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No. 348.—(VOL. XIV.—No. 17.)

LONDON: FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1879.

Published Weekly; Price Twopence.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

No. 348.—VOLUME FOURTEEN; NUMBER SEVENTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, APRIL 25th, 1879.

A DRAWING-ROOM MEETING.

LAST Monday night, at one of the receptions of Mrs. Maddougall Gregory, at 21, Green Street, Grosvenor Square, London, the appended paper about Spiritualism was read by Mr. James Campbell, President of the Cambridge University Society for Psychological Investigation. Among the guests present were Sir Patrick Colquhoun, Lady Colquhoun, Lieut.-Col. Gregory, Mr. Maitland Crichton, Miss Cecilia Douglas, the Hon. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, the Rev. Reginald Haweis, Mrs. Haweis, Mr. Serjeant Cox, Sir William Dunbar, Bart.; the Ven. Archdeacon Dunbar, Mrs. Linwood Strong, Miss Strong, Miss Emmet, Miss Laura Emmet, Lady Vere Cameron, of Lochiel; Mr. F. W. Percival, M.A., Miss Caroline Burke, Mr. Blount, Mr. G. C. Joad, Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, Mr. Clements Redfern, Mr. Algernon Joy, M.Inst.C.E., Professor Ansted, Mrs. Ansted, Major and Mrs. Mackenzie, Lady Cranstoun, the Lady Sandys, the Hon. Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Ramsay, Mr. Annesley Mayne, Mrs. Wiseman, Miss Mattie Houghton, Miss Godfrey, Mrs. Showers, Mr. C. E. Williams, Mr. Colman, Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, Mrs. James (Miss Showers), Signor Rondi, Mr. George Scott Douglas, and Mr. Harrison.

THE RECORD OF THE SEERS CONCERNING THE GREAT CHANGE.

At Eastertide when, if we are silent, every hedgerow is crying out, when every budding rod is speaking to us more forcibly even than to Athenian and to Israelite of the transitory phenomenon of death and the eternal fact of resurrection, I cannot, if I would, apologise to you for the subject of my paper. I cannot believe that I shall sadden any of your hearts by speaking to you of that great change which is so certainly before us all.

Not that I myself consider that the soaring joy of Eastertide is always possible to us more than to our earth-mother, or that it is even desirable that it should be constantly ours. The great fact of death has many aspects in which we may regard it, and I think I shall be able to show you to-night that to the spiritually strongest men it has presented itself universally under all of them: there has been the gloom of the cold, grey sea, and the stillness of the valley of the shadow, as well as the living green which shines clear in the guiding eyes of the Greek spirit of life, and clothes the sweet and distant fields where those who have overcome shall walk with Him in white; and the noblest deaths as the noblest lives have been those in which, if there has been no dread of future punishment, there has been no looking for future bliss, though faith in both were generally abundantly present. At the outset of this paper, though if not for the matter, for the manner at any rate, I feel that I owe you an apology. The influences to which I have been and am subject—some of them, you will allow me to believe (those of you who are not Spiritualists), from another life than that which surrounds us here on earth—have been and are so strong upon me that they mould both my thought and my expression, and from being myself unable to grasp fully what comes to me and to give it forth as my masters would themselves do clearly, my words, I know, must often only confuse instead of making plain, and my sentences appear to be hyperbolic and vague when all my effort has been to make myself understood. Still I can do no other, and crave your indulgence for unintentional weakness.

Let me go on, then, to my subject. The title that I have chosen for my paper will show you that I intend to deal this evening purely with the records of the past; for I believe that the present can be understood rightly only in the light of it, that reverent and may I add *entire* dependence on what is worthy of worship in former times is, in truth, one of our deepest needs—if we desire that our knowledge shall be well proven instead of doubtful, and useful instead of vain.

“Our science,” I say. When shall we return to the using of words in their simple and straightforward sense? When shall this much insulted word mean for us once more simply knowledge? When shall we be able once more to speak and hear it peacefully without unpleasant associations of explosions, railway trains, and the Darwinian theory? I pray God soon; and then we shall find out that Goethe and Carlyle were right when they told us that “seer” and “scientific man” were but two names for the same person, who speaks that which he knows, and testifies that which he has *seen*, with physical eyesight or with spiritual, and of that only—and that Plato was right when he defines this sort of scientific person as “one who is able to grasp the eternal, and hence is spectator of all time and of all existence; lost in his longing after the universal law that knits together human things with divine, he shows himself gentle and without fear, having no terror even of death,” how would this definition sound in the ears of the British Association of knowing men who meet for the advancement of knowledge, for most of whom there exists no law of any sort beyond fortuitous concurrence, and no things unresolvable finally into evil-smelling gases? It will appear to you that I have some animosity against “physical” scientists when I speak thus of them, but such is not the case, for who are more noble than some of them, or more good? But I do protest against that being called knowledge of a thing, which tells you merely the external accidents of its existence, and against that person being called scientific who *can*, by his nature, do no more than measure and dissect—important as such work undoubtedly is. From having come to regard these mere phenomenal things as real things, in this purblind hobble-de-hoy age of ours, zoology has become for us the piecing of skeletons, botany the cutting up of flowers, and Spiritualism threatens to become the study of “atomic” structure. I say this sadly, but I say it because it seems to me to be true; and if Spiritualism does indeed finally rank herself in that faithless and cold circle of independent sciences, she will then have become what her enemies declare her even now to be—a siren luring men into that bottomless pit in which things *are not*, and yet *appear* to be. For surely little-mindedness thwarts above everything the soul that is destined ever to aspire to grasp truth, both human and divine, in its wholeness and universality, as says Plato. So then I can tell you now, shortly and exactly, what I mean when I speak of a seer, the man who apprehends to some extent—

“ (1) Things as they are.

(2) The due proportion and relation of things.”

The man whom John Bull still professes to venerate as his ideal, who looks facts in the face, and who looks at them all round, these present to us the passionate, the unutterable, the forth-driven life of their age. We call them seers with exact use of language, from whom fewer secrets are hidden than from ourselves, to whose steadfast-looking depths reveal themselves undreamt of even by us, in the heaven and in the earth. We call some of them artists, as creating the form in which the results of their seeing is made known to us again accurately; for though every seer is not an artist, yet every true artist is by that token a seer.

Frederick Robertson has given, as one of his definitions of poetry, that it is the indirect expression of that which cannot be expressed directly. You may apply the definition to all art, for those only are truly artists who can express to us through material symbol some infinite truth beyond, seeing not only things but into things (invisible things sometimes) of darkness as well as of light. Among such men there are no differences of opinion; the measure of truth revealed by them varies from age to age, but so far as they see they see exactly, and their witness agrees together.

By the grace of that Divinity who shapes our ends for us

as well as our means, it has been appointed that such prophets or articulate seers arise in a manner quite unexplainable on the haphazard theory of the universe, in the days of every great nation's childhood, and in the days of her fullest strength, and that these prophets have recorded for all future ages, as might care to read the first, her subtlest intuitions, the second her matured thought. The mantle of the Elijahs when caught up falls on the Elishas, and the apostolical succession continues, each one interpreting and developing the teachings of those who have gone before.

Upon the carven and blazoned record of some artist seers concerning the great change, let me speak to you; my reading lessons have been given me by the man whom I revere as the latest of them, and where I can I shall quote his words, rich, where mine are poor, and beautiful, where mine are rough.

Death! then what is the meaning of the grim sounding word to such men, and how do they regard it? In three principal ways, as I take it, do all facts present themselves to them, and always in the same order.

First in their eternal and innermost relations.
Then in their human and temporal relations.
Then in their phenomenal or lowest relations.

That is briefly their method of scientific investigation, though according to the class of mind of the learner, any one branch of the study may be specially followed, its vital connection with the others being never lost sight of.

Take as illustrations bearing upon the present subject. Of the first method, this short sentence of Epictitus, the bondsman and the infinitely free: "The petrification of the soul is double; in the one case when it is stupified in its intellect, in the other when it is dead in its morals."

Of the second, this loveliest of Greek elegies.

"Prose, thou art not dead, but hast removed to a better place, and dwellest in the islands of the blessed, among abundant banquets, where thou art delighted while tripping along the Elysian plains amongst soft flowers far from all ills. The winter pains thee not, neither does heat or disease trouble thee, nor hunger, nor thirst; nor is the life of man any longer desired by thee, for thou livest in the pure splendour of Olympus."

Of the last, this bitter wail over physical decay:—

"But open converse there is none,
So much the vital spirits shrink
To see the vacant chair—and think
How good! how kind! and he is gone."

And this one—

"Where have ye laid Him?" They said unto him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept.

But to our records!

Those of us who know the British Museum will well remember the curious papyri that hang on the staircase between the upper and lower Egyptian rooms. They are chapters from the Book of the Dead, and from them Mr. Newenham Hoare has given some most interesting readings in the Dec. number of the *Nineteenth Century*. They represent that hour of death, and day of judgment, in which we pray each one of us to be delivered. The soul in the human form—the man—is seen entering the hall of truth, where he is to be separated from his sins; at the entrance of the hall he is received by Thoth, the God of Truth; he is then conducted into the presence of forty-two assessors, the representatives of the laws of human duty; before each of them he kneels in turn and declares the deeds done in the body. "I have not stolen, I have not lied, I have fed the hungry, I have clothed the naked." Then he is placed in a scale of the eternal balance, while in the other is placed the image of Justice, and the God of Truth records the weight; then the soul is conducted into the presence of Osiris, the Divine Lord, and passes into the kingdom prepared for it, or into the purgatorial fire; at last pure, the soul becomes fully identified with Osiris; through life his divine life has ever been strengthened by the life above him, he has been "governed and lifted up;" and now on the heights of the Eternal Hills he is made one with Him who has given Himself for him: being pure in heart, he finally sees God.

Hail! O Father Osiris! Thou dost not corrupt, thou dost not turn to worms, thou dost not decay. I am! I am! I grow! I grow! I wake in peace, I am not corrupted. And why? because I am one with the eternal life, because the everlasting arms are under me. Life is union with the Divine

realities, death is separation from them—then think of the words of Christ: "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (and remembering what life is and what death is), think that Christ comes to judge the living and the dead, not the people with physical bodies and the people without.

And think also that in the Hell of Dante the same sins are punished as in purgatory; but the love of God and the fear of Him are gone, *which is the second death*. So perhaps our views of living and dying may in this Egyptian and world-light, change somewhat, and we may begin to regard ourselves and our friends (our old friend John King, for instance), not only in structural and weighable relations, but in their connection and ours with love and life, faith and hope—those imponderable realities.

I will now bring before you another vision of death, written at a time when the full light and life of immortality were shining resplendent in our earth, when men seemed to have entered so fully into the brightness of the everlasting spring that the shadows of the earth-winter and the realities of the earth-duties threatened to be lost sight of together; in the blaze of mediæval colour and lightheartedness of mediæval simplicity; and the dwelling among the seers is more on the peace of Divine union than on the rigour of Divine punishment. Again we are before the judgment-seat as seen and painted by Lochner of Cologne—the judgment-seat of the Son of Man. On His right hand are the living, on His left the dead; but the living side is chiefly in the heart of the painter, and on the gorgeous jewellery and carving and colouring of the heavenly city he has dwelt with lovely joy.

Humanity again! Look, please, at the photograph of this after I have done, and see how entirely *human* the whole picture is; the angel and the girl who are looking into each other's eyes. I want some artist to copy those two heads for me in vignette, for they are so beautiful.

The guardian angel and the guarded child meet thus and recognise each other, never more to be separated. The outer is reconciled to the inner—not subdued and destroyed by it, as some would have us believe.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me—
Only to live as once on earth, with love.
Only to be.
As then *awhile*, forever now
Together I and he."

A little nearer the gate of heaven (Gothic imitated from Cologne Cathedral, but with a tall German house-roof above)—for church and home are equally sacred—an angel is embracing heartily a girl who is entering. "We shall be real substantial beings there," says Lochner—lips, body (and all), soul, and spirit, presented blameless in the day of Jesus Christ. Quite down in the right-hand corner is a dear little angel, teaching a boy she is leading into heaven how to behave there. I have no more time to describe, as I should like to, the happy side of this wonderful record, now in the Museum at Cologne, where I have spent many days before it. The curator asked me last time if I had come again to look at my *green devil*; to whom, and to his side of the picture, I must now turn.

At the very edge of heaven, where the flowers begin to grow, an angel standing on the verge has put out his hand to rescue a poor boy, who has just come out of his grave, and who clutches hold of his dress in terrible fear and trembling; and no wonder, when you see who is trying to clutch hold of him. A fearful creature truly, with large glassy eyes, useless for any kind of looking, with no sense in them to do more than seize his prey, and faces, with the same cold ghastly eyes, are repeated over every part of his body. His colour is the grey of the dust of earth, tinged, and only just tinged, with the green which is the symbol of Divine life in the heaven and in the earth, the colour of the rainbow throne, on which the Lord of that life is seated in the centre of picture, but vivid there, and like unto an emerald.

This monster, you will see at once, is the symbol of the wild and fitful life of passion and desire, ungoverned by the Divine reason; that life of the soul which is death when left to itself, but which, under the rule of the Spirit, is Life and Peace. But one angel hand is holding him, and the other, uplifted, is enough without weapon to

repel such brute force as this. The angel of help is clothed in the pure white of those who have overcome, and whose nature has been fully harmonised in the great God-light. May not some such have charge over us, if we value at all the promise of their protection? For these days of judgment are facts, future and present, pictured for all time. But yonder man, with the dice-boxes falling from his hands, turned upside down, hanging from the devil's back, what sort of death is this? The old law of pay for work, and no pay for juggling, has reacted now; he has tried to turn the law upside down, and it has turned him. This German, too, sees that preachers of religion may be dead, double dead, and sometimes kings and rulers too. You will find several close to the dragon's mouth in the lower left-hand corner, and several near the gate of heaven in the upper right.

Two hundred years gone by! and we are again face to face with death. No colour now, and no jewellery, and no heaven-gate, but a field, and an old man, and the setting sun. The earth-facts are the main-facts now, for the age is a little older, and its eyes not bent so entirely heavenwards, therefore Holbein has graven his prophecy instead of blazoned it, in his strange strong series of the Dance of Death. Mark you, the ancient faith is not lost; it has become now, not so much a passionate aspiration after heaven and spiritual things, as a half-sorrowful labouring on the earth, with full trust that all will finally be well, if only we do our ploughing and sowing faithfully.

Look at him well, this consecrated landsman, bending over his plough, with hat worn through and crownless, and breeches worn through and kneeless. All worked with the minutest, most delicate care in this engraving; Holbein has evidently had more heart in it than in any of the others. And this old man, "labourer on the earth," is almost the only person in the whole series to whom the messenger the Angel of Death comes peacefully. Such an angel too! None of your wings and white robes, but something quite anatomical and materialistic instead. As I said just now, the heaven-glow was becoming dimmer, and so the Angel of Death to Germany in 1530 is a skeleton—but in this case quite a life-ful, brotherly skeleton, who leads the old man's horses for him up hill, making a straight furrow. He has been honest and earnest, not a cumberer but a tiller of the ground. With his best strength he has laboured to be faithful over his few things, but now that strength has failed him, and the old home is broken up, brother Death has come to help him finish his last day's work, and to lead him into the land that lies beyond the brightness of that sun, who is going down also, behind the cross-crowned spire of the village church, where such ploughmen as he shall find in fuller labour an ever-increasing rest.

This familiar hob-nobbing with grim death is characteristic of Germany in this great, clear-thinking engraving time. Presently she will discover that the skeleton messenger is only a bag of bones put together after all, incapable of leading anywhere, and when she discovers that, her art-prophecy will cease, and she will enter before long into the service of the "spirit who denies."

One more record from another land! from a little city that has striven to keep her inner eyes steadfastly looking up to heaven, and her human eyes resolutely round on earth in reverence and in justice, and who has therefore produced a prophet who can speak to us in mediæval passion of colour, and in Greek and modern German exactitude of light and shade—I speak of Venice and of Carpaccio. His method of dealing with the subject of Death, I shall endeavour to make clear to you from two of his pictures—the one, the visit of the Death Angel to a King's daughter; the other, of the life in heaven of the first translator of the Bible, St. Jerome.

Here is Mr. Ruskin's account of the vision of St. Ursula.

He comes to her in the clear light of morning
The Angel of Death. . . .

There is no glory round his head; there is no gold on his robes; they are subdued purple and grey; his wings are colourless, his face calm, but sorrowful. Wholly in shade in his right hand he bears the martyr's palm, in his left the fillet borne by the Greek angels of victory, and together with it, knotted in his hand, the folds of shroud with which the Etrurians veil the tomb.

You see it is written in the legend that she had shut close the doors of her chamber.

They have opened as the angel enters. Not one only, but all in the room,

all in the house. He enters by one at the foot of her bed; but beyond it is another—open into the passage; out of that another into some luminous hall or street. All the window-shutters are wide open; they are made dark that you may notice them; nay, all the press doors are open: no treasure bars shall hold where *this* angel enters.

Carpaccio has been intent to mark that he comes in the light of dawn. The blue-green sky glows between the dark leaves of the olive and dianthus in the open window. But its light is low compared to that which enters *behind* the angel, falling full on Ursula's face, in divine rest.

In the last picture but one of this story, he has painted her lying in the rest which the angel came to bring; and in the last is her rising in the eternal morning.

On the tassel of her pillow (Etrurian also) is written "Infantia," and above her head, the carving of the bed ends in a spiral flame, typical of the finally ascending spirit.

For this is the first lesson which Carpaccio wrote in his Venetian words for the creatures of this restless world—that death is better than *their* life; and that not bridegroom rejoices over bride as they rejoice who marry not, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

In the little "church of the slaves" in his native city, Carpaccio has painted a series of pictures representing the life of St. Jerome. In one of them he is seen translating the Bible, his faithful dog by his side; then comes his death and burial, and then his work in the risen life. Again poring over the Word of God in the same room as before, but from the altar the cross is removed and replaced by a banner of resurrection. The candlesticks are removed—"they need no candle"—and under the altar are put away the censer and the paraphernalia of church worship, while near his feet (that we may make no mistake) are Testaments with broken seals—no use now! Through the bars of the window streams the sun, shining on him, not the full blaze of heaven yet, but brighter than on earth. Mr. Ruskin's comment is Rossetti's verse:

"Through his body's prison bars
His soul possessed the sun and stars."

He still wears over his dress the brown cape, typical of connection with earth, and by his side lies his well-beloved friend and companion. Animals also in the risen life and the future life? "Yes," says Carpaccio.

I crave your patience for but a few minutes more. Have I made in any way plain what I desired to show you, that reverent attention to the true thought of the past is our surest guide as to our own subjects of thought, and our method of thinking of them? Their thought deals always with things important to our present life. Their science is not of the size of the sun, or its chemical analysis, but of its shining as affecting human health and human hope. They tell us that the things vitally important for us to know are the love of the Father and His laws, His laws concerning our own being, our human bodies and human spirits, our human life and human death. His laws concerning our earth and its tillage, and the rendering perfect in it of beautiful and gentle lower life. When we have learnt these we may or may not learn the modes of the moon.* Probably we shall have no time for it, and it doesn't matter. So then I have tried to look with the seers at this great fact of death. You see how all knowledge on such a subject is prized by them, and how it is considered in its due relations; and I have strong ground to go upon when I say that it seems to me the duty of every true man to gain whatever knowledge he can on this vitally important subject, and to arrange the various branches of knowledge so ascertained in their due order. For this reason I feel no hesitation in saying that it seems to me the duty of every true man to inquire into these strange phenomena of Modern Spiritualism—every man who stands fast in full faith in the goodness of the Heavenly Father, and who cannot believe any law of his to be wrong, and who cannot be swerved from his sacred knowledge of the difference between good and evil at the beck of any Spirit in the body or out of it: and equally the duty of every man who honestly believes that neither God nor Moral Law have any real existence. Surely it is needful this "science of the soul;" surely it is important, if true. Shall we not be better men for knowing rationally what the nature of our existence shall be on the other side of the grave and gate of death, though we know also that existence is not life, and decay is not death. They tell me I do not trust God when I ask such knowledge; and do so, when going to America I ask for a guide book? The idea is ludicrous.

* I know nothing about such things myself, and shall never probably care to learn.

I have never made "Spiritualism" my religion; I never shall. It cannot reveal the inner truth to me, which my own divine spirit must grasp; but it has made plain to me that I am to exist after physical decay as a man, not as a gas, or an aspiration, or a sentiment. It has shown me and has made me understand my relation to that world and its inhabitants, and for that knowledge I am very thankful.

Let me plead with you for study of this great fact in all its relations, which this "science of the soul" will help you better to understand; God has given us a clearer insight into the outer facts of the future life. Shall we refuse that knowledge, or deem it unnecessary, because we prefer to look at physical facts alone, or at spiritual ones? Knowledge is being increased. Let us strive with our best strength to make it righteous, and not partial knowledge.

I ask you to help, and I ask those friends to whom the better cause is pleasing, on the other side of the narrow stream, also, to help and be near us:—

"Be near us when we climb or fall,
Ye watch like God the rolling hours,
With larger, other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all."

AN AFFIDAVIT ABOUT HENRY SLADE'S MEDIUMSHIP.

The following is printed in an advertisement, more than a column long, in *The Melbourne Argus*, of February 18th last:—

In the first place I must preface what I have to say with the remark, that had you gone through Sydney you would hardly have found a greater sceptic than myself, but at the same time I must also state that I did not sit calmly down and laugh at Spiritualism as "jugglery, humbug, and imposture." No! I, like many others, wanted to see and hear the arguments of the other side, and took every opportunity of so doing. I heard Mrs. Britten, and admired her lecture immensely. I listened with wonder and awe, not unmixed with reverence, to the words she spoke, but still that did not convince me. I wanted a manifestation, something real, something tangible, AND I GOT IT.

Of all the phenomena connected with Spiritualism, I think that of "slate-writing" is the most wonderful; and though people are apt to slur it over, and do not attach much importance to it, still what can be more wonderful or more convincing, to what is fast becoming an acknowledged fact, than written messages from those we've "loved and lost," making one feel that they are "not dead but only gone before."

Now, before I proceed with the details of my experience, I must state that wherever I have used names in full I have permission to do so, and the parties are well known in Sydney, and with this explanation further proof of my words may be obtained, if necessary; and I hope that your readers will pardon the rather frequent use of the letter "I," but being a personal narrative it is difficult to cut it out.

Last Saturday fortnight I was proceeding along York-street, Sydney, and in passing Dr. Slade's house, I was suddenly taken with the idea to go up and see him. There was no previous intention of my doing so, as, five minutes before, he had not been in my mind. I had never met him, and was, in fact, a perfect stranger to him. I reached his room, and found him alone, with the window open and the blind drawn up. I did not introduce myself, but only asked for an appointment the following week, which was granted for Wednesday afternoon. I was turning to go away, when I thought I might have one "all to myself," and this he readily acceded to, saying, "Possibly you might get more personal messages alone." We closed the door, and I examined the table. It was a very plain deal, with a white edge, had four legs, was steady and strong, and had no apparatus concealed in any part of it. It was not hollow, as I have heard suggested, for I tapped it and sounded it thoroughly. We then joined hands on top of it, the window being still open (it was a calm clear day); immediately raps were heard, as if IN THE WOOD, dull, heavy thuds. Then the doctor said, "Tap like this," producing a sharp sound with his nail, and it was imitated at once. He then asked, "Will you write?" and was answered by three raps, decisive and loud. "Are you ready?" three raps again; this meant "Yes."

All this time Dr. Slade was sitting sideways to the table, with his feet and legs well away from it, and in full view. After the answer last given, he turned round and picked a slate off a side table, cleaned it with a sponge, and placed a chip of pencil on it, and held it under the ledge; clamped it there, in fact, by placing his thumb ON TOP OF THE TABLE. He then put his left hand on my two, and at once we heard writing on the slate. Now, I just wish here to reiterate the fact that the doctor and I were perfect strangers, and that he knew nothing about me and my affairs I am most positive. Three taps announced the completion of the message, and with some difficulty he slid the slate from the table (it seemed to be almost glued there) and handed it to me.

The slate contained a message from my wife (now dead eight months) congratulating me on having come to the medium, and using terms and words—"passwords," I should more properly call them—familiar to us both during her life. The writing on this first message was not like hers at all, with the exception of the signature, and that, instead of being her Christian name Jessie, was signed as we more often called her "Sissie," and in a similar way to that on her letters addressed to me. I received a second message from her referring to her two children, the existence of whom Dr. Slade knew not.

Dr. Slade then asked if any other spirits were present, and this time held the slate downwards on top of the table, with the pencil confined to the intervening space. Immediately there was written a large "W. H." I disowned any knowledge of the initials, and though I tried to think of some one answering to them, still I could not. "Never mind," said the doctor; "we will ask who it is?" and putting the slate down again he said, "Will the spirit please give full name?" Then we heard the writing again, and then the taps signifying the conclusion. He turned the slate over, and there written in quite a different hand to the first message were the words, "I am your uncle, William Haviland." Had I a doubt this must have removed it; there was no mind reading, clairvoyance, or will force here. In the first place, my wife did not give the surname, and in the next the doctor did not know it, and still this was a truth. William Haviland, my father's brother, was shot in the gold escort in New South Wales, how many years ago I almost forget. I should think about eighteen or twenty, and when I was a child, therefore I looked on that message as a marvellous test.

Now, I went home and told Mrs. Robson (my mother-in-law) all this, and she, who was, like I had been, a disbeliever, wondered at it greatly, and finally said, "I'm going into town on Monday; will you come with me and see him?" Of course I would, and I told her that sometimes spirits tied knots in ladies' handkerchiefs, as I had been informed, and so she had better take an extra one.

On Monday morning we went at 11 o'clock, Mrs. Robson taking with her a handkerchief. We entered the room and I made no introduction, simply saying, "That this lady wanted to sit with me." This time we shut the door, and, as before, left the window up, Mrs. Robson sitting down with the loose handkerchief on her lap on one side, Dr. Slade sitting sideways, as before, and myself opposite him. We joined hands on top of the table, and at once strong raps announced the presence of the spirit. I was touched on the knee and on the side. Mrs. Robson's chair was twisted round, she in it, and her bonnet strings and ribbons were visibly pulled and untied; and all this in BROAD DAYLIGHT, and not, as many suppose, in darkness. Dr. Slade then took a slate, and after holding it a minute he said, "Oh, it's gone," and immediately it appeared on edge at the opposite side of the table, out of reach of any one but myself. "Bring it back to me," said he, and the slate disappeared again, and reached his hand, never once touching the floor. "I think," said the doctor to Mrs. Robson, "that the spirit wants you to hold the slate yourself." She took it from him. He put his two hands on the top of the table with ours, and Mrs. Robson held the slate ALONE just under the table in front of her. Writing was distinctly heard and soon it stopped, and we took the slate from her to read the message. It proved to be from her daughter (my wife), and was addressed, "My darling mother and husband;" it then went on to speak about private affairs, of her father who was present with her, of her children, and how happy she was, &c. I kept on watching Mrs. Robson's handkerchief, which lay still untouched in her lap, and we both had several

touches, as if a hand had been laid on our knees. At one time there was written on the slate, "My dear husband, it was I touched you,—JESSIE." For one instant I had my hands off the handkerchief, and when I looked again it was rolled up tight and knotted in two curious and small knots, one in each end. Dr. Slade seemed as much astonished as we were, and holding the slate face downwards on the table asked, "Who tied the handkerchief?" and the answer came, "Father." This was splendidly written, and was so like my wife's handwriting that we could not doubt its truth, but what followed was the most singular part of this apparently trifling knot. "Why," said Mrs. Robson in an almost bewildered state of astonishment, "that is most strange. Do you know," said she, "my husband, Captain Robson, when he was alive, used to tie knots IDENTICAL WITH THESE IN EVERY WAY; he used to snatch my handkerchief out of my pocket and tie them JUST LIKE THIS." Now what can sceptics say to this? I give it up. I have that handkerchief at home, and have shown it to dozens of people.

The next fact I come to, taking them seriatim, occurred on the following Wednesday (the appointed day), when I visited the doctor in company with two gentlemen, one a well-known Sydney engineer (Mr. T. S. Parrott). We took a folding book slate with us, and obtained messages inside it, the slate being held on top of the table. We had also other manifestations of the presence and power of the spirits; but in this article I only wish to mention in as few words as possible what struck me as the most wonderful and most convincing proof of Dr. Slade's truthfulness, and further to impress on your readers the fact that they may all go and see these things themselves, and it is for this purpose that I seek publication of my statement in a paper where it will be read by thousands and tens of thousands; for this will not only be published in Melbourne, but every journal throughout England and America that is essentially an organ of the people will place before its readers my experiences, which, as far as in me lies, I have put past doubt, by taking my oath before God and the world, are true.

But to pass on to the next interesting experiment. A gentleman in Sydney called on Dr. Slade, and took with him a compass. Placing it on the table, he requested the doctor to put his hand on it, but contrary to his expectations, the needle moved not. They then joined hands, and the doctor, putting one hand to the needle, covering his visitor's hands with his other one, was astonished himself to see the needle deflected more than 60 degrees. The day following I was up again to see him, and he told me of this, bearing out exactly what my friend the scientist had said, and turning round to his side table he took a small compass from it, and placing it between us, joined hands with me and said, "This is the way we did it," but to his surprise the needle did not move. "Why," said he, "that is curious; it moved yesterday, but perhaps the spirits want you to do it." I disengaged one hand from his, and held it towards the needle, and it immediately followed my finger whichever side I put it. He then pushed the compass far from us, to the extreme edge of the table, and we sat away, but in full view of it. "Now," said Dr. Slade, "will the spirits please revolve the needle, if we wish it?" Three raps answered him, and the needle, with no one near it, turned round several times. Perhaps scientific men will explain this; but before they attempt it, let them take their own compasses, and the doctor will, I doubt not, be only too happy to convince them. There is only one thing for them to bear in mind, and that is, act in a courteous and gentlemanly manner when you go, and not, as some have done, and by so doing disgraced themselves, treated him as a swindling rascal, and a rogue of the deepest dye.

Outsiders (those who have not seen Dr. Slade, and look on Spiritualism as thorough trash and nonsense) are apt to judge rashly, and many speak in a mysterious "stage-aside" voice of wires, electric batteries, will power, ethic, psychic, and goodness knows how many other forces, and further still, if one mentions Dr. Slade in their hearing, they immediately answer significantly, Professor Baldwin, Maskylene, Cooke, and I forget how many other conjurers. But all I ask in simple fairness is that before they speak of what they have not seen and do not know—in fact, before they make fools of themselves—let them see Dr. Slade, and I'll guarantee that neither Baldwin nor any of the others can produce writing on a lock-

up book-slate under the same conditions that Dr. Slade has done, and prove, as they profess to do, that it is not spirit agency and power that is at work.

Dr. Slade has been to my private house, and on my own table, with a common school slate, and in the presence of my friends, received written messages of love and happiness from relatives that he could not possibly have known of in any way, and I make this statement partly in justice to him, but more so that others may share in some of the blessings awaiting them. Perchance they may not get personal messages, and will then be disappointed. Let them take heart and try by themselves in their own family circle—try with planchette, or some other means, that I, among many, have too long looked upon as toys and trifling objects, and then their eyes will be opened, as, I thank God, mine have been.

In closing this article, I wish to state that it is by no means a complete list of all I have witnessed, but only a selection of what I considered the most remarkable and wonderful tests in my experience. Others, no doubt, have seen better, and they should in justice give them to the world. I shall write further details of this great blessing for the *Banner of Light*, who, having the cause at heart, I know are only too happy to publish such experiences, if people would only send them.

There is another thing that is very curious with regard to Dr. Slade's mediumship, and that is, that it does not signify whether he be in Russia, China, Fiji, or any other foreign country, the messages written on the slate are, with few exceptions, in the language of the people so addressed.

Since writing the above, I have read Dr. Knaggs' paper in the Sydney *Herald* of the 14th instant, and he certainly proves that he is "wise in his own conceit." As for his explanations, any sensible man will at once see their stupidity, and I can only wonder at his putting his name to such nonsense. Just let him try to raise a table like Dr. Slade's by "grasping one leg between his legs and knees, and burying the edge in his abdomen." Let him practise it for the next ten years, and he won't do it. Dr. Slade, I positively assert, does not touch the table at all except with his hands; but perhaps Dr. Knaggs can easily explain "how he (Slade) raised a lady of 9 st., chair and all, from the floor, simply by placing his hand on her chair back."

E. C. HAVILAND.

I, Edwin Cyril Haviland, of Sydney, New South Wales, do solemnly and sincerely declare, that the phenomena and occurrences as stated in my paper, "Spiritualistic Facts, or Scepticism Bewildered," are true, and took place in every particular as I have therein set forth, and that Dr. Slade used no apparatus to produce them, and that I carefully examined the table and slates used. And I make this solemn declaration, conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of an Act of the Parliament of Victoria rendering persons making a false declaration punishable for wilful and corrupt perjury.

E. C. HAVILAND.

Declared at Melbourne, in the colony of Victoria, this seventeenth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-nine, before me, Henry Penheth Fergie, notary public, also a commissioner for taking affidavits, &c., in the Supreme Court of the colony of New South Wales, in Melbourne, in the colony of Victoria.

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. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

DR. MONCK.

SIR,—It may interest the friends of Dr. Monck to know that after four months' residence with me, he left Naples on the 24th of March for Rome. Since then I have not heard from him, but I hope soon to have favourable tidings of his health.

G. DAMIANI.

Naples, 12th April, 1879.

THE Spiritualistic movement might be greatly aided by the general adoption of the plan which Mrs. Makdougall Gregory has inaugurated, of holding drawing-room meetings for the consideration of the strength of the evidence in favour of life eternal. Mr. Campbell's paper is a gem of spiritual literature, which, like all truly beautiful utterances, will bear reading and re-reading.

EVENINGS WITH THE INDWELLERS OF THE SPIRIT WORLD.

BY FREDERICK HOCKLEY.

THE late Earl Stanhope (grandfather of the present earl) having, in July, 1852, informed me that the Honourable Captain H. A. Murray, to whom he had given a card of recommendation to me, was extremely curious about crystals, and that, accompanied by his friend Lieutenant R. F. Burton, who had travelled much in India, and studied Occult Sciences, he intended to visit me at Croydon. Shortly afterwards, I had the honour of making their acquaintance. Mr. Burton was then contemplating his pilgrimage to Medinah and Mecca. At this time (February, 1853), I, at the suggestion of my spirit guides, was changing both my process of working and my spirit acquaintances. As Mr. Burton was desirous of taking with him a crystal and mirror, and I was on the point of using new ones, I had the pleasure of giving my small oval mounted crystal, which I had used for the previous sixteen years, and dedicating it afresh to a guide appointed for Mr. Burton. I also prepared for him a black mirror.

Lieut. Burton left London on the evening of April, 1853, and, arriving at Alexandria, he appeared as an Indian doctor:—

"It is not to be supposed that the people of Alexandria could look upon my phials and pill boxes without a yearning for their contents. An Indian doctor, too, was a novelty to them! Franks they despised, but a man who had come so far West! Then there was something infinitely seducing in the character of a magician, doctor, and fakir, each admirable of itself, thus combined to make 'great medicine.' Men, women, and children besieged my door; even respectable natives, after witnessing a performance of *Mandal* and the *Magic Mirror*, opined that the stranger was a holy man, gifted with supernatural powers, and knowing everything. But the reader must not be led to suppose that I acted 'Carabin' or 'Sangrado' without any knowledge of my trade. From youth I have always been a dabbler in medical and mystical study."—*Pilgrimage*, vol. i., p. 17.

After Mr. Burton's departure we were naturally anxious to hear of his welfare, and being often assured by our spirit friend of his safety, I did not call him into the mirror until Christmas, 1873, when I requested that we might have a vision in the "Evam glass," a curiously-shaped mirror made from instructions from a spirit friend for seeing visions past and present.

December 17th, 9.30 p.m. Called R. F. Burton.

Emma inspected, and said:—

"Now its light; I see some sand: all sand. Now I see some camels—one is lying down, the other two standing up; there's a black boy with a tremendously rough wig; he looks like a negro lying down. There's a tall, dark man, with a black beard and moustache, and no hair; he's quite clean-shaved; he looks so funny! He's got some sort of a white dress and trousers on, and something round his waist, loosely tied at his side, and something like a knife, but no sheath, stuck in something coming from the girdle; it hangs from the girdle; he looks quite white against the black boy; he has got a head of hair, there's no mistake about that. It's getting plain. There's sand coming behind them, and a clump of trees more like dried thyme. There are tents. They are very low, not peaked; they look as though you would be obliged to creep into the tree, if it is a tree; it looks more like a bunch of dried thyme sticking up above the tent.

"Now there are two or three men dressed like the other, who are lying down flat on their faces. There's one smoking; he is standing up. None of them have any hair; the one standing up is dressed in a yellow and white striped dress, and rather a greyish blue round the bottom; they are comical-looking little figures. Now there's one gone up to the first. I don't think he is Mr. Burton though; he has such black hair and eyes. The other is a nasty-looking old man; his beard is grey. He does show his teeth so; he is all action; he looks like a monkey going to eat him; it is Mr. Burton. The old man keeps on spitting; he looks so spiteful. Mr. Burton only smiles.

"Now the boy has jumped up. I don't know hardly what shape he is. I never saw such a droll boy; he looks almost

a dwarf. The one that is smoking would be good-looking if he had some hair. The black boy has gone up to him and laid hold of his pipe, and taken it out of his mouth. Now they seem quarrelling; there are two or three more round them.

"Now there's such a beautiful horse come up, and a man with a turban by the side of it; he is the only one with a turban on. They all seem quarrelling. The old man seems exactly as if he was going to eat the other; he has a grey beard and moustache, and wide mouth, but such white teeth for an old man.

"Now it's going—it is all gone. 9.50 p.m."

Mr. Burton called upon me again the 5th July, 1861, and I showed him the entry as above in my MS. minutes, which he read through, and on the opposite page gave his attestation: "*I quite recognise the correctness of this vision—the old grey man, the boy, and the quarrel about the pipe. This is easily ascertained by a reference to the 'Pilgrimage.'*"—Richard F. Burton.

Here is the statement in Captain Burton's book:—

"The plain was already dotted with tents and lights. We found the Baghdad caravan; it consists of a few Persians and Kurds, and collects the people of North-eastern Arabia—Wahhabis and others—though not amounting to more than two thousand in numbers, men, women, and children. They had been passing to the Damascus caravan, and being perfectly ready to fight, they were not going to yield any point of prudence. From that time the two bodies encamped in different places. I never saw a more pugnacious assembly; a look sufficed for a quarrel. Once a Wahhabi stood in front of us, and by pointing with his finger, and other insulting gestures, showed his hatred to the chibouque in which I was peaceably indulging. It was impossible to refrain from chastising his insolence—by a polite and smiling offer of the offending pipe. This made him draw his dagger without a thought; but it was sheathed again, for we all cocked our pistols, and these gentry greatly prefer steel to lead."—*Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Mecca*. Vol. iii., p. 103. Published 1856.

EXOTERIC OBSERVATIONS OF SPIRITUALISM.*

BY THE REV. W. MIALL.

It is a very stale device to anticipate or endeavour to disarm criticism by expressing dissatisfaction with the subject under discussion, or by taking exception to the terms in which it has been announced. "Exoteric Observation" having been chosen by myself as the title of this paper, to complain of it would seem unreasonable. I may state, however, that it was coupled hastily, and was suggested by the frequent appropriation by Spiritualists of its correlative term. The objections to it which reflection originates are—first, that it is somewhat pretensive, throwing an air of the philosophical about an address which certainly will not rise above the ordinary and practical; secondly, that it would seem to define my own position more clearly than I am accustomed to regard it as capable of being defined; and thirdly, that it seems to imply with respect to pronounced Spiritualists, that they claim to possess certain secrets sacred to the more or less formally initiated—a representation of at least questionable accuracy.

I will take the liberty of relieving myself of some of the difficulties of my own creation, by dismissing the learned-looking cojective, and describing what I have to say as "Observation from the frontier line of Spiritualism."

Whether the speaker is to be regarded as within the line, or without it, or astride it—being in the uncomfortable position of the angel in the Apocalypse, "One foot on the earth and the other on the sea," I must leave it to my audience to determine.

To the unsatisfactoriness of my position there is at any rate this counterweight. It enables me to play the part of Janus—to overlook the country within the boundaries of Spiritualism, and the more extensive one without them; it is a favourable post for observation alike of Spiritualists, of semi-Spiritualists, of non-Spiritualists, and of anti-Spiritualists. My simple object will be to describe what appears to me to

* A paper read last Monday night before the National Association of Spiritualists.

be the noteworthy features of the positions and arguments of some of these. In doing so the only qualities for which I desire credit are sincerity, the fullest candour of which I am capable, and a kindly sentiment towards all true-hearted Spiritualists.

I propose, in the first place, to describe some of the circumstances in connection with Spiritualism which seem to me both to justify and to demand respectful attention, and painstaking and patient investigation. Among these circumstances is the alleged accessibleness of the alleged phenomena. We are told that they occur not only in distant lands, but here in England, in London, in the next street, in the houses of our friends. The presence of some person rendered with qualities constitutional and temperamental, which are at any rate not possessed by everybody, is indeed essential to their occurrences, but then a large proportion of human beings are said to be thus endowed; so that at any time we may witness the phenomena and subject them to whatever scrutiny we choose. Without much cost of either trouble or money, we may for ourselves see what is to be seen, hear what is to be heard, and examine whatever evidence is wont to be adduced, and subject that evidence to whatever sifting or testing process our sagacity may suggest.

If believers in the occurrence of these phenomena were uniformly ignorant and credulous persons, and the abnormally endowed "mediums" were in all cases persons of doubtful credit, it would, as I think, be incumbent on wise and philanthropic individuals to endeavour to ascertain for themselves, and to publish to the world, what is the true explanation of this widespread and extraordinary belief. But so far from mediums being all dishonest, they are in many instances persons of the most undoubted probity, the cherished members of families whose character is above suspicion, and who make themselves responsible for the correctness of the representations furnished. And instead of believers in the phenomena being always ignorant and credulous, they are in very many instances persons which nothing short of the grossest ignorance, and that pitiable credulity, or at all events of the most invincible prejudice, could lead any one so to regard. The superiority in respect of ability and high character of many of the more prominent supporters of Spiritualism, is therefore another circumstance making examination of the subject imperative.

A third may be found in the accord of the alleged phenomena with those associated historically with the rise of the foremost of the great religions of the world. Whether or not the professors of the Christian faith regard their own sacred Scriptures as the faithful records of undoubted facts, there can be no doubt as to the similarity of those current circumstances, belief in which is peculiar to Spiritualists, and those which New Testament writers affirm to have been frequent in the earliest times of Christianity. It is difficult to imagine a book more fraught than is the New Testament with the record of events kindred to, if not in their nature identical with, those which Spiritualists ask the present generation to believe are of perpetual occurrence among ourselves. If Mr. A. devoutly believes all that is attributed to the authorship of evangelists and apostles, he of course, in the first place, admits the possibility of the abnormal, or as he would probably describe it supernatural. I submit that, in the next place, he is bound by fidelity to his principles to take note of the alleged facts of Spiritualism, in order that, if perchance they may be true, he may avail himself of the confirmation of his faith which they supply, or that being proved false, he may do the world and his religion the great service of exposing and denouncing the wretched travesty in which they consist. But Mr. B. is a Christian in the sense of believing that the religion which Jesus taught presents us, as no other religion does, with principles of eternal truth, the recognition of which is of the very highest importance to humanity; but he also maintains that no evidence hitherto available is sufficient to warrant confidence in the infallible truth and literal accuracy of the writings constituting the canon of the New Testament. I submit that he, too, as a true man, is bound to examine into the veritableness and value of circumstances said to be transpiring all around him, and which assertion, if proved to be true, will supply him with a sufficient reason for investing the New Testament writings with a stronger claim upon credence than he has hitherto

awarded them; or, if false, will, without diminishing his veneration for Christian truth, do something towards justifying his scepticism with regard to the historical details with which its original proclamation is identified.

One further circumstance powerfully suggestive of the same course, is found in the very remarkable adaptation of the facts and doctrines of Spiritualism to meet the requirements of the times, growing out of the nature and results of modern thought. The perpetually repeated procession of the superior from the inferior, and the apparent indestructibility of all natural forces, are among the facts which the most eminent of the instructors of the present day affirm and emphasize. It is obvious that Spiritualism being true, it is in perfect harmony with, and in fact an endorsement of such teaching. There are, however, other and less satisfactory deliverances by which the philosophy of the present day is characterised. "The material is the real—the thing which is, and its Creator—there being in creation, or beyond it, nothing superior to those natural forces which, however subtle, are yet material." Such is either the avowed belief or the unacknowledged, perhaps unperceived implication of the belief of many minds. How revolutionary in its effect upon all that has proved most elevating and ennobling, most consolatory and gladdening, it is unspeakably painful to realise. Other utterances there are, scarcely if at all less calculated to rob the sun of its brightness, existence of its chief charm. An endless succession of cause and effect, occurring everywhere and comprehending all that is, human life and destiny no less certainly than the history of the meanest of material objects—this is all which man by searching can possibly discover. All that is asserted to lie beyond—an existence superior to the human—a cause superior to the causes with the operation of which we are all familiar—an Intelligence, the originating source of all things—aught in any respect different from or superior to that of which our senses testify—this all is an empty dream, unverifiable, and therefore unreasonable. About the drapery in which facts array themselves, we may know, or think we know, or think that we think we know a very little—about the facts themselves, we know and can know nothing—about the origin of those facts, nothing. In truth, know-nothingism is our creed, and to every proposal to seek after instruction we say simply, "The thing is impossible." How like a pall on the form of some dear one fall such utterances, on the aspiring, hoping, trusting, loving spirit of intelligent and Christian men! To be sure, here, as everywhere, we must be on our guard against arguing from consequences—concluding that because the results of a position are painful that it is therefore untenable. To discover naked truth should be our highest ambition, and to assert what seems to us to be such truth, even when its aspect is most forbidding, should be the habit of our lives. But now understanding by Spiritualism simply an assertion of the continued existence of the so-called dead, and of the possibility of holding communication with them, whilst it cannot be said to disprove the doctrines of either Materialism or of Agnosticism, it certainly and enormously increases the data, acquaintance with which is essential either to their intelligent maintenance or to their intelligent denial. From these considerations it follows, that one who desiderates fuller evidence before he can feel justified in writing himself "Spiritualist," may yet perceive in Spiritualism that which compels his respect, and demands his further investigation.

To say that this Spiritualism has had, and still has, to make its way amidst much opposition, is only to say that it is subject to a law which is observed universally in relation to all things. Only by struggle, by hard-won conquest, can growth be attained, whether it be the growth of a deadly upas, or of a tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

I propose now to look out upon the objectors to Spiritualism and to take note of some of the objections which they express. I at once observe that there are those, and they are very numerous, who from ignorance or extremely limited and partial knowledge, or from the evidence which they supply of being hopelessly and on all matters under the dominion of prejudice, are incompetent to the entertainment of an intelligent opinion on the subject. This incompetency of theirs, indeed, all unsuspected as it is by themselves, extends

not to Spiritualism only or especially, but to any of the thousand and one subjects, about which they are generally among the foremost to show conviction and pronounce judgment. If it is true, as our literary Nestor affirms, that the millions of men constituting the human family are "mostly fools," it need not surprise us to find that many should prove their title to that name by rushing in here, where possibly angels fear to tread. Certainly, a very large proportion of the remarks about Spiritualism which one hears in general society, make it obvious that the speakers know very little about the subject, that they are strongly prejudiced against it; that, therefore they are indisposed with due patience to examine it; and that they never use the wisdom to hide these facts from view by the exercise of a becoming reticence.

The wholesale attribution to Spiritualists of childish credulity, and much more that of mendacity, and of a desire to delude their fellow-men, at once places the objector without the pale of opponents, to whom it is consistent with self-respect to make reply. There are, to be sure, many circumstances which an impartial observer or even a "friendly eye" cannot fail to perceive with dissatisfaction, and, in some cases, even with disgust. No doubt many who profess themselves Spiritualists are persons whose habit of mind is such as to invite the plastic handling of any adept in the art of operating on the gullibility of his fellows. Unhappily, the demand creates the supply. Many of the wonders attributed to spirit-agency are, I fear, *pure* charlatanry. Whilst, in other cases, charlatanry would seem to have been practised by men and women only in exceptional instances—the phenomena ordinarily occurring through their agency being able to stand the most rigid tests and closest scrutiny.

Then there is the most astounding ignorance on all general subjects, which not a few of the public advocates of Spiritualism exhibit. Worse than this, there is superficiality, demanding and receiving from many the credit of large knowledge and profound thought—Ignorance, self-elevated to the chair of authority, and pronouncing, *à la* Sir Oracle, on all matters, however recondite.

A disposition when imposture, or something akin to it, is made but too evident, to treat it all too tenderly, may be mentioned in this category. So, also, may the disunion of Spiritualists, their crotchetiness, their practical forgetfulness of the circumstance that for the present many plausible and promising theories can only be tentative, their tea-pot tempests and lack of that mutual forbearance and general good temper which would contribute largely alike to their mutual respect, and to the desirable end of securing the respect of others. But now, these circumstances and others of like kind, which form the staple of the objections expressed by many, are, I submit, of little or no weight when balanced against pro-Spiritualistic arguments. They are but as the dust which settles alike upon the priceless jewel and upon its worthless counterfeit. Most of them are to be set down to the fact that modern Spiritualism is but in its earliest stages of development, or to the other fact, that conceding the essential truth of the whole subject, it is destined to make its way, as so many other most important truths have made theirs, by first indoctrinating the comparatively uncultured minds of ordinary men. Its phenomena are apprehensible by, and therefore subject to the treatment of anybody and everybody.

Waiving further reference to this ragged regiment of objectors, I cannot help beholding with surprise the very many who, habituated to the exact investigation which scientific pursuits require, refuse to bring it to bear upon the alleged facts of Spiritualism, with a view to either their endorsement or disproof. One would think that these men would be able to make short work of the matter. The prior disqualification of supposing anything beyond the region of mathematics to be impossible, cannot attach to them. Neither is it to be supposed that any results in any department of research can be regarded by them as either too eccentric or too insignificant to be worthy of the most careful study. Power of concentrated thought and of protracted examination is peculiarly theirs. They, too, have shown more than most men the courage of their convictions. Whence comes it that, with the exception of some three or four, to be mentioned always with every expression of admiration and honour, the occupants

of a high place in the scientific world refuse to bestow upon the asserted facts of Spiritualism that attention which they do not deem the most trivial material phenomena unworthy to receive? Of course, I do not complain that they do not take part with Spiritualists, but that they do not qualify themselves to take part either with or against them. As, without previous examination and a statement of that fact and its results, to describe serious inquirers into the subject as "Dead Sea apes," is unworthy of the character and position of the most famous and honoured of our literary *savants*; so, to affirm that if the communications which are professedly made by disembodied spirits through "mediums" are genuine, he, because of their triviality, does not care to know anything about them, is inconsistent, not only with the high position, but with the entire course of the very able professor who is reported so to have expressed himself. Most carefully would I abstain from the imputation of motives not the worthiest; scarcely, however, can I restrain the inquiry, Do these men really know, or at any rate suspect, that there is more in Spiritualism than they could recognise, without abandoning theories to which they stand committed, and with the perpetuation of which their credit is identified? Not of their most vigorous opposition to Spiritualism, but of a nature worthy of themselves, could I bring myself thus to speak. On the contrary, I should regard it as an invaluable contribution to my own, and to the world's just conclusions on the subject. It is their simple aloofness, their indifference, so inconsistent with their own principles, that is provocative of the suggestion.

But I see another and still larger party of non-Spiritualists—in many cases they are anti-Spiritualists—whose position I must regard as anomalous and inexplicable. I have already referred to the claim which the subject has upon the careful thought of Christians of various kinds. Now religion, as I understand it, is something broader in its basis—I will not say than Christianity as its Founder taught it, but than Christianity as men generally understand it. The persons to whom I now refer, are those who, being deeply interested in the conservation of the great underlying facts of all religion, fail to perceive the claims which, on that ground alone, Spiritualism has upon their most earnest and careful study. Let but the idea prevail that death is the termination of personal existence, and religion, on the part of people in general, will be impossible. Nay, however visionaries and the partisans of pet theories may agree as to the compatibility of that nescience on which certain philosophers insist with such devoutness as constitutes the essence of the religious life, I opine that in the case of any individual, in proportion as he is firmly convinced of the former, the latter will be found to decline, and will ultimately cease to be. Every one, therefore, concerned for the cultivation of religion in his own heart, and for its prevalence in the world, must admit the supreme importance of being assured as to the existence of a personal posthumous life. There are current circumstances which render fresh evidence in its favour greatly to be desired. It is not that certain of the old arguments may not really be sufficient to warrant intelligent and confident conviction in its favour, but it is that the attack upon them by a few has generated doubt respecting them in many. An echo of the denial of immortality finding expression in the language: "There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again; but if a man die, shall *he* live again?" has come to us from the long past, by way of a very few of the deep-thinkers of the present. The multitude have heard it; they do not repeat it, nor altogether concur in it, but anxiously they urge the inquiry which it awakens, "If a man die, *shall* he live again?" Now obviously the one thing which they especially require is the authoritative affirmation, If a man die, *he shall* live again. All to whom the interests of religion are precious, might be supposed to admit and feel the force of this representation. And this is the very requirement with which Spiritualism professes to comply. What occurs to me as most unworthy of religious men, is their disregard of this profession. If false, surely it is not beyond their powers, nor unworthy of them to prove it to be so; if true, must they not be unfaithful to the claims of their convictions and of the age, in not availing themselves of the support which it would furnish?

There are several other classes of persons whose attitude

with respect to Spiritualism claims consideration ; but passing over these, I proceed to mention certain things which appear to me to be real difficulties preventing full conviction and consequent earnest advocacy. These, let me say, do not consist, either wholly or in part, in the cost of whatever kind, which such conviction and advocacy would involve. Most emphatically do I believe, that to save life at the cost of truth and principle, is to sacrifice the chief glory of life ; and that to lose life for the truth's sake, is to find, to dignify, and glorify it.

" He's a slave, who would not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth he needs must think ;
He's a slave, who would not be
In the right with two or three."

I half hesitate to enumerate the difficulties of which I have spoken, lest my object in doing so should be misunderstood. I cannot help thinking, however, that it is of considerable importance that Spiritualists should know how outsiders are affected by incidents about which it may be the initiated were themselves once exercised, but whose influence upon them, they, since their period of full conviction, have perhaps forgotten.

First, I mention the fact, that attendant on the phenomena which otherwise would be the most convincing, there are generally some circumstances—often plausibly, perhaps satisfactorily accounted for—which yet await to prevent unqualified confidence.

There are mysterious noises ; but then one is generally not quite sure but that they are the effect of electrical or other atmospheric disturbance. There are *séances* conducted by well-attested public mediums, but inquirers may attend many times and nothing of any account may take place, the conditions being, it is said, unfavourable.

There are unaccountable displacements of furniture—the floating in air of chairs, tables, and musical-boxes, the obedience of these last to the expressed wishes of sitters in circle, and many similar phenomena ; but then these things generally require more or less complete darkness as the condition of their occurrence.

There is the power of extrication from the firmest bonds ; but the same thing, or apparently the same, is accomplished by clever conjurers.

There is an alleged power of healing ; but mesmerism, apart from Spiritualism, would seem to possess the same power in about equal degree.

Trance-mediums utter sometimes striking so-called improvisations ; but, in many instances, the most wholesale plagiarism has been proved against them.

The home-circle is recommended, and that professional mediums should be dispensed with ; but the testimony of, I think, the great majority of those who have acted on this advice, is to the effect that the results are most unsatisfactory. In many instances nothing occurs, and in a yet larger number only those phenomena which are most elementary, and as an evidence of spirit-agency most inconclusive.

Clairvoyant power is claimed ; but, singularly enough, when the fact of its possession would be rendered indubitable—as, for instance, were it to be employed to detect the criminal, to vindicate the innocent, or to relieve the needy—it is almost always at fault.

There are psychometric revelations ; but these, at least in some cases, are believed to be opposed to unquestionable fact.

Searching tests are said to be desired ; but often those which alone the investigator deems satisfactory are declined.

There are so-called materialisations of disembodied human spirits ; but, strange to say, their identification is generally most difficult, and even the most pronounced Spiritualists have often expressed doubt respecting it.

Many more circumstances of a similarly perplexing kind might be adduced.

I must beg my hearers to understand that I do not mention all these things as a justification of anti-Spiritualism, but rather as an explanation of non-Spiritualism—a vindication of the long-continued residence of some on the frontier-lines of Spiritualism, who on many accounts would much prefer to advance to a position in the interior. Nor should it be overlooked that these circumstances are cumula-

tive in their effect. Any two or three of them might be allowed to admit of easy explanation, but taken together the difficulty they constitute becomes formidable.

The temporariness of the zeal of apparently sincere and earnest converts may be mentioned among the circumstances which arrest the progress towards conviction of the duly cautious investigator. Certainly, I know not of many instances, but those with which I am acquainted suggest the inquiry, "How can it be possible that assurance of posthumous life should be possessed ; that communications with departed ones should be established, and that persons thus favoured should not feel that Spiritualism has claims upon their life-long adhesion, their most zealous maintenance?" One would think that instead of growing cold in its service or relinquishing its advocacy, advancing years would render it increasingly precious, and produce a readiness to sacrifice very much in its cause. Have those persons, once prominent among its supporters, who now never refer to it, and who seem to have lost interest in it—have they discovered the fallacy of reasoning they once thought conclusive, and that what they once regarded as fact was in reality only fact-like fiction? I do not mean to imply that I think it is thus with them, but only that their recreancy requires some explanation, and suggests this one, Men may grow weary in well-doing, often do so ; but a demonstrated truth, one, *i.e.*, which resting upon the testimony of their senses they would in most cases so regard, and which appeals to their deepest feelings and satisfies their most urgent requirements, would not be likely to be relinquished by them.

I will, in the next place, mention the idea which sometimes presents itself to my mind, and which takes rank among the circumstances rendering difficult my adoption of the Spiritualist creed. That idea is, that the relation of Spiritualist doctrines to current thought, which, whilst it may, as I have stated, indicate divine ordination for the purpose of meeting the exigencies of that thought and to endorse the phenomena on which the doctrines are based, also may be the mere outcome of the subjection, alike of Spiritualist and of non-Spiritualist, to the same mysterious thought-moulding and history-making influence. As the ages roll on, one error after another comes to be exploded. Slow, ordinarily, the process may be, but certain of occurrence. Theological error, the most tenacious in its hold on the human mind, is made sooner or later to succumb to this law. An influence begotten of an apparently unbeginning succession of facts of all kinds, and of innumerable present and concurrent circumstances, avails at last to undermine beliefs the most venerable and the most general. As after centuries of defiance or change, the stately structure gives evidence in all its parts of subjection to the universal law of decay, so the most time-honoured creeds and theories are seen to give signs of decadence in all their parts. Such effect being produced no man can determine precisely by what or how. The mysterious influence which so operates as to change the habit and result of human thought is exerted, not occasionally and exceptionally, but habitually and generally. The scholarly and the philosophic mind, and the popular mind, though not similarly, are yet alike certainly affected by it. Now when Spiritualist teaching and scientific teaching agree in lending support to the modern ideas of evolution and of conservation of energy, or when they unite in demanding a broader basis for religious development than Christendom has heretofore recognised, but which broader basis the most thoughtful among all the Christian sects are beginning to admit must exist—is it not possible and likely that, instead of this being attributable in the case of Spiritualist and spirit teaching, it is the consequence of the subjection of all alike to the action of the one great tidal wave of influence which is bearing the age on to the destined haven of enlarged and improved conception? I mean simply that the thought occurs, May not that feature in Spiritualism which best commends the whole subject to the sympathy and approval of many, be attributable really—the Spiritualists perceive it not—to something outside of the subject, and so be no argument in its favour? May not the communications claiming spirit origin be really the reflection of the unconscious thought of the recipient?

But another circumstance, and one which I fancy Spiritualists must themselves perceive, constitutes a great difficulty in the way of candid investigators, is the fact that whilst a

great variety of communications are said to be made by departed spirits, there is a singular absence of such as it may be presumed could scarcely fail to compel conviction. Whether immediately, or by way of some abnormal mediumistic power, the knowledge both of past and of future events is said to be communicated by the spirits of the departed, very extraordinary are some of the well-attested instances of such communications. A very little advance along this line, and all reasonable persons could not fail to be convinced, if not of spirit agency, of an obligation resting, as upon all who lay claim to intelligence, so especially upon scientific and religious investigators, never to rest until some sufficient cause of such astounding facts had been discovered by them. To illustrate my meaning, suppose the existence and whereabouts of undeniable documentary evidence as to the authorship of the "Letters of Junius" or of Ossian's "Poems" were pointed out; or suppose it were communicated that some two or three of the plays which are among those most confidently attributed to Shakespeare were in reality the productions of Lord Bacon, and that the proof of this was to be found in certain letters which passed between these two men and which still existed, and were to be found in a certain place, then described, the whole being afterwards verified. Or to suggest what may be described as an imperial instance—suppose the original MS. of any one of the books of the New Testament, say of the Fourth Gospel, were by some person under control asserted to be still in existence; suppose that the place where it was to be found were described, and suppose that proceeding upon this information the document itself were brought to light—could the effect be other than most favourable to the claims of Spiritualism? I know to this last suggestion it may be replied that the thing is impossible, because the MS. in question has perished or been destroyed. But, admitting that this may be, there must be many other documents supposed to be irrecoverable, the discovery and production of which, in the way and by the means I have indicated, would be equally convincing.

I readily concede that a pertinent, if not perfectly satisfactory reply may be made to these representations as to the supposableness of certain circumstances which would be convincing, but are not forthcoming. Not any the less, however, does their absence constitute a difficulty in the way of inquirers, and especially when regarded in connection with those other considerations to which I have invited, or now proceed to invite, attention. I do not attach much importance to the objections felt by many on the ground of the triviality, or inconsistency, or other peculiarity of the messages said to be communicated. All this may, I think, be fairly accounted for. The one question on this subject which only is of great moment is, "Do the messages really proceed, as Spiritualism teaches, from invisible beings, and were those beings once conditioned as we now are?" There is, however, one circumstance about these messages which I have not seen satisfactorily explained. They not only take form from the peculiarities of the "medium," but their nature, their essence, often seems to be determined by those peculiarities. That the mental and moral features of the medium should leave impression upon, and mould the communications, seems reasonable—that the mould should determine the material moulded, is startling. There is one circumstance which I do not remember to have seen remarked on, which has often occurred to me as occupying a rather prominent place in this category of difficulties. It is admitted by all that the conditions of the existence of departed human beings are wholly unlike our own. Of course, therefore, we are utterly unable to form any rational conception of them. Any description of them must of necessity be rather merely symbolical or absolutely incomprehensible. Just as if man had always possessed only four senses, and the attempt were made—say by some incarnated visitor from some other world—to describe to him a fifth sense, that attempt would of necessity be a failure; or just as the endeavour to conceive of a sixth sense would in any case be fruitless, so I should imagine any attempt to unveil the realities of disembodied life must be unsuccessful. What astonishes me is, not that communications from the possessors of that life should be unintelligible, but that they should be so like to our comprehension. They are difficult of belief

because so easy to be understood. They are so natural as to leave the impression of being unnatural.

Now, I can anticipate the kind of remark which this statement of an inquirer's many difficulties may elicit. "Whatever," it may be said,—“whatever an outsider may see or may not see, whatever he may admit or whatever he may object, there are the phenomena—indisputable, proven. We have just the same evidence of their occurrence that we have of the presence in this room of the speaker and of his audience. And there is the explanation—no more admitting of rational dispute than does the explanation that the sight of a friend and the sound of his voice are attributable to his actual presence.” The consideration of this supposed reply suggests a statement of what is, I think, after all, the chief difficulty—so great that, if removed, all other difficulties would thereby be proved to be capable of easy solution, or rather to be already in process of rapid annihilation. For the majority of our beliefs we are necessarily dependent on testimony. Refusal to give Spiritualism a place among them may be deemed ungracious. It is the testimony of so many persons, and of persons so many of whom are admittedly of lofty principles and noble character, and who are in every way competent to weigh evidence and to arrive at just conclusions. Feeling the force of all this, I yet dare to decide that upon this subject, so unique, about which we are asked to believe that which revolutionises not only popular ideas but the best thought of the very great majority of the best thinkers of the present time and of all ages, and the issues dependent on which are so incomparably momentous—conversion may well be made to wait on such conviction as is born of personal experience. That which we are assured is ever transpiring is enough to transform the sceptic, if but a good man and true, into the most ardent disciple. That which has transpired under our own observation—and some of us have embraced all possible opportunities of observation—has been, in some instances, unaccountable indeed, but considered as premises warranting the Spiritualist conclusion, pitiful beyond description. This fact it is which lies like some huge impassable mountain between ourselves and that land of full conviction where we would fain find our home.

What I have now said suggests the further remark, that I think Spiritualists should be on their guard against excessive sensitiveness with respect to the hesitancy with which their testimony is received. Often the only alternative which presents itself or seems possible, to that of offending against our own desire to be courteous and confiding, and against the sentiment of self-respect with which a consciousness of rectitude and high honour inspires our informants, is that of resting satisfied with testimony, when we feel that the peculiarity of the questions at issue not only warrants, but demands that we should be content only with such evidence as makes appeal through our own senses to our power of apprehension. One can readily excuse the disposition to resent incredulity when it is felt that it appears to reflect upon either the discernment or the good faith of the witnesses in the case. Let me say that, anomalous as it may seem, such incredulity does not necessarily do this. We may be sure that our informants are, in all respects, all that we could desire them to be, and yet we may feel that it is just possible there may be a flaw in the evidence somewhere, and that that fact renders delay imperative. Apparent but unintended and unmerited reflection upon Spiritualists should, I think, be regarded by them as a part of that process of moral martyrdom to which the earliest champions of unrecognised truth must submit—the cross by way of the endurance of which the crown is to be secured.

May I further remark on the imperativeness of the obligation which rests on those who are fully assured of the facts, and of their explanation to assert their principles, to propagate their faith. In this dark world, with the multitudes groping in all directions as blind men for the wall, to hide light of any kind or degree under a bushel, is to merit the contempt of our generation and of all future ages. I have seen it counselled that because men of science and others have exhibited deplorable prejudice in relation to this subject, they should be treated with scorn—left in their ignorance, without further attempt to convince them. The anger which thus finds expression may not be without excuse, but the old maxim is worthy of regard, "Wrath worketh not righteousness."

Every dictate of humanity and every prompting of true religion suggests, that all which we believe to be true on a subject so entwined with all the dearest associations and best aspirations of men, we should assert fearlessly, and self-sacrificingly seek to promote.

To this remark I will only add the suggestion that the object upon which effort should be concentrated should be rather conviction of the occurrence of the phenomena than the admission of any theory respecting their cause. Facts first, explanations afterwards. To thrust forward the latter before the former are admitted, is to retard their admission. What men need most of all to be assured of, is that these things do really occur. Once satisfied on this point, they will not long delay the consideration of the other. Certain papers read at these fortnightly meetings, detailing incidents in the home circle, and vouched for by those who are above suspicion of either credulity or fraud, appear to me to be of a kind which it were wisdom to expend the resources of the Society in spreading broadcast over all the land. "Give us facts," people say (and not unnaturally or unwisely), "and we," they add, "will discover their philosophy for ourselves." I cannot help thinking that it would be well if some three or four or half-dozen representative Spiritualists whose names command public respect, and who are willing to pledge their credit in attestation of certain of the more remarkable of the phenomena, were to be invited, importuned, if necessary, to adopt every available means of advertising the world of their occurrence—to even force a statement of them on the attention of the public, and to not only encourage, but invite inquiry and investigation. For such a work all necessary pecuniary means would surely be forthcoming; and, assuming that Spiritualism rests on a firm basis, it is impossible but that the result should be abundantly compensative. I am quite aware of the distastefulness to many minds of such self-obtrusion on the attention of reluctant auditors. I know, also, that many of the details which are felt to be most convincing possess a sacredness which the duly sensitive shrink from violating. I would submit, however, whether being made the depositaries of truths so pregnant with such incomparably important results to all thought, all people, all time, does not originate an obligation to disregard feelings which, under other circumstances, might well demand respect and determine conduct.

Once more and for the last time I direct a hasty glance, first at the country adjacent to Spiritualism, and then at that enclosure itself. The spectacle which I beheld is memorable and affecting. Men and women often deluded and made wary by the fact, cannot but have their attention arrested by the strange things which Spiritualism brings to their ears. More or less vividly and habitually they realise that they are standing on the confines of another world—a world which the strongly insisted on but often utterly baseless doctrines of religious teachers have availed to invest with such circumstances as inspire habitual concern and often intense dread. With some little hope, though more than half suspiciously, they inquire, "What may this new doctrine mean? Is there, can there be in it aught which can meet our case, which can assure our hearts?" Very many there are who, educated into the reception and retention of certain dogmas, or stimulated by appeals to the emotional side of their nature to accept and cling to those dogmas, are yet ever and again more or less affected by that spirit of free inquiry with which the very air of our day is charged. Sometimes with "bated breath" and much of self-accusation for their temerity, at other times with something of the boldness which true manhood may well inspire, they express their doubts of the perfect satisfactoriness of such evidence for their beliefs as their teachers are wont to adduce. They do not yield a willing ear to the representations of Spiritualism. Is it likely they should? Do not their instructors assure them that so much of it as is true is of the devil? But they constitute material upon which Spiritualists may well attempt to operate. Numerous, well-intentioned, appreciative of moral excellence, important factors in the creation of current history, and in many cases predisposed to the re-examination of their beliefs, and of their warrant for them, their conversion would be, and not to themselves only, a great gain—as life indeed to the dead. But, again, I see certain, many, the present nature of whose experience constitutes an appeal the effect of which no Spiritualist, being a sound-hearted man, can resist. Their

heart's most cherished treasures have been transported into the great beyond. A whisper as to the welfare of these their dear ones arouses their profoundest interest. Assurance of that welfare were the best boon with which God Himself could enrich them. With streaming eyes they turn to those who profess to be able to certify them of the perpetuated life of all the so-called dead. With an intensity of feeling which almost renders their utterance unintelligible they cry, "By all your hopes of the welfare of your own departed deceive us not, but if you have ground for the blessed assurance that our dead do really live let us but know it, and our stricken hearts will evermore environ you with blessings."

I turn to those who are thus addressed. Instead, however, of further noting what I see in them and their proceedings, I make common cause with their appellants, and say, "O! bothers, you profess that you have a supply for the world's deepest needs, a balm for its worst wounds. I am quite sure that your profession is sincere. I more than half believe that you are not mistaken in that which you profess. Will you bear with me for desiring and seeking full assurance? Nay! that that assurance be made doubly sure?" This effected, I should deem it the most delightful duty, during what part of life may remain, to assist as best I may in your arduous but high vocation, for assuredly I should regard your mission as of one nature with that of the most honoured of all of woman born—viz., to bring life and immortality to light.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT "THE SPIRITUALIST" PRINTING OFFICE.

Last night, about eight o'clock, a fire broke out at the printing establishment of Messrs. Beveridge and Co., Nos. 9, 10, and 11, Fullwood's-rents, Holborn, causing the destruction of considerable property. A report was at first spread about that the Duke's Theatre was on fire. The excitement in Fullwood's-rents was very great. It was about a quarter-past eight when fire was seen about the centre of the building making its way rapidly in the direction of the staircase. Five steam engines and three manuals were quickly present—all of them, from necessity, being placed in Holborn, and the hose had to be conveyed up Warwick-court to reach the back of the burning premises. At the same time of the outbreak Mr. Beveridge was in his private office, and the whole of the hands had ceased work, but fortunately the books of the firm were removed in safe condition. The "press-room" on the first floor, and the two floors above, occupied as composing-rooms, were quickly in a blaze, and Superintendent Gatehouse directed the attention of his men to the preservation of the warehouse and machine departments underneath. It was not till the upper part of the premises was burned out, and considerable damage to other portions of the property was sustained, that the engines were able to cease playing. Captain Shaw's official report of the fire is as follows:—At 8.18 p.m. last night, called to a fire at 9, 10, 11, Fullwood's-rents, Holborn, occupied by Messrs. Beveridge and Company, printers. A building of five floors, about 35ft. by 35ft. three upper floors nearly burnt out and most part of the roof off, ground floor and basement and contents damaged by water; contents insured. No. 8, ditto, occupied by Mr. J. Jones, cardboard manufacturer, building and contents slightly damaged by water; insurance not known. No. 17, ditto, let out in tenements, front scorched and roof slightly damaged by breakage; insurance not known. Nos. 18, 19, and 20, occupied by Mr. J. Walters, fronts scorched; contents insured. No. 6, Warwick-court, ditto, occupied by T. Porter; passage slightly damaged by water; insurance not known. No. 7, ditto, building slightly damaged by water, and skylight by breakage; insurance unknown: cause of fire unknown.—*The Echo*.

MEDIUMSHIP.—*The Melbourne Age*, of December 30th last, says:—"Last night, Mr. Walker, the Spiritualist lecturer, delivered an address to a crowded audience in the Academy of Music Theatre, on *The Spiritual Telegraph and How it is Worked*. Mr. Walker addressed himself principally to an explanation of the mode in which spirits are said to communicate with the material world. He asked his audience not to despise the apparently contemptible methods whereby the spirits communicated with mortal beings. The process might appear simple and even ridiculous, but the result was of the utmost importance. The most important messages were transmitted between persons in different parts of the world by means of common wire, and an electric current obtained from such common materials as zinc and copper, yet the messages were not despised on that account. The most exalted sentiments of humanity were transmitted from age to age by means of the simple pen and paper made of rags, yet those ideas and opinions became none the less valuable for that. It mattered not therefore that communication between the spirit and the material world was carried on by means of rags so long as the message was valuable. The means of communication might appear contemptible in itself, but what did it matter so long as it resulted in the establishment of intercourse with the immortal denizens of the invisible spheres? The lecturer recommended his audience to prepare themselves for mediumship, in order to do which he said they must lead virtuous lives, be abstemious, and not too much engrossed with the affairs of the world. The ordeal was often a difficult one to go through, requiring much patience and perseverance, and the objects of those who became candidates for mediumship were often of an unworthy description. At the conclusion of a lengthy address, which was listened to with attention, Mr. Walker answered a number of questions, after which the meeting terminated."

A FIVE DAYS' TRANCE.

THE *Boston Sunday Herald* of March 16th, 1879, contains the following:—

"A special despatch to the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, from Free-lansville, Indiana, of the 12th of March, says:—What is considered a remarkable case of trance has happened here lately. The victim is Miss Flora Feihleman, the daughter of a well-to-do farmer, residing near this place. The facts are these. Miss Feihleman, whose family are Catholics, returned from the school of Notre Dame, Indiana, last December. Since her return she has been in very ill-health, moaning and tossing in fever at night. Immediately after the late cold spell she was attacked with pneumonia, now so fatally prevalent in this region. Notwithstanding she had the best medical attendance to be procured in this vicinity, she died on Monday, March 3, or at least apparently died. Were it not for the fact of Miss Feihleman being an only child, it is probable that she would have been buried immediately, but, as it was, it was decided to hold the corpse until relatives from Ohio, who had been sent for, could arrive. This delayed the funeral until March 8. The funeral was to take place at two p.m. At that time, as the friends and relatives were taking a last look, the corpse not yet having been taken from the house, the mother, being last to view the remains, suddenly bent over the body, and, uttering a cry, declared that she saw the eyelids move as if in life. The father with other friends commenced immediately to try by gentle movements to withdraw her from the room. They had nearly accomplished this when the corpse, to the surprise of all, suddenly arose and assumed a sitting posture in the coffin. Miss Feihleman is said by those who witnessed the scene to have gazed around with a vacant, surprised stare, and then to have sank back apparently exhausted. She was immediately removed and placed in bed, but it was, perhaps, three hours before she was conscious enough to give any account of herself. The period she passed in trance she is perfectly dead to—it seems to her a perfect blank. The parents are overjoyed, and the case excites much comment in the neighbourhood."

THE Soirée Committee of the National Association of Spiritualists asks us to announce that next Tuesday a soirée will take place in their rooms at Great Russell-street, London.

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Printed for the Proprietor by BEVERIDGE & Co., at the Holborn Printing Works, Fullwood's Rents, High Holborn, in the Parish of St. Andrew-above-Bar and St. George the Martyr, London, and published by E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, E.C.