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ELECTRICITY, MAGNETISM, AND THE HUMAN BODY.

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THE words electricity and magnetism are so often used by Spiritualists to express the forces which produce certain Spiritual phenomena, and so many people speak of the human body as possessing the power of giving off electric or magnetic force, that I request you to publish the following remarks, which I hope will somewhat clear up the subject. So far as I am aware, the human body has absolutely no power, on account of its vitality, of emitting either of these forces. When any dissimilar imperfect conductors are rubbed together, electric disturbance is the result; beyond this extent the human body cannot produce electricity, and this electricity produced by friction against external objects is wholly independent of vitality.

I frequently hear people remark that their bodies are highly charged with electricity. One person describes how, having combed his hair with a vulcanite comb, it crackles and gives off light in the dark. Another how, upon pulling off rapidly a silken undershirt, it has been luminous, and given discharges attended with a snapping noise. Americans, who live in a much drier atmosphere than we in England, often describe the effects produced by rapidly walking or rubbing the feet on a carpet in winter time, when one is often able to give off sparks half an inch in length. A fourth form of supposed bodily electrification, which has led many people to suppose that the brain was an electrical battery, sending electricity through the nerves to contract the muscles, is exhibited in the following manner:—The two terminals of a very sensitive galvanometer are connected each with a separate basin of water. If the hands be then placed one in each basin, on squeezing one hand violently, a positive current is almost always found to flow from that hand through the galvanometer, to the other hand which is not compressed. These phenomena were supposed to indicate an electrified condition of the human body.

The first instance alluded to, is simply electricity generated by the friction of the hair against the vulcanite comb. It is entirely independent of the human body and its condition, and can be produced by loose hair as easily as by hair attached to the head.

The second case, that of the silk undershirt drawn rapidly from the body, is of a kindred character. (The skin and silk must each be dry, else the electricity generated will be conducted away again by the moisture).

The third form of excitation described, I have repeatedly witnessed in America, when the thermometer has been at zero Fahrenheit, and the air in consequence very dry. At Mr. Peter Cooper's house in 1867, we lighted the gas by walking about the floor, rapidly shuffling the feet over the carpet, and presenting the finger to the unlighted gas issuing from the gas-burner. I found the thick carpet to insulate so well, that on walking up and down, and touching Mr. Cooper each time I passed him, such a charge was ultimately accumulated as to enable him to give to another a painful spark, fully half an inch in length. This electricity was due to the friction of my dry leather boots against the very dry woollen carpet, and could have been produced by a pair of empty boots, just as well as when feet were in them. This may be easily shown in damp England in the following way:—Place a thick woollen rug before a blazing fire on a dry day; put a gold-leaf electrometer on the table, and touch it with the finger—the gold-leaves will remain closed until the foot is drawn briskly over the rug, when the leaves will fly asunder, and indicate the presence of electricity. The mere pressure of the feet on the rug will suffice, if it and the boots are very dry and hot. This force is not more than a grain on each square inch at the distance of half an inch.

The fourth experiment of the squeezing of the hand under water, at the first blush really seemed to indicate that electricity was the power by which the brain contracts the muscles. In 1854, while experimenting night after night upon this subject with a very sensitive rapidly oscillating reflecting galvanometer, I found that after squeezing the hand, or suddenly relaxing it, and opening the clenched fist, there was a momentary increase of electrical power instead of a decrease. I further observed that when the wind was from the

south-west, and had continued so for several days, the power of this so-called muscular current was less than one-fourth as strong as when the wind had been blowing for several days from the north-east. The former wind I found almost invariably to be slightly negative to the earth, whilst the north-east wind was as invariably powerfully electro-positive.

One foggy evening, wishing to show these currents to a visitor, and finding them to be very weak, I endeavoured to strengthen them by cleaning my hands thoroughly with water containing some liquid ammonia, to decompose the grease in the pores of the skin. The result was a diminution instead of an increase of the power. This led to an explanation of the cause of these currents, for on washing my hands in very weak nitric acid, and afterwards with water, I obtained more power, when the hand was squeezed, than I had ever experienced in the most persistent east wind. It is evident that the effect of compressing the hand was to squeeze out some of the acid from the pores of the skin, which immediately generated a current. By simply putting the two hands in the basin, and dropping a little acid on one of them, a current was instantly generated without muscular exertion. When one hand was dipped in ammonia and the other in nitric acid, and afterwards washed with water, squeezing either hand produced a current in the same direction. Thus, it will be seen, that these currents are simply due to electro-chemical action, and are in no way evidence that the brain uses electricity to govern the muscles.

If a man lift a four-pound weight with his outstretched arm, he can carry it for a certain number of minutes, and then his arm fails. If the other arm be now used, it can support the weight, although the first arm cannot do so. Therefore, if the brain were the source of the power that lifted the weight, and it were exhausted by the one arm, it would be unable to lift the weight by means of the other arm. It is, therefore, clear that the source of the power which lifted the weight is in the arm, or rather the muscles governing it, the brain being simply the directing agent calling into activity the force which the blood had stored in the muscles.

Again, inasmuch as the nerves are very bad conductors of electricity, and are not insulated, it is perfectly evident that this force which is emitted by the brain is not electricity. An electric signal flies from France to America (2,500 miles) in one-third of a second. The time occupied by the passage of a nerve force signal from the brain of a whale to his tail (say about 80 feet) is about two seconds.

The electric wave is in this case about 200,000 times as rapid as the nerve signal, which is conclusive evidence of their non-identity.

Dr. Radcliffe has shown that if the large nerve of a frog be detached from the body with the leg hanging to it, and that if this exposed nerve be 1½ in. long, the passage of an electric current through the upper tenth of an inch of the nerve will disturb the nerve force, when the muscle contracts violently, although absolutely no electricity has passed into it.

Nowhere have I seen any reliable evidence that electricity exists in or about the human body, either as a source of motive-power or otherwise. All the feeble electricity which has been obtained from muscles can, I think, be explained by the different chemical conditions of the parts of the muscle itself.* For instance, if two metallic needles be inserted, one in the centre and the other in the surface of a muscle, a current of electricity will flow from one to the other; in like manner, if a sponge or piece of cotton-wool be impregnated on the one side with an acid, and on the other with plain water or an alkali, and two needles be thrust, one in the alkaline, and the other in the acid solutions, electricity will be engendered by the action of the two different liquids on the metal. The same is observed in plants; and in fact wherever there is any dissimilarity of solution or metal there is invariably slight electrical action. The forces by which mesmeric actions are produced are neither electricity nor magnetism.

February 14th, 1871.

C. F. VARLEY.

* A living muscle is alkaline, a dead muscle is acid; if in a dying muscle one part be dead and acid, whilst the other part is not quite dead, and so has not lost its alkalinity, all the conditions are present to generate electricity by simple chemical action when two needles are inserted.—ED.

LIFE AND INTELLIGENCE.*

BY PROFESSOR TYNDALL.

Two or three years ago in an ancient London College—a clerical institution—I heard a very remarkable lecture by a very remarkable man. Three or four hundred clergymen were present at the lecture. The orator began with the civilisation of Egypt in the time of Joseph, pointing out that the very perfect organisation of the kingdom, and the possession of chariots, in one of which Joseph rode, indicated a long antecedent period of civilisation. He then passed on to the mud of the Nile, its rate of augmentation, its present thickness, and the remains of human handywork found therein; thence to the rocks which bound the Nile valley, and which teem with organic remains. Thus in his own clear and admirable way he caused the idea of the world's age to expand itself indefinitely before the mind of his audience, and he contrasted this with the age usually assigned to the world. During his discourse he seemed to be swimming against a stream; he manifestly thought that he was opposing a general conviction. He expected resistance; so did I. But it was all a mistake: there was no adverse current, no opposing conviction, no resistance, merely here and there a half-humorous, but unsuccessful attempt to entangle him in his talk. The meeting agreed with all that had been said regarding the antiquity of the earth and of its life. They had, indeed, known it all long ago, and they good-humouredly rallied the lecturer for coming amongst them with so stale a story. It was quite plain that this large body of clergymen, who were, I should say, the finest samples of their class, had entirely given up the ancient landmarks, and transported the conception of life's origin to an indefinitely distant past.

This leads us to the gist of our present enquiry, which is this:—Does life belong to what we call matter, or is it an independent principle inserted into matter at some suitable epoch—say when the physical conditions became such as to permit of the development of life? Let us put the question with all the reverence due to a faith and culture in which we all were cradled—a faith and culture, moreover, which are the undeniable historic antecedents of our present enlightenment. Let us put the question reverently, but let us also put it clearly and definitely. There are the strongest grounds for believing that during a certain period of its history the earth was not, nor was it fit to be, the theatre of life. Whether this was ever a nebulous period, or merely a molten period, does not much matter; and if we revert to the nebulous condition, it is because the probabilities are really on its side. Our question is this:—Did creative energy pause until the nebulous matter had condensed, until the earth had been detached, until the solar fire had so far withdrawn from the earth's vicinity as to permit a crust to gather round the planet? Did it wait until the air was isolated, until the seas were formed, until evaporation, condensation, and the descent of rain had begun, until the eroding forces of the atmosphere had weathered and decomposed the molten rocks so as to form soils, until the sun's rays had become so tempered by distance and by waste as to be chemically fit for the decompositions necessary to vegetable life? Having waited through those æons until the proper conditions had set in, did it send the fiat forth, 'Let Life be!'? These questions define a hypothesis not without its difficulties, but the dignity of which was demonstrated by the nobleness of the men whom it sustained.

Modern scientific thought is called upon to decide between this hypothesis and another: and public thought generally will afterwards be called upon to do the same. You may, however, rest secure in the belief that the hypothesis just sketched can never be stormed, and that it is sure, if it yield at all, to yield to a prolonged siege. To gain new territory modern argument requires more time than modern arms, though both of them move with greater rapidity than of yore. But however the convictions of individuals here and there may be influenced, the process must be slow and secular which commends the rival hypothesis of Natural Evolution to the public mind. For what are the core and essence of this hypothesis? Strip it naked and you stand face to face with the notion that not alone the

* This is quoted from a lecture on *The Scientific Use of the Imagination*, delivered by Dr. John Tyndall, F.R.S., before the British Association at Liverpool.—ED.

more ignoble forms of animalcular or animal life, not alone the nobler forms of the horse and lion, not alone the exquisite and wonderful mechanism of the human body, but that the human mind itself—emotion, intellect, will, and all their phenomena—were once latent in a fiery cloud. Surely the mere statement of such a notion is more than a refutation. But the hypothesis would probably go even further than this. Many who hold it would probably assent to the position that at the present moment all our philosophy, all our poetry, all our science, and all our art—Plato, Shakspeare, Newton, and Raphael—are potential in the fires of the sun. We long to learn something of our origin. If the Evolution hypothesis be correct, even this unsatisfied yearning must have come to us across the ages which separate the unconscious primeval mist from the consciousness of to-day. I do not think that any holder of the Evolution hypothesis would say that I overstate it or overstrain it in any way. I merely strip it of all vagueness, and bring before you, unclothed and unvarnished, the notions by which it must stand or fall.

Surely these notions represent an absurdity too monstrous to be entertained by any sane mind. Let us, however, give them fair play. Let us steady ourselves in front of the hypothesis, and, dismissing all terror and excitement from our minds, let us look firmly into it with the hard sharp eye of intellect alone. Why are these notions absurd, and why should sanity reject them? The law of Relativity, of which we have previously spoken, may find its application here. Those Evolution notions are absurd, monstrous, and fit only for the intellectual gibbet in relation to the ideas concerning matter which were drilled into us when young. Spirit and matter have ever been presented to us in the rudest contrast, the one as all-noble, the other as all-vile. But is this correct? Does it represent what our mightiest spiritual teacher would call the Eternal Fact of the Universe? Upon the answer to this question all depends. Supposing, instead of having the foregoing antithesis of spirit and matter presented to our youthful minds, we had been taught to regard them as equally worthy and equally wonderful; to consider them in fact as two opposite faces of the self-same mystery. Supposing that in youth we had been impregnated with the notion of the poet Goethe, instead of the notion of the poet Young, looking at matter, not as brute matter, but as "the living garment of God;" do you not think that under these altered circumstances the law of Relativity might have had an outcome different from its present one? Is it not probable that our repugnance to the idea of primeval union between spirit and matter might be considerably abated? Without this total revolution of the notions now prevalent, the Evolution hypothesis must stand condemned; but in many profoundly thoughtful minds such a revolution has already taken place. They degrade neither member of the mysterious duality referred to; but they exalt one of them from its abasement, and repeal the divorce hitherto existing between both. In substance, if not in words, their position as regards the relation of spirit and matter is: "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder." And with regard to the ages of forgetfulness which lie between the unconscious life of the nebula and the conscious life of the earth, it is, they would urge, but an extension of that forgetfulness which preceded the birth of us all.

I have thus led you to the outer rim of speculative science, for beyond the nebulae scientific thought has never ventured hitherto, and have tried to state that which I considered ought, in fairness, to be outspoken. I do not think this Evolution hypothesis is to be flouted away contemptuously; I do not think it is to be denounced as wicked. It is to be brought before the bar of disciplined reason, and there justified or condemned. Let us hearken to those who wisely support it, and to those who wisely oppose it; and let us tolerate those, and they are many, who foolishly try to do either of these things. The only thing out of place in the discussion is dogmatism on either side. Fear not the Evolution hypothesis. Steady yourselves in its presence upon that faith in the ultimate triumph of truth which was expressed by old Gamaliel when he said:—"If it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; if it be of man, it will come to nought." Under the fierce light of scientific enquiry, this hypothesis is sure to be dissipated if it possess not a core of truth. Trust me, its existence as a hypothesis in the mind is quite compatible with the simultaneous existence of all those virtues to which the term Christian has been applied. It does not solve—it does not profess to solve—the ultimate mystery of this universe. It leaves in fact that mystery untouched. For granting the nebula and its potential life, the question, whence came they? would still remain to baffle and bewilder us. At bottom, the hypothesis does nothing more than "transport the conception of life's origin to an indefinitely distant past."

Those who hold the doctrine of evolution are by no means ignorant of the uncertainty of their data, and they yield no more to it than a provisional assent. They regard the nebular hypothesis as probable, and in the utter absence of any evidence to prove the act illegal, they extend the method of nature from the present into

the past. Here the observed uniformity of nature is their only guide. Within the long range of physical enquiry, they have never discerned in nature the insertion of caprice. Throughout this range the laws of physical and intellectual continuity have run side by side. Having thus determined the elements of their curve in a world of observation and experiment, they prolong that curve into an antecedent world, and accept as probable the unbroken sequence of development from the nebula to the present time. You never hear the really philosophical defenders of the doctrine of Uniformity speaking of *impossibilities* in nature. They never say, what they are constantly charged with saying, that it is impossible for the Builder of the universe to alter His work. Their business is not with the possible, but the actual—not with a world which *might* be, but with a world that *is*. This they explore with a courage not unmingled with reverence, and according to methods which, like the quality of a tree, are tested by their fruits. They have but one desire—to know the truth. They have but one fear—to believe a lie. And if they know the strength of science, and rely upon it with unswerving trust, they also know the limits beyond which science ceases to be strong. They best know that questions offer themselves to thought which science, as now prosecuted, has not even the tendency to solve. They keep such questions open, and will not tolerate any unlawful limitation of the horizon of their souls. They have as little fellowship with the atheist who says there is no God, as with the theist who professes to know the mind of God. "Two things," said Immanuel Kant, "fill me with awe: the starry heavens and the sense of moral responsibility in man." And in his hours of health and strength and sanity, when the stroke of action has ceased and the pause of reflection has set in, the scientific investigator finds himself overshadowed by the same awe. Breaking contact with the hampering details of earth, it associates him with a power which gives fulness and tone to his existence, but which he can neither analyse nor comprehend.

TRANCE-MEDIUMSHIP EXTRAORDINARY.

THE appended paper on "Syphilitic Insanity," read by Mr. H. Grainger Stewart, M.D., before the Psychological Section of the British Medical Association at Newcastle-on-Tyne, has been forwarded to us by Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., accompanied by the jocular remark, "Is this trance-mediumship?" The reply is, "No." A trance medium, while speaking "under influence," very commonly exhibits intellectual powers two or three times higher than his own in his normal state; this is not seen to be the case in the instances quoted below. Every Friday evening for more than a year, through the lips of Mr. Morse, trance-medium, some "dead" man or other has told to public audiences, at 15, Southampton-row, Bloomsbury, how and when he died, and often what were his religious, business, and family troubles or pleasures during life, likewise what were his experiences when he found himself on the other side of the grave. These communicants give their names, also their former addresses; a great many of their statements have been inquired into, and in most cases have been verified. There is nothing of this kind to be found in the following memoir. Trance-mediumship, though sometimes troublesome during development, afterwards improves the health of the medium, which syphilitic insanity does not do.

There are some trance-mediums through whom "ideas" only can be transmitted, and not proper names and addresses. So far as we have seen, the communications through such mediums are greatly coloured by their own thoughts and opinions, as if a disembodied spirit applied the stimulus and the mediumistic instrument responded in his own way to the inspiration, just as a muscle contracts when stimulus is applied to it by the nerves. Such mediums also seem to vary in their "transparency" to the influence; sometimes misty and foggy utterances come from their lips, at other times the communications are brilliant and noble, infinitely higher than those which the mediums could give in their normal state. So far as we have seen, also, the lower the spirit the more power he has over common matter, and the more readily can he produce violent physical manifestations; those who make disturbances in haunted houses often require the presence of no human medium, and are invariably of a low order. The higher the nature of the spirit, the more does he seem to lose his direct power over common matter. The higher spirits can probably only influence the thoughts and not the material body of the medium, so that their ideas, in travelling through the long channel between the thinking brain and the mouth of the medium, are vastly coloured by the transmitting and translating instrument. Mesmerists who have never seen physical manifestations, but who have seen much of what Spiritualists call inspirational mediumship, have much ground for disbelieving the Spiritual theory, as they very often do, but they fall into error because they judge the whole from the very small part which has come under their notice.

As society very often sends murderers and other unpleasant spirits into the next world, if they get a chance

to do mischief, they very likely do so, and it is really wonderful that disagreeable experiences are not more common at spirit-circles. We are not at all prepared to assert that within the sphere of the bad psychological influence of a madhouse, there may not be many of these imperfect spirits, stimulating, if not directly causing, some of the sufferings described in the following narrative. This we *know*, that doctors, because of their want of knowledge of incipient spirit mediumship, often send sane people to the lunatic asylum, where the sensitives are soon driven mad in real earnest. In cases of seeing-mediumship, medical men most frequently fall into this error; if the very same incipient symptoms appeared in one of the members of a spirit-circle, the patient would not be sent to a lunatic asylum and driven mad, but would be surrounded by good influences, the power would be properly developed, and in time the "patient" would be able to logically demonstrate to his relatives that he *can* see spirits, and get accurate messages from departed friends to prove the fact. This is a very serious subject, and when the present race of medical men is succeeded by another, sufficiently advanced to investigate natural phenomena, instead of ignoring them with the same contempt which Chinamen often display, when asked to gaze upon a steam-engine, or some other feature of Western civilisation—when that day comes, the lives of the public will be better protected than they are at present. Here is Dr. Stewart's narrative, which gave rise to the preceding remarks:—

"The three following cases of syphilitic insanity, which came under my care in the Newcastle Asylum, are, I think, worthy of bringing before you as illustrative of the remote effects of the taint of syphilis.

"Case 1.—J. S., a commercial traveller, aged 35, married, with children, was admitted into the Newcastle Asylum on April 16th, 1868. He had fair hair, blue eyes, and fresh complexion. His bodily condition and health were indifferent. He had led a very irregular life many years, and at one time had suffered severely from syphilis. During the three months before admission, he had gradually become incapable of conducting business. He now believed himself persecuted by enemies, especially men residing at Bradford, with whom he had had business connections. He said he heard them conspiring against him and wishing him ill. He was restless and irritable; frequently heard voices talking with him and about him; he understood all their plots. He slept fairly, but awoke much distressed, believing that he had been subjected to the most cruel processes during his sleep.

"After residing in the asylum for a short time, he continued to be the subject of the most extraordinary hallucinations. He heard voices which communicated to him the most foolish and absurd things, all which he firmly believed. He said he underwent nightly a kind of torture, which he called the 'cylinder finish,' and which he described as an excruciating process, by which his brains were whirled round with extreme velocity, mixed into a pulp, and replaced in his skull just in time for his awaking. This, he believed, was ordered by the doctor, who knew of everything that was done to him, and had the power of regulating the amount of his sufferings. He was also, he said, frequently put upon the wheel and drugged during the night; and though he really slept well, he averred that all the time he was vividly sensitive to all the tortures which he thought he underwent. Gradually he became extremely irritable, fancied that insults were offered to him by all about him, secluded himself from the society of his fellows, refused food, was inclined to lie in bed, and threatened to commit suicide. He referred to his head as the seat of his sufferings, and complained of pain at the vertex. Occasionally he was persuaded to take the iodide of potassium in two-grain doses three times daily, but never so continuously as to give it a fair trial.

"In the second year of his residence in the asylum, phthisis pulmonalis became developed, and then some improvement in his general health took place. He began to occupy himself in the joiner's shop, making toys for his children; and his actual sufferings seemed to obscure the abnormal sensations which so strongly affected him in the earlier period of his disease. Two years after his admission, he died. *No post mortem* examination was allowed by the friends.

"Case 2.—D. T., a woman aged 50, married without children, was admitted on April 10th, 1868. She was said to have led a dissolute life. She was very much emaciated and unhealthy; her nose was marked by cicatrices. She had suffered from syphilis, and had a bad sore on the leg. The circulatory and respiratory systems were healthy. She was of fair hair and complexion, ate well, and was said to sleep well. It was stated that she had been only a week insane.

"On admission, she was in a state of dementia. She was perfectly bewildered, and evidently could not understand the events taking place about her. She answered very slowly any questions that were put to her, and seemed unable to understand when she was spoken to.

"Shortly after admission, her mind became filled with singular and painful delusions. She fancied herself constantly persecuted by certain individuals, who day and night made it their business to annoy and hurt her. This they did by using the most ingenious machines which were specially invented to torture. They were introduced into her body and brain and worked by means of wheels. She averred that they burnt her brain, drew out her inside, cast her into the air, put their fingers into her, and so tormented her. This, for the most part, took place in the night; but if she were allowed to remain in bed during the day, she complained of similar though not such severe treatment. At the same time she heard her tormentors talking together, consulting as to which was the most painful process they could invent. She also heard others remonstrating with them for treating the poor woman so cruelly. She as well saw faces which she recognised as old neighbours, and particularly the face of her principal tormentor, whom she supplicated to desist. The head was referred to as the seat of the pain.

"During her residence in the asylum, she has every morning bitterly complained of her treatment during the previous night; and sometimes she gets into great excitement, and threatens to destroy herself occasionally. She refuses her food for days together, with that intent; and once, about a year after admission, was found by the night-nurse nearly strangled by a garter which she had twisted round her neck. She has often prayed the doctor to give her poison to end her sufferings.

"She now (August, 1870) continues to suffer from the same or similar delusions and hallucinations. At night, when the nurse shuts the door on her, the operations of her tormentors commence, and so they continue to persecute her all night. She says she is placed on a table and dissected; that her head is opened; and that all the time she sees and hears her tormentors inciting each other to treat her more and more severely. She occasionally receives her medical attendant with a storm of abuse, averring that he was present during the night, and aided her tormentors. The sores on her legs healed up under treatment by a solution of the bichloride of mercury. There has been no improvement of the mental symptoms of any duration, although she has undergone long courses of the iodide and bromide of potassium. The hydrate of chloral in forty-grain doses, produces deep and long continued sleep, and seems to relieve the symptoms at the time; but there is no material change in the mental state of the patient.

"Case III.—P. H., aged 58, single, an Irish labourer, a Roman Catholic, was admitted into the asylum on January 22nd, 1869. He had served some years in Portsmouth, and had led a very irregular life. He has fair hair and eyes, and is ruddy; he is blind of one eye from wound of the cornea. He has suffered from syphilis; but his general health is fair. He believes that his brother was murdered in the workhouse, and that the assassins are now after himself. He fancies that they are constantly watching him, hiding themselves in the ceiling and under the floors, and even suspended in mid-air over head. He heard them constantly plotting how they may kill him. One of their favourite modes of attack is by shooting vitriol, ammonia, and 'black poison' at him, besides using to his injury other magic and black arts. These persecutions go on principally at night, and the arrangements which he makes for warding them off are worthy of remark. He secures small pieces of wood in the day-time, by which he wedges the door of his room at night, and places his bed so that, should anyone attempt to enter, he must be awakened. He envelops his head with his pillow-case, which drops over his face, stuffs his ears and nostrils with cotton-wool and his mouth with a pocket handkerchief, and thus, he believes, he keeps out any drug or vapour when he is asleep. All the keyholes, ventilators, and open spaces about the doors and shutters are also carefully covered with blankets or sheets. It takes him more than an hour every night to complete these arrangements, and when he lies down under his mattress he considers he is in circumstances of comparative safety. He frequently complains of pains in the head and burning sensations on his skin, which he attributes to his unseen enemies shooting poison on him. He complains during the day, but is worse at night, and every morning recounts some new plan of attack that his tormentors have been attempting. He has been under treatment for eighteen months; but in his, as in similar cases, it is almost impossible to carry out a system of treatment, and no improvement has taken place in the case. He threatens to commit suicide to put an end to his sufferings; but has never made any actual attempt.

"Remarks.—These cases have several characters in common: 1. They all occur on subjects who have suffered from syphilis. 2. The character of the delusion is similar. They all believe themselves the victims of conspiracy, persecution, and cruelty undeserved. 3. They are all subjects of hallucinations of touch, hearing, and sight. 4. They are all suicidal, two of them having made actual attempts on their own lives. 5. They are all dangerous to others when under the influence of their delusions, and were quite unsafe to be at large. 6. They are all worst at night, which circumstance may be dwelt upon as indicating the syphilitic nature of the disease. 7. They all suffered severely from cephalalgia: their abnormal sensations were in the brain. 8. The treatment produced but little effect, and it is feared they can only be looked upon as incurable; but still, by the relief of symptoms, much of the distressing character of the disease may be assuaged."

SPIRITUALISM IN KILBURN.

ON Monday evening, at a public meeting convened by the Kilburn Spiritualistic Society, held in the Carlton-hall, Carlton-road, Kilburn, Mr. A. C. Swinton read a trance-address received through the mediumship of Mr. J. J. Morse, in which the communicator gave the particulars of his death, and his experiences on first entering the world beyond the grave. The deceased was Edward N. Dennys, a political and social reformer, and author of "The Alpha,"* a book which has been much praised by the *Athenæum*, *Critic*, *Spectator*, and other periodicals, for its literary merits and deep thought. During his life Mr. Swinton knew Mr. Dennys intimately, and the latter, who knew nothing of Spiritualism, promised the former that if it were possible for a man to return to him after death, he would do so. Mr. Swinton, of 5, Cambridge-road, Kilburn, and Mr. C. W. Pearce, of 6, Cambridge-road, Kilburn, are quite satisfied that Mr. Dennys has communicated with them several times since his death through various mediums, and that he has conclusively proved his personal identity. The following are portions of the statements recently made by Mr. Dennys, and read by Mr. Swinton to the public meeting at Kilburn:—

"When I became conscious that physical dissolution was near, I experienced sensations of exquisite delight. I felt as if I were sinking into an atmosphere of indescribable happiness, which, from its intensity, gradually overpowered my bodily senses, and caused a profound slumber. This slumber lasted about three days, at the end of which I awoke, and became conscious that the change called 'death' had passed over me, and that the veil which, for more than threescore years, had hidden the realities of existence from my sight was removed, and for ever.

"When I awoke, I found myself in an apartment, the like of which I had many times pictured, but had never before realised. It was circular in shape, having walls of a translucent substance, nearly resembling alabaster, and a bright, yet yellow light, pervaded the whole of it. I found myself reclining on a couch, formed to resemble a white lily. Floating around me, and filling the room, was a perfume laden atmosphere, the inhalation of which gave me a new sense of being, coursing through my veins like ethereal ether, and filling me with joyous life: I had not, however, fully realised my new

condition; it was so much like a dream that I arose from my couch, and rubbed my eyes, and felt myself to ascertain whether I was dreaming or awake. After some little consideration I became fully conscious of an elevation of myself in every sense, when, quietly thinking for a while, I suddenly observed the curtains part at the side of the couch furthest from me, and a person of a most benevolent aspect stood in the opening.

"He was clothed in a long flowing robe of emerald colour, and bright as the diamond. It was fastened round the waist by a golden cord, with two tassels depending from the ends thereof. His head was bare, and his long wavy hair fell in heavy masses of gold around his shoulders."

Dennys then gives a conversation which took place between him and the stranger friend, who said that he, as a spirit, had watched over Dennys, and aided him during his earthly life. Dennys thus describes his thoughts at the close of the conversation:—

"I travelled backward to the scene of my first life. I felt within the strong desire to elevate those I had left behind. I had a clear conception that Intelligence rules all existence, and that Intelligence suffers nothing to exist, unless it be useful. Thus reasoning, I knew there must be some means whereby my desire could be gratified, and I said to my Brother—

"How can I compass the means which I perceive must exist? How can I approach those upon the planet whence I came; for I am conscious of another existence away from that planet; because what I now behold would be impossible upon it."

"He replied—'Come with me, my Brother, and I will introduce you to the rest of our circle; you shall then receive a practical exposition of how you can fulfil the animating desire of your soul.'

"We arose from the couch upon which we had been seated, and passing between the curtains, which opened at our approach, we passed onward through a corridor, at the end of which I observed a landscape surpassing in beauty and grandeur all that I had ever seen or conceived.

"Before us was an open plain interspersed with trees, shrubs, flowers, and streamlets; and away in the far distance rose up, like undulating waves of the grand ocean, bright and verdant mountains; and dimly seen over their tops was the outline of what appeared to be a city, bathed in a calm, subdued light. Over our heads was a bright blue atmosphere, clear as the noonday sky, and a spirit-sun cast its golden, mellow light around, bathing every object in a flood of celestial glory."

He then narrates how, in an open space beneath some trees, he was introduced to a band of spirits, who told him how to set to work to carry out his desire to revisit the earth. Aided by a guide of the name of Apoletha, he returned to the earth in this wise:—

"I observed a small tremulous light come smoothly rolling along: directly Apoletha saw it, he changed our course; and all descended in an oblique direction, and by that means drew near to the little orb, which gradually revealed to our eyes its spiritual life; and once again I stood upon the planet earth. But how changed was the view since my short absence,—how dark and cloudy all things were,—the gloom being fitfully illuminated here and there by flickering rays of spiritual light, which, though ever struggling to expand themselves, but seldom succeeded through the want of associated effort among mankind. I saw the people of earth crowding hither and thither in their search for wealth, and material reputation, stooping down and seldom or ever rising beyond their mouths: good and holy were many called, but they were dark and cloudy within. I saw that many a patient, plodding tiller of the soil,—that many of the servants of the rich and so-called great were in themselves brighter and purer than their rulers: and, as I looked, tears of pity fell from me, and deep thrills of sympathy for suffering humanity coursed through my nature. I wept for the ignorance and misery I saw around me. Apoletha said, 'Weep not, brother! at these sad scenes, there is endless labour yet for thee.' Sorrowfully, I replied, 'How can I raise them now! For too truly do I find they have ears, but they hear not; they have eyes, but they see not; they have understandings, but they understand not. I cannot speak to them as I was wont; I cannot write and distribute my views as I did on earth!' Here again I felt my childhood's simplicity was revealed by the reply he made:—'Ignorance is the cause of error.' You are ignorant how to communicate with your brethren in the flesh, hence the error into which you have fallen.' I felt the reproof, and bowed myself in silence, reproved by mine own words."

"This occurred in the midst of your busy city, London. We now ascended from our level and passed onwards until we found ourselves among a fresh people, where all things were strange and new to me; but swiftly came the news to my brain, 'You are in the land of freedom!†' Said my guide to me, 'Follow! and I will now show you how the immortals speak with the mortals.'

"By a process which I will describe another time, we passed into the house, and to an upper chamber, where, seated around the room, were about twenty persons of both sexes. Instantly my inner nature responded to the stream which flowed upward from them, for they had met for the purpose of obtaining instruction and advice from the inner or spiritual life. Apoletha threw aside his robe, and advanced to a young man who was sitting in the centre of the group, and, after he had performed some manipulations around his brain, I observed the image of the young man rise from himself and repose, peacefully sleeping, at a short distance; then the sphere around Apoletha also enveloped the body to which that image belonged, and the 'medium' (as you would call him, and as I learnt such were) poured forth, under Apoletha's complete control, a flood of instructive eloquence which was as dew to thirsty souls. At the conclusion of the address, mortals and immortals separated,—each refreshed and invigorated by their respective work.

"Then Apoletha, turning to me, said, 'You have had sufficient for the time, Brother, we will return to our home, and again seek the advice of our Chief and Brotherhood, as to the best mode of procedure to ensure your success.'

After the reading of the communication, which was a very long one, a discussion took place; the audience for the most part admitted the facts of Spiritualism, but introduced the religious difficulty, and strenuously advanced the devil theory.

SPIRIT-RAPPING IN JOHN WESLEY'S FAMILY.

IN TEN PARTS.—PART EIGHT.

The following are some more of the family letters which were published by John Wesley:—

My sister EMILY's account to JACK.

"ABOUT a fortnight after the time when, as I was told, the noises were heard, I went from my mother's room, who was just gone to bed, to the best chamber, to fetch my sister Sukey's candle. When I was there, the windows and doors began to jar, and ring exceedingly; and presently after I heard a sound in the kitchen, as if a vast stone coal had been thrown down, and smashed to pieces. I went down thither with my candle, and found nothing more than usual; but as I was going by the screen, something began knocking on the other side, just even with my head. When I looked on the inside, the knocking was on the outside of it; but as soon as I could get round, it was at the inside again. I followed it to and fro several times; till at last, finding it to no purpose, and turning about to go away, before I was out of the room, the latch of the back-kitchen door was lifted up many times. I opened the door and looked out, but could see nobody. I tried to shut the door, but it was thrust against me, and I could feel the latch, which I held in my hand, moving upwards at the same time. I looked out again; but finding it was labour lost, clapped the door too, and locked it. Immediately the latch was moved strongly up and down; but I left it, and went up the worst stairs, from whence I heard, as if a great stone had been thrown among the bottles which lay under the best stairs. However I went to bed.

"From this time I heard it every night for two or three weeks. It continued a month in its full majesty, night and day. Then it intermitted a fortnight or more, and when it began again, it knocked only on nights, and grew less and less troublesome, till at last it went quite away. Towards the latter end, it used to knock on the outside of the house, and seemed farther and farther off, till it ceased to be heard at all."

My sister MOLLY's account to JACK.

Aug. 27.

"I have always thought it was in November, the rest of our family think it was the 1st of December, 1716, when Nanny Marshall, who had a bowl of butter in her hand, ran to me, and two or three more of my sisters, in the dining-room, and told us she had heard several groans in the hall, as of a dying man. We thought it was Mr. Turpine, who had the stone, and used sometimes to come and see us. About a fortnight after, when my sister Sukey and I were going to bed, she told me how she was frightened in the dining-room, the day before, by a noise, first at the folding-door, and then overhead. I was reading at the table, and had scarce told her I believed nothing of it, when several knocks were given just under my feet. We both made haste into bed; and just as we lay down, the warming-pan by the bedside jarred and rang, as did the latch of the door, which was lifted swiftly up and down. Presently a great chain seemed to fall on the outside of the door (we were in the best chamber), the door, latch, hinges, the warming-pan, and windows jarred, and the house shook from top to bottom.

"A few days after, between five and six in the evening, I was by myself in the dining-room. The door seemed to open, though it was still shut; and somebody walked in, in a night-gown trailing upon the ground (nothing appearing), and seemed to go leisurely round me. I started up, and ran upstairs to my mother's chamber, and told the story to her and my sister Emily. A few nights after my father ordered me to light him to his study. Just as he had unlocked it, the latch was lifted up for him. The same (after we blew the horn) was often done to me, as well by day as by night. Of many other things all the family as well as me were witnesses.

"My father went into the nursery from the matted chamber, where we were, by himself, in the dark. It knocked very loud on the press bed-head. He adjured it to tell him why it came, but it seemed to take no notice; at which he was very angry, spoke sharply, called it deaf and dumb devil, and repeated his adjuration. My sisters were terribly afraid it would speak. When he had done, it knocked his knock on the bed's head, so exceeding violently, as if it would break it to shivers; and from that time we heard nothing till near a month after.

My Sister SUKEY's account to JACK.

"I believed nothing of it till about a fortnight after the first noises; then one night I sat up on purpose to hear it. While I was working in the best chamber, and earnestly desiring to hear it, a knocking began just under my feet. As I knew the room below was locked, I was frightened, and leaped into bed with all my clothes on. I afterwards heard, as it were, a great chain fall, and after some time the usual noises at all hours of the day and night. One night, hearing it was most violent in the nursery, I resolved to lie there. Late at night, several strong knocks were given on the two lowest steps of the garret stairs, which were close to the nursery door. The latch of the door then jarred,

* London: James Burns, 15, Southampton-row, Holborn.

* Alpha, p. 104.

† America.

and seemed to be swiftly moved to and fro, and presently began knocking about a yard within the room on the floor. It then came gradually to sister Hetty's bed, who trembled strongly in her sleep. It beat very loud, three strokes at a time, on the bed's head. My father came, and adjured it to speak; but it knocked on for some time, and then removed to the room over, where it knocked my father's knock on the ground, as if it would beat the house down. I had no mind to stay longer, but got up, and went to sister Em and my mother, who were in her room. From thence we heard the noises again from the nursery. I proposed playing a game at cards; but we had scarce begun, when a knocking began under our feet. We left off playing, and it removed back again into the nursery, where it continued till towards morning.

THE FUTURE OF SPIRITUALISM.

THE following remarks by Mrs. Emma Hardinge, as to the present and future of Spiritualism in the United States, and throughout the world, are here reprinted from an American newspaper:—

"I have looked upon these evidences of disintegration with the regret natural to one who has laboured to form the associations which seem now so strangely breaking up; but I do not regard them as the signs of decay, which our enemies would fain believe them to be, nor yet as the evidence that there is some radical incompetency on the part of Spiritualists to organize, as some of our Spiritualistic teachers would urge.

"I am assured by those spirit friends in whose wisdom and foresight I have confidence, that Spiritualism, unlike all other merely human movements, will not endure corrupt and effete atoms in its organizations, and that until the pure and vitalizing influences of Spiritualism shall have produced their full effect in the reform of individual character, such individuals may strive in vain to band each with the other into concrete organizations. Humanity has too long been treated as a mass whose totality constitutes the power which the few can wield.

"Our spirit-guides are labouring to disintegrate these masses; deal with them separately, and when the individual is pure enough to stand alone and recognise his own eternal responsibility, then, and then only, will he be deemed fit to become a part of an organic movement, and an atom in the body politic of an association. . . . Until such individual reforms have been effected, all our associations and movements will be but temporary, the expedients of the hour, but never suffered to crystallize into creedal unity. . . . I have frequently been invited by my spirit-guides to reflect whether the persons who have gone out from our midst, did not confer a far greater benefit upon 'the cause' by their withdrawal than by their advocacy. I have been required to answer to myself, whether the really good and wise have ever turned back from the faith, and whether any organisation of our ranks has been dissolved until the action of obnoxious individuals had rendered the dissolution absolutely necessary. My reflections on these suggestions have only ended in the admission that we were not yet in a condition to organize—that is, upon the high grounds of spiritual excellence that has been presented to me as the basis of our future action, and that until we shall become so, a silent but irresistible spirit of disintegration will prevail throughout our ranks. Yet, despite the sneers and scoffs of vestry boards, philosophical associations for the conservation of science, and ecclesiastical societies for the preservation of ancient landmarks, our numbers increase with startling rapidity, and isolated adherents to the spiritual faith grow up and permeate the ranks of every other faith. . . . Besides these words of cheer and promise, I have long been assured, by my most trusted guides, that a period of marvellous Spiritual revivalism was at hand, and that somewhere about the year 1875, a mighty outpouring of the spirit should be experienced, commencing as a starting point from a field preaching in the State of New York, and rushing like the tides of a fiery flood all over the civilized world.

"The old and the young, the high and the low, the good and evil, saint and sinner, wise and foolish, shall equally partake of the psychological contagion. I am told that whilst the manifestations of spirit presence will still be of an external and sensuous character, that the influence and tendency will be to awaken the religious depths of man's nature. That the epoch through which we have passed, having been devoted to the production of phenomena, whose chief significance was to demonstrate the fact of Spiritual communion, that epoch is to be regarded only as preparatory to the higher or more exalted Spiritualism which is to follow. I find in these predictions no promise that a personal Messiah is to appear, or that the egotism of special creedal faith is to be satisfied by the endorsement of any special form of ecclesiastical belief; but I am told that the spirit of righteousness, mercy, and charity, will be kindled in the heart; high aspirations towards Spiritual existences and Spiritual states of mind will be promoted. Trust in, and unity with the Great Spirit, Lord and Creator of all, will possess the heart, and an universal desire for 'peace on earth, and goodwill to men,' supersede the present idle and sensuous enjoyment of the more external phases of spirit communion, which constitutes so large a portion of the Spiritualism of the past twenty-two years."

AMONG THE SWEDENBORGIANS.

NUMBER ONE.

Of all the religious sects, the Swedenborgians hold opinions which are, perhaps, most in harmony with the facts demonstrated by Spiritualism. There are in London some four or five places of worship for those belonging to what is called the "New Church." One of them is in Devonshire-street, Islington, not far from the well-known Roman Catholic church. The building is of rectangular form. Its height, if anything, exceeds the length of the body. There are no galleries, although there is room for several: there are hardly any pillars, and the acoustic effect is not of the best. The chancel is separated from the body by a straight line of railings, and inside this barrier stand the communion table, several tastefully carved chairs, the pulpit, and a row of seats. From a balcony within the chancel, visitors are probably permitted to watch or participate in the proceedings below. Above the communion table is a tablet containing the commandments, in the centre of which is written the name of the Most High in Hebrew, and the name of Jesus in Greek around it. Around the candelabra, each of which contains

the significant number of seven or fourteen lights, the Christmas garlands were still visible a few Sundays ago. Here and there about the walls were to be seen crosses on intersecting triangles. Just beneath the pulpit, a white cross was also conspicuous, and a crown with three crosses above almost led one to think that high church emblems were not considered objectionable. The place could accommodate several hundred people, but at the time of our visit the congregation counted hardly fifty. Yet the seats were comfortable, the people obliging and very hospitable, and the service was conducted in a somewhat solemn, but in no way unpleasing manner. A venerable looking old gentleman, in his ample garments, not unlike a monk of the middle ages, opened the service by reading from a kind of prayer-book various passages. The character of the book may be gathered from its title, and preface; it is called *A Liturgy from the Divine Word*; and the preface begins thus, "To produce a service in which every believer in the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ could heartily join, has been the object of this compilation, &c."

It was observable that on the name of Jesus Christ being read, every one present bowed devoutly, as is the custom in some other churches. Lessons from the Old and New Testaments were also read, and a psalm was chanted from a book entitled, "*The Psalms of David*," a revised edition, pointed for chanting and designed for the use of the New Church, signified by the new Jerusalem in the Revelation. By order of the General Conference." A voluminous hymn-book, specially compiled for the followers of the New Church, was also used in the course of the service. Their tenets are mainly derived from the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, the great seer of the last century.

The introductory portion of the service at Devonshire-street contrasted strongly with the sentiments expressed in the sermon. The preacher was hardly a middle-aged man, and not the pastor of the congregation. Robed in white, like all those officiating within the precincts of the chancel, he commenced his delivery by an extemporaneous prayer. During his sermon he often referred to the Athanasian Creed, and to the additions which the early creeds of the Christian Church had undergone. He told how additions were made in favour of priestcraft and holy churchdom, the meaning of which additions might be construed to suit vile purposes. He said that, with a purer meaning, these creeds might be used safely. The ancient and only visible and true church established in the wilderness, had found a resting place in Canaan, and a gorgeous outer case had been made to envelop the pure truths contained within. In the place of inward spiritual grace, burnt offerings, and rams, and goats, and bulls, were sacrificed in the temple. But the whole institution was but the casket in which the real pearls were safely kept. Whoso opened the casket and found them, had really received the Divine gift bestowed on mankind by the institution of the holy church. Milton, the preacher said, had glimpses of the truth, when he spake of the millions of forms that walk the earth, both when we wake and when we sleep. These spiritual beings, he said, are like ourselves, only in a state more free and more simple. We do not hear the sound of their footsteps day by day in our streets, our workshops, or our counting-houses, but we know that they often whisper to us, and comfort us when deserted by all the world besides. These evidences are the living witnesses from a land above.

The sermon lasted about three-quarters of an hour. It was followed by a hymn, which like the rest of the music, was somewhat monotonous, although there was no lack of material for something better aloft among the choristers, and the organ was a good one.

MR. D. D. HOME has reached St. Petersburg, and according to a private letter received from him a few days ago, the Emperor of Russia had arranged to be present at one of his *séances*.

MR. J. M. PEBBLES.—A recent number of *The American Spiritualist*, edited by Mr. J. M. Peables and Mr. Hudson Tuttle, announces that Mr. Peables did not dine with Mr. John Bright, M.P., while in England, but that his memorable conversation with Mr. Bright about Spiritualism took place when he called upon him in company with the poet Bailey. The statement that the conversation took place at a dinner was copied into English journals from a Chicago newspaper called *The Present Age*, which contained a report, many columns long, of the lecture by Mr. Peables, in which is narrated the conversation. The error of detail, then, rests with *The Present Age* newspaper.

SPIRITUALISM AND SCIENCE.—Both on the outward and homeward voyage of H.M.S. *Urgent*, with the Eclipse Expedition on board, composed of some of the leading philosophers of the day, Spiritualism was the chief subject of discussion, and some of its literature was closely examined. Several of those on board had witnessed manifestations, so knew the phenomena, at least, to be real. At Cadiz, the well-known Spiritualist, Lord Lindsay, joined the ship on the homeward voyage, and he, as he always does, unreservedly and openly bore testimony to the truth of the facts, and thus he strengthened the hands of Mr. William Crookes and others, who had previously testified to the same effect. Lord Lindsay obtained some good photographs of the total phase, and had been more successful in his work with respect to the eclipse than anybody else on board the *Urgent*, he having been favoured with good weather while the sun was hidden by the moon. On the homeward voyage, Professor Tyndall made a series of experiments by which he has ascertained the cause of the different colours of the sea at different places; these colours are caused by the variations in quantity of small solid floating particles, held in suspension by sea-water. In a blue or indigo sea there is little suspended matter; in a green sea suspended particles are more plentiful. During the past two months a stronger interest in Spiritualism has been evinced in the scientific world at home, and not a few leading philosophers now desire to witness manifestations. How far they will be able to do so, while there are scarcely any professional mediums in London, and while the few celebrated non-professional mediums have so much pressure on their time, is another question. No doubt many new investigators will have to begin, as Mr. Crookes did, by going to see some of the good or indifferent manifestations easily accessible to the public, and those who thus show that they are earnest searchers after truth, no matter where it is to be found, are sure thereby to become acquainted with Spiritualists, and to get invitations to private circles. Mr. Crookes first began to investigate Spiritualism, under the impression that a little investigation would show that all its alleged supernatural phenomena could be traced to known natural causes. The result has been that he has certified the phenomena to be real, and he has done this both in print and on board the *Urgent*; we therefore regret that the mistaken article from *Human Nature*, hereafter censure upon him, was reprinted a few weeks ago in the *Banner of Light*, the chief paper of the American Spiritualists.

ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

ON Thursday, January 26th, a meeting of the St. John's Association of Spiritualists was held at the St. John's Temperance Hall, Corporation-row, Clerkenwell, London. The room was crowded to excess. The proceedings began with a tea-meeting, after which Mr. J. Burns was voted into the chair, and various speakers addressed the audience.

Mr. R. Pearce, the secretary, said that the Association was formed in May, 1869, and began with thirty members. Its object was to open spiritualistic meetings free to the public, and its work has been successful. The average number of persons present at the *séances* has been thirty or thirty-five; forty-four *séances*, six lectures, and two social tea-meetings, were held during the first year, at a total cost of about £20. Mr. Morse gave his first public address under spirit influence to the St. John's Association of Spiritualists. He (Mr. Pearce) very much wished to see working-men's discussions on Spiritualism in connection with the Association; he thought that such discussions would aid the cause, and benefit the speakers by cultivating the faculty of independent thought.

Mr. Steele said that the Association was formed in consequence of so many persons attending a *séance* one Sunday at his house, that he could not accommodate them, so he and Mr. Woolnough resolved to originate a society, and to open a hall for Spiritual meetings. He did not blame people for not believing in Spiritualism, without much investigation beforehand. When he first saw Mr. Davis, the trance-medium, under control, he thought that he was a most deceitful old man, speaking under the influence of chloroform (laughter). Mrs. Hicks then sang "The Maid of the Mill," in excellent style.

Mr. T. Shorter said that the St. John's Association was the oldest society of Spiritualists in London. Spiritualists are doing nothing for the education of the young, and although Mr. Gladstone's Educational Act was one of the noblest and best ever passed by the British Parliament, the work should be supplemented by energetic action among Spiritualists. Sunday-schools are dismal places for young children, and it takes many long years and some pain, to get rid of the false and narrow ideas there implanted (hear, hear). Schools are wanted which will delight the young, and where they will be taught no narrow creeds, but learn about the glory and the wisdom of the works of creation, and be taught to love God rather than to fear Him. Many disembodied spirits are low and undeveloped, because society has sent them into the next world in that state; we ought to send better beings into the spirit world, and the first step in the right direction would be to improve the education of the young.

Miss Nisbet, of Glasgow, then gave a recitation. Mr. J. J. Morse, medium, next tried in his normal state to make a speech, but broke down at the beginning. He then passed into the trance-state, when his guardian spirit spoke through his organism, and recommended the utmost toleration of freedom of thought among Spiritualists, who should not quarrel because they cannot think alike on all subjects. He said that in these eventful times many of the false institutions of the day are crumbling to the dust, and that soon nought but the memory of them will remain; in many places, where error now rears its head, there shall stand the bright-eyed daughters of truth. Men should be more kind and humble one to another, and the lack of this spirit causes some of the greatest sorrows of the present time.

Miss Wooderson then sang "Under the Willows she's Sleeping."

Mr. Steele, of 36, Great Sutton-street, Clerkenwell, said that he rose to speak a second time, to tell of a manifestation which might interest the meeting. Some time since Mr. Morse was at an evening *séance* at his house, and his (Mr. Steele's) little boy, said, "Look, father! Mr. Morse has two hands on one of his arms?" Eleven persons were present, and saw the additional hand, which was a small one, of wax-like delicacy, and melted away while they gazed upon it. On another occasion, in his house, one of Mr. Morse's feet, boot and all, was elongated about four inches more than the other.

Mr. Morse reminded Mr. Steele that on another occasion the spirits had made him put his hands into the coal-fire, and with his naked fingers break to pieces a glowing coal about as big as a wine-glass. Afterwards there was no sign of burning on his hands.

Mr. Steele: Yes, that is true, and twenty-two persons were in the room.

Mr. Young, librarian to the association, said that the library was free to all the members of the society.

Mr. Tunbridge said that the members of the society ought to work hard to circulate the Spiritual periodicals, for till Spiritualism came up, they none of them knew where they were going to after death, and the teachings of the preachers only put their brains in a muddle. They should, therefore, do all they could to make known the great truth of Spiritualism.

Mr. Stokes told of manifestations witnessed in his own family circle, such as the formation of spirit hands, and the rising of solid objects in the air, without contact with anything visible.

Miss Nisbet then sang a few verses, after which another communication was given through Mr. Morse. Mr. Bassett, Mr. Freeman, Mr. Ashman, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Towns also said a few words, after which the meeting broke up. It was a good meeting throughout, the only drawback being the bad ventilation of the room, which made its bad effects painfully felt towards the close of the proceedings.

A NEW MEDIUM.—About seven or eight months ago, Mr. Stokes and his family, of 29, Kingsdown-road, Upper Holloway, London, began to sit for Spiritual manifestations, and the result is that Miss Kate Stokes has begun to develop into a very remarkable medium. Tables often float in the air in her presence in the light, and in the darkness solid objects are carried about the room, rings are taken from the fingers of some of the sitters, and placed on those of others, small articles of dress are transferred from one to another, and other manifestations are produced. Last Sunday night, in a small room well filled with guests, a small four-legged table, at which some of those present sat, was turned bottom upwards in the dark, then floated high in the air over the heads of the sitters, and was afterwards placed on its legs in the only space at another part of the apartment where there was room for it to stand. Spirit hands were formed and allowed themselves to be felt by some of the strangers and others present; they were small and of velvety softness icy cold when they touched some persons, warm when they touched others. Spirit voices have begun to make themselves feebly audible at the circle, and Miss Kate Stokes was entranced for the first time a week ago. Last Sunday night Mr. Hayes, well known in connection with the St. John's Association of Spiritualists, was at Mr. Stokes's circle, and was entranced for the first time; he said that the sensations were very pleasant.

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When five or more insertions of the same advertisement are paid for, twenty per cent. reduction will be made in the above rates.
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To Correspondents.

All letters should be brief and to the point, as the amount of space available for correspondence is at present small.
Communications intended for the Editor should be by letter only, addressed to the care of the Publisher, Mr. E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, St. Paul's Church-yard, London, E.C. Until the Spiritual movement in England, together with this journal, have both grown considerably, time cannot be spared for personal interviews on subjects connected with the literary work of THE SPIRITUALIST, but all letters will meet with careful consideration.

THE SPIRITUALIST is a periodical intended to give great freedom of expression to all the different shades of opinion to be found among Spiritualists. There will therefore be very little uniformity in the ideas promulgated in this journal, more especially in the correspondence columns. Under these circumstances every reader will find occasionally something in THE SPIRITUALIST which he or she does not like, but the right of reply remains. This freedom of thought given to others, the Editor claims for himself, and those who do not like the contents of leading articles can write against them in the correspondence columns. This plan is thought better than that of reducing the contents of the journal to a pale weak mediocrity, by inserting only those contributions which please everybody. The preceding remarks are not intended to imply that those who have erotehets which they cannot get printed anywhere else, can find an outlet for them here, for none but those letters which are considered worth publication will be inserted.
Notices of Public Meetings in connection with Spiritualism should be sent to the office several days in advance.

To Subscribers.

The first eighteen numbers of THE SPIRITUALIST will be forwarded regularly by halppenny post to subscribers, who remit five shillings and threepence in payment to Mr. E. W. ALLEN, Publisher, Ave Maria-lane, St. Paul's-churchyard, E.C. No notice will be taken of orders received unaccompanied by a remittance.

When the day of issue chances to fall upon a Sunday, this journal will be printed on the preceding Saturday, and published on the following Monday.

"THE SPIRITUAL NEWS."

"THE SPIRITUAL NEWS" PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH, PRICE ONE PENNY, IS ISSUED IN CONNECTION WITH "THE SPIRITUALIST," PUBLISHED ON THE FIFTEENTH OF EVERY MONTH, PRICE THREEPENCE. THERE IS THEREFORE A FORTNIGHTLY SUPPLY OF NEWS, AT FOURPENCE PER MONTH. EIGHT COPIES OF EACH OF THE FIRST TWELVE NUMBERS OF "THE SPIRITUAL NEWS" WILL BE SENT FREE BY THE HALPPENNY POST TO THOSE WHO REMIT NINE SHILLINGS IN PAYMENT TO THE PUBLISHER, E. W. ALLEN, AVE MARIA LANE, LONDON, E.C.

The Spiritualist is registered for transmission abroad.

The Spiritualist.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1871.

THE NOMENCLATURE OF SPIRITUALISM.

WHEN one Spiritualistic lecturer may be heard telling an audience that currents of electricity are always passing up one side of the human body and down the other; when another lecturer may be heard stating that mediums are electro-negative individuals, whilst other people are electro-positive, as revealed by the electrometer; and when a third is heard to state that a silk dress should not be worn at spirit-circles, because silk is a non-conductor of electricity, it is high time to disseminate a little accurate knowledge on these subjects. The requisite information is given on another page, by Mr. Varley, an electrician of twenty-five years standing, and one who has done as much, if not more than any other man, to develop the electric telegraph. The wisest course of action under present circumstances is to abolish the words "electricity" and "magnetism" altogether in connection with Spiritual phenomena. Magnetism is the power which enables certain pieces of steel to attract iron, consequently when a Spiritualist says that strong "magnetic powers" are possessed by a particular individual, one expects to see the fender and fire-irons clinging to his feet, and the dinner knives making desperate rushes at him across the table. In future, whenever the aforesaid misused words are inserted in any communications received by this journal, we will alter the word "magnetism" to "psychological influence," and the word "magnetise" to "mesmerise." If any of our readers can suggest better terms than these, we shall be glad to publish a discussion on the subject.

MRS. E. HARDINGE has begun a series of Wednesday evening lectures at Lawson's Rooms, Gower-street, which should be well supported.

THE last number of The Spiritualist had such a large sale, in consequence of the long history it contained of "The Rise and Progress of Spiritualism in England," written by Mr. Benjamin Coleman, that we had to reset portions of it, and print off a second edition.

Poetry.

BABY GRACE.

THE following is extracted from a poem by Robert Williams Buchanan, originally published in the St. James's Magazine, a periodical which numbered many Spiritualists among its contributors:—

She had such old-fashioned and funny ways,
That we watched her pranks for days and days;
Now and then we laid her down,
Dressed in her little frilled cap and gown,
She would lie on her back in a mock repose,
Watching the flies
With her big blue eyes,
And thinking them fairies, perhaps—who knows?
Early at eve she would prattle and smile,
Fidgetting restfully all the while,
And leap in her mother's arms for a kiss,
And toss and tumble that way and this,
And slowly and quietly fall and rise
With her thumb in her mouth, and the dust in her eyes,
And flutter off in a doze, and then
Flutter up with a cry again,
In the midst of our freside talk, until
The little spirit would have its will,
And all would be beautiful, hushed and still,
Then it was prettiest far of all
To watch her asleep in her cradle small,
With one red hand crumpled under her head
And a red hand clenched outside the bed,
And her small lips parted in pearly dew
Like a flower that opens to let odour through!
And Wife and I were so foolish and young,
So free as yet of the world's rough weather,
That we sat and watched her, and held our tongue,
By the side of the bed, for hours together;
She and I were so young, so young,
(I was older than she by a single spring,)
And we wondered so much at the strange little thing,
So chubby, so rosy, so soft, so small,
Whom we hardly thought a baby at all;
And we felt so full of our joyful store
That the heart grew faint, and the eyes ran o'er,
That the little baby, our only pride,
By the mist of our tears was magnified,
And became a sunbeam to shine at the door,
And be a beacon to rich and poor!
Besides, you know,
We loved her so,
That we loved each other so much the more.

When Baby Grace had been born a year,
She clung round our necks as a scared bird clings,
But she never grew wiser in worldly things;
And do as we might, we could barely teach
Her lips to prattle our human speech;
And her face in its tenderness wore a shade,
Which seemed like a shadow the angels had made
To keep out the world with its want and sin,
And conceal the bright
Spiritual light
Consuming the roots of the life within.

Then Wife and I in dull amaze
Looked at each other with homeless gaze;
And we felt that the beautiful music we heard,
In the fluttering wings of our tiny bird,
Was a melody from the soundless sea
Of eternity.

Calling her back in an angel's name
To the wondrous silence from which she came,
Still so helpless and still so small
It seemed she would never grow big and tall.
(Just a mere baby perhaps, like the rest,
Yet more a baby when cherished the best.)
She would lie for hours without prattle or moan,
She would lie for hours alone, alone,
With her open mouth and her great blue eyes,
Looking so wise,
And deaf, quite deaf, to our sighs and tears!
And we knew of a sudden that vagrant gleams
From Heaven were coaxing her back in dreams,
And we knew that the music was in her ears.

Then Baby Grace
With her pale sweet face
Went away from our dwelling-place;
Like a tiny flower with the cold dew pearly,
Thin faded leaves o'er a wee heart furred,
And honey-sweets in the heart poured,
She went, and we
(Being young) could see
No light at all in the whole wide world.

Baby Grace was so dear, so dear,
So palpable to us, so helpless and small,
And she clung unto us so near, so near,
That we never thought we could lose her at all.
We were so foolish and young, that we
Deemed her a little one meant to be
The ornament of a mother's knee—
Made to cling to a mother's dress,
And never grow bigger and never grow less;
Made to cling in a yearning holy
To the roots of the heart and keep them lowly
So dear, so dear, that when Baby died,
And left a blank at the ingle-side,
We hid our faces from God and cried,
And could not be patient however we tried

Then Baby was wrapped in a little white dress,
And a little white cap was placed on her head,
And she looked so sweet in her holiness,
That we could not believe she was really dead,
But fancied her deep
In a baby sleep,
Ready, just ready, to go to bed!
And they took her away with her sweet wee face,
And a lamp went out in our dwelling-place,
And we sat in the darkness, father and mother,
Lorn and bereaven,
Weeping and clinging to one another,
Because our Baby had gone to Heaven.

Wife and I were so young, so young,
That closer and closer in tears we clung;
So careless quite of the world's cold scorn,
That we took the clothes that Baby had worn,
And laid them by in a secret place,
To mind us ever of Baby Grace;
And now and then, when our hearts grow sore,
And hard in a world of follies and crimes,
We look at the clothes our little one wore,
And they make us humbler a hundred times!
And 'tis something at least in a world so drear,
To know that an angel has once been here!
Though the light has gone from the snowy brow,
It is sweet to keep a token or two
Of our dear little Baby with eyes of blue—
For we feel so weary without her now.

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.—It will no doubt be gratifying intelligence to the Spiritualistic public of America, to learn that it is the intention of Mr. and Mrs. Britten to take up their permanent residence in this country. In a private note from this eminent lecturer and author, we are informed that the deepest interest is manifested in the Spiritual philosophy in London, and indeed throughout the whole country. She has spoken every Sunday to houses so crowded, that she was obliged to leave the Cavendish Rooms, where Bro. Peebles lectured, for more spacious quarters in the Cleveland Assembly Rooms; but even that large hall was insufficient for her audiences. She adds, "We have here in London many magnificent physical mediums and wonderful manifestations." This lady has done immense work in behalf of the cause, and has the blessings of all true Spiritualists on this side of the Atlantic.—Banner of Light.

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers.]

THE DIFFICULTIES OF INVESTIGATORS.

SIR,—In the month of May last I took the liberty of asking you a few questions concerning Spiritualism which you kindly answered for me. I am now induced to trouble you again. For some time I continued to read and think over the evidence brought forward in its favour, and without any personal experience could not but feel that the subject deserved honest investigation. I then attempted to interest a relative at a distance who seemed to me likely to possess medial powers, but who felt and expressed a very strong dislike and contempt for the "superstition," as I myself had done not long before. At last she consented to examine the evidence, and a short time back became sufficiently interested to sit alone for manifestations. Nothing worth mentioning occurred, but quite sufficient to induce her to continue. Soon she incidentally heard that a friend living in the neighbourhood had once joined a circle. She questioned her, and they agreed to sit together. I send you the result in her own words, and only adding two or three notes and queries:—

"It was about three o'clock in the afternoon when we placed our hands on the table. In a few minutes we felt those strange vibrations, then the electric shocks, faint at first, but gradually growing stronger. In a quarter of an hour there was a slight movement, then another, and another, and then the table moved so much that we had to rise. Presently we were walking round and round, soon running, and fast too. Then the table shook as it turned. This continued with intervals of quiet for about half an hour, when I said to Louisa, 'I am giddy; I wish it would turn the other way.' It immediately stopped, and then turned in the direction I mentioned; but as it shook very much, Louisa said: 'I wish it would go round quietly,' it went at once gently and without one shake. I then addressed the table. I asked it to shake—to go slowly—quickly—now this way—now that—and it always did as I wished at once. I asked it to lift up one of its legs, but this it could not or would not do. At last we were fairly tired, and sitting down we declared that we would move no more. We had considerable trouble to hold back the table, and more to make it understand that we wished to question it. In time it seemed to comprehend our wishes; and when answers were obtained more easily, I asked for the name, and repeated the alphabet over and over. These letters were shaken out,

O U R B G A L B D U

We could make nothing of them, and said so. The table grew unmanageable; we had to rise and let it spin round. Then came 'A F K N.' I said, 'Spirit, we cannot understand you: do try again.' I asked a number of questions, and found that it was my sister who wished to communicate. 'Try to spell your name right then,' I said, and it was given quite correctly. To test her, I asked some thirty questions; some relating to her last illness, and the time of her departure, and some relating to particulars known only to myself. I also asked her age, the time she had been in the spirit world, &c. Of all these questions only two were answered incorrectly. Her age at departure was nineteen, and she has been away eight years, making together twenty-seven. Twenty-six, instead of twenty-seven, was given as her age, and her birthday was wrong by one day. The former of these errors was, however, corrected by the two answers given to the two subsequent questions. Although my questions could only be answered by 'yes' or 'no,' I put them in such a way that my voice should not betray the right answer. As question after question was answered correctly, some instantly, some after a pause, some joyfully, I felt that I was in actual communication with my sister, and I longed to have another conversation speedily. I asked, 'Will you come again, soon?' 'Yes.' 'To-night?' 'No.' We sat again that night and she did not come.

"Once before Louisa and I had a seance together. Then, although we felt strong vibrations and electric shocks, the only results were a few tilts and shakes. Of course you expect me to say that I am completely convinced. I was for three days, then my old doubts returned. I sit often alone, and obtain tilts in any direction I wish; but I suspect myself of causing them, because I feel my hands so much drawn about. The theory of 'unconscious muscular action' haunts me, and I want to know how much it can do when connected with the will. The table seldom moves contrary to my will. I think taps would be so much more satisfactory; I ask for them again and again, but as yet no one decided tap has come.—A.T."

It is right to add that the second medium hardly knew my relative had lost a sister, certainly knew almost nothing about her.

1. Can you explain the galvanic shocks? On one occasion they were so violent as almost to cause convulsion, and my friend then sitting alone deemed it prudent—indeed, was obliged to break off the seance.

2. Can you account for the failure of the first and second attempts to spell out the name, and the success of the third after the medium had learned that her sister was trying to communicate? This needs further investigation.

Being too late for your issue of January 15, I continue my narrative in a more complete form for February—summarising the results of my friend's seances, as contained in her letter.—January 3rd. The two mediums sat together for the second time, and the movements were more powerful, the table literally walking about the room, and lifting two legs to avoid a chair. An attempt to obtain a message resulted only in the following, which strongly resembles the telegrams we used to receive from India—"A hope ebeg did if fead came ekaim." The most noteworthy circumstance attending it was that the table began spontaneously to signal "no" by one tilt, instead of remaining still as had been agreed on. The motions were somewhat different from those at the last seance, and led to the belief that the same power was not at work. The name was therefore asked for, and that of a sister of the other medium, C—H—, was given, who left this world 20 years ago at the age of two years only. A number of questions were asked and correctly answered. The replies to most, if not to all, being known at the time. In order completely to remove all possibility of deception, in spite of the perfect confidence she felt in the other medium, my friend chose favourable weather on January 9th for sitting alone. The name of her own sister, A. T., was again given, and a few questions so answered as to show one of two things, either an acquaintance with the family which only a sister would be likely to possess, or a power of reading off the medium's thoughts at the moment. To eliminate the last she asked—"Can you see me?" "Yes." "Can you let me see you?" "Yes." "Now?" "Yes." The table immediately moved quickly away across the room, avoiding obstacles, got itself on the hearth-rug, and stopped right under A's likeness which hangs on the wall. She says, "I could ask no more. I was confounded. I said good-bye, and left."

You will see that if the answers are to be of any service at the moment, they must be known to the medium so as not to need subsequent verification. Thus thought-reading can hardly be excluded in these circumstances. At the same time to be compelled to guard against such an event is really to yield the chief point of the Spiritual theory. The only alternative seems to me to lie in a resort to the hypothesis of the dual nature of the mind, and to suppose the disembodied part (if I may so call it), the unconscious half to be capable of acting objectively upon the conscious and embodied one. Even this, however, is only a partial defence, as a subsequent experiment will show. At the next seance, on January 10th, after a number of questions had been answered, the following occurred:—"Have you a message?" "No." "Not one word?" "Yes, Chuffey." Readers of Dickens will recognise the name of Anthony Chuzzlewit's old clerk which flashed into the medium's mind after the first two letters had been signalled, and led to the question—"Do you ever put your thoughts into my mind?" the reply to which was "Yes." "Then you heard me reading

Martin Chuzzlewit aloud last night?" "Yes." "Could you speak through me?" "No." "Could you use my hand to write?" "Yes." Holding the pencil in her left hand the medium sat and waited passively. In a few minutes three or four legible words were written, and her sister's name signed above and below.

On January 17, 1871, the two mediums sat together for the third time, and C—H— was again announced. The additional power seemed to render the signalling easier, and a communication really startling in its minuteness and earthliness was made. It consisted of a circumstance related by the communicating spirit to her sister, one of the mediums present, and alleged to have occurred to the mother of both, 17 years before, at a time when the former was only two years old, and three years after the latter had left this life.

Neither of them, therefore, could have the slightest knowledge of it, and my friend, the other medium, having but recently become acquainted with the family, was of course in equal ignorance. As may be expected, it is impossible, after the lapse of so many years at once to verify every part of the story without leading to the natural query, "How did you hear about it?" This we are anxious to avoid. So far as we have inquired, it has proved correct; indeed, it bears on its face such marks of accuracy that doubt is more difficult than belief. I would give it at length but for this want of full verification.

The following, which took place at the next *séance*, January 22, when my friend sat *alone* and in the dark, is not open to the same objection. Her sister announced herself, and after a variety of questions and answers the following colloquy took place. "Do you often see A?" naming another sister living some 400 miles away. "Yes." "Where is she now?" "At B—" "How many days since you saw her?" "Two." "What time?" "Friday evening, at 8 o'clock." "What was she doing?" "Practising." "Practising what?" "Mendelssohn." "What of Mendelssohn?" "Songs without Words." "Which book?" "First." "Which number?" "First." "Was she alone?" "Yes." A letter from B, in answer to enquiries, confirmed the truth of every part of this, except the number of the song, which the writer, not expecting to be questioned about it, had forgotten. She also stated that during the hour of practice, which was at a very unusual time of day for her, she had called to mind the beauty and delicacy of touch which characterized the playing of her departed sister, and had longed to possess the same. The medium adds that she should never have guessed the answer, for her sister left her "Lieder" at home. Thought-reading fails here to explain the occurrence. Clairvoyance (far sight) may do it, but would be as much beset with difficulties as the duality of mind. A second and more successful attempt at writing was also made at this *séance*. Our experience now assumes a slightly different phase, not less unimportant, but less uniformly in one direction. We were anxious to obtain the presence of a spirit intimately known to us both, and on whom, if once identified with absolute certainty, we should rely with perfect confidence. At a sitting on January 29th, the movements of the table were observed to be rather unusual, and in answer to a question, the desired name was given, and a number of answers obtained. Some of these were not of a nature to test the identity, and the answers to others were known to the medium. But a few were not so known, and they are of two kinds. From previous knowledge, the medium might guess the replies to some, and these were tolerably correct, but of the rest only two or three out of the whole were rightly answered. This was a complete puzzle.

On February 1st, by an appointment made at the previous *séance*, my friend sat alone. Again the movements were unlike those of her usual manifestations. Questions elicited the name of Frank Lymly Jones, who stated himself to be a Welshman, of Merionethshire, and to have left this life forty years ago, at the age of twelve months. His communications being trivial, and some of them apparently untrue, the sitting was not continued, though the movements were powerful. In order to apply a severe test of the identity in case the wish for name should be again given, I forwarded, at my friend's request, a list of questions, the answers to many of which she could neither know nor guess. After receiving the name at a *séance*, on February 2nd, she obtained replies, and has sent them to him. As in the previous instance, all she knew are rightly given, all she could guess are given as she might or did express, and all others are quite wrong. This is where we stand at present. "We falter where we firmly trod." As you may imagine it is baffling, and were it not for previous results of an opposite kind would be disheartening. But in a scientific investigation twenty failures do not invalidate a single success, though they must lead to a keener search for their cause.

Can you or any of your readers furnish me with hints toward the solution of the various difficulties I have mentioned? It is possible that the errors of the answers in the last *séance* may be owing to personation, in which case to give the reply, "I do not know," would lead to instant detection.

Were not your correspondence columns marked by a spirit of fair investigation, and a regard for truth alone, instead of being devoted to the advancement of a particular set of opinions, I should hesitate to send you a letter ending as does this. I give you my word for its truthfulness. For the sake of brevity and clearness, I have employed throughout the phraseology of Spiritualism. In the search for truth no objection can be raised against the adoption of an hypothesis, if care be taken to remember that, however probable, it is not yet proven. In this way the chemist avails himself with advantage of Dalton's Atomic Theory, and the Theory of Types, and the naturalist deals in like manner with Lamarck's Transmutation by Development, and with Darwin's Natural Selection. Hypothesis does not always lead directly to truth, but it often serves to show where truth is not.

I must apologise in conclusion for the length which this letter has reached.

B. A., B. Sc., London.

[As there are so few developed mediums in the whole of the United Kingdom, the experience of any one observer must of necessity be limited, so if those who can give information and advice on the points raised in the above communication, will send us some brief letters for publication, the accumulated experience will be interesting and useful. It is a common thing for mediums to receive satisfactory communications at first, and then for a time to get unreliable messages. Great care should be taken to surround a new medium with none but good influences, and people of doubtful character, who may be supposed to be surrounded by unpleasant spirits, should not be invited to sit with them at a spirit-circle, as their presence is almost sure to subject the sensitive for some days or even weeks, more or less to the influence of invisible beings whose close companionship is undesirable. A well-developed medium who uses the powers conferred upon him for good purposes, seems to be more protected from such influences. If A. T. continues her sittings, she will probably find that sometimes solid objects will move about in her presence without being touched by her or anybody else, and facts like these effectually quench the "unconscious muscular action" theory. Recently in Edinburgh some investigators obtained tilts, while the medium alone touched the table, and sat in a chair on the top of it.—Ed.]

DR. GULLY'S EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—In the number of your periodical for January, in the course of a report of Mr. Coleman's lecture on Spiritualism, the lecturer is made to say that "Dr. Gully and Dr. Wilson had previously been materialists;" that is, previous to Mr. Coleman's visit to Malvern with the Marshalls. As far as I am concerned this is not a correct statement. More than a year before Mr. Coleman came to this place I had been at *séances* and witnessed spirit phenomena; and I dare say that I had studied the Swedenborgian world of spirits several years before Mr. Coleman's attention had been called to it. At no time of life was I a believer in the self-action of matter; and I can recall no period of it in which I was not a believer in the near presence and influence of the spirits of the departed,—certainly, long before the subject of Spiritualism was brought forward,—so that I very soon understood and appreciated the facts which constituted that subject. And a wondrous quantity of pity and abuse has been bestowed on me for my spiritual belief! And a large pity do I in return feel for the ignorant donors!

Malvern, 3rd February, 1871.

J. M. GULLY.

TEST MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—The following may be interesting to some of your readers:—

On the 24th of December last, in the evening, at a circle consisting of Mr. Bird (medium, of 98, Lothian-road, North Brixton), my wife, and myself, on indications of spirit presence being given, we found, on enquiry, that one calling himself a relative of ours, who passed away a few years since, and often communicates with us, desired to say something. We were then informed by him that a cousin of mine was dying; and on asking in how many days we might expect the event (we knew he had been unwell for some months, but the medium did not) we were told—"Not days but hours," and the number of hours given would terminate in the next morning. In the course of a post or two we received a letter and card stating that W—G—, our cousin, departed this life on the morning of the 25th as predicted. The communicating spirit also said he would be with him as he passed into the spirit world.

A few days since a lady coming up from the country to spend a few days with us desired to sit with Mr. Bird for a test as to spirit identity, and on doing so her deceased husband's name was given, which was different from that by which the lady herself was known, as she had been again married, of which circumstance the medium knew nothing. On the number of years he had been in the spirit world being asked, he gave a number which was said to be incorrect by the lady; but the spirit was emphatic that he was right and she was wrong. After the *séance* was over, in order to convince us of the error made, the lady produced evidence which proved that she was in error and the spirit right. There was a difference of two years between them.

JOSEPH FREEMAN,

President of the Brixton Society of Spiritualists.

Jan. 27, 1871.

THE AUTHENTICITY OF RECORDS OF SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

SIR,—Pray allow me to say that I think your valuable monthly journal might be even more so if it were more open to the anonymous; which might be acknowledged as such, and still used if worthy and probable. Great and valuable truths may possibly sometimes come from sensitive persons who shrink from personal notoriety, or to whom, in a domestic or social point of view, the publication of their names, even at *séances*, would be fatal to their peace—ladies, especially. And there are some who dare not speak of personal manifestations to their dearest friends, and in that case might hesitate also to give their names to even the privacy of an editor. We may remember that a person who is sensitive on one point is sensitive on another, and it is the sensitives who are the best mediums, and often mediums in spite of themselves. Honour, however, to all those who have come forward openly and borne the finger of scorn without rejoicing at the notoriety! Some persons are, however, from constitution or position, or both, more able to publish themselves than others.

I have watched the phases of Spiritualism long enough, to find some who run open mouthed into the phenomena, believing every spirit and chronicling all their observations, draw back when they found that they had been unable to separate the dross from the gold, while others, who were diffident at first, have found the gold and gradually come forward to acknowledge it. It is remarkable that one man who used to go secretly to Jesus for fear of the Jews, and another who visited him by night for the same cause, were the only two men who stood by Him to the end, when all those who had openly professed Him from the beginning either forsook Him or denied Him when danger was at hand.

W. R. TOMLINSON.

[This letter contains some reasonable suggestions. Under very special circumstances we might occasionally publish some anonymous particulars about manifestations, on condition that permission be given us by the writers to furnish their names and addresses to private inquirers who ask for the same. Anonymous statements about such extraordinary phenomena as Spiritual manifestations have no weight with the general public. We cannot publish any letter without knowing the name and address of the writer.—Ed.]

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS.

SIR,—On the evening of Wednesday, December 7th, a few friends met by spirit direction to hold a *séance* at the house of Mr. Everitt, Pentonville. The company consisted of nine well-known Spiritualists, some of them eminent mediums.

Long before we arranged ourselves for the circle-raps were heard in and around the room, and the heavy telescopic dining table moved and tilted in answer to our many questions, that, too, without mortal contact.

As soon as we had taken our places our spirit friends gave out a portion of Scripture to be read, Rev. chap. 1st. to the 10th verse; one of the company then read and afterwards engaged in prayer, while the raps still continued to accompany the proceedings. The light was lowered and they indicated by raps that they wished us to talk, in order to get into a passive frame of mind. Scarce had the conversation begun, when a flap, flap, flapping sound was heard over our heads, and something appeared to descend from the roof and fall on the table near to a gentleman, and evidently intended for him. A light was immediately struck, and there, to the surprise of all, lay a book 16in. long by 13in. broad. Strange to say the subject of it was on the opening of the Seven Seals, and quite in harmony with the chapter previously read. I may here state that this book was presented to Mrs. Everitt six months ago by Mr. H. (the gentlemen to whom it fell on descending), who, when he gave the book, remarked that, as it had such a broad

margin he would like the spirits to give some direct writing in it some day. No more being thought of it, Mrs. Everitt put the book, four or five months ago, into a drawer in a room above, and it had never been removed therefrom till brought by the spirits into the closed room where we held the *séance*.

A lady seer present said she saw an Indian spirit on the vacant chair to the left of the medium; the chair was instantly drawn up to the table, then the spirit seemed to rise up higher and higher, till she could see his head go through the ceiling, as if to impress her how the book was brought from the room above, and to show that the roof, or whatever *we* term matter, was no obstruction to spirits. The chair began to move with great force, and pressed close up to an elderly lady near it; the seer then described another spirit in it whom she knew to be a son of the lady, and he was trying to caress his "Dear Mother."

After the book had been examined by several persons, and the fact ascertained that there was no writing on any of the broad margins of its few pages, the light was put out, and instantly we heard the leaves of the book turned over and the direct writing going on with great rapidity; the time was counted, five seconds—a light struck—and there on the margin of the book, on four different pages and exactly opposite each illustration (first of the white horse, then of the red horse, the black horse, and the pale horse) was written a communication on each severally, and in all seventy-four words.

Light was again extinguished, and again the direct spirit-writing as before. On a half-sheet of note paper, initialled by H. N., of Glasgow, was written an account of what the spirit-friends think of the nature and attributes of the Deity (a most excellent paper, which no doubt will be published at some future time), concluding with four lines in Latin verse, being 340 words in four seconds.

Again, our lady seer saw another Indian approach our circle. One of the company expressed his surprise that the Indian should seek to communicate so much with the white man. The medium gave in reply a short but most eloquent inspirational defence of the poor Red Indian, saying that the white man came, as a professed Christian, with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, to teach them in brotherly love and charity the love of God. With might on their side, they drove the Indian from his wife, his wigwam, and his native land, and even at the point of the sword drove him to death itself, so under the cloak of religion did the white man persecute his brother; but the great Almighty Spirit of all saw this evil and oppression. Now, the Indian, though the humblest in the Kingdom of Heaven, He hath chosen to be the messenger of love and blessing to the white man; thereby to heap coals of fire on his enemy's head. Once more the light was lowered, and we had the most delicious of perfumes wafted from time to time around us, then came the spirit-light in dazzling brightness. I may here state that I have had the pleasure of being present at several *séances* lately, where the lights were far from being the least interesting of the phenomena produced, but never have I witnessed them so beautifully bright and luminous, as at the *séance* of which I now speak. They appeared first as a radiant star, then gradually faded and expanded into a light spirit form or outline. In one a face was distinctly seen.

After a short interval we sat again, and the easy chair on the right of the medium was drawn up close to the table by an invisible power. In it sat our spirit-friend John Watt, and behind him was seen Benjamin Franklin with a long tube of light in his hand, and he seemed to be trying to connect the circle with a ring of light. During this time John Watt had lifted the tube from the table to the ceiling, then he spoke to one or another of the company in his usual kind, affable way, which makes the sound of his voice ever welcome to those who have once heard it. With many kind greetings to all he bade us "Good night." So ended a most memorable evening with our dear spirit friends.

Trongate, Glasgow.

MARION NISBET.

SPIRITUALISM AT HOME.

SIR,—On Friday evening, Jan. 6th, at my brother's house, we had a most delightful sitting with Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, who were spending a few hours with us.

With the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, the circle formed was exclusively confined to our own family—Mr. and Mrs. M. T., their three elder children, our brother, Mr. R. M. T., with his eldest little boy, and myself. It was as a great treat that the children were allowed to join our *séance* during the first part of the evening. They, like all children, show great signs of mediumship, but their parents are anxious to suppress rather than to encourage its development whilst they are so young. At the same time, seeing as they do the evident good result of the spirit communion between our little group in the spirit home, and their little brothers and sisters here, they feel it is a good gift from our lovingly heavenly Father, to be accepted gratefully and used cautiously, but above all prayerfully. We had no sooner taken our seats round the tea-table than raps were given. Some were loud and distinct; others softer, and like numbers of little fingers tapping, this being the signal of the presence of our little group. Then came most peculiar grating and rubbing noises (as though from the inside of the top of the table), resembling the sounds proceeding from a carpenter's shop.

Later in the evening this manifestation was given more completely; the sounds produced by every variety of tool used by a carpenter were imitated most accurately, and as soon as our desire for each imitation was expressed.

This form of manifestation purports to come from the spirit of one whom Mrs. Everitt knew intimately whilst on earth, and who was, I believe, the means of inducing her first to look into the subject of Spiritualism. He was a carpenter, and therefore chooses this singular way of proving his identity to his friends. I know well many sceptics will ask jeeringly of what use is such a manifestation? Surely anything that can so clearly prove the presence of an unseen intelligence, that can thus hear, enter into, and reply to, our conversation, must be of inestimable value.

As soon as the tea was removed, and the room prepared for the *séance* by the screening of the fire-light, &c., we sat round the table again. A few slight alterations in the position of two or three present was made at the request of our spirit friends, who made known their wishes by raps in reply to Mr. Everitt's questions. When we were all placed properly we were directed to two most suitable passages of Scripture, and M. T. was desired to offer prayer. A little lively singing followed, and then "lights out" was spelt through the raps.

Very soon a refreshingly cool, but soft and scented breeze was felt by all present. "Annie Blower," Mrs. Everitt's guardian spirit, always thus announces her presence. Not only was the dining-room in which we were all assembled completely permeated with the most delicious and varied perfumes, but also the adjoining drawing-room was filled

with them. Then came the most lovely spirit lights, and as the little ones joined heartily in singing Leslie's beautiful little song, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star" (which is an especial favourite with our spirit group), the bright little stars floated all over the room, waving gracefully in time to the music, then darting joyously to greet each one present, and thus, in every possible way, proving to us that they were the visible signs of the presence of our loved spirit group. At the request of the children, bright rocket-like lights rose from the centre of the table, and after darting up for some distance, fell in perfect imitation of a rocket.

I asked mama and papa to give me a "double star." Immediately a bright light (the size of a walnut) rose close up before me, and dividing itself, formed two complete stars.

M. T. asked for a signal light from our dear grandpapa (he occasionally writes messages through M.'s hand, and has been described accurately by John Watt, and always as standing with his hand on M.'s shoulder. Directly the request was made, a bright, joyous, and most characteristic sign was given.

In a very short time "John Watt" came, announcing his approval by the raps peculiar to himself, somewhat resembling the galloping of a horse. They seemed to us to begin in the far distance, and gradually to come near, until his presence was known by the sudden raising of the paper tube through which he speaks, and which was placed in the centre of the table ready for him. The two servants afterwards told me that just at this time, as they were occupied preparing the supper table in the drawing-room, they heard a peculiar noise as though it was out in the garden; it came gradually louder and nearer, and passing through the room on its way to our circle, shook the whole room with a strong vibration.

"John" usually comes in rather a sudden, startling manner, but this evening, on account of the children, whom he was most anxious not to frighten, he came very gently, and quietly raising the tube, rubbed it over my head and shoulders, then going to Mrs. Everitt, and to Mrs. T. (who was sitting opposite to me, Mrs. Everitt being between us) he did the same, "to gain power," as he said.

It is not possible to give any adequate idea of the delight that is borne in upon us all by the presence of this good spirit, who can in audible voice bring us news of our spirit home, and words of greeting from our loved ones!

R. M. T. remarked truly that there is an indefinable charm in his presence, that he evidently possesses the cultured mind of a true poet; that his "sweet gentleness," combined with his deep reverence for all high and holy knowledge, proves his sphere to be high and elevating.

Some days before our *séance*, as I was sitting alone and thinking over some matters in connexion with our Spiritual experiences, upon which I wished advice, I begged mama to come to me this evening and give John Watt a message, answering decidedly some questions I put to her then. I said, "Give me this as a test." This circumstance I had not named to anyone.

As soon as John had greeted us all, he turned to me, saying, "What do you want to say to me?" I said, "Will you ask mama for a message for us?" "What?" he said, quizzically—"you want a test!" Then, in a sweet earnest tone, he proceeded to give me a long and beautiful message from mama, answering in every particular all my questions. I was greatly delighted, and exclaimed, "This is indeed a delightful test? Is it not?" "Yes," he replied, "that is *one*. But she also desires me to say that she tried to make herself visible to you on Christmas-day, when she was standing by the Christmas tree." These words were delightfully corroborative of the truth of our experiences. On Christmas-day, in the dim twilight, I was sitting in the drawing-room with Teddy. Suddenly, looking towards the Christmas-tree, which was standing ready for the next day's family party, in the far corner of the room, he said, "I believe I see a spirit! Yes! I'm sure I do! It's a beautiful female figure, all in white, with *flouces* round the skirt. She is pouring something over the tree, and looking towards us." At this moment Ernest came running in, and before we had had time to speak a word, he too looked towards the tree and said, "I guess you see a spirit. I do. Such a beauty. She's throwing flowers over the tree." I said, "Teddy says there are *flouces* on the skirt." "I don't see *flouces*," he answered, "but I see rows of flowers." I now addressed the spirit—"Are you mama? If so, will you bow your head?" Immediately the children saw the spirit bow decidedly, and smile upon us. In the evening, by spirit writing, I was told that, "As the Christmas tree is the focus of your joy to-morrow, so it was that I, your loving mother, showed myself there to the two children."

The last few days the children have put a stocking at the foot of their bed "for the spirits to put something in." The first morning it was found tightly tied to the bed-post, nothing in it. One morning a cough lozenge was there, evidently removed from a box standing in the room. But two or three times they have seen grapes, or plums, on golden stalks. We asked "John Watt" the meaning of this. He replied, "They are symbolical fruits of wisdom and goodness." Ernest said, "Why may we not take them? When we try to touch them there is nothing?" John Watt replied, "It's to teach you not to be discouraged. When any good thing you think to grasp eludes your touch, try again."

Much interesting conversation passed, but all at once John said, "I must go now, its eight o'clock, and time for all children to go to bed," bidding us a kind good night. He then threw the tube at Franky's head (much to his delight), and left. When the candles were lighted, we found the clock on the point of striking eight.

As soon as supper was over, and the children were safely in bed, we resumed our *séance*. Six only were now present—Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, Mr. and Mrs. M. T., Mr. R. M. T., and myself. The raps and moving of the large table had been going on the whole evening, even whilst we were at supper. As soon as we put the lights out, again there came, in fresh power, the sweet perfumed breeze, and the bright spirit lights. Very shortly we heard a ticking or rustling among the paper, which was lying upon the table with a pencil; we had barely time to count "seven," when pencil and paper were thrown down; we lighted the candle and found a sheet full of closely and minutely, but clearly written direct spirit-writing!

It is a very beautiful message, much too long to be inserted here, but will shortly be offered to one of the Spiritual papers for publication.

Very shortly John Watt again joined us, and entered into a most interesting and impressive conversation. I much regret that we could none of us take down short-hand notes of what passed, for it is not possible to recall from memory such details.

Among other subjects we spoke of Christ. John told us that when on earth he (John Watt) had been a Unitarian, but very shortly after he reached the spirit-land, he was taught about Christ's Divinity. He told us that Christ is the One

"Visible God." The Father, or essence of Divinity, residing in the highest Celestial Sphere, as the Sun Centre of all, He is not seen in form. The human mind or spirit can but grasp the idea of "God" by the incarnation of Divinity in the person of Christ, His Son. The Holy Spirit is the pervading life of the universe. *En passant*, let me remark that this corroborates what I have been taught by my spirit guides, through the spirit-writing; and, also, that a few weeks ago, in a very beautiful message, purporting to come from "Edward Denny, the well-known author of 'Alpha' (and also a Unitarian while on earth), these words are used, 'The Fatherhood is universal, but it's a truth I did not grasp, that it ultimated fully in the Spirit of Christ His Son, &c.'" But I must not now enter further upon this subject, having already (and as usual) trespassed too far upon the valuable space of this journal. As John Watt wished us "Good-night," he observed, "Your papa and mamma have just come." As he said it two bright cloudy figures were seen by most of us present standing in one corner of the room. We had asked John to leave us at twenty-five minutes past 10 o'clock in order that Mr. and Mrs. Everitt might not lose the last train, as they unfortunately could not remain longer. When the lights came we found he was again punctual to the minute.

F. J. THEOBALD.

Hendon.

WAR.

SIR,—During the late war in Europe, I have closely watched its educational and Spiritual influence on the English people, and I am glad to see that the balance of feeling here is against our national interference with the low intrigues of Continental courts, and the butchery, which, sooner or later, results therefrom.

Many of our newspapers, acting in the interests of those influential people who want to keep up heavy army and navy expenses in order to find places for their relatives, have tried, without success, to involve us in war. The taunt is, that "John Bull is a shopkeeper," and cares nothing for honour or glory. Is there any honour in taking part in a prize-fight? If two blackguards fight in the street, would Mr. S. C. Hall, Mr. Wallace, or any leader of the Spiritual movement, gain any honour by taking sides with either combatant? Would England have gained any real honour, had she proved, as France and Prussia have just done, that they have progressed only half-way from savagery to civilisation, and that the religious teachings they have had for the last 1870 years have proved to be practically a dead failure?

Among Spiritualists are many hasty-brained men, exerting much influence in society, and I think that these should one and all try to weaken the hands of everybody who desires to mix this country up with the affairs of Continental nations. If any treaty now exists, by which we could possibly at a future time be embroiled in a Continental quarrel, let us do all we can to get such treaty cancelled at once by mutual agreement of the contracting parties. Will some member of Parliament move for a list of all clauses in all treaties which might possibly at a future time be the means of embroiling us in a Continental war? The return might also state what English ministry was party to the formation of each of the said clauses.

In spite of the beating of big drums, the blowing of trumpets, and the songs of triumph of a low-class press, I am not at all sure that thoughtful German and French soldiers, who go home fresh from the slaughter-house, with their hands bathed in human blood, will at heart believe they have gained so much honour as England has done, in looking after the wants of the sick, wounded, and starving belligerents.

Do not think I am wanting in the chivalric spirit; I like such characters as a certain Provost of Edinburgh—

A brave old man was he,
Of ancient name and knightly fame,
And chivalrous degree.
He ruled our city like a lord,
And brooked no equal here,
Yet ever for the townsmen's rights
Stood up 'gainst prince and peer.

It is this same chivalric and noble spirit which I wish to see exhibited in the moral world, and not in cut-throat work or in political intrigue. Many a man who will walk holdly up to the cannon's mouth, has not the moral courage to run counter to the social and political evils sanctioned and supported by society, which evils cause poverty, ignorance, and starvation among thousands, and make us a miserable, unhappy people. There is plenty of scope at home for those who wish to act with chivalric spirit.

February 10th, 1871.

X.

WHAT IS A SPIRIT?

SIR,—What is a spirit? is answered by the question, what is a man? The answer may take another phase, and be—A being possessed of life, of intellect to observe, to consider, and act with and up to the powers he is possessed of, both intellectual, ethereal, and physical.

Human-life is of itself an unseen force, possessed of form, and by assimilating to itself visible material substances, cruds itself, as it were, with and in those substances, which to us, are, bone, flesh, blood, hair, &c., and become visible as one body having many members or divisions called brain, legs, arms, &c., and it is susceptible to atmospheric changes. If by accident a leg is cut off, the life form, without the crustation, still exists and feels the power of the atmospheric changes. A slight change in the life essence, would, as in snow-flakes, change the crystalline form, and produce the wing or the fin, though the brain might remain the same, and thus engage in duties, man cannot, with his present form, attempt.

Science is perceiving that the real, the elementary forces of nature, are *invisible* to the eye, as invisible as the air we breathe; therefore it is no incredible fact that life, having by the involuntary nerves and powers used up the physical seen forces created by eating and drinking, should throw them off, and the body so thrown off be called dead, but the life still continue a living intelligence—an individualised, unseen force; amalgamating with itself the more refined elements of nature around, and which we may call soul, and in that condition *think on, act on*, possessed of memory, mind, and will—a so-called disembodied spirit, capable of producing, when he wills, the varied phenomena called spiritual; nay more, that while the spirit is in the flesh, it is creating from the elements which it has assimilated to itself, the ethereal substance and form it has to live in and use when it has to leave the flesh body. Let us, for want of a better symbol, refer to the caterpillar and butterfly.

Light can pass through glass, though air cannot. Electricity and magnetism can pass through walls and floors though light cannot: it therefore seems not an incredible thing, that a human being should exist, think, and act in the finer and more ethereal elements around us; possessed of brains to think, and a body to act; and in that condition produce effects as

wonderful as light, as electricity, as magnetism, as air; and also in that condition, either pass through glass or stone walls, depending entirely on the powers of the ethereal elements the human spirit has assimilated to itself. This range of evidence has been taken for the sake of atheists and deists who glibly assert that intelligent spirits cannot have an existence. Christians, Mahomedans, Brahmins, and others, acknowledge the existence of spirits, and of the great spirit, God. "God is a spirit." They acknowledge that around Him, and in his dominions are ethereal intelligent beings, thinking and acting as need arises. Therefore as light travels with speed, so may spirit; and as electricity can circle the world, a distance of twenty-four thousand miles, in less than a second of time, so may an individualised spirit.

That spirits exist, is a fact based, not only on past historical narratives, ecclesiastical and secular; but also on the knowledge of thousands of persons in domestic life, and in all grades of religious and irreligious society. Unfortunately, the "Reformation," in its effort to ahatc—to destroy the scandal of men selling Divine pardons at so much per sin, by means of Saint A, Saint B, and the mother of our Lord's brothers, proclaimed to the people God *alone* in action on earth for good, and taught this in our schools and colleges, the only other person in action being the devil.

That method abated the scandal, but unfortunately, in a generation or two, it shut out through the press and the pulpit, all knowledge in Protestant families of spiritual beings acting for, with and around us; and all spirits seen were put down to hallucination, to disordered stomachs; and the theological dilemmas produced by the assertions that God in person did all, does all, led to the rampant materialism which has prevailed.

Let our population know, that the Deity has His ethereal, intelligent agents in action around earth, acting mentally and physically in ethereal elements, under laws as rigidly binding on them, as we are bound in our semi-ethereal bodies of flesh; and at once many theological difficulties would be solved, special providences understood, ministering angels become a felt reality, heavenly or ethereal hosts a reality, ethereal music (chord and discord) a reality, spirit-power phenomena by and communion with good and evil spirits a reality. Our faith and hope, in being by-and-by an ethereal being become a certainty, and that we shall again see and embrace our loved ones, a certainty. Here in the flesh, "we see as through a glass (our eyes) darkly, but then face to face"—spirit to spirit.

JOHN JONES.

Enmore-park, Norwood Junction.

THE BRIXTON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.

ON Thursday evening, January 26th, a dark *séance* was held by the Brixton Society of Spiritualists, at their usual place of meeting, 98, Lothian-road, North Brixton; Mrs. Bassett, of Stratford, was the medium, and about twenty ladies and gentlemen were present.

Spirit voices and spirit hands are formed through Mrs. Bassett's mediumship. How Mr. Bassett first began to investigate Spiritualism was published in No. 9 of *The Spiritualist*. For a long time Mrs. Bassett would not believe that the manifestations were produced by spirits; but now that these powerful voices, heard by everybody, talk to her when light is absent, she says she is obliged to believe in the spiritual origin of the phenomena. At the Brixton *séance* the spirits who thus spoke, said that they did so by means of an artificial throat and lungs, formed from the emanations from the medium, and if those present could see the process of producing the voice manifestations, they would be much frightened at the scene. Somebody remarked, "But you would not like to frighten us?" The voice answered that they would not mind frightening the observers, but the conditions would not allow them to make the process visible. One of the spirits remarked that in a mixed company, where many of those assembled did not know each other, some would be apt to think that the voices were produced by one or more of the mortals present; the right thing, therefore, for investigators to do, was to form circles in their own homes, and to test Spiritual phenomena at their own firesides, under conditions where collusion is impossible.

Mrs. Bird is a seeing medium. She said she saw one of the spirits who spoke, and that the spirit was a lady—a deceased relative of Mr. T. A. Reed, the well-known shorthand writer of Chancery-lane. Mr. and Mrs. Bird, who knew the lady before she passed away, said that this particular voice, heard at the circle last Thursday, was the voice of the deceased, and all the persons present heard the voice.

This is the first interesting *séance* for physical manifestations which has been held by the Brixton Society, and in this instance the phenomena were considerably weakened, in consequence of the medium having partly exhausted her power, by previously sitting at a private circle on the same day.

THE HARLEY-STREET MEETINGS.—Last Monday week the last, for the present, of the Harley-street meetings in connection with Spiritualism was held at the Beethoven Rooms. Mr. Coleman informs us that the statement in the last *Spiritual News* that he had not been well supported by subscriptions to cover the expenses of the twelve meetings, was erroneous, but that he will now pause for a time, that those who desire to see the meetings continued through the rest of the winter, may write to him at 1, Bernard-villas, Upper Norwood, S.E., and send in their contributions. The Rev. F. R. Young recently read a paper at the Beethoven Rooms. Another was read by Dr. C. M. Davies, a minister of the Church of England, and the reputed author of the "Unorthodox London" letters in the *Daily Telegraph*; it was an honest straightforward paper, admitting that he had often witnessed the phenomena when none but members of his private family were present. He however questioned the personal identity of the spirits or intelligences who professed to communicate, but mentioned a few good proofs of identity he had had, amongst very many of an unsatisfactory nature. He also pointed out, that one of the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England recognises certain Spiritual phenomena. Mr. William White, author of *The Life of Swedenborg*, read a paper at the Beethoven Rooms on "Miracles," which he argued were not violations of natural law. Mrs. Hardinge delivered the closing lecture of the series, and her subject was "The Teachings of Spiritualism." She pointed out that all the spirits, whatever may be their religious opinions, agree in stating that their happiness or misery beyond the grave resulted from the deeds they did in life, and that the state of man is one of eternal progression.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters from correspondents in Dalston and Somers-town, are crowded out of this issue.

FACTS FOR NON-SPIRITUALISTS.

THE phenomena seen at spiritual circles are so extraordinary, and so unlike those coming within the ordinary range of human experience, that it is quite right not to accept them on the testimony of others.

EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

The testimony of reliable and respectable witnesses that the phenomena of Spiritualism are actual facts, and not imposture or delusion, has of late years so accumulated as to possess very great weight.

"I have been a student of electricity, chemistry, and natural philosophy for twenty-six years, and a telegraphic engineer by profession for twenty-one years, and I am the consulting electrician of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, and of the Electric and International Company.

"About eight years ago, I called on Mr. Home, the defendant in this suit, and stated that I had not yet witnessed any of the physical phenomena, but that I was a scientific man and wished to investigate them carefully.

"He immediately gave me every facility for the purpose, and desired me to satisfy myself in every possible way, and I have been with him on divers occasions when the phenomena have occurred. I have examined and tested them with him and with others, under conditions of my own choice, under a bright light, and have made the most jealous and searching scrutiny.

It also came out in the evidence given at the trial, that Mr. Home had been the invited and unpaid guest of the Emperor and the Empress of the French, the Emperor, Empress, and the late Empress Dowager of Russia, the Grand Duke Constantine, the King of Prussia, the late King of Bavaria, the late King of Wurtemberg, and the Queen of Holland.

"Cromwell F. Varley, Esq., Fleetwood-house, Beckenham Alfred H. Wallace, Esq., 9, St. Mark's-crescent, N.W.; Professor De Morgan, 91, Adelaide-road, N.W.; Captain Drayson, B.A., Woolwich; Dr. J. M. Gully, The Priory, Great Malvern; Dr. J. G. Wilkinson, 4, St. John's-wood-villas, N.W.; Dr. Dixon, 8, Great Ormond-street, W.C.; S. C. Hall, Esq., 15, Ashley-place, Victoria-street, S.W.; Newton Crosland, Esq.; William Howitt, Esq., The Orchard, Hare-green, Esher, Surrey; Robert Chambers, Esq., St. Andrew's, Edinburgh; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Kilmorey-house, Norwood; J. G. Crawford, Esq., 52, Gloucester-crescent, N.W.; W. M. Wilkison, Esq., Oakfield, Kilburn; Lord Adare, 5, Buckingham-gate; The Master of Lindsay, Grosvenor-square."

Mrs. De Morgan has written a book, entitled From Matter to Spirit (Longmans), where she gives many interesting particulars, the result of ten years' experience in Spiritualism.

"I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me."

Dr. Hooker, in his opening address, as President of the British Association at Norwich in 1868, spoke very highly of the scientific attainments of Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S. Mr. Wallace is an avowed Spiritualist. Professor Hare, of Philadelphia, the inventor of the Hare's Galvanic Battery, once refused to witness spiritual phenomena, alleging that Faraday's "unconscious muscular action" theory explained all the facts.

Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the Chemical News, is now investigating Spiritualism, and he has published an article in the Quarterly Journal of Science, stating that its phenomena are real, and not delusion or imposture, though he does not know as yet whether they are produced by disembodied spirits.

"20, Mornington-road, London, N.W. July 13th, 1870.

"DEAR MR. VARLEY, I was very pleased to receive your letter of the 9th inst., in which you discuss some points alluded to in my paper on "Spiritualism viewed by the Light of Modern Science."

"You have been working at the subject for more years than I have months, and knowing as you do, the enormous difficulties in the way of accurate investigation—difficulties for the most part interposed by Spiritualists

themselves—you will not be surprised to find that I only feel the ground firm under me for a very short distance along the road which you have travelled so far.

"I was deeply interested in reading of your experiments, the more so, as I have been working in a similar direction myself, but as yet with scarcely a tangible result.

"You notice that I admit freely and fully the physical phenomena. Let this openness be a guarantee that I shall not hesitate for a moment in recording with equal fearlessness for the consequences, whatever convictions my investigation leads me to—whether it points to a mere physical force, or makes me, as you predict, a convert to the spiritual hypothesis—but I must let my convictions come in my own way, and if I hold somewhat stubbornly to the laws of conservation of force and impenetrability of matter, it should not be considered as a crime on my part, but rather as a peculiarity in my scientific education.

"I have already had many letters, both from Spiritualists and from leading men of science, saying that they are glad I have taken up the subject, and urging me to continue the investigation. In fact I have been agreeably surprised to find encouragement from so many scientific men, as well as sympathy from the good friends I possess amongst the Spiritualists.—Believe me, my dear sir, very truly yours,

WILLIAM CROOKES."

A work entitled The Book of Nature, by C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S. (London, John Camden Hotten, 1870), has a preface by the late Lord Brougham, in which that eminent statesman says:—

"There is but one question I would ask the author, is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age?—No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce, are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties;—to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is Modern Spiritualism."

Signor G. Damiani, a Sicilian gentleman living at Clifton, has written a pamphlet, still in print, in which he severely censures Professor Tyndall, Mr. G. H. Lewes, and others like them, for refusing to investigate the subject. He further offers a reward of 1,000 guineas to any respectable, scientific or educated man, who will investigate the subject and prove it to be an imposture. The following are his words:—

"I now offer you two challenges.

"First, I challenge you, or either of you, or any of the public who, like you, disbelieve in the genuine character of spiritualistic phenomena, to deposit in the hands of any well-known London banker whom you or they may name, the sum of five hundred guineas; and I pledge myself to immediately deposit in the same bank a like amount,—the ownership of such sum of one thousand guineas to depend upon my proving by evidence sufficient to establish any fact in history or in a criminal or civil court of justice.

Secondly—That dead and inert matter does move without the aid of any mechanical or known chemical agency, and in defiance of all the admitted laws of gravitation.

Thirdly—That voices appertaining to no one in the flesh are heard to speak and hold rational converse with men.

"A jury of twenty-four gentlemen, twelve to be chosen by each party (such jury to consist exclusively of members of the learned professions and literary men), to decide whether or not the facts contained in the above propositions are conclusively proved per testes—i.e., by witnesses of established character. A majority of the twenty-four to decide. If the verdict be that these facts have not been established, the thousand guineas are to belong to the party accepting this challenge; if the verdict be that these facts are established, the thousand guineas to be mine.

"Secondly—Immediately after the above wager being decided, either way, I offer a like challenge of five hundred guineas (to be met on the other side in like manner as above)—the ownership of the second sum of one thousand guineas to depend upon the establishment of the facts contained in the propositions already given, by experiments conducted in the actual presence of the twenty-four gentlemen who have decided the previous wager; the verdict of the majority to decide in this case likewise.

"In either case, the sances are to be conducted in any public or private building which the jury may select, and which may be available for the purpose.

"The result of these challenges (if accepted and decided) to be advertised by the victorious party, at the expense of the defeated party, in all the London daily papers.

"I hope this is plain English. "Awaiting a reply to this letter, and to the challenge with which it concludes, I am, gentlemen; your obedient servant, G. DAMIANI.

"Clifton, Oct. 1, 1868. "P.S.—Letters addressed 'Sigr. Damiani, care of Manager of West of England and South Wales District Bank, Corn-street, Bristol,' will always reach the writer."

In addition to the above evidence, there is the testimony of numbers that the modern spiritual manifestations are realities. Mr. Hepworth Dixon in his New America estimates the number of Spiritualists in the United States at rather less than three millions, and this is about the lowest estimate that anybody has made. There are no accurate statistics, and different authorities vary in their estimates from three to eleven millions.

When reports of the speeches of spirits are printed in this Journal, non-Spiritualists should understand that spirits out of the body are wise or foolish, truthful or untruthful, just the same as spirits in the body. Moreover, they are but individuals, so do not know everything. The statements of a spirit are but the assertions of an individual; but by comparing the statements of many spirits, it may in time be possible to discover in what points they agree, and to sift out the unreliable communications. Many spirits cannot see each other, any more than we can see them, and as some of them are thus in different states of life, it does not follow that contradictory messages are therefore untruthful. Spirits are of different religions, consequently their teachings do not altogether agree; there is no more uniformity in the next world than in this one. It is the business of this journal to report facts, so we are in no way responsible for the religious, scientific, or any other teachings given by individual spirits.

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

An experimental trial at home, among family friends and relatives, often gives the most satisfactory evidence of the reality of spiritual phenomena. At the same time, as no fully developed medium is present among those who have never obtained manifestations before, the probability is that there will be no results. Nevertheless, it is a very common thing for striking manifestations to be obtained in this way at the first sitting of a family circle; perhaps for every one successful new circle thus started without a medium, there are six or seven failures, but no accurate statistics on this point have yet been collected.

When once manifestations have been obtained they will gradually increase in power and reliability at successive sittings. The following is a good plan of action:—

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle. Wet, damp, and foggy weather is bad for the production of physical phenomena.

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

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

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

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle is likely to attract a higher and more pleasing class of spirits.

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

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

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

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance. Information respecting the many kinds of mediumship will be found in Mrs. Professor De Morgan's book, From Matter to Spirit, published by Longmans; and this is a good book to read before trying to start a new circle.

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