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## Contents.

Poetical Inspiration in the Nineteenth Century ...	157
Where is the Spirit World? By William H. Harrison ...	157
Materialisation Phenomena ...	159
Spiritual Impressions in Romish Churches. By Catherine Woodforde ...	160
From India. By the Rev. Thomas Colley, Chaplain to H.M.S. <i>Malabar</i> ...	162
The Prophecy of Vala ...	162
A Challenge to Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke. By S. C. Hall, F.S.A. ...	163
A Remarkable <i>Seance</i> with Mr. Eglington. By C. Carter Blake, Doc. Sci. ...	164
The Religious Aspects of Spiritualism. A Trance Oration, by Mrs. C. L. V. Tappan-Richmond ...	164
Correspondence.—Remarkable Test Mediumship—Curious Allegations ...	167
Spirit-Rapping among the Ancestors of Mr. P. A. Taylor, M.P. ...	168
Answers to Correspondents ...	168
Paragraphs.—A Spiritualist at an Hotel, 153; Mr. Tyerman, 161; Tall Talking, 161; Mohammedanism, 162; Spiritualistic Periodicals, 162; Spiritualism in Newcastle-on-Tyne, 163; Spiritualism and the Press, 163; The Latest Miraculous Cures, 163; Religious Mania, 163; What is the Origin of Psychic Force? 164; The Alleged Haunted House in Kent, 167; The Psychology of Revivals, 167; <i>Seances</i> at Mrs. Madoxgall Gregory's, 167; Mrs. Weldon's Sociable Evenings ...	167

## "THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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# The Spiritualist Newspaper,

A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

VOLUME TEN. NUMBER FOURTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, APRIL 6th, 1877.

## POETICAL INSPIRATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

In the best speech delivered during the meeting at Glasgow of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the Duke of Argyll made a vigorous attack upon modern literary men. "See around us," said he in effect, though not in these words, "the noble monuments which science has raised, the benefits she has showered upon mankind, the additions she has made to human knowledge. But where are now our Shakspeares, our Wordsworths, our Spencers, our Byrons, and our Miltons? Where are the literary men whose words now shake men's minds as the wind shakes the branches of the forest trees?" Then he uttered a wail over the decadence of modern literature, and that too in no uncertain tones. It was a great and a fair question to raise—a question of greater moral and religious importance than any other raised at Glasgow except Spiritualism; yet this best speech of the whole meeting attracted no national attention. The reason of the inattention is not far to seek. Scores of reporters were present, some few of whom were literary men, and the great majority not so (therefore all the more influential literary men in their own estimation), and as reporters unconsciously lengthen that which pleases them and cut down that which does not chime in with their own ideas, the speech of the noble Duke was practically consigned to oblivion. Next morning the telegraphic and other summaries in the newspapers gave in a few lines cut-and-dried versions of the speech, in no way representative of the spirit or logic of the original utterances. Few recorders have studied their duty to society as chroniclers, for which reason the majority of newspaper reports are worthless and essentially untrustworthy, as Spiritualists know full well.

But is the charge brought against modern literature a just one? Omitting the side issue whether the Duke of Argyll would not think it a severe punishment to be made to read fifty pages of his eulogised Wordsworth before he went to bed to-night, is it not a fact that all eminent scientific men *are* literary men, who do no more nor less than others, namely, reveal to men in print the truths which it is their privilege to give to the world? If so, the world has demanded a new class of literary men, who are well fulfilling their duty, and the Duke was merely throwing a boomerang with unpractised hands, thereby injuring friends he believed himself to be exalting.

The real question at issue, therefore, narrows itself to the following:—Why have we now, practically speaking, no great poets? For the simple reason that the world does not want them and will not have them; science, with its materialism, does all it can to crush inspiration, to reduce everything to mechanics and mathematics; yet the Duke of Argyll, in the self-same speech, was extolling the murderers of poetry and of its root, spirituality, as they stood before him with blood on their hands. Another influence which is death to the poetical spirit is that of the cramped creeds of the theologians of the Scotch, English, and Irish Churches; real genius cannot bend itself to emblazon incomprehensible and unbelievable dogmas, hence the churches, with all their platform and press influence, look upon free ability as "dangerous;" and true poetry must be free. Then, again, there is the powerful influence of vulgar wealth, guided by those who are unable to appreciate the poetical spirit, but are fortunately kept in check by the superior power of rank and refinement. So, what between scientific materialism, theological materialism, and the materialism of wealth, true poetry is trebly strangled at its birth. Once we said to a well-known literary lady who contributed a splendid piece of poetry to this journal, "Why do you not send it to one of the monthly magazines? It is worth high remuneration." "Oh," was the

reply, "they don't care for poetry, and I should only get a guinea for it. But in any case you are welcome to it." What between science, theology, and vulgar wealth, poetry, religion, and the chivalric spirit have been killed out of men's hearts in this country, and, in our opinion, can only be revived therein by the power of Spiritualism. The public, already surfeited, are themselves getting sick—they scarcely know why—of wallowing in the mire of materialism, and are dreamily and uneasily beginning to wish for a reaction which the signs of the times indicate to be setting in like a flood.

## WHERE IS THE SPIRIT WORLD?

BY WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

WHERE is the Spirit World? Some spirits, mostly those who have committed crimes, haunt houses, and are tied more or less continuously to the scenes of their misdeeds. Others appear not to be so chained, but to possess great powers over the conditions of time and space; they exhibit such spiritual powers, for instance, as are sometimes brought under direct experimental observation in cases of the clairvoyance of human beings still dwelling in the body of flesh. Some spirits again seem to be always within reach of the thoughts and aspirations of particular mediums.

There is a floating idea in the minds of not a few Spiritualists that those spirits who are near the earth come voluntarily upon missions, or are here because their evil deeds prevent them leaving until their period of atonement and repentance is complete. This involves also the idea of a spirit world *par excellence*, somewhere else, a spirit sphere proper, the lowest of many others forming steps in the ladder of the educational progression of the human soul. And some of the ideas relating to this spirit world are materialistic in the extreme; there is a tendency to describe it as invisibly surrounding this earth at a fixed altitude, and some seers have given the number of miles it is from us with the utmost precision, have mapped its rivers, and described its inhabitants and their modes of life. Unfortunately the revelations of the various seers do not agree with each other although founded upon genuine visions, this result being probably due to the difficulty the inspiring intelligences have in conveying ideas relating to the spirit, to men still clothed in matter, and surrounded by materialistic conditions; the outcome of the revelations thus consists for the most part of earthly ideas clothing a hidden spiritual truth.

If that Spirit World so much resembles our own, why should it be made invisible to mortal eyes? Why, in the great economy of nature, should it be placed immediately outside our own, when any neighbouring habitable planet would have answered the same purpose?

My speculation is that all material worlds are the outcome of spiritual conditions, and that the common belief in matter is a superstition founded upon superficial data. A mesmerist on a platform, as I have often stated, will surround five or six sensitives at once with appearances which are real to them; he will cause them to see valleys or mountains, or anything he pleases; they will all see the same thing, and converse with each other about their observations. Remove the mesmerist—who ignorantly uses a great power of which he understands little—from his six sensitives, and substitute an Almighty Intelligence exerting His will over a world of human beings in an orderly way, they will find themselves in a world which is material to them, governed by fixed laws; in time they may come within the influence of other laws, and find themselves in a new world, with other senses, other powers, and other obligations; this new world may be no measurable distance from the first one, the very power of measuring, being itself one of the outcomes

of the temporarily experienced mental conditions upon which the belief in matter is founded.

As Dr. Carter Blake said in effect in *The Spiritualist* a few weeks ago, we perceive an apple by the senses of sight, smell, touch, and so on; if we had more senses we should know more of the apple. Remove the sense of sight, and we know less about the apple; take away smell, we know still less; then remove the other senses, and the apple no longer has an existence for us except by means of revelations volunteered by some other intelligent being. After the apple has gone, and the wide world with it, let other senses be opened; perhaps we then perceive another world, governed by other conditions. This hypothesis is to some extent experimentally verified by the phenomena of clairvoyance; the room in London fades from sight, a scene in Birmingham is revealed to the sensitive by temporarily developed spiritual powers, and the utterances of the seer are afterwards proved to have been true. He observed the scene probably from its spiritual side, perhaps by *rapport* with some mind still in the flesh, and described that which thus came home to his consciousness by the translation of his ideas into the phraseology of ordinary life. The physicist, aghast at that which he is wholly unable to explain, denies the facts; he will not accept them upon irrefragable and overwhelming evidence; my hypothesis not only admits them, but tends to clear up philosophical difficulties. If matter is something altogether different in its nature to soul or spirit, how was it first formed? Did some thinking Being evolve this same tangible and alien matter from his own ideas? Can a man by any process of thinking or willing cause leaden bullets to fall from his brain? Where and how in such case does the law of continuity come into play? On my hypothesis there is no solution of continuity.

There are at least as many difficulties in demonstrating the reality of matter, as vulgarly understood, as there are in proving the existence of spirit. The assumed ultimate atoms of matter have never been seen; some think them to be forces emanating from points; others believe in the infinitely rigid atoms of Dalton, and Sir William Thomson has advocated the idea that they are the vortex motion of an infinitely elastic fluid, the *wirbel-bewegung* of the Germans. But all the members of the Royal Society are agreed that nobody has ever seen an atom of matter, and that they do not know the ultimate constitution of an atom. Why, then, elevate this visionary particle into a God?

Observation at *séances* has convinced me that the emotions of spirits are more intense than ours; that to them, unless they are very degraded, the things of matter are nothing, but the facts of the spirit everything. Love is said to be the light of the spirit world, and men and women who have not cultivated it here, but passed their time in trampling on their fellows, may, in the next phase of existence, find themselves as truly and tangibly in the dark as we should be physically, without the presence of the sun. All spirit messages, in all ages, agree in describing the affections as more permanent than anything else in God's universe, therefore they should be kept pure. Their permanence is visible even here; the body of man somewhat keeps its form, but, like a fountain, every particle of it is in incessant motion, every portion of it in a state of change; when every particle of the body has been changed, he is the same man still, and the governing power of that man is still his affections, be they for good or be they for evil.

My idea is that matter is as real as real can be, in that it is founded upon immutable law, but that, as something totally distinct from mind, it is an illusion, a superstition. I think that physicists have made a mistake not unknown to young electricians—namely, that of ascribing indications to an external cause, whereas in reality they are due to conditions inside the observing instruments. The conclusion from all this is that there are no worlds but spirit worlds, that everything in the universe is the result of mental conditions governed by fixed laws; that matter, as commonly understood, is an illusion, and that as the distance between two spiritual or moral states cannot be measured in yards, so will materialistic Spiritualists never know in miles the distance of the world of spirits. The distance between spirits depends upon the intensity of their affection for each other;

they are separated or united by spiritual processes analogous to those of crystallisation.

These ideas in no way make the universe less real; they not only, as heretofore, admit the reign of law to underlie and control the conditions called matter and spirit, but they take a firmer and closer grip upon law, making law everything and the external manifestation nothing but the inevitable outcome thereof. Instead of assuming the world to be built up stone upon stone, particle upon particle, they postulate that it is built up line upon line, law upon law. And whereas there is very great difficulty in imagining how a senseless clod of matter can in time, by inherent power, evolve an intelligent being, there is no difficulty in imagining that the orderly evolution of mental conditions can surround human beings with a world which is as material to them, as the creations of the brain of a mesmerist are to the human beings under his control.

These ideas do not abolish an external world, but make it a world of thought and of law, of which we know a little through the limited channels of our sensations. Few have considered how much our knowledge of the external world depends upon the nature of our senses and physiological characteristics. If a prism, a triangular piece of glass with three straight sharp edges five or six inches long, be taken from a chandelier, and held in bright daylight across the eyes with one of its edges nearly touching both eyeballs, and resting against the top of the nose, then by slightly turning the prism a position will be found, in which from the bars of the window, the tops of the chairs, and from all brilliantly lighted objects between the eye and the window of the room, gorgeous rainbow hues will be seen streaming. There they are, beautiful beyond description, and fixed and motionless so long as the prism is kept in position before the eyes. Had a prism been naturally fixed from birth behind the lens of each eye, instead of thus temporarily placed in front, every living soul, from the cradle to the grave, would see solid objects glorified by fringes of resplendent rainbow hues, and any man who endeavoured to prove to his brother observers that the hues which all mankind saw streaming from solid objects were not there but within themselves, would be treated as a visionary by the many, yet the experiment clearly demonstrates that the many would be the real visionaries. Thus, what we know of the outside world depends much upon the construction of the complicated machinery of our bodies, and slight changes in nerve fibres or microscopically small portions of the organism, might present the world under a totally different aspect to the whole human race. I further submit that it is possible that mesmeric laws in constant operation have a still greater influence on our perceptions.

Before quitting this subject it may not be out of place to point out how Sir Humphry Davy, the accomplished chemist and physicist, was momentarily changed into an idealist. Nitrous oxide was once administered to him at the Royal Institution; he says that his thoughts began to flow with lightning-like rapidity, many of the deepest secrets of nature were unveiled to his view, and problems which had long perplexed him were solved. He exclaimed, "Nothing exists but ideas." Gradually he returned to his normal condition; all that had been revealed to him in a state of supersensuous perception faded from his waking memory, leaving for this lower world but the single utterance, "Nothing exists but ideas."

A SPIRITUALIST AT AN HOTEL.—"Who's there?" There was no answer, and the queer noise stopped. "Anybody there?" No answer. "It must have been a spirit," he said to himself. "I must be a medium. I will try." Aloud—"If there is a spirit in the room, it will signify the same by saying aye—no, that's not what I mean. If there is a spirit in the room, it will please rap three times." Three very distinct raps were given in the direction of the bureau. "Is it the spirit of my sister?" No answer. "Is it the spirit of my mother?" Three raps. "Are you happy?" Nine raps. "Do you want anything?" A succession of very loud raps. "Will you give me any communication if I get up?" No answer. "Shall I ever see you?" He waited long for an answer to his last question, but none came. The spirit had gone, and, after thinking about the extraordinary visit, he turned over and fell asleep. On getting up in the morning he found that the spirit of his mother had carried off his watch and purse, his trousers, and his great coat down stairs in the hall.—*American Paper*.

## MATERIALISATION PHENOMENA.

WHEN the manifestations through a physical medium begin to develop, the first phenomena usually consist of table tilting, followed a few weeks or months later by raps, and as the power still further increases, solid objects occasionally move without being first placed in contact with the medium. Small articles are sometimes carried from one part of the house to another. When this stage has been reached the medium can usually obtain the direct spirit voice by sitting for it in the dark; at this same period musical instruments carried by materialised spirit hands are floated around the room with ease, and spirit lights commonly enough accompany these manifestations. Later still it will be found that the spirits can free the mediums from bonds of any kind in the twinkling of an eye. His wrists may be tied together with tape and sealed with signet rings; the sleeves of his coat may be sewed together, and the same garment may be further stitched up the front, but the evidence soon comes home to the observers that no bonds whatever will secure a strong physical medium; he can be removed from them without the seals being broken or the knots unfastened. At this stage the materialised hands, which have had so much to do with the previous manifestations, but which previously had never been seen, gradually begin to show themselves in subdued light; commonly enough they are thrust out from the partial darkness under a table near which the medium is sitting; this phenomenon is the first palpable evidence of materialisation. The temporarily materialised hands, when examined, are usually, though not always, the duplicates in form of the hands of the medium. This manifestation is now tolerably common, and can be obtained without much difficulty by strong mediums who sit for it. One Sunday afternoon recently, at the residence of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, one of these materialised spirit-hands was seen by many of the observers to rise above the shoulder of Mr. Eglinton, and to snatch a handkerchief off his head, which handkerchief had been placed there for the purpose. While this was done, the hands of Mr. Eglinton were held by the sitters on either side of him. Such a manifestation is absolute proof of the reality of materialisation, and if it be admitted that a hand can be materialised, it amounts almost to an admission that a whole body can be materialised also.

As a matter of fact the materialisation of the whole body has often taken place. The form calling itself "John King" has sometimes been materialised while Mr. Williams has been seated in an open circle, with hands held on both sides. When we once held the medium and saw the form floating high above the table under these conditions, the materialised face was living, with sparkling eyes and flexible features, but was the duplicate of that of Mr. Williams, and devoid of John King's usual black beard. These materialisation manifestations once took place with great power in the presence of Miss Florence Cook (Mrs. Elgie Corner), the medium, however, being cut off from the view of the sitters, by being placed in a dark cabinet, from which, when the materialisation was complete, the form came out. Similar phenomena have been witnessed in the presence of other mediums. Most of these cabinet *séances* were of an unsatisfactory nature, because of the strong resemblance of the forms to the mediums, and the absence of evidence on the majority of occasions, as to whether an actual materialisation had been effected or whether the entranced medium had been sent out by unseen powers to personate a spirit. This led for a year or two to an elaborate system of testing. Miss Cook for nearly two years never sat for the manifestations without being most efficiently secured with knotted tapes, applied by critical observers, who had long and carefully studied the most secure methods of tying; the knots were sealed with signet rings. At the close of the sittings the medium was found taped and sealed as at the beginning, evidence being thus given that the manifestations were not imposture, but produced by abnormal powers; still, it was by no means proved that the medium was not sometimes taken out of her bonds and put back again. To decide this point, Mr. Cromwell Varley devised the plan of sending a feeble current of electricity through her body all through the sitting; and while the materialised form was outside, the electrical resistance,

indicated by a reflecting galvanometer, showed that the current was still passing through the body of the medium, consequently that she was inside the cabinet. Mr. Crookes and others verified these results, and on one occasion, through the mediumship of Mrs. Fay, materialisations were obtained in our presence under electrical test conditions; several well-known Fellows of the Royal Society, and Mr. Serjeant Cox were also among the observers.

The forms come out robed in white drapery. If the mediums are searched before the sitting begins, no such drapery is found about them, neither can any be found upon them, after the sitting is over. When small pieces of it have been cut off and given away by the forms, they have usually, but not always, proved to be very common stuff, such as can be purchased anywhere; probably this drapery is brought into the cabinet for the purposes of the *séances*, and carried away again afterwards; where it comes from or goes to has not been found out. Little or no information is given upon these points when the spirit-forms are questioned, and that little is not always trustworthy.

Whilst at a small number of *séances* absolute evidence has been given of the duplication of form of the medium, evidence has also been obtained that sometimes the entranced medium has been sent out dressed as a spirit, and that there has been no materialisation at all. At the great majority of what are called "materialisation" sittings, there has been no evidence, either in the one way or the other, consequently such sittings have been waste of time, devoid of all evidence of the presence of spirit power, and serviceable only as a tax upon the amount of faith of the observers. The fact of materialisation is in itself so astounding that it can only be accepted on the best of evidence, consequently the medium should always be placed under test conditions. This is very seldom done, the result being that the time of the observers is wasted, and that unbelieving observers have their prejudices against Spiritualism increased. No *séances* do so much harm to the observers, to the medium and to inquirers, as those held for materialisation without the medium being placed under strict test conditions; such sittings always prove miserable failures, and permanent sources of dissatisfaction. But under any circumstances the fact of materialisation is so tremendous that with the best of evidence it cannot be readily accepted by inquirers without they are first gradually educated up to it by experience in simpler manifestations, consequently whether under test conditions or not, such *séances* do a great deal more harm than good when any attempt is made to use them for proselytising purposes. Elementary unanswerable phenomena in the light, are better than alleged astounding manifestations not given under test conditions.

The beings who produce these strong physical manifestations are seldom trustworthy and will sometimes play impish tricks upon their best friends; it takes a long time to discover this, but after attending scores upon scores of materialisation sittings, the knowledge has been unwillingly forced upon us. We have never heard a single utterance from these forms worth recording upon its religious, moral, or scientific merits, yet when the same mediums sit for other than the physical manifestations, revelations of high character may be obtained through their organisms by trance, automatic writing, or clairvoyance. We have known—while the medium has been under strict test conditions—spirit-hands and arms to carry about a mask which had been imported into the cabinet by abnormal means, and to attempt therewith to delude the spectators into the belief that they were observing an immortal being from the next world. It is now high time that materialisation mediums should sit as Dr. Slade does, for manifestations without any cabinet; they might be allowed to lie upon a sofa, in a dim light, at one end of a room, whilst the spectators sit at the other. Spirit hands can be produced under these conditions, and by practice doubtless spirit-forms likewise.

While the manifestation of the materialisation of a living hand is common, it indicates that the head governing the actions of that hand can be materialised also, but presumably at great expense in the shape of vital energy drawn from the medium. Either the manifestation should be produced at any cost, or materialisation *séances* not under test conditions stopped altogether.

## SPIRITUAL IMPRESSIONS IN ROMISH CHURCHES.

BY CATHERINE WOODFORDE.

WITH the King's Chaplain for my *cicerone* it was my privilege to pay my first visit to St. Peter's, where the grand altar is overshadowed by a bronze chair of gigantic dimensions, containing within it a very old wooden chair, of senatorial fashion, thickly inlaid with ivory, which is believed by Catholics to have been the episcopal throne of St. Peter and his successors. It is, however, really probable that it may have been in possession of the senator Pudeus, with whom the Apostle lodged, and he may, therefore, of course, frequently have sat in it. The great bronze chair is upheld by colossal figures of the four fathers of the Church: Augustine, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Athanasius. How imperatively this declares to the world that Roman Catholics here locate *par excellence* the Church of Jesus Christ, at the head of which stands Peter, the Rock, and, following him, the Popes, his successors, to whom, they teach, has been delegated that headship as custodians, fathers, princes of the Church, and even representatives of the Divine Will to the faithful. According to Protestant ideas this is arrogating too much to a church which has no right to take to itself alone an honour perhaps never meant to be so conveyed. Be that as it may, here is embodied, and constantly kept before the eyes of its votaries an idea not devoid of grandeur; and the highest artistic geniuses of various periods have striven to give it appropriate external expression in the most indestructible materials to be procured. As if still further to preserve the image of permanence and indestructibility, beneath the very dome of this wondrous church are enshrined the mortal remains of Peter—that Rock consecrated by the words of Jesus. Gazing up into the dome you behold the words, in mosaic letters six feet long: "*Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram, edificabo ecclesiam meam, et tibi dabo claves regni cælorum.*" Around this shrine burn perpetually eighty-six lamps of gold, emblems of the everlasting light of faith. But all these externals, made as imperishable as the hand of man can make them upon this ever-changing material scene, are but the effects of the spirit contained in those words, which, glowing forth, has created unto itself these forms as its fixed symbols to man. Without the words and the spirit contained in them, these material embodiments had never existed, and they thus form one of those myriad links between man and his God-Saviour, to draw his thoughts perpetually upward to Him who pronounced them. It is the spirit we revere, the externals are but the shell which preserves it. The idea presented is the ever-abiding presence of Jesus with His Church, and the never-withdrawn watchful care of Peter, continually represented and brought before the minds of believers in the persons of the Popes, named his successors.

It is true that the ignorant and fanatical are ever prone to render worship to shadows, and, enveloped in their own narrow darkness, fail to perceive the spiritual light shed from mere symbols; and it is true that men sunk in the grossness of the flesh materialise everything and are reduced to idol-worship. Hence the humble, devout, but uneducated Catholic, to whom prayers in his Church are the very staff of life, making the rounds of this vast temple, kneeling at this altar, and that shrine, kissing fervently the bronze toe of the statue of Peter, and blessing himself with holy water, may give to the images before his eyes somewhat of that affectionate reverence his spirit also lifts to the great unknown God; but, nevertheless, let us do justice to the fact that not only is here embodied a beautiful uplifting idea, but a spiritual reality is also most certainly here existent. It is most certain that if the spirit of Peter, the trusted follower of Jesus, abides anywhere on this earth, or pays visits of mercy and helpfulness to struggling brethren in the flesh, that spirit, or being, on earth called Peter, must be drawn and attracted here, in obedience to an inevitable spiritual law. Apart from all religious prejudices, apart from all the errors the Romish Church may have drifted into, the one fact of the possibility of spiritual presences and of the helpful assistance rendered when they are sought, cannot be denied by Spiritualists; and, indeed, an uplifted and refined medial power introduces one sensibly

by sight and hearing into the very presence of the spirit personality.

Spiritualism has been decried, hated, spurned, spat upon; and so has the Romish Church—the one Church on earth where Spiritualism is in reality practised, and is the heart and core of the belief. Indeed, as a Romish priest acknowledged to me the other day, "It is the *foundation* of the Church." The devout Roman Catholic believes in the actual Divine Presence of Jesus, and with simple faith according unto him infinite power, trusting in the infinitude of a love which will e'en descend into smallest things for love's sake,—they believe that He is miraculously present in the small shrine set up on their altars in His honour. They cherish His promises, they worship Him with a love unsurpassed by any other church—a love fervent, adoring, self-sacrificing. The tabernacle where the Divine Presence is supposed to abide, becomes to them a sacred centre from which the Divine Spirit flows forth in blessings. Is it possible for Spiritualists to doubt that the simple faith, the fervent love, the constantly outpouring prayers fail to bring what is sought? If so, there is no God, no answer to prayer, and Spiritualism itself is a gross fallacy and delusion. It is quite possible that with many of the most ignorant this belief descends, and manifests itself in the form of idolatrous worship; the shadow, the external, being worshipped for the substance, the internal spiritual; but there is no doubt that this simple faith, handed down in the Church through so many ages, is all powerful to bring that Divine Presence. "Ask and ye shall receive," is as true now as ever, and is the one only essential law in Spiritualism; seek God and you will find Him; seek spirits and they will come at your call; seek any gift whatever with simple faith, trust, and earnest effort, and your labour will be crowned with success according to your powers of reception. God gives himself to all according to the measure of demand, and the power of reception; and His ministering spirits, filled with divine love, and actuated by the divine helpful spirit of mercy; give too of their angelic gifts from Him according to the way in which we seek. The Roman Catholic Church is full of such faith in all its teachings and observances; an actual presence is believed in of Jesus, Mary, or the Saints; and from the intense fervour of this faith, and the ardent prayers offered up in these shrines, an actual ever-abiding presence is there, and is sensibly experienced by the spiritually minded, or those gifted with medial powers. It is this indestructible spirit ever answering to earnest prayer which elevates into ecstasy, giving visions, or the power of performing what are called miracles; this earnest faith acting upon susceptible minds subdues irreverence to outward respect, fascinates, enthral, and finally converts. The soul within will some day, when circumstances are favourable, answer to the call—"Man know thyself, that thou art spirit—angel come, prepare thyself, and win thy birthright!" And often do these favourable circumstances, aided by the powerful spirit influences, find themselves at the foot of Roman Catholic altars.

And so God will ever be with us if we build and prepare the shrine, even if it be only within our own hearts, with no external symbolic abiding-place, or if only in the simple bed-chamber. He will be there where we seek. In the temple of nature, by the roaring deep, or in the eloquent stillness of the forest, or mountain-top, or in crowds of human beings, who in another manner proclaim his greatness. But the purer we keep our shrines, the more devout and fervent our prayers, the more trusting and perfect our love, the more powerfully will the spirit presence of God and his angels be felt; and we must not deny that presence to any of our brethren, even if they do not follow the paths we have chosen.

A medium may comment curiously upon the different sensations awakened by the spiritual atmospheres of the different churches; and the question arises, why, in the vast temple of St. Peter's, does one feel less disposed to piety, why does one feel an atmosphere so disturbed, and in some respects painful, that you would fancy yourself (if you closed your eyes) in a spot not devoted to the worship of God, and with clairvoyant vision would dread the sight of some dark form representative of evil. You wonder the same heavenly calm, and sense of utter holiness in the place, does not descend upon your spirit as in other quieter, and more

secluded churches. There are altars as beautiful, which in statues and paintings appeal as eloquently to the heart; the same divine voice calls out to you from these altars; but you sadly feel yourself somehow further off; you have a sensation of suffocation, heaviness of the limbs, and a feeling as if wrapt round, and compressed by myriads of spirits gathered like a dark cloud about you, from which, in the pauses of conversation you send up ejaculatory prayers for help, for light to see and know what it is; and at length the majestic radiant form of the faithful spirit-guardian stands at your side, with the words, "I am come to relieve you, my child; you will suffer no more!" And afterwards complete peace, calm, easy breathing, and happiness are felt. Then the words come by the inner hearing to the mind, whilst the eye takes in the colossal beauties of this glorious house of God, and passes athwart the groups of nondescript sightseers of all nations and creeds. "You have felt the disturbing influences brought and left by the various-minded visitors who enter here as to a show place; many who have no respect, but enter with bigoted prejudices, hatred, and scorn of a faith to whose spiritual beauty they are blind; who keep their thoughts fixed upon the deformity of error, and forget the immutable truths underlying all forms of religion, and whose hearts are devoid of charity and brotherly love. There are some devout worshippers and believers, but the greatest number of the daily visitors are mere sightseers, and the atmosphere of the place, to your spiritual senses, is disturbed as if filled with conflict and discord."

But in St. John Lateran, as the heavy leathern curtain at the door drops behind you, all at once you feel shut into a calm, cool, placid spot, so quiet, so appeasing, so uplifting, that it might be the portico to heaven; and you walk forward almost unconsciously in reverential prayer. Fast descend upon your soul heavenly feelings of wrapt worship, and, unable to resist the impulse, you fall on your knees in the midst of a chaunting group, who are following the priest in his white robes, attended by boys also in white, and bearing lighted candles. There are poor old women and men in the group, the grand and the richly-dressed are absent; and all are singing with simple fervour in the Latin tongue. You do not know what service it is, but, filled with reverential sympathy with these poor, devout worshippers, and overcome by the powerful spiritual influences of the place, you bow your head, and humbly pray to God to open the doors of heaven to you too. Is it strange that angel forms descend and wreath themselves like celestial flowers in loving groups about the altar, whilst a glorious light beams from it, and that child-like forms, with happy smiles, descend the steps of the altar, and mingle with the worshipping groups bearing various objects in their hands, typical of heavenly gifts, and come at length to your side too, with sweet loving looks, and you weep because of your great unworthiness—and in the midst of all seems to stand the gentle, meek Eternal One, with outstretched bleeding hands and thorn-crowned brow, and is breathed over your heart, the words reach you—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Your face is flooded with tears, for you think that in the sore trials of life you have wandered too far away from that gentle voice. Is this strange? Not strange in a place where a pure presence is invited by constant earnest prayer, and an unchangeable faith, that it will be accorded. The presence is not denied here any more than of old, in the temples of the Jews any more than to the faithful seeker anywhere; whether in the prison cell, the humble cottage of the labourer, or the *séance*-room in the house of a pious Spiritualist, set apart, and consecrated to the noiseless visitors from the upper world. The place of worship, wherever it may be, is the gate of heaven on earth, wherein angels may meet with mortals, mingling with them in brotherly love, for holy and strengthening communion. And to whomsoever is given the open vision, scenes of heavenly beauty and import may be revealed. Even in the disturbed atmosphere of St. Peter's, whose precincts become almost a public highway for the innumerable visitors from all parts of the globe, and which encloses within its walls almost a world, even here visions of beauty are not denied. The lovely ones who have earned their martyr crowns, may be seen transfigured with the beauty of heaven, and take a delight,

springing from heavenly love, in giving some spiritual gift of peace, comfort, tenderness, mercy, or strength to the loving brother, or sister below, offering in simple faith a tearful request. With loving tenderness, eager to help, the beautiful forms may be seen bending over and enveloping in celestial auras some poorly-dressed man, or woman fled into the church for the rest, peace, quiet, and refreshment denied in the crowded place of earthly toil. Beside these, stately proud-looking priests clad in purple—who cross the nave to kiss the toe of the bronze statue of Peter sitting holding the keys, and who bend and kneel with dignified reverence before altar, and shrine, as if covering themselves with a glory in their church in the very face of denying strangers—beside these glide the beautiful forms of angel-guardians, and attendant spirits; some firm and strong in bearing, with looks of angelic wisdom as if they had fathomed the mysteries of the universe, but with a calm, beautiful patience to bear with human weakness. Others of the softer feminine type, floating with a wreath-like gracefulness, and seeming to wrap themselves about their charges. On all sides, multiplied as frequently as space will permit, in every form of pictorial and statuesque representation, are images of the Saviour of man, in the various incidents of His life on this planet, which to some men is a never-failing fountain of divine inspiration, and to others only a subject of learned disputation. Overwhelmingly do all these external symbols remind one of the ever-abiding presence of Jesus with those faithful unto Him; but like a mighty voice does His spirit-presence speak here to the soul; and although we know that not here only, but everywhere may that presence be felt, yet it is delicious to feel it brought so sensibly to one as here in this vast temple dedicated to His praise and worship. Upraised on high, radiant, and with a lovely majesty, and gentle beneficence, surrounded by a glorious company of angels, He sheds down His divine influences, or sometimes descending passes through the groups of worshippers, bestowing especial gifts; for the humanity is assumed as a garment to cover the divine glory, and enable the God-spirit to more nearly and intimately reach man; and thus at will may this Glorious One come amongst us. Is not this true?

Does not Spiritualism teach it? That Spiritualism which is in all religions does,—and the soul of man does. How many a poor dying soul cries out "I see Jesus!" "Jesus has not forgotten me, He comes with His angels for my soul!"—etc., etc. Are these delusions?

Rome, March 16th, 1877.

Mr. D. H. Wilson has left Algiers, and will return to London after visiting several places on the Continent.

MR. TYERMAN.—It is with extreme regret that we have to announce that our eloquent and highly-talented friend, Mr. Tyerman, the father of public free-thought in this city, has been seriously ill. The great fatigue consequent on overwork in pursuit of his great mission had for some weeks been affecting his health, and his indisposition culminated on Saturday last in the bursting of a blood-vessel, which prevented his carrying on his ministrations at the Victoria Theatre on Sunday evening, the duties having been kindly undertaken by Professor Hamilton. Mr. Tyerman's many friends will, however, be happy to learn that he is rapidly recovering, and will no doubt be able to resume his lectures on Sunday evening next, when he purposes delivering an address of a new character, at which he will be sure to receive the hearty sympathy and support of a crowded congregation.—*The Satirist* (Sydney), Dec. 15th, 1876.

TALL TALKING.—A newspaper called *Vulcan*, published in Barrow-in-Furness, contains a leading article abusing Spiritualism, also another, from which we make the following extract, as a specimen of the literary food the dwellers in that benighted region sometimes have to swallow:—"We have frequently been compelled to listen to the sharpening of a saw; we have lived in close proximity to a man who was learning to play the bagpipes; and every morning, as we trudge to business through some of the loveliest bay and mountain scenery which this or any other country can produce, our meditations are disturbed by the sonorous groans of 'buzzers,' the vigorous clanging of time-bells, the excruciating shrieks of steam-whistles, and the unearthly yells of other infernal engines of acoustic torture, which pour forth their black-throated unutterableness as though a concert of 'goblins damned' were belching out a 'blast from hell' to frighten the morning star from its cerulean throne, or scare the sky-lark as it sets earth's morning prayers to music and wings them upward to the gates of heaven." The writer perhaps thought it clever, and after penning the lines—

Felt adown the small o' the back,  
That gentle warmth which creeps upon us  
When we know that we have said a good thing,  
Although the vain world  
Never can, and never will.

## FROM INDIA.

BY THE REV. THOMAS COLLEY, CHAPLAIN TO H.M.S. "MALABAR."

DELHI, Agra, Cawnpore, Lucknow, Allahabad, and Benares (Poonah and Bombay in my first visit), are names that carry me in spirit to the places visited in India, from which I am now for the second time returning.

I have seen a good deal of Indian jugglery at certain of these places, but with one solitary exception it was all mere conjuring.

The Mango tree business I had heard so much of was disappointing. I suspected how it was done, and by paying a few rupees was quietly in my room at the bungalow very readily shown that not particularly clever trick.

Rupees in India will do anything, and afford a very good test as to what is genuine occult power, and what mere sleight of hand, the latter being marketable for a consideration, so that you may purchase the juggler, bag and baggage, knowledge of tricks and apparatus and entire stock-in-trade for the everlasting rupee. But when you light, as in the solitary instance I refer to, upon what looks the real thing, then it cannot be told, purchased or sold, which is dreadfully baffling.

"Import a Fakeer," some one has said; but I question the utility of it even if it could be done; for the Mussulman Fakeer is not generally accredited with abnormal powers greatly in excess of ordinary mortals, while at the same time he is very unpleasantly extraordinary in other matters not so interesting; and the Hindu Fakeer in whom occult mystery is more native, being, moreover, quite as un-savoury as the other, could not cross the Kala Pawnee (black water) without losing his caste than which he would sooner lose his life.

Still I think Indian Spiritualism ought to be studied and thoroughly gone into; and there are many officers now in India who, as Spiritualists, might form a committee for its systematic investigation, and transmit results to us in England that might be very useful and suggestive. I only regret that I had not longer time in India to go into the matter deeper.

Malta, March 21, 1877.

MOHAMMEDANISM.—He described the howling and dancing dervishes of Stamboul, and said that some of them, as he witnessed, possessed remarkable mesmeric power, stanching the flow of blood from an ugly wound by a touch, and healing a palsied arm. They claim miraculous power, and agree with the Shakers and Quakers that divine inspiration has not ceased. Mohammedans reject the doctrine of the Trinity, and that of the atonement, as irrational, and claim that every sin has its punishment, from which there is no escape. They believe in seven hells and seven heavens, shading insensibly into each other, and the difference between the highest hell and the lowest heaven is of the same nature as that between any two heavens or hells. They are very strict in honesty and temperance, except in the cities, where they have become somewhat demoralised by contact with European Christians.—*Report of J. M. Peebles' Lecture, Religio-Philosophical Journal.*

SPIRITUALISTIC PERIODICALS.—In the year 1869 there was no newspaper connected with the Spiritual movement in this country; we had then nothing but monthly periodicals, filled with essays of a magazine character; shorthand or other reports of meetings, and records of the ordinary current events of the day, were almost entirely unknown. The consequence was, that no reports were published of the long series of Gower-street conferences then held in London, at which psychological facts of the utmost value were made known by Mrs. Hardinge, Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Luxmoore, and others; and the speakers complained from the platform of the want of a newspaper in the Spiritual movement. For these reasons *The Spiritualist* was first published, in 1869, as a fortnightly journal, with the announcement in the first leading article of its first number, that it would be brought out weekly as soon as such a course was considered to be reasonable. The following is an extract from that article:—"Spiritualism in England has long been represented by three periodicals, all published monthly, namely, *The Spiritual Magazine*, *Human Nature*, and *Daybreak*. *The Spiritual Magazine* was first published in January, 1860; *Human Nature* in April, 1867; and *Daybreak* in June, 1858. *The Spiritualist*, issued for the first time this day, is not started for the purpose of competing with the three journals just mentioned, but is intended to occupy new ground, and to meet a want as yet unsupplied. At the Gower-street conferences last winter, several of the speakers mentioned the want of reports and records of public meetings connected with Spiritualism, and one chief object of this new journal is to chronicle the proceedings of such assemblies. Another feature of *The Spiritualist* will be its scientific character. . . . At first this journal will be published fortnightly, to 'feel the ground,' before its transformation into a weekly paper—a step which, together with other improvements, is likely to be taken before long, should all go well."

## THE PROPHECY OF VALA.

[THE Prophecy of Vala is founded on the Scandinavian mythology. Odin, the great All Father, is the sovereign power of the universe; Thor, a lesser god, of whom it is said, "his mighty hammer smote thunder out of everything." Baldur was a son of Odin and Frigga. He was slain by Horder, his blind brother, who was persuaded to the act by Loké, an evil spirit, corresponding to the Hebrew or Christian devil. The Valkyrien were the geni of the battle field. The three Nornen were the Fates who watered the tree Yggdrasil, at whose roots it is said that a dragon was constantly gnawing. The Heimskringla was the circle of the universe. Vala was a seeress, or prophetess, who was summoned from the dead by Odin to tell of the fate of Baldur, but on her appearance refused to do so, and to the astonishment of all, prophesied the death of all the sons of Odin, at the day of Ragnaroc, which corresponds to the day of judgment, with the exception that it was also the day of reconstruction, or renewal of the world. The prophecy of Vala, as given in the old Icelandic Edda, has been used with perfect freedom, to present the idea that Good, though apparently overcome of Evil, should ultimately triumph.—*Explanation by Poe.*]

THE following verses were given through the trance mediumship of Miss Lizzie Doten, of Boston, U.S., and were taken down in shorthand at the time. They were stated to be given through her organism by the spirit of Edgar Allan Poe, and not only do the utterances partake of his style, but they display here and there a clearer recognition of fundamental religious principles, and are in that respect superior to anything which he wrote during his earth-life:—

I have walked with the Fates and the Furies 'mid the wrecks of the mighty Past,

I have stood in the giant shadows which the ages have backward cast; And I've heard the voices of prophets come down in a lengthening chain, Translating the Truth Eternal, and making its meaning plain; Backward still, ever backward, 'mid wreck and ruin I trod, Seeking life's secret sources, and the primal truths of God.

"Tell me," I cried, "O Prophet, thou shade of the mighty Past, What of the Truth in the future? Is its horoscope yet cast? Thou didst give it its birth and being, thou didst cradle it in thy breast— Show me its shining orbit, and the place of its final rest!"

A sound like the restless earthquake! A crash like the "crack of doom"! And a fiery fulmination streamed in through the frightened gloom.

I stood in the halls of Odin, and the great All Father shone Like the centre and sun of being, 'mid the glories of his throne; And Thor with his mighty hammer upraised in his giant hand, Stood ready to wake the thunder at his sovereign lord's command.

"Ho, Thor!" said the mighty Odin, "our omens are of ill, For the dragon gnaweth sharply at the roots of Yggdrasil; I hear the wild Valkyrien, as they shriek on the battle-plain, And the moans of the faithful Nornen, as they weep over Baldur slain.

A woe to the serpent Loké, and to Hördér's reckless ruth, For Goodness is slain of evil, and falsehood hath conquered truth! Now call thou on mystic Vala, as she sleeps in the grave of time, Where the hoary age hath written her name in a frosty rime; She can tell when the sun will darken, when the stars shall cease to burn, When the sleeping dead shall waken, and when Baldur shall return."

A sound like the rushing tempest, and the wondrous hammer fell, And the great Heimskringla shuddered, and swayed like a mighty bell. There were mingled murmurs and discords like the wailing of troubled souls;

Like the gnomes at their fiery forges—like the howlings of restless ghouls. Then out of the fiery covert of the tempest and the storm, Like a vision of troubled slumber, came a woman's stately form; There fell a hush as at midnight, when the sheeted dead awoke, And even the silence shuddered as her words of power she spake:—

"Mighty Odin, I am Vala,  
I have heard your thunder-call,  
I have heard the woful wailing  
Sounding forth from Wingolf's hall;  
And I know that beauteous Baldur,  
Loved of all the gods is slain—  
That the evil Loké triumphs,  
And on Hördér rests the stain.  
But my words shall fail to tell you  
Aught concerning him you mourn,  
For the leaves that bear the record  
From the Tree of Life are torn;  
And while Hecla's fires shall glow,  
Or the bubbling Geysers flow,  
Of his fate no one shall know—  
Understand you this, or no?"

"I will sing a solemn Saga,  
I will chant a Runic rhyme,  
Weave a wild prophetic Edda,  
From the scattered threads of time:  
Know, O Odin,—mighty Odin,—  
That thy sons shall all be slain,  
Where the wild Valkyrien gather,  
On the bloody battle plain;  
And thy throne itself shall tremble,  
With the stern resistless shock  
Which shall rend the world asunder  
At the day of Ragnaroc.  
Other stars the night shall know,  
From the rock shall waters flow  
And from ruin beauty grow—  
Understand you this or no?"

"Vainly shall the faithful Nornen  
Water drooping Yggdrasil,  
For the wrathful, restless dragon

At its roots is gnawing still,  
Loké's evil arts shall triumph,  
Hörder's eyes be dark with night,  
Till the day of re-creation  
Brings the buried Truth to light:  
Then a greater god than Odin,  
Over all the worlds shall reign,  
And my Saga's mystic meaning  
As the sunlight shall be plain.  
Out of evil good shall grow—  
Doubt me not, for time shall show.  
Understand you this or no?  
Fare you well! I go—I go."

There came a voice as of thunder, with a gleam of lurid light,  
And the mystic Vala vanished like a meteor of the night;  
Then I saw that the truth of the present is but the truth of the past,  
But each phase is greater, and grander, and mightier than the last—  
That the past is ever prophetic of that which is yet to be,  
And that God reveals His glory by slow and distinct degree;  
Yet still are the nations weeping o'er the graves of the Truth and Right:  
Lo! I summon another Vala—let her prophesy to-night.  
With the amaranth, and the myrtle, and the asphodel on her brow,  
Still wet with the dew of the kingdom, doth she stand before you now:

"Not with sound of many thunders,  
Not with miracles and wonders,  
Would I herald forth my coming from the peaceful spirit shore;  
But in God's own love descending,  
With your aspirations blending,  
I would teach you of the future, that you watch and weep no more.

"God is God from the creation;  
Truth alone is man's salvation:  
But the God whom now you worship soon shall be your God no more;  
For the soul, in its unfolding,  
Evermore its thought remoulding,  
Learns more truly, in its progress, 'how to love and to adore!'

"Evil is of Good, twin brother,  
Born of God, and of none other;  
And though Truth seem slain of Error, through the ills that men  
deplore,  
Yet still nearer to perfection,  
She shall know a resurrection,  
Passing on from ceaseless glory, unto glory evermore.

"From the truths of former ages,  
From the world's close-letted pages,  
Man shall learn to meet more bravely all the life that lies before;  
For the day of retribution  
Is the final restitution  
Of the good, the true, the holy, which shall live for evermore!  
Understand you this, or no?  
Fare you well! I go—I go!"

**SPIRITUALISM IN NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.**—On Sunday last, April 1st, the guides of Mr. J. J. Morse delivered a trance address before the members of the Newcastle Psychological Society. As this was the commencement of another twelve months' engagement of Mr. Morse, they announced that they proposed giving a series of twelve lectures on the Sunday evenings of each month, under the general head of "Elements of Cosmic Philosophy." The particular department dealt with last Sunday was "Supernaturalism;" their next subject will be "Naturalism;" and in the June lectures they will follow on "Spiritualism." Last Sunday a poem of his own composition was delivered by Mr. Jos. Skipsey, the Northumbrian seer and poet; and the public ceremony was performed of naming the infant daughter of Mr. Thomas Tate, of Newcastle, by Mr. Morse. Mr. John Mould occupied the chair.

**SPIRITUALISM AND THE PRESS.**—"I have been recently assured by one of our leading journalists that Spiritualism finds favour at last with many literary and scientific men in this country, but unfortunately we do not see them; we have not yet heard their voices; they are silent when most needed. It is known that almost every journal published in the metropolis has one or more members of its staff who are thorough-going believers in Spiritualism, and yet if any public emergency arises they are dumb and stand by, whilst their associates are permitted to wield the pen, to misrepresent the truth, to mislead the public, and to encourage every charlatan in his pretended exposure of Spiritual phenomena."—*The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England*, by Benjamin Coleman.

**THE LATEST MIRACULOUS CURES.**—Miracles are becoming uncommonly common. There is the bed-ridden Chicago crone who prayed, and was made whole. There is Mr. F. W. Fields, the lame man with the hip disease, who taught a Sunday-school class in Chicago, and whose leg grew two and a half inches after a night of prayer. And now comes Ruth Harris (coloured) of Washington. She has been dumb for eight years. She committed some dreadful act, and when accused of it called upon the Creator to strike her dumb if she did not tell the truth. She was struck dumb, and never spoke again until one night last week, when she had a dream. Her mother—who died about a year ago—appeared to her in the watches of the night, and told her that her powers of speech would return to her. Awakening from her dream, she found that her speech had indeed returned. Rejoicing at the discovery she turned over in bed, touched her husband's shoulder, and when he was aroused remarked, "What do you think?" He thought the world was at an end, and waited for no explanation. Bouncing out of bed he ran into the street, and aroused the neighbours. They returned with him, and found that Ruth could really talk again. So runs the tale. Probably the miracle vein is being overworked just now.—*New York Tribune*.

## A CHALLENGE TO MESSRS. MASKELYNE AND COOKE.

BY S. C. HALL, F.S.A.

MESSRS. MASKELYNE AND COOKE are clever conjurers: that and nothing else; but they lead the public to think they can do what spiritual mediums do. Can they?

Let the matter be tested and—proved.

Will you transmit to them this challenge?

I undertake to pay £50 to any charity they may name if they will do any one of the eight things, of which I append a list.

But it must be done in my drawing-room in the presence of four persons invited by them, including themselves, and four persons invited by me, including myself.

The conditions shall—and to that I give my honour—in no degree differ from those under which I have seen that done which I shall call upon them to do—if they can.

The eight things I have seen done in my own drawing-room, some of them more than once.

The conditions, as I have said, shall be exactly the same. No one shall enter the drawing-room until all enter together; but Messrs. M. and C. shall consent to be searched before entering it.

The three persons chosen by me shall be gentlemen high in position, literary or scientific, and the two brought by Messrs. M. and C. shall be in no way their auxiliaries, but gentlemen whose names will guarantee assurance that they aim only at elucidating truth.

I have not the remotest expectation that this challenge will be accepted. The marvels of Messrs. M. and C. are very different indeed from those of admitted spiritual mediums. The imitation is no more like the real, than the basest pinchbeck is like that which it simulates—pure gold.

1. Mr. Maskelyne shall take in his hand, from a clear fire in my drawing-room, a large blazing coal; put it on my white head, let it remain there two minutes, and not singe a hair.

2. He shall be seated on one of my drawing-room chairs, and be raised thence to the ceiling, where he shall make a pencil mark, and descend and again sit on the chair. This in sufficient light for on-lookers to trace his course.

3. A piano closed and locked, at a distance from the table, shall play a well-known air of three minutes' duration.

4. On a sheet of paper, marked so as to be identified, some power write (in the dark) a sentence in Greek—first assuring the persons present that it is a language of which he is ignorant.

5. He shall read a name written by me lightly in pencil on a slip of paper, which slip I will enclose in seven thick envelopes.

6. He shall, in sufficient light, cause a handbell to be taken by a hand (perceptible) from the table, and to be rung in distant parts of the room, as well as over the heads of the sitters.

7. He shall, in the dark, make a drawing that competent judges shall declare to be of excellence as a work of art, the subject chosen by me at the moment: or paint a landscape in oil-colours, the colours provided by me, and placed by me with brushes and (marked) canvas on my table.

8. He will take my accordion, hold it in one hand, his other hand being held by one of the persons present, and cause it to play good, true, and beautiful music, of seven minutes' duration.

It would be easy for me to greatly extend this list; but it is unnecessary to do so. I think I could name twenty other things I have seen mediums do, which I am very sure Messrs. M. and C. cannot do, unless, indeed, they are permitted to make their own arrangements beforehand, which I shall take good care they shall not be in a position to do.

It would be as easy for me to name tasks, perhaps more out of "the course of nature" than either of these eight; but I confine myself to those I have myself witnessed, and to which, if Messrs. M. and C. wish, I will testify on oath, sustaining my affidavit by the testimony of at least a dozen persons, whose testimony would be, without a moment's hesitation, accepted as unquestionable on any other subject by all who read their statements.

I may state that among the names of some of my guests on one or more of the eight occasions were Lord Lindsay, Lord Dunraven, Lord Lytton (the late), Robert Chambers, Sergeant Cox, W. Crookes, F.R.S., Rev. J. G. Wood, M.A., William and Mary Howitt, Colonel Drayson.

I repeat that if under the conditions I lay down, which are simply those that have been accorded to mediums who have done them, they will do any one of the eight, I will give the sum of £50 to any charity they will name.

**RELIGIOUS MANIA.**—Had the hero of the following narrative been a Spiritualist, all the daily papers would be publishing articles on the subject, and full details sent to America by the Atlantic cables. We quote the account from the *Pall Mall Gazette*:—"At the Uxbridge petty sessions yesterday (Monday), James Rookes, aged fifty-three, was charged with being found wandering, suffering from religious mania. About midnight on Sunday a police-constable on duty at Hillingdon Heath saw the prisoner walking towards London naked, and took him back to Uxbridge, a distance of two miles. At the police-station the prisoner said that he was released from Colney Hatch Asylum about a fortnight previously, and that on Sunday he resolved to attend a mission meeting at Exeter. He walked from London as far as Gerrard's-cross, and was there met by the devil, who looked into his eyes to see if he was the right man. The prisoner then remembered that he had something to confess. He had, however, forgotten the words he should repeat, and the only way in which he thought he could free himself from the power of the evil one was by walking backwards for a mile naked. He accordingly undressed himself, and leaving his clothes in the road, walked backwards. After going about a mile in this way he returned for his clothes, but could not find them, and consequently determined to walk back to London."

## A REMARKABLE SEANCE WITH MR. EGLINTON.

BY C. CARTER BLAKE, DOC. SCI.

ON Tuesday, the 27th ultimo, a *séance* took place at 38, Great Russell-street, Mr. W. Eglinton as medium, the circle present being Captain James, Mr. J. F. Collingwood, F.G.S., Mrs. Lewis, Mr. W. B. Mawson, Mr. W. Cutler, Mrs. Burton Burton, Mrs. Tennyson Ker, Mrs. and Miss Falkiner, and myself.

The medium, who wore black clothes, was placed loose in the cabinet, sitting on a chair, with his face in a westerly direction. The curtains being closed, and the musical box turned on, a long white figure, resembling that known as "Abd-ū-lah" was seen at the centre of the curtain within one minute from the time of the closing the curtains. After a few more minutes such form came out and walked into the middle of the room, eight times in all. The form termed "Joey" then appeared and stepped to the front of the cabinet, where, after retreating several times, he stooped down to the ground, and covered his head with a fold of white drapery. He then rose up with the black beard attached to the cheeks (but not chin) of Abd-ū-lah, and stood up to a greater height than that which the medium himself reaches. He further picked up the light round table and held it at arm's length above his head, trying (abortively) to place it on the top of the cabinet.

After some time a request was made by a lady and gentleman present, that the medium and "Abd-ū-lah" should be shown at the same time. To this request "Joey" acceded; and subsequently the following events took place: Mr. Eglinton sitting as before, the curtains were drawn showing the figure Abd-ū-lah standing up near and in front of the wire screen; and two patches of light which may be reasonably conjectured to have been Mr. Eglinton's face and left hand at the level which he would have occupied if he had been sitting in the chair. This not being, however, perfectly clear to all, the form Abd-ū-lah took a step or two to its own proper right, keeping face to face with Eglinton, who rose from his chair, and raised both his hands with what appeared to be convulsive action. This time there was no doubt that it really was Eglinton standing up in front of, and about 3½ feet outside the cabinet opposite to a form exceeding himself in stature, and dressed in white. This was clearly seen by all present during an interval of time which I estimate as six minutes, and in what has been termed "quarter gas-light." Eglinton then sat down in his chair, and the form Abd-ū-lah appeared to vanish into Eglinton, appearing to unite with him about the breast. I then stepped into the cabinet, ascertained that Eglinton was thoroughly asleep, lifted him outside the cabinet, and examined the spot carefully. The voice called that of "Joey" was chattering nonsense around and about the walls of the cabinet all the time. Eglinton subsequently woke up.

I consider this to have been the most remarkable *séance* which I have seen in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, and to have been thoroughly conclusive to those present of his non-identity with the form which is called "Abd-ū-lah." It is the more remarkable, as on the previous Tuesday some very slight manifestations took place, though the conditions were similar and satisfactory.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF PSYCHIC FORCE?—At a recent meeting of the members of the National Association of Spiritualists, Mr. W. H. Coffin presided, and after the reading of a paper by Mr. D. Fitz-Gerald on "Physical Science and Spiritual Psychology," a discussion took place on the correspondence or connection between the mechanical force exerted by man derived from food, and what Spiritualists understand by "psychic force," the motive power in the production of "physical manifestations." Mr. Tapp said that he had often suffered great exhaustion after *séances*, and felt ravenously hungry, though he had, perhaps, dined only a quarter of an hour before going there. On the other hand, Mr. Joy gave the case of Mr. Ashman, who could mesmerise for many hours without apparently suffering any loss of energy. Mr. Tapp also cited the case of a lady who was herself weakly and delicate, but whose presence in the circle seemed to give strength to the medium. He would like to know whether the lady gave the energy, or whether she was used as a vehicle for transferring it from the circle to the medium. She hoped the Research Committee of the Association would make some experiments in that direction. Mr. Shorter remarked that there appeared to be an equalisation of forces in a spirit's circle, as each person was generally differently affected. After some closing remarks from Mr. Fitz-Gerald, the meeting broke up.

## THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

A TRANCE ORATION BY MRS. C. L. V. TAPPAN-RICHMOND.\*

OH, HEAVENLY FATHER! Thou Infinite Spirit! Thou Beneficent Guide! Thou Counsellor and Friend! To Thee we turn in aspiration and praise, giving to Thee the tribute of the offering of our lives, of the loftiest hopes of the mind, of the divinest contemplation of the spirit. Thou who art enshrined within every living soul, who art the life of every moving thing, whose spirit pulsates alike in the atom and in the star, who art the life of the burnished wing of the butterfly and the aspiration of the soul of man; Thou who hast builded from eternity the Temple of Infinite Life; thou who hast from eternity endowed the spirit of man with understanding and immortality, framing within the soul the lofty edifice of life, and fashioning there the sanctuary of worship—unto that sanctuary, even the House of God, fashioned by thy hand, we would repair; we would keep it free from all that contaminates or makes unholy—pure and burnished like the shining light of the vestal altar, free from all earthly stain, even like the whiteness of the orb of day, burnished like the countless stars that fill the firmament, adorning and beautifying and giving home to immortal souls; the temple of the spirit, the shrine of all holiness, the altar of immortal worship—there we would bend to praise Thee.

Not the burnished incense of outward shrine, not the gilded altar, not the everlasting token of man's adoration, but the spirit, meek and lowly, the loving thought, the kindly deed, the purity of life, all these shall be the offerings that we bring unto thee; and if there be some that bring the offering of sorrow, if death, white-winged and with noiseless step, has silently touched the brow of dearly loved ones, and there be those that bend in the altar of the spirit to-night with tears and despondency, oh, let them find that life immortal springeth from death, and that beyond the clouds of time and sense the glorified soul rises free and untrammelled. If there be those that bend in the soul's altar to-night, upon whom material life weighs heavily, who know not the voice of the Spirit, and hear not Thy divine, parental, and loving soul, oh, let them know that, even as in the dark the hand of life is extended, even as upon the storm-tossed waves the voice of peace was heard, even as the mother bird, who presses forth the young that they may learn to fly alone, so is Thy hand extended amid the storms of outward life, and though clouds intervene Thy spirit reveals itself in many a sign and token, that if they will only listen they may hear.

Let Thy power be felt and known, let the quickening of Thy Spirit, like a flame of holy light, burn within, and let its fruition of praise be the loftiness of thought, the excellence of life, the charity, the divine goodness that encompasses the souls of those who see Thee and know Thee, in spirit and in truth.—AMEN.

Some twenty years ago, from his pulpit in Music Hall, Boston, my friend, Mr. Theodore Parker, said this of Spiritualism, or "Spiritism," as he termed it: "This belief, without priests, without creeds, without churches, without any established form of worship or teachers, entering silently every pathway of life, piercing every department of science, of literature, of religion, is destined to be the religion of the future."

Mr. Parker was not a Spiritualist; he had never investigated the phenomena of modern Spiritualism; he had no time to do so; but he was perfectly aware of the influence it was destined to exert upon the minds of the people, being predicated, as he saw, upon undeniable proofs, and having for its foundation the broadest scope of human philosophy and reason.

It is not my purpose to measure the religions of the past in the light of modern thought. That has already been done far more ably than I can do it to-night, and, perhaps, in some instances unjustly. The past religions of the earth have fulfilled measurably their purposes. For the age in which they were given they were undoubtedly *the* religions, and we often misinterpret them in the light of modern thought and science, by not being able to place ourselves *en rapport* with the circumstances, surroundings, times, and inspirations of the period in which they were given. To the Buddhist belongs his worship, to the Brahmin his, to the Hindoo his, to the Hebraic worshipper his, to the Mohammedan his, to the Christian of every denomination his own especial form of praise. It is not my province to find fault with this or that form, to criticise or call in question the methods by which the different devotees approach the Infinite Mind. I only claim the privilege of approaching God in my own way, and after the manner in which my mind and my spirit shall see to be the best method of approaching Him.

It is the claim of the Protestant Church that man has the right to interpret the Scriptures according to his own understanding. There is no Church in the world that has given fewer privileges of interpretation. It is the boast of the Protestant Church that to man's conscience there comes a quickening voice which shall act as an interpreter. There is no Church in the world that listens less to that quickening voice, I am sorry to say, than the Church of our ancestors. Girded round by the narrow limits of creed, established in fixed forms of thought, limited in the range of intellectual observation, the Protestant Church is made a prison-house from which, as rapidly as the mind of the nineteenth century has developed, the young fledgelings have flown away. Like the home circle that is too greatly restricted in its amusements and pleasures, like the cruel parent that enjoins obedience because of duty, from which the offspring take their departure as soon as strength of limb and mind will permit, so from out the nest of the Protestant faith; one fledgeling after another has flown, leaving the mother Church almost bare of offspring, and the parent nest like a deserted rookery, filled, it is true, with those that cling there for the mere support of the external edifice, but devoid of much of the life and inspiration which the younger elements of modern thought would have given it.

\* This inspirational address was delivered at Chicago, U.S., Feb. 25th, 1877, and professedly under the influence of the late William Ellery Channing.

Incorporated into the Church, however, is the thought of modern intelligence, and this gradually, notwithstanding the force of education and creed, is making its presence felt. But intellect is harsh in her methods, science is didactic in her measures, and with external proof and the sledge-hammer of strong logic and intellect, the Church has been battered away from the outside, instead of renovated from within.

The materialist has made the mistake of supposing that the Church is not maintained by human beings, has made the mistake of supposing that the Church is an edifice, a something that can be torn away by the mere proclamation of scientific truth and the errors in the Church itself. But not so. The perception of knowledge is a matter of growth, and those within and without the Church must have a consciousness of error before they can admit or even adopt new forms of belief.

Unfortunately, however, the religious mind of the nineteenth century has not been strengthened in its proper strongholds. The faith which was the strong groundwork of the early Christians, has steadily departed before the light and the encroachments of science, and the spiritual fervour which kept alive the early faith was quenched just so soon as political ambition and external power became the chief instruments for the forwarding of the Church itself. Under these circumstances, it is most wonderful that there is as much religious fervour in the Church as there is to-day. Under these circumstances it is most wonderful that the human mind clings even to any thought of worship, when we consider the external ambition, the pride, the history of bloodshed and rapine, the adoption and support of every form of human oppression that has had its chief foundation in the established churches of the world. The centres of power have been sustained and supported by religious bodies, and these centres of power have frequently been associated with tyranny, with ambition, with pride, with all that degraded humanity.

Briefly, then, the religions of the world seem to have passed through three successive stages; the religion of external power or force, which was illustrated in the early Mosaic Dispensation and in the earlier religions of the world, where temporal power, external splendour, beauty of adornment, outward display, external offerings, the sacrificial rite, were held as necessities for human devotion. Under this light of prevailing force man became cruel; his methods of devotion became methods of torture, and the governments of the world were used and employed to enforce a religion of power and of tyranny over the conscience of mankind. No soul could think of worshipping according to its own dictates, because every soul had permission, chiefly from those who held power, to worship only after a given method, and all forms of external sacrifice must be employed to propitiate the divinities which seemed to hedge man around with physical power and destruction. To such divinities belonged one of the three divinities of the Brahminical worship, and to the divinity of destruction more than those of creation the Brahmins gave their adoration; and the children of Israel, borrowing from the ancient methods, gave to the god of power their offerings, their sacrifices, their external tokens of reverence and praise, forgetting that the chief life must come from within, though often reminded of this by prophet, seer, and sage.

The next dispensation of religion seemed a modification of the law of force, and was one of moral power and fervour; but just so soon as man externally became the representative of that religion, it was again merged into the law of force, and from the doctrines and teachings of Christ, who came to the spirit of man, the Church gradually degenerated again into the external form of worship, and to the enforcement of external discipline. These methods were also adopted in the Protestant Church, and though the first outcome of the Protestant religion promised a greater harvest to the spiritual kingdom, it was not long before the Church and State again united in the unhallowed compact of compelling people to worship, not according to the dictates of their conscience, but according to the dictates of priest, king, or ruler; and thus it came to pass that out of the Protestant Church, and out of the dynasties of ancient governments, sprung the newer kingdoms of thought and the republic of the world.

But a milder thought of religion came into the world. Overspreading all, even as after a storm the bright evening glow overspreads the sky, there came into the thought of the nineteenth century—there came even as early as the eighteenth century—the dawning of the peaceful religion, the method of Christ as belonging to that of love, the teaching of the life of Christ as the example of humanity; and this, gradually spreading itself in the time of John Wesley, was caught up by the early Unitarians, advocated by Dr. Priestley and others, until, at last, from the Unitarians and Universalists, and other bands of worshippers, there came to be a belief in the world in the love, instead of the fear of God; in the power of love, instead of the power of anger and hatred; in the overspreading mercy of the religion of Christ, instead of the condemnation of that religion; and in contradistinction to the extreme doctrines of Calvin and of some of the followers of Luther, there came into being the milder form that adopts the thought of the salvation of the whole human family; but accompanying this milder form came also the disruption of creeds, the doubt as to religion itself, the doubt and cloud thrown upon inspiration; the Bible came under critical examination, creeds under the disintegrating touch of infidelity; and there arose the materialistic tendencies of the past century, the line of thought in the schools of modern philosophy, which seemed destined to overthrow, not only all religious thought, but the very foundations of religion. Under these circumstances, Universalism and Unitarianism, though spreading rapidly and gaining adherents, gained them frequently at the expense of spiritual power, and it became no longer a question of teaching religion, but rather of teaching in some new form of literary novelty the most modern thought in philosophy and science, and the churches now that express the greatest intelligence, and to which are drawn the largest number of worshippers continually, are those that say the least about religion.

If we become followers of a school of thought which admits the

freedom of human conscience, but at the same time refuses to admit the increase and continued flow of spiritual power in the universe, we are liable to become impoverished spiritually. Such a school has sprung up among the liberal, free-thinking religionists of this age; and we are, therefore, in the midst, not of a revival of free religion, but rather of an attenuated form of metaphysical philosophy, borrowed somewhat from the school of Germany, borrowed somewhat from the school of Bentham and Mill, but being still more strongly tinctured with the school of Huxley, Tyndall, and Carpenter, in England. Under this *regime* the Unitarian Church is drifting into the school of unbelief. Under this *regime* the Church of England, with the broad church interpretation, is drifting into the school of unbelief; and under this *regime* those who seek for a strong foundation of faith are flying to the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, while out of the Protestant Churches are fleeing those who seek for freedom of thought under the pale of modern philosophy.

I claim that Spiritualism is the religion of the world. Take away from the Inspired Word the contact of angelic ministration, of messengers, of spirits, of angels and their doings with mankind, and you take away all there is of it. Take away from the record of Christ and His teachings that which pertains to the spiritual nature of man, and you take away the life of that record. So with the history of the Church, and so with the history of man. Take from Plato, from Socrates, from Galileo, from any teacher of philosophy, poet, or artist, the spirit that is unexpressed, and you take the vitality of their philosophy, of their poesy, and of their art from them. The image which they give is only the suggestion of what lies beyond it, is only something to lead the mind to the contemplation of the spiritual proposition which was really the animating principle. All the prophets of science have been led step by step, not so much by the outward observation as by what the outward observation suggested of that which the senses could not reach.

For my own part, had I ever experienced for one moment a doubt concerning the spiritual nature of man, or the ultimate power of the Infinite Spirit, I should have considered myself a beggar upon the earth. Despite of the poverty of human theology, despite of the husks and stones upon which they sought to feed me when a child, despite of the revelations that came to me through study afterward, the belief and consciousness in a super-atmosphere of spiritual power never deserted my mind for one moment. Calmly as an infant upon its mother's bosom, I trusted in that Infinite Power that I knew girded the universe round about, and as calmly I allowed my mind to understand that the spiritual, though uncomprehended, formed the chief portion of the life which I lived.

The questions, then, which are most frequently asked of Spiritualists to-day are, Is Spiritualism a religion? Does it intend to usurp or supplant the religions of the past? Is it at war with, and in conflict with Christianity? Does it usurp and supplant the foundations of past beliefs? It is not my province to answer these questions, but simply to say that they suggest that which I wish to say to-night.

Christianity is in more danger of foes from within than from without. The established forms of Christian belief are rapidly melting away under a broader comprehension of the world, and if you mean by Christianity either the Roman Catholic Church or the various evangelical bodies of the Protestant Church then they are being undermined by themselves; that is, containing the power of self-destruction, the external structure of every human theology will perish with the material surroundings under which that structure was framed, but out of these will spring new expressions of Christian belief, and the ultimate Christianity is, of course, the ultimate Church of the world. Spiritualism has not only been a great disintegrator, but a revelator as well; entering the Church, laying hold of the most cherished creeds, fastening its truth upon the mind in contravention of some of the established beliefs of the Church itself, it has steadily encroached until theology melts even as rocks before the encroaching power of the avalanche, which, in spring time, melts and carries away rock, tree, *débris*, all, with it.

Now, some of the principal points of belief in the Christian theology must of necessity pass away with the knowledge that Spiritualism brings. I will name a few of these points. The belief which is entertained by some classes of Christians, that the body sleeps until the resurrection, and that the soul is in a state of probation or sleep during that time. If a spirit can live one instant, one hour, one day, without its material body, it will probably never require that material body to live afterwards, and the presence of one disembodied spirit who attests that he or she lives in Spiritual Life without the physical body, certainly does away with all belief in the resurrection of the physical body of man. This, of course, has been done away with in many minds long ago, but there are those who still cling to it, and to such the answer is: "I live in Spirit Life; I have a spiritual body; I am conscious, and my surroundings are those of spiritual existence."

Another belief is, that there is an absolute place of torture and an absolute place of happiness. Every spirit passing into Spirit Life, who can find means of communication with his friends, says: "I am not in hell; I am not in heaven; that is, I am not in either place, according to the interpretation of theology; I am in the Spirit World; I am in a sphere adapted to my state and condition. There are stages of growth, conditions of life adapted to every stage of human thought." At one word of an angelic messenger or guardian spirit the whole superstructure of the heaven and hell of theology sinks away. Why? Because the facts are of more power than the belief in an imaginary or theological place of torture or happiness. The ancients believed that beyond the Pillars of Hercules, which guarded the Mediterranean and held it at its westernmost shore, there lay a wild region of sea, of waste, wherein were monsters, gorgon-headed evils, powers that would devour any untoward mariner who would venture thither, and it was not until some inspired mariner ventured beyond, discovering the shores of Britain, that it was believed that the western portion was at all habitable, or

that there was any region there that was not given over to the powers of darkness. So, when Columbus set sail to find the New World it was the belief among the superstitious of his own land, who threw every obstacle in his way, that he was venturing out upon a sea inhabited by demons, and that, for his temerity in doubting that the earth was flat, he would certainly be devoured by monsters. Science, with her gradually encroaching revelations, has revealed the wonderful structure of the earth, and this vast, peopled continent is an answer to all such fears.

So, when out of the darkness of the past, penetrating the unknown regions that lie beyond death, theology fashioned a hell and a heaven which were but figurative and allegorical illustrations in the time of the prophets and of Christ; when out of the fears of death and out of the conscience-stricken fear of punishment, these two regions were peopled with the two classes of human souls that evangelical theology had divided mankind into, then there came a bold mariner, Swedenborg, from that region, saying:—"There are various stages of human life." And when into the milder light of the Wesleyan theology there shall enter the thought of the possibility of progression beyond death, and when, confirming that, the seers of modern Spiritualism declare that there are degrees of human life adapted to each human spirit; and when coupled with the vision of the seer and prophet are the words from the departed soul:—"I am not in hell; I am not in absolute heaven; but I am in a sphere adapted to my condition," the whole region of fear and of unduly exaggerated hope passes away, and the soul is admitted into the natural kingdom of life beyond the gateway called death.

No belief, however strongly grounded, can possibly withstand the constant encroachments of actual revelation, of actual knowledge. One messenger from the World of Spirits is worth one hundred thousand beliefs. One absolute voice from beyond the grave is worth a million tones of power or fear, such as are given to the unconverted by the Evangelical Christians.

We must confine ourselves to the religion of facts, for those facts include all possibilities in the universe, and when the fact is there we shall not be obliged to answer a creed, for the truth speaks for itself.

Does Spiritualism teach any creed? No. Has Spiritualism any especial form of belief? No. Is there in Spiritualism any established method of religion? No. Are there any particular teachings requisite to become a Spiritualist? No. What then is the religion? The consciousness of a spiritual nature in man which recognises a spiritual nature in the universe; the proof of God lying within man himself and not without him: the consciousness of an Infinite Spirit, Power, Principle, Mind, moving the universe, whose personality it is not important for men to know, inasmuch as the finite cannot grasp the infinite; the consciousness of an unending state of spiritual life, which begins with the growth of the spirit here, and never ends; the consciousness that the future life for the first stages is adapted precisely to the conditions of mortal life here, but the infinite stages that lie beyond are adapted to man's eternal growth. The religion of Spiritualism includes everything that pertains to the spiritual nature of man, here and hereafter; includes everything that can promote the growth of that spiritual nature, here and hereafter, and lays the foundation of that growth, not upon external belief, speculation, creed, or aught that the outward man can do, but upon the growth of the spirit itself, upon the claim that the spirit has to a place in the infinite universe. Small though it be, minute in comparison to the Infinite Soul, a place in the spiritual universe every soul must claim, and having a place, has all the rights, all the privileges, all the possibilities of any other soul whatsoever.

With this basis, the religion of Spiritualism includes all religions, admits all, questions all, and leaves all stripped of their mere externalities, laying bare the soul of human worship for the contemplation of the mind of man. With this interpretation, the religion of Spiritualism becomes the overarching, controlling, all-absorbing power of the spiritual nature which abides in the soul of man. A Brahmin or Hebrew, Egyptian or Christian, alike can worship at its shrine because it includes the whole. Just so much of the sunlight as you behold, that much will you recognise and absorb. As the powers of the spirit expand, the powers for the recognition of truth increase, and so the spirit by gradual stages of unfoldment recognises the ultimate Power of the universe.

The creeds of men seem to have been convenient walls, barring the soul from too much light lest its dazzling splendour should overcome them. We treat young and tender plants carefully; if they have been in darkness, we remove them gradually to the light; we guard them by climbing trellis and by sheltered wall until they have grown strong enough to bear the full rays of the sun. After this manner the creeds of men have been convenient walls upon which to climb, but when at last the tree is fully formed and the trunk is strong, and the limbs stretch themselves out gradually, the wall must be taken away or the tree will be cramped and dwarfed and upon one side only will yield fruition and life. So the spirit must not too long remain sheltered by walls and barriers of time and sense. There is a time when the child must learn to walk alone. There is a time when the spirit must learn to know that leaning steadfastly upon the life above is a great deal safer than leaning on the earth beneath. That vine which only creeps upon the ground never becomes strong in its power, and the soul knows that the rays of the Infinite Light penetrate through matter and time and sense for the uplifting of the soul beyond the matter, and not for the building up of the external to wall in the soul.

The God whom I worship, the God that Spiritualism recognises and believes in, is the Infinite Spirit of life everywhere, all-pervading, active, in the glow-worm and in the star. The Spirit whom I adore is the Spirit that is as near to every soul as to the highest archangel in heaven, to whom every soul, whether on earth or in obscurest planet, is just as dear. The Spirit whom I adore is not the one of partisan strife, is not the one that enters into the imperfections of time or takes

cognisance in any degree of personalities, of the strivings and contentions here; but implanting within the human breast a consciousness of what is due to itself, makes man the arbiter of his own destiny by taking him into an eternal co-partnership of responsibility, that responsibility being the consciousness of man himself; and therefore, as a king and ruler will not enter into the petty disputes of his subjects, but leaves arbitrators to do this for him, so man himself is the medium between God and his own spirit.

There is no pathway marked out. There is no creed whereby the Spiritualist hopes to gain heaven. There is no external offering of praise; there is no formula of devotion. The only creed which the true Spiritualist recognises is that of truth, wherever it shall lead. The Infinite being everywhere, the truth being its brightness, I cannot distrust it, though it lead me through every pathway of human doubt. The doubt is the material wall which man has builded round the soul. I will undermine that wall, and it shall not crush me, for I shall find my way to the other side and see the truth that is there!

The only formula which true Spiritualism enjoys is the daily and hourly worship of God by the daily and hourly fulfilment of the highest duty before you. He who denies this as being the religion of Spiritualism is an external Spiritualist and not a Spiritualist indeed. He who denies that the spirit of man must be quickened by a consciousness of immortal life is a phenomenalist, and not a Spiritualist. He who denies that Spiritualism appeals to the religion of man's nature in the worship of God through the highest manifestation of the spirit of man in the form, is an externalist, and not a Spiritualist.

The true form of worship is the expression of praise in the highest life that man can lead. The lilies blooming by the feet of the Master in Galilee were the type of a sermon; the flower growing by the wayside is the fulfilment of praise; it perfects itself so far as is possible, becoming the highest type of its kind. The forest tree, bird, star, and sun proclaim their praise by being the highest of their kind. Shall man, endowed with spirit, with immortal possibilities, with unquenched imagination, with lofty flight and tongue—shall he be less a symbol of praise? The praise which I demand from my kind unto the God whom I worship is that they be as perfect as possible. The commandment of Christ—"Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"—is not that you shall be like God, infinite, but that as human beings you shall be perfect, as immortal spirits you shall be perfect, as souls with immortal powers you shall express those souls in the loftiest thought and aspiration of life.

He whose actions are the noblest, he whose life is the best, he who drowns the body in the soul's living waters, he who makes manifest the noblest charity, the widest range of intelligence, the loftiest expression of the spirit—he is the worshipper at the shrine of the Spirit's temple. I care not whether he bend the knee before the shrine of the Roman Catholic Church, or whether he worship at the setting of the sun with the Mussulman, bowing as the bells chime over mosque and tower; I care not whether he repeat sermon or song of praise or anthem, or whether there be words in his prayer or only deeds; if his life be the expression of the spirit, as far as he knows, he is the true worshipper, and he sings the praises of God after the manner of the infinite intention.

This is the ultimate of the creed of Spiritualism. This is all there is of it. There are no ritualistic offerings, no hymns nor praises. If we sing it is because we must; if we pray it is because our aspiration leads us to prayer. We ask no man to pray. If we give forth our expression in deed of kindness and word of love, it is because the kindness and the love are there, not because we imitate them for duty's sake. If we would speak gently, it is because gentleness is within; if we would instruct, it is because there is a lesson to be taught, not because there are words and nothing but words.

Those who teach that the Spirit Life is for the most part like the earthly life, and are contented with a mere knowledge of existence beyond death, defraud the soul of its loftiest aspiration. The external consciousness of spiritual existence is not enough, but it is that that consciousness shall interpenetrate the mind, shall quicken the power, shall make lofty the aspiration, shall lay the foundation for the soul's temple beyond the grave. Is it enough that you know when you are a child that you are to be a man? Are you satisfied and contented with this? Do you not daily strive to become a man faster than you can, and is not the child constantly mimicking, in its small way, the actions of the children of larger growth, and are not the children of mortal life as imitative as these? Shall we not always hold to that which lies beyond, laying the foundation of existence as we pass on, and striving for the angelhood that lies veiled and hidden from the sight?

Oh, it is not simply the existence beyond death that is great, that is wonderful, that is the miracle of the modern science of Spiritualism—the proof that has come to this materialistic age of existence beyond death; but it is that that existence is fraught also with infinite possibilities, and that beyond the Spirit Life, which is the mere reflex and addition to earthly life, is the great eternity of life piled mountains high with its possibilities before the immortal soul. If it were only a Spirit World, with a repetition of the passions, the hopes, the ambitions, and the manners of earthly life, it might well be blotted out; but it is a Spirit World that is one step nearer the altitude of angel life.

When John, upon the isle of revelation, called Patmos, received the angelic messenger, and beheld his glory, he would fain have worshipped him; he forbade him, saying: "See that thou do it not; I am of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." Not the revelations of life beyond death, but the consciousness of the continued existence of father, mother, husband, wife, and friend, their ministrations and presence, bring comfort, bring aid, bring elevation to thought and aspiration to mind.

If the message of life beyond death means anything, if it means the commingling of kindred souls, if it means the continuation of the gaining of knowledge, then it means that for every loftiest dream, not only of reunited love, there is a realisation, but that also beyond the spirit land, and beyond the various degrees and stages that lie in the immediate spirit world, there is another and a vaster land, a land of celestial power and beauty, whose glory only the inspired vision can behold, whose contemplation can only come to loftiest thought and poesy, like Dante's loftiest vision, or like the dream of Raphael, revealing images of the heavenly throng, unpictured to mortal eye, unspoken in mortal word. It means solution of all those problems that lie within the spirit, veiled and half ready for expression—the relation of man to the Infinite, the relation of man to the angelic hosts that have already soared beyond time and space, and are making new pathways to eternity, paving those pathways with the glory of their own thoughts, even as they have paved the pathway of time with the splendour of their existence here.

Oh, mighty hosts! Oh, attendant throng! Oh, glorified souls, having knowledge where mortals grope in darkness, having wisdom where they are blind, having sight where they cannot see, encompass the world with somewhat of this power, and make the religion of mankind the aspiration of the soul to fulfil its loftiest life; and in that life, and in that soul, and in that divine expression, may the Infinite Spirit, shining through all, glorified in grandeur, adorn each mind with something of its splendour, and make of each spirit a worshipper at the temple of truth.

On the Sunday after next the Very Rev. Canon Gilbert, D.D., Vicar-General of the Archdiocese of Westminster, will commence a series of sermons at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary's, Moorfields, on "Spiritualism: its Manifestations and its Scientific and Religious Aspects."

THE ALLEGED HAUNTED HOUSE IN KENT.—A fortnight ago a brief statement which had been sent to Mr. J. N. T. Martheze, of 20, Palmeira-square, Brighton, about an alleged haunted house in Kent, was published in *The Spiritualist*. The very circumstantial and minute testimony was to the effect that sometimes the disturbances were so great as to frighten the cattle outside the house; that two gentlemen who came for a week's shooting could not stop more than one night because of the noises, which consisted of groaning and the shaking of the house; that other persons had been similarly annoyed; and that the farmer in possession had given special instructions with his own lips to some boys on the farm not to irritate the unseen, unknown, unquiet sprites. There was, also, incidental mention of the appearance of "a gentleman in black." Last Monday Mr. W. H. Harrison, of 38, Great Russell-street, London, went to the house to inquire into these matters, and to, if possible, get into communication with the invisible disturbers of the peace. The tenement is in a picturesque situation, surrounded by undulating, well-wooded country, far from any railway station, in the region immortalised by the *Ingoldsby Legends*. The farmhouse itself is on the site of an old ecclesiastical establishment, from the ruins of which it is in part built, and is now the property of the primates of Canterbury. The original building was erected in 1253, in the reign of Henry III., for canons regular of the order of St. Augustine; nearly three hundred years later Henry VIII. turned the monks out of the premises, which he afterwards leased to Archbishop Cranmer. The farmer-tenant of the present house was from home when Mr. Harrison called, but his son denied that there was any truth in the statements of the informants of Mr. Martheze. He said that no noises had ever been heard in the house which could not fairly be explained as due to owls and rats. He had heard that some of the labourers about the premises had said that the house was haunted, but there was no truth in their story. He did not believe in haunted houses, and should like to live in one if he could get the chance. The narrative which had been sent to Mr. Martheze was a fabrication.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REVIVALS.—Prominent Spiritualists have written, and are writing, on the subject of revivals considered in the light of the spiritual philosophy. They hold that the results are founded on exact laws that have always existed. The force employed is the will. The operators, or revivalists, through experience, understand how the best results may be obtained, but are ignorant of the true nature of their powers. They proceed first to interest the ministers. If all labour harmoniously, so much the better prospect of success, for there are no opposing wills. When all the preliminaries are arranged, and the united ministers and revivalists are at work, a mind-battery is unconsciously turned upon the audience, earnestly exhorting or willing that some one shall become converted. The first to feel the effects would be those who were negative or receptive to its influence—that is, weak minds, or minds that were not averse to so doing, or perhaps were wishing that they might feel "a change of heart." As the will-power influences them and they yield, they also join the positive side and earnestly pray (or will) that others may do likewise. Gradually, by these fresh additions, the influence becomes so strong that even those who "came to scoff" find their wills broken down by this power that they could not resist, and they "remain to pray." Revivals succeed best in cold weather. It is impossible for any speaker to send a thrill of mesmeric influence into the hearts of an audience sweltering with heat. This also is in obedience to the exact laws governing these manifestations. The fact that many converts "backslide" when the "revival" influence is gone, as many ministers have discovered and acknowledged, is pointed to in illustration of the truth of the claim that the "power" that converts is the will of the revivalists and co-labourers acting mesmerically. The law is undeniably of God, the central Spirit, and therefore works equally well with Spiritualists, Methodists, Unitarians, and all the Protestant sects, as well as with Catholics, Jews, Mohammedans, or any of the adherents of any other faith. The same conditions will always produce the same results.—*Boston Herald*.

## Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers.]

### REMARKABLE TEST MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—It has often been remarked with regret that many of the best facts of Spiritualism are lost to the world, because they occur in private life, and under circumstances which do not admit of their being made public.

The following interesting fact was related to me by a friend who begged that the names connected with it should not be made known; with this proviso, I am glad to say that I have the writer's permission to give it to the world. I quote from the letter in which it was written.

"Two days ago I received a most remarkable and conclusive proof of the reality of spirit intercourse. Four or five days since (having been unwell for some time) I requested information and advice regarding my state of health, and also information upon another point on which I was anxious. About thirty-six hours' later, I received a letter from a friend of mine, a private lady medium, stating that she had been put into a deep trance, and on waking up had found a letter before her, addressed to me, which she enclosed. This letter contained complete answers to all my questions as well as a Latin prescription (not one word of which my friend understood), which I had made up immediately, and from which I have derived the greatest benefit. I doubt whether any earthly doctor could so completely have met my necessity. I need not tell you that the lady was perfectly ignorant of my requests, and I therefore consider this as conclusive a proof of the reality and separate identity of our spirit friends as can possibly be given. My experience is that nothing occurs at professional *séances* to be compared with what is received through private mediums. Therefore, although I do not wish my name published, you are perfectly welcome to mention the circumstance to your friends, and as you know me your authentication ought to be sufficient. I only wish the world could know, as we do, that these things, wonderful as they seem, are but stepping-stones to one great end, the spiritualisation of man's nature by the reception of the highest influences which can descend from above into our inmost souls, raising and purifying us from those dense material influences by which we are surrounded in the world."

E. KISLINGBURY.

38, Great Russell-street, London.

### CURIOUS ALLEGATIONS.

SIR,—*Apropos* to the leading article in *The Spiritualist* of last week, it may interest you to know that a spirit purporting to come from the planet Mars has for the last two years been a visitor of my friend Mrs. Woodforde. This spirit has given his spiritual name, and its significance; also many words, and sentences of a language in use, he tells us, by a portion of the inhabitants of Mars, and by some of the spirits from that planet. He has given, as well, accounts of the moral character of the inhabitants, of the nature of their worship, and temples. The spirit is drawn to the earth from the fact that he is angel-guardian of the young son of a mutual friend. The son, we are informed, was in a former existence an inhabitant of the planet Mars, and a sister of his, who is an extraordinary natural *clairvoyante*, is also from the same planet. No doubt much more could have been obtained from this spirit, but time and opportunity have hitherto been lacking. We are, however, promised a good deal more, which, with some very interesting information upon reincarnation and cognate subjects, my friend hopes to publish.

FLORA.

Rome, March 27th, 1877.

THE Baroness Von Vay has sent Mr. Regan £2 towards a subscription list in favour of Mr. W. Wallace, medium.

SEANCE AT MRS. MAKDOUGALL GREGORY'S.—On Wednesday evening last week, at a materialisation *séance* at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, Mr. W. Eglinton was the medium. Among the observers were Mrs. Gregory, Sir P. Colquhoun, Lady Colquhoun, the Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D., Mrs. Davies, Mrs. Wiseman, and Mr. Harrison. No manifestation occurred under test conditions. An attempt was made to show Abdullah, the spirit, and the medium at the same time, but as the former was not clearly enough seen by anybody to permit of its being certified that he had living flexible features, the effort failed.

MRS. WELDON'S SOCIABLE EVENINGS.—These meetings continue every Monday evening at eight o'clock, without interruption, at Langham Hall, 43, Great Portland-street. The children of the Orphanage make visible progress, and Miss Katie, just three years old, recites a long poem, "The Spider of the Period," every Monday, with clearness, and with little gestures which greatly interest and amuse the audience. Mrs. Weldon herself always sings. The Orphanage Hand-bell Ringers chime national airs and village chimes. Mrs. Weldon has lately brought out a successful bass song by one of the pupils, and the composer, sixteen years old, himself sings it. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Blagrove and their orchestra of concertinas, Mdle. Hébert, a sprightly French *comédienne*, Mr. George Grossmith, junr., Miss Masson, Mme. Schneegans, and many others have appeared at these Monday entertainments. Part-singing is also one of the chief attractions. Next Monday, 9th April, there will be a variety of the programme. Mr. Charles K. Salaman, secretary to the Musical Association, takes the chair for Mr. Charles Lunn, author of *The Philosophy of the Voice*, and other works on music and art, who will read an essay called *The Two Paths, or Conservation and Restoration*. He will speak on the merits of Mrs. Weldon's singing method, and take for examples of her successful treatment, the accomplishments of her tiny brood.

## SPIRIT-RAPPING AMONG THE ANCESTORS OF MR. P. A. TAYLOR, M.P.

From the "Newcastle Chronicle."

THE Public Free Library of Newcastle has not yet got under way, but from day to day its foundations are being laid. Contributions are flowing in for its shelves from both sides of the Atlantic. Ere its home can be reared by the architect, evidences are afforded of the wisdom of providing, in every town over the land, suitable walls and apartments within which the gifts of the generous may be received for the culture and elevation of a community. Among the latest of these is the handsome quarto volume by our side, extending to seven hundred illustrated pages, entitled "Some Account of the Taylor Family (originally Taylor), compiled and edited by Peter Alfred Taylor, M.P.—London: Printed for Private Circulation.—1875." Of the hundred copies printed, one becomes the property of this town, where members of the family once resided, and where (in 1859), the author, now Member for Leicester, was a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons. The book has copious illustrations; the photographer, allying himself with the printer, has mingled pictorial leaves with the letterpress; portraits and coats of arms are numerous; written and printed pages that first saw the light long, long ago, are given in facsimile, and lend a peculiar interest and value to the memorial.

The son and heir of Daniel Taylor is described, by way of distinction, from others of the name as "William Taylor the Dantzic Man." Of him there are two portraits, and also portraits of his two wives, Dorothy Turner (whose paternal grandsire was woollen draper to Oliver Cromwell) and Rebecca Sherbrooke. There is a portrait, too, of Dorothy Turner, his mother-in-law. His first marriage took place on the 6th of March, 1673; and on the 7th of December there was a son born to him in his absence, his young wife, but twenty years of age, dying in childbirth. The tale is touching, even after the lapse of two centuries, freighted with all their wondrous history. Truly, "it is difficult to read the story without emotion"—difficult not to linger over it, and make the incidents our own. The grandmother of the little orphan took the place of its mother, and lovingly discharged the duties which death had devolved upon her. In the first year of "her dear Willie," she writes to the child's father, "merchant in Dantzic," telling him how he "is learning to kiss his hand." She dwells upon the growing attractions of the gentle "babe with whom I am as happy as if I had all the pleasure in the world, and he begins to be as fond of me, only his teeth pull him back from being a footman." Her charge ceasing by the marriage of her son-in-law with Rebecca Sherbrooke, in the month of August, 1676, she commends her grandson in all love and simpleness of heart to his new mother:—"Dear daughter, for so you must give me leave now to call you, being now in the room and place of my poor daughter, especially as to my son, and this dear little jewel, which with this I now present to you; and I hope your good disposition, of which I have heard very much, will cause in you a great tenderness towards him, being the only one of his dear mother; and the blessing of God be upon you all." The words are the more impressive because coming from a heart that had first mourned the loss of a daughter, and was now widowed. Her husband had died but a few months before; and in her manuscript book she wrote a poem beginning—

How is it, Lord, that one so weak as I  
Should still survive, and do not sink and die?  
The burdens lately I have undergone  
I have before e'en quaked to think upon.  
'Tis not at all from any power in me,  
But from the strength that I receive from Thee.

It is pleasant to find this devout sufferer, who could herself write verse so well, quoting also one of the poets of her century. Among her own lines, and those of her husband, she introduces a quaint stanza "out of Mr. Herbert":—

Farewell, dear flowers! sweetly your time ye spent,  
Fit, while ye lived, for smell or ornament,  
And after death for cures.  
I follow straight without complaints or grief  
Since, if my scent be good, I care not if  
It be as short as yours.

Happy the mourner who could solace her mind with such sweet odours of song! And so, with her high thoughts, we leave this good gentlewoman of the seventeenth century.

William Taylor, of South Weald, the orphan child (who lived to an advanced age), married Anne Crispe, niece of his master, Henry Sherbrooke, and thus united the Sherbrookes and the Taylors by blood, who had before been allied by marriage. Her grandfather, Edward Crispe, was so prominent in his period as to be chosen in 1651 to address Oliver Cromwell on behalf of the Militia of London after his victory at Worcester; and the speech, written in his neat, clear hand, is here printed to the word and the letter. Henry, the son of William and Anne Taylor, was sent to Queen's College, Cambridge. He it was who grew up to distinction in his day as a preacher and an author, the "Ben Mordecai" of the religious world.

The son of "Ben Mordecai" was also of Queen's College, Cambridge, and a clergyman. "The following curious certificate," says the author, "shows him to have been, in 1776, officiating as curate of Ashley, a village in the neighbourhood of Crawley:—Mary Shepherd, of the parish of Crawley, maketh oath that the body of John Pinton was not wrapped up when buried in anything but what was made of sheep wool only. Sworn before me this 22 day of February, 1776. Henry Taylor, curate of Ashley." In an explanatory foot-note, Mr. P. A. Taylor refers to the Act 30 Charles II., cap. 3, which ordered that all the dead should be shrouded in woollen stuffs. Passed for the encouragement of the woollen trade, it was repealed in 1814. Pope (as Mr. Taylor observes) refers to the statute in his well-known lines:—

"'Odious! in woollen? 'twould a saint provoke!  
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke.'"

Our forefathers regulated by statute the costume of the living and the clothing of the dead. The year 1666 had its act for "burial in woollen;" and 1677 and 1680 had their amending enactments. "Here," says the parish register of Stockton, in August, 1678, "the Act for burying in woollens takes place." The statute states its intention to be "the lessening of the importation of linen from beyond the seas, and the encouragement of the woollen and paper manufactures." The law, however, was not invariably observed. At St. Mary-le-Bow, in the city of Durham, in December, 1678, Christopher Bell, Gent., "was lapped in linen, contrary to the late Act." At St. Oswald's, too, in the same city, Miss Faith Buck, in September, 1678, was "buried (but not in woollen)." Narcissa was spared from the intrusive statute.

Our space wanes, and the claims upon what is left trouble us. Not a few of them must go unrecognised. "Ben Mordecai" was happy in having two sisters who wrote him capital letters. We can realise the pleasure with which they must have been received and read; we feel the disappointment which comes over us in omitting what we had marked for quotation. One long passage we can alone copy—a passage in which Rebecca Taylor makes report to her brother of a spirit-rapping exhibition in the year 1762, when "Fanny" was a familiar ghost. The letter is thus "of more general interest and value than those merely relating to family matters: it gives an account of a spiritist *séance*" of the last century, which "bears a quite startling resemblance to similar doings of the present day, and," Mr. Taylor remarks, "is on the whole satisfactory, as showing that in our follies and superstitions we have not retrograded since the days of our great-grandfathers." Addressing the Rev. Henry Taylor, at Crawley, near Winchester, Hants, his sister says:—"I have lately been at London, very near the Ghost of Fanny. Yes! I have been among the believers, but could not help considering myself an infidel, notwithstanding I was so near the spirit. Oh! that all the clergy had but as much understanding in their whole composition as my brother has in his little toe. They would not then give in to such ridiculous nonsense. A friend of Mrs. French's, a person of veracity, and whose integrity and honour she could depend on, was present while the following farce was acting:—He was admitted at ten o'clock one night, where he found about fifteen more persons, three of whom were reverends. The candle was immediately put out, and silence desired. Soon after, a soft rapping began, and scratching; but not in an angry mood. One of the clergymen declared the spirit was come, and asked if he should question it? which was assented to, and accordingly he began. Fanny, are you come? to which one knock was given (which, you must know, is yes, and two knocks is no). Are you willing to answer such questions as I shall put to you? if you are, give one knock; if not, give two knocks. One knock given. He then proceeded with great solemnity to interrogate this female ghost. Are you a spirit? One knock. Are you a good spirit? One knock. Are you in a state of happiness? One knock. Are you in a state of progressive happiness? I mean by that an increasing happiness? One knock. Are you troubled in mind? One knock. Have you injured any one? Two knocks. Has Mr. Parsons injured you? Two knocks. Has his wife? Two knocks. Did you die an unnatural death? Two knocks. Some persons present having heard that the ghost came to reveal its being poisoned, were surprised at the answer to the last query; but the parson gravely said it was his fault in not stating the question right: he therefore would ask it again. Parson: Did you die a natural death? Spirit gave two knocks. Were you poisoned? One knock. Was it in beer, tea, or purl? Knocked for purl. What is it o'clock? Gave ten knocks. How many quarters after? Two knocks. Some persons said the ghost was again out, for that it had gone three-quarters by St. Sepulchre's chimes. The reverend gentleman answered that clocks might be faulty, but by real time the spirit might be right. He then pursued his interrogation. Can I be of any service to you? One knock. Would it appear that you died by poison if your corpse was taken up? One knock, yes. Would it give you satisfaction if Mr. X. was hanged? Yes. Will you appear in a court of justice if he should be prosecuted? Yes, one knock. Is there no one here who comes to scoff? No. Do all present come with a serious mind? Yes. How many clergymen are in the room? One knock. Parson: What! only one knock? Then two knocks. Some observed there were three clergymen in the room, to which the parson judiciously observed that the third was a stranger, and not in a canonical habit. Then Mrs. French's friend asked if it could tell the colour of the arsenic by which it was poisoned? One knock, yes. Was it red arsenic? Yes. . . Now am I convinced of the imposture, for red arsenic has not the least poisonous quality in it; 'tis white. I appealed to a physician present for my assertion. This was excused. How should a woman know such nice distinctions as to the colour? Mrs. French's friend: Pray, gentlemen, does she know that she took arsenic at all? She declared she lived but three hours after taking it. It's plain she did not know the taste, or she would not have taken it. Upon this much altercation ensued, at which the spirit showed great anger by scratching."

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. J. (Holywell).—The "law of the conservation of energy" is that "force is never lost." It is as indestructible as matter; it may be diffused, concentrated, or transformed, but not annihilated.

R.—From the day it was first started until now, not a line has ever been inserted in the literary part of this journal on payment for being placed there; corrupt journals of low character only, would so print things for remuneration. If a communication is of real value it is to the advantage of the journal that it should be inserted, and to make a charge is defrauding the author; if it be not of real value, it is merely an act of cheating the readers to substitute inferior for good matter for the sake of a money payment.

BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHOLOGY, MESMERISM, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND BIOLOGY,

Representing the English and American Literature of Spiritualism, obtainable of W. H. Harrison, Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.

[For purposes of mutual convenience the above office has been rented on the premises of the National Association of Spiritualists, but the Association and The Spiritualist Newspaper and publishing business are not in any way connected with each other.]

THE DEBATABLE LAND, by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, formerly American Minister at the Court of Naples. A standard work containing interesting, and well-authenticated facts, proving the reality of spirit communication. It also contains an elaborate essay defining the author's views of the relationship of Spiritualism to the Christian Church. 7s. 6d.

FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD, by Robert Dale Owen. An excellent book of absorbing interest, replete with well-authenticated narratives, describing manifestations produced by spirits. 7s. 6d.

REPORT ON SPIRITUALISM, by the Committee of the Dialectical Society. This committee consisted of literary, scientific, and other professional men who investigated Spiritualism for two years without engaging the services of any professional medium, after which they published the report. Original edition, 16s.; moderately abridged edition, 6s.

RESEARCHES IN THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM, by William Crookes, F.R.S. The best work ever published to scientifically demonstrate the reality of some of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. 6s.

MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Alfred Russell Wallace, F.R.G.S. This book contains a masterly argument in reply to the "Essay on Miracles." It also records a large number of interesting spiritual manifestations, and contains some of the personal experiences of Mr. Wallace. 6s.

PLANCHETTE; OR, THE DESPAIR OF SCIENCE, by Epes Sargent. A book rich in descriptions of well-authenticated spiritual phenomena. Information about the relationship of Spiritualism to Religion and Science is also given. 5s.

CONCERNING SPIRITUALISM, by Gerald Massey. A brilliant well written little essay on Spiritualism. Neatly bound, with gilt edges. 2s.

LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM, by the late J. W. Edmonds, Judge of the Supreme Court, New York, U.S. This book consists of essays on the Social, Moral, and Scientific aspects of Spiritualism. 3s. 6d.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD? OR, SPIRITUALISM EXPLAINED, by Fred. A. Binney. A practically useful work for inquirers, giving general information about English professional and non-professional mediums; also about the periodical and other literature of Spiritualism. 3s.

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It is easier asked than done. A book on Spiritualism, if it did but sketch the subject, should be very voluminous; and, when written, it would be found to omit more than it discussed or recorded. I cannot write such a book; nor do I think it desirable that any such attempt should be made in the present state of our knowledge.

But I do think it very important that any person who has special facilities for observation should use them, and record their results as best he can. In this belief, I have kept careful records of what I have seen, and from time to time have published Essays and Reviews on the published opinions of others. I have also printed a number of chapters of Personal Research in the Phenomena and Philosophy of Spiritualism, and have selected, from a mass that have been automatically written out, certain Spirit-teachings.

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For the present I put forward only "ESSAYS AND REVIEWS." The following friends have kindly formed themselves into a committee with a view of carrying out business arrangements. Those to whose name \* is prefixed will receive names of Subscribers, and Mr. Percival, the Treasurer, will receive subscriptions as they become due.

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I respectfully beg that no business letters may be sent to me, as my time is already overtaxed.

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HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES AT HOME.

Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm, but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, considerably delays the manifestations.

Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead-pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communications that may be obtained.

People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums; it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is frequently found to be a weakening influence.

Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.

The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tiltings or raps.

When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

Afterwards the question should be put, "Are we sitting in the right order to get the best manifestations?" Probably some members of the circle will then be told to change seats with each other, and the signals will afterwards be strengthened. Next ask "Who is the medium?" When the intelligence asserts itself to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as the alleged spirits are found to exhibit all the virtues and all the failings of humanity.

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