under foot or not. For the present I can only remind Mr. Jones that there is no system of theological doctrine which, as a body, Spiritualists either accept or cast aside; that whilst there are some amongst them who make no profession of Christianity, and others who are outside of any Church, preferring to remain "Christians unattached,"—others again are to be found in every branch of the Christian Church, Romanist, Anglican, and Nonconformists, and therefore that his sweeping generalisation must be a little rash—a hasty inference from defective premisses. If I may venture to hint so alarming a heresy, I would suggest to him that men, whether in this world or in the next, are not necessarily "demons," because they do not substantially agree with him on "these points," or on any points of theological doctrine.

11.—Mr. Jones concludes by again warning us that "this modern necromancy is altogether the *work of demons*." I also conclude with a word of warning—of warning against that prevalent idolatry of our time and land which Coleridge happily termed *Biblolatry*, and which has done more to discredit Christianity than all the attacks of so-called infidels. It has created a false antagonism between religion and science; it impedes the advance of knowledge and of truth, and impairs that just reverence for the Bible which if left to itself it would never fail to command with serious and thoughtful men. I feel as if something like an apology was due to my readers for the trivialities I have been called upon to discuss. But these are inevitable when great questions are narrowed down to petty issues, to expounding texts, and verbal criticism. This mode of controversy is happily growing obsolete. Texts are now seldom marshalled to the front, as heretofore, to do battle with science. We do not now determine the true structure and laws of the universe by reference to the Hebrew cosmogony, or the antiquity of man by appeals to Genesis. Nor can we settle conclusions as to the moral *status* of Spiritualism by quoting ancient Hebrew legislation, apostolic epistles, and obscure apocalyptic visions; which in truth no more refer to Modern Spiritualism than do the history of Herodotus, or the *Iliad* of Homer. Imagine Macaulay's New Zealander, say two thousand years hence, quoting to his countrymen the Laws of Alfred, the Letters of

Junius, and the Poems of Tennyson, to decide their controversies. No, Spiritualism; like astronomy or geology, must be judged of by its own proper subject matter. Let us study it in the light of its facts and consequences, and by eternal principles; leaving theologians, if they must, to wrangle over the interpretation and application of phrases in ancient records. Christ's rule of judgment—"By their fruits ye shall know them," is for me still the highest and truest. Let us thus "try the spirits;" try them by all the lights of reason, conscience, and experience. In that final court of appeal, let Spiritualism be tried and tested to the utmost; I for one am content to abide the issue.

Notices of Books.

GERALD MASSEY ON SPIRITUALISM.*

THE present season so far has been one of considerable literary activity in regard to Spiritualism. The *Report of the Dialectical Society's Committee*, and the article by Dr. Carpenter in the *Quarterly Review*, have been followed by five important volumes:—*Outlines of Biology. Body, Soul, Mind, Spirit*; a volume of 556 pages by Dr. DOHERTY, being the third volume of his *Organic Philosophy*; the second volume of HOME's *Incidents of My Life*; *Hints on the Evidence of Spiritualism*, by M. P.; OWEN's *Debatable Land between this World and the Next*; and *Concerning Spiritualism* by GERALD MASSEY. Each of these books requires a separate notice. Our present notice is of the latter work only.

In this elegant little volume there is much "concerning Spiritualism," which should interest both the Spiritualist and non-Spiritualist reader. The author's remarks on normal and abnormal mediumship are, we think, in the main true; and the legitimate use and province of each are justly discriminated. His exposition of Swedenborg's spiritual philosophy of life is finely rendered, and is well contrasted with views recently put forth by some eminent scientists. Mr. Massey points out what he conceives to be some of the bearings of Spiritualism on Scripture narratives and theological doctrines; and his criticisms on popular orthodoxies, churches, and the so-called religious world are severe and sharp; some will perhaps think a little too much so.

* *Concerning Spiritualism.* By GERALD MASSEY. London: BURNS.

Here and there we have hints and gleams of peculiar experiences of the writer, extending as he tells us, over fifteen years, and which he intimates may at some time be published. We hope it may be soon: we are not always correct in judging whether or not the world is ripe to receive experiences of this nature; nor in truth should it much concern us. If we sow the seed of truth, we may trust the free winds of God's invisible providence to carry at least some small portion of it to fruitful soil where it will germinate and grow, and in due time bring forth its ripened harvest. But let us hear what Mr. Massey has at present to tell us as to the value of these experiences to himself. He says:—

It has been to me, in common with many others, such a lifting of the mental horizon and a letting in of the heavens—such a transformation of faiths into facts—that I can only compare life without it to sailing on board ship with hatches battened down, and being kept a prisoner, cribbed, cabined, and confined living by the light of a candle—dark to the glory overhead, and blind to a thousand possibilities of being, and then suddenly on some splendid starry night allowed to go on deck for the first time, to see the stupendous mechanism of the starry heavens all aglow with the glory of God, to feel that vast vision glittering in the eyes, bewilderingly beautiful, and drink in new life with every breath of this wondrous liberty, which makes you dilate almost large enough in soul to fill the immensity that you see around you.

There are many fine gems in this volume we feel tempted to extract, but as they are seen to best advantage in the author's own setting, we recommend the careful perusal of the entire work.

Correspondence.

MR. WALLACE'S DEFINITION OF A MIRACLE.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—Mr. Wallace's definition of a miracle is certainly a great improvement upon Hume's, but I doubt whether it is all-sufficient. What does Mr. W. mean by the words "implying the existence of?" There are many acts or events which imply the existence of superhuman intelligences, which are not considered miracles; viz. death and dreams.

Is not Mr. Wallace's view rather an explanation than a definition of a miracle, and when a miracle is explained does it not cease to be miraculous? To the philosophic spiritualist are there such things as miracles at all? I am inclined to think that the word miracle is not philosophic, that it is simply invented and used to express a popular idea. May we not then give a definition of a miracle by combining the best parts of Hume's doctrine with Mr. Wallace's criticism on it? Thus:—A MIRACLE is a transgression of a known and established law of nature, by a particular volition of the Deity or by the interposition of some superhuman intelligent agent.

A criticism on the meaning of a word is not necessarily a definition. I shall be glad to receive further enlightenment on this point.

Blackheath, 13th March, 1872.

NEWTON CROSLAND.