

*Wm. J. Sawyer  
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# JESUS OF NAZARETH

AND

**Modern Scientific Investigation.**

**From the Spiritualist Standpoint.**

BY

**ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D., &c.**

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SECOND EDITION.

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. . . . . " Here, again, points are admirably made in 'JESUS OF NAZARETH,' and it would be well if that little book, with its scholarly tone, its breadth of treatment, and its psychic knowledge, was in the hands of every Biblical student."

From "The Vital Message,"

by SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE.

. . . . .  
"I read to my students every year from your illuminating address. It is most helpful."

PROFESSOR HARALDDUR NIELSSON,

Chair of Divinity,

University of Reykjavik,

Iceland.

## PREFACE.

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This address was delivered fifteen years ago, and by the desire of many friends it was reprinted from "LIGHT" as a pamphlet.

I had hoped to recast it and introduce it as a chapter in a prospective book—unfortunately long delayed—"The Problems of a Truth-Seeker," but owing to the exigencies of a professional life, I have been prevented from carrying out my intention.

This booklet having been out of print for some time, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has created an urgent demand for its re-issue by referring to the manner in which I have treated some of the reported phenomena in the life of Jesus, and shown their resemblance to many of the evidences of present-day Spiritualism.

The Two Worlds Publishing Company, Ltd., has kindly undertaken to reprint it for me.

A. WALLACE, M.D.

LONDON,  
October, 1919.



# JESUS OF NAZARETH AND MODERN SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION.

FROM THE SPIRITUALIST STANDPOINT.

BY ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D., &c.

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An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on the evening of Thursday, December 3rd, 1904—the President of the Alliance, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, in the chair.

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I have on several occasions been asked by our revered president to give an address to this Alliance, and as an ordinary member of it I have much appreciated the honour, but for several reasons I was hitherto obliged to decline. I have now accepted the invitation with considerable diffidence, for though I have had a fair amount of personal experience as an investigator of super-normal psychic phenomena in the years that I have devoted time and attention to the subject, yet as a student of psychology I am too conscious of my imperfect knowledge of the facts and laws of man's psychic mechanism, in its ordinary functioning, to attempt to instruct a society consisting of many whose experiences in Spiritualism, and in Occultism generally, have been more extensive than mine.

I have been bold enough, however, to try to look from the standpoint of the modern psychical investigator at this remarkable Personality, Jesus of Nazareth, and at some of the ultra-normal phenomena recorded in the New Testament, particularly in the synoptic Gospels, and said to have been manifested in the life of Jesus, who is, by the general consensus of the peoples of the western world, regarded as the most

divine expression of humanity in the history of our race.

A year or two ago, in the privacy of a small society composed of truth-seekers of various schools of thought, I ventured to discuss one or two aspects of this important subject, and several friends thanked me for the assistance that I had given them in understanding more clearly than before, the recorded history of the prophet of Nazareth. Encouraged by this knowledge, I have decided to take up this subject, as it seems to me opportune to do so, especially on account of the great stimulus given to the investigation of the whole subject of Christianity by a course of lectures delivered in the winter session of 1899-1900, in the University of Berlin, by Professor Adolf Harnack, since published in book form with the title of 'Das Wesen des Christentums,' and admirably translated into English by Mr. Bailey Saunders, under the title of 'What is Christianity?' This book, which shows much learning and great breadth of view, caused on its appearance considerable commotion both in Germany and in this country, and more recently in France, resulting in the publication of another remarkable work, 'L'Évangile et l'Église,' by Abbé Loisy, which is principally a criticism of Harnack's lectures. Abbé Loisy is one of the most accomplished leaders for greater freedom of thought and action amongst the Catholics of France, and has recently received the condemnation of the Pope for the enunciation of his advanced views.

Since the publication of these books and the appearance of that most instructive quarterly review of religion, theology, and philosophy, 'The Hibbert Journal,' which is so ably edited, all the aspects of Christianity are being re-considered both by clerical and lay investigators from broader standpoints. Quite recently too, in the columns of 'The Daily Telegraph,' the question 'Do we believe?' has been written about *ad nauseam*; few of the contributors it seems to me, having logically discussed the question. All this activity shows that, amid the indifference of the multi-

tude, there are many honest souls desirous of discovering larger and clearer views.

I have no doubt that the result will be 'Light! more light!', the removal of many existing misunderstandings, and at the same time an increase of unity of aim and action, without the uniformity of belief which some of our religious teachers and authorities have tried and are still trying to force upon us, and what is more deplorable, to force upon our children.

In approaching the study of this all-important subject from the spiritualistic standpoint, I am not unmindful that there exists a crude, imperfect, or mistaken idea amongst many people as to what this position really is. This is due usually to their ignorance of the present state of the subject and the history of its development, and sometimes, I regret to say, because of the appropriation of the designation Spiritualist by many who are as crass materialists as one can find anywhere. These pseudo-Spiritualists convey to outsiders quite an erroneous conception of what Spiritualism essentially is. A somewhat flagrant example of those who do harm to a noble cause is the following. Not long ago I was present at a public séance, conducted by one of our best mediumistic workers, and a sitter who apparently prided himself on being a Spiritualist showed that he was so in a very narrow and rudimentary sense, for he distinctly refused to listen to the description of a spirit-form given by the medium as manifesting near him, and unblushingly said that 'he had not come to get spirit identity, but to find out what the spirits had to say about how his shares in a certain gold mine would turn out during the next few weeks.' Thus he tried to prostitute the psychic powers of the sensitive, and to vulgarise spirit communion to the basest ends.

In proceeding with the investigation regarding the historical Jesus I have applied ordinary critical methods, as I do with the psychic phenomena of to-day, and in thus reviewing his history I do not wish in the slightest degree to minimise his character, or to interfere with

the religious sentiments of anyone. His highly evolved spiritual nature, with its psychical functioning, has made him the enigma of the intervening ages, and especially is he so at the present time to many worthy people in the orthodox churches, who accept without criticism what has been placed before them by their prejudiced teachers, and without trying to understand something of his advanced psychical evolution.

In examining his phenomenal life I shall endeavour to do so without bias, at least as much as a Scotsman can who has been reared in a controversial theological atmosphere. Before taking up in detail some of the prominent events in his life, I am obliged to discuss, however imperfectly, certain preliminary matters, in order to make my position intelligible and my thesis clear. It is necessary, however, to leave many of the literary and historical problems which one must face in a complete survey of the subject, and take for granted that the New Testament, and especially the synoptic Gospels, that is, those according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, form the basis of our knowledge of his earth-life. The fourth Gospel is by most scholars regarded as less historical.

Listen to what Harnack says regarding the sources of our knowledge :—

'Apart from some important information given by the Apostle Paul, our authorities for the message which Jesus Christ delivered are the first three Gospels. Everything that we know, independently of these Gospels, about Jesus' history and his teaching, may be easily put on a small sheet of paper, so little does it come to. In particular, the fourth Gospel, which does not emanate, or profess to emanate, from the Apostle John, cannot be taken as historical authority in the ordinary meaning of the word. The author of it acted with sovereign freedom, transposed events and put them in a new light, drew up the discourses himself, and illustrated great thoughts by imaginary situations. . . . It can hardly make any claim to be considered

an authority for Jesus' history; only little of what he says can be accepted, and that little with caution.' ('What is Christianity?' p. 20.)

And Loisy says :—

'Viewed as history, the point of view of the Gospel of John is incompatible with that of the other Gospels, and a choice has to be made.' ('The Gospel and the Church,' p. 31.)

Remember these are the statements of specialists, men who have devoted years to the study of the subject. We ordinary investigators are therefore perplexed with doubt as to the statements regarding the life of Jesus of Nazareth contained in the Gospels; whether or not these records are historical, and if so, how much they are tinctured by the introduction of legendary, mythical, or Oriental embellishments. We are told, however, by the churches that these records are 'inspired,' and that settles the question for them at least. Whether they be so or not, one naturally asks, if one be intellectually honest,—Who reported the events, and how long after their occurrence were they committed to writing? How much is merely oral tradition containing subsequent emendations, exaggerations, and amplifications?

We members of this Alliance understand the subject of inspiration from our experience of the various methods of inspirational production, either by written or spoken communications, through sensitives or mediums. We are, moreover, certain that all revelation purporting to be divine has ever come through human instrumentality. Most of you know that remarkable book produced in this way, 'The Principles of Nature, Her Divine Revelations, and a Voice to Mankind by and through Andrew Jackson Davis,' a volume of 786 pages. I regret to say that this book, or even its author, is little known in this country outside the ranks of the Spiritualists. It is a book of a most

startling character, being the production of a young

man, the son of a shoemaker who had only five months' school training. He worked with his father as an apprentice, and had little or no acquaintance with books, yet at the age of from nineteen to twenty-one years he showed a great sensitiveness, and easily passed into a clairvoyant state. For fourteen months, from November 28th, 1845, the date of his first inspirational lecture, to January 25th, 1847, he delivered one hundred and fifty-seven lectures. Each lecture was from half an hour to four hours' duration. These were taken down by a scribe, and the book as it now exists was published. One point of scientific interest, which even critics like Mr. Podmore admit, is that 'he anticipated the astronomers Adams and Leverrier in the discovery of the planet Neptune by six months,' and he foreshadowed the system of evolution so ably formulated by Darwin and Wallace.

We have had, and have, numerous inspirational or trance speakers, the late Emina Hardinge Britten, Mrs. Cora Richmond, of America; in London we have Mr. E. W. Wallis and Mrs. Wallis, Mr. J. J. Morse, W. J. Colville, and others whose utterances when in the trance condition attain a high level of excellence.

According to the records, Jesus of Nazareth believed in inspirational speaking, for in warning his disciples who were sensitives (Mark xiii. 27) he said: 'And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak, but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit.' In Matthew x. 20, it is written, 'The spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.'

Mr. Myers claimed that 'spirit control . . . is a normal step forward in the evolution of the race,' and he says: 'I claim that a spirit exists in man, and that it is healthy and desirable that this spirit should be thus capable of partial or temporary dissociation from the organism; itself then enjoying increased freedom and vision, and also thereby allowing some departed spirit

to make use of the partially vacated organism for the sake of communication with other spirits still incarnate on earth.' (S.P.R. 'Proceedings,' Vol. XVII.)

Inspirations are given by a second process known as automatic, involuntary, passive, or control writing, in which the sensitive or medium holds the pen or pencil, and the resulting communications are, as a rule, without conscious mentation. We all appreciate that most instructive and thought-inspiring book, 'Spirit Teachings,' produced in this way, through the mediumship of the late Mr. Stainton Moses, the former editor of 'LIGHT.'

There is a third supernormal means of obtaining communication from the invisible, that is psychography, or direct writing, which is produced without the use of the medium's physical hand. You remember the statement in Daniel v. 5: 'In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.' I have seen a partially materialised hand moving articles on a table, but I have not seen it write. I have met, however, many intelligent people who have witnessed the production of this kind of script, and in some instances they have told me that they saw a pencil writing in the ordinary position, as if held by an invisible hand. In that remarkable book, 'Spirit Workers in the Home Circle,' by Mr. Morell Theobald, you will find records of many such writings. Now, whatever be the source of the so-called inspirational communication, or method of its production, if 'holy men of God spake as they were moved of the Holy Spirit' (II. Peter i. 21), or if our present-day mediums are moved by some influence outside of themselves, the resulting messages always possess indications specific enough as a rule to determine through what instrumentality they come. We are not bound to accept as divine truth all communications given by an ancient or modern seer, because he chooses to ascribe to some

exalted personality what, perhaps, may have originated in his own deeper self, or from some discarnate intelligence external to his own; so that a 'Thus saith the Lord' prefaced to any communication does not necessarily guarantee its divine origin. Many such messages are scarcely worthy of ordinary human intelligence, and indeed may not be in accordance with fact. Therefore all so-called 'inspired' writings must be submitted to critical investigation, as is being done at the present day by 'higher criticism' in regard to the Gospels. Looking at the inspiration of the Gospels, as we intelligently can do, we place them on a truly scientific basis, though perhaps not in so exalted a position as ordinary orthodoxy demands. From these records, whether inspired or not—and this it is not my function to determine—various views of Jesus have been entertained. It is the controversies in relation to these different views that have caused the unfortunate sectarianism that has been, and is to-day, destroying the effect of the real spiritual insight and the religion of Jesus Christ, whose life shines out in all its sublimity from the pages of the New Testament, even through the mists of legend and mythology.

I trust, before this generation passes away, we shall have, instead of the many sectarian churches with their mediæval theology, free temples of religion and worship, in which creeds are subordinated to spiritual vitality, with manifestations of those 'spiritual gifts' described by Paul, which, alas! are not apparent in our Churches to-day.

First, Jesus has been regarded as a 'God,' or 'God of very God' (at least the creed of the orthodox Churches make this statement), or one person of a 'Godhead,' whatever that term denotes or connotes. I, as a truth-seeker, object to the use of terms professing to be explanatory, which are themselves indefinable, or even unimaginable. Canon Gore—now Bishop of Worcester—in his book 'The Creed of the Christian'—and he, I presume, is to be regarded as one of the best

authorities in the Church of England—does not help us when he says that 'the disciples came to believe in his Godhead through their experience of his manhood,' and further, 'This Jesus of Nazareth was the Eternal Son of God, Himself Very God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.' He continues: 'It seems to some people hard of belief. But we must never forget that this Son or Word of God who was made man in Jesus Christ, was, and is, also present in all his creation and in all his creatures' (p. 36). Here it seems to me the Bishop of Worcester mixes up the individual Jesus of Nazareth, who lived his life on earth, like other highly-gifted psychics, and was a *persona* or aspect of the divine essence, with the doctrine of the Logos, which is set forth in the Gospel according to John, with other metaphysical speculations connected with the Great Gnostic movement, which was occupying the world of thought in the second century. The term trinity, as applied to a theological dogma, was never used till the time of Tertullian, after 150 A.D., and it was perhaps about this time when the inversion of 'the Son of God' was made into 'God, the Son'—a view that did not exist in the apostolic times.

The differences in theological views have always arisen, it seems to me, from an attempt to define the indefinable, and from the use of terms which have not been accurately defined, as to their meaning, or the underlying conception has not been accepted by common consent. If precise terms be employed, or the exact meaning of them be agreed upon, much difficulty would be removed from the pathway of those who are earnestly seeking after truth. When, for instance, we use the term, 'God,' I apprehend the absolute is meant, or, according to Spencer, that 'Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed.'

Nowhere in the synoptic Gospels, so far as I know, did Jesus affirm that he was God, or was equal with God. He truthfully could say, 'The Father is greater than I,' thus recognising his filial relationship to the Supreme

'Over-Soul.' He also, with good reason, could proclaim his oneness with the Cosmic or God-Consciousness: 'I and the Father are one'—a state of spiritual allegiance, characteristic of all the great Souls of the race.

Secondly, he has been regarded as the high-water mark of humanity—that is, man at his best. I should like to read an extract from Mr. Stopford Brooke, who may be taken as representing the higher grade of Unitarianism. In 'Jesus and Modern Thought' he says:—

'Of the two doctrines, one of which maintains that Jesus Christ is God, and the other that he was a man like ourselves, we hold here the latter. The first predicates the miraculous. It is not according to reason that the absolute God and a man who lived and died as we live and die, should form one person, and when we hear it, we say, "If this be true, it is unique in experience; it never occurred before in man's history. It is not likely to occur again." This is indeed the very thing that the orthodox declare. This traverses, they say, all experience, and it was needful for our salvation that it should do this. Man is naturally sinful, the Redeemer must be sinless; he must be different in kind from man. Jesus could not then come into the world as other men come, or leave it as other men do. At the points of his birth and his resurrection he is not as we are. Being himself miraculous, all that belongs to him is miraculous. Nevertheless, we are also told by the churches that "His human nature was at one with ours, and that he was at all points tempted as we are." This preservation of ordinary humanity alongside of complete Divinity seems a greater miracle even than the Incarnation, and the attempt to explain how this could be, has employed and strained the subtlest intelligences for many centuries. "Vanity of vanities" we cry, as we read the infinite labour wasted on this question. Faith, brought to the rescue, may accept the doctrine, but the moment reason takes the hand of faith and both look at

it, it seems as if we caught no sight of a real thing. "He was not then," we say, "really at one with us all. His personality must differ radically from ours. The temptations he suffered seem fictitious, if he could not sin; if there were no struggle of the will against wrong—and there could not be if he were God—he cannot have been truly like a man."'

Thirdly, by some thinkers to-day Jesus of Nazareth is regarded as a myth. Thus a most distinguished rationalist, Mr. John M. Robertson, in his book, 'Christianity and Mythology,' p. 303, says:—

'There are data, both miraculous and non-miraculous, in the Christian Gospels, held by Christians to be historical, and held even by some naturalists to be either historical, or at least accretions round the life and doctrine of a remarkable religious teacher and creed-founder, which are really mere adaptations from myths of much greater antiquity; and accordingly the alleged or inferred personality of the Founder is under suspicion of being as mythical as that of the demigods of older lore.'

And further he avers that—

'When every salient item in the legend of the Gospel Jesus turns out to be more or less clearly mythical, the matter of doctrine equally so with the matter of action, there is simply nothing left that can entitle anyone to a belief in any tangible personality behind the name.'

It is not my function to criticise this view, were I qualified to do so. I may say, however, that I believe it is impossible that a fictitious character, embodying all the salient and essential features of the physical and psychic history of Jesus, could be created by the writers of the time, and, therefore, I am convinced that there must have existed an original, possessing extraordinary or ultra-normal powers. When the records of these powers are investigated, as you Spiritualists can do, according to the methods and knowledge of to-day, it

is not difficult to realise the existence of such a magnificent and unusual personality. No doubt in the post-apostolic time, the man Jesus merged into the mythical Jesus Christ, and most of the dates and symbols of solar myth were incorporated with the history of the individual; and many of these continue to this day, for example, the anniversary of the birth of Jesus is celebrated on the 25th of December, connected with the winter solstice, as were the birthdays of the Egyptian saviours, Osiris and Horus, and the Persian god Mithra, and many others.

It is rather difficult to gather from the writings of prominent Theosophists what is the exact view held regarding Jesus of Nazareth. It seems a kind of substitution of personality—the man Jesus giving up his pure body to a ‘mighty indwelling presence.’ They claim that interesting information regarding him has been obtained by clairvoyant retrocognition, especially with reference to the period of his life between the twelfth and thirtieth year; but I must refer you to Mrs. Annie Besant’s extraordinary book, ‘Esoteric Christianity,’ and Mr. Leadbeater’s work on ‘The Christian Creed,’ for first-hand information.

In regard to so-called miracles—the crucial problem—there are two texts of the New Testament which might be taken as forming the basis of the Spiritualist position: one from the discourse of the apostle Peter (Acts ii. 22), ‘Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty powers and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves also know’: and the reported statement of Jesus (John xiv. 12)—‘He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father.’

These texts, I think, warrant me in proceeding by critical methods to take up the functionings of Jesus, which are popularly termed miracles. The word miracle is a very misleading term when loosely used,

and its meaning not thoroughly understood. It simply means a wonderful thing, and does not imply a violation of natural law, as is usually assumed. There has never been a miracle in that sense, but an unusual event may be and often is, as I believe, an instance of a law not yet generally recognised. It is well to remember that a law is a generalisation from observed phenomena, and may be defined as a theoretical principle deduced from observation and experience.

Twenty years ago two books were written from the Churchman's point of view, which influenced my mind in regard to the question of miracles. These were the Boyle Lectures of 1884, delivered by Professor George Herbert Curteis, called 'The Scientific Obstacles to Christian Belief,' and the Bampton Lectures of 1884, by the late Archbishop Temple, 'The Relations between Religion and Science.' These two books showed great breadth of view, and contained many noble thoughts, which have, however, been amplified and transcended by my spiritualistic investigations. Thus, in reference to miracle, Professor Curteis said: 'We may (and we must) conceive that it, too, is but the fragmentary arc of some vast curve, whose "law" may not be known to us, but is certainly known to God,' and further, in referring to investigations, he says: 'As men of sense and modesty, we begin at once to conform our ways of thinking to the new environment amid which we find ourselves, and to readjust our too narrow theories to the newly ascertained facts.'

I wish leaders of religious and philosophic thought to-day would readjust their 'narrow theories' and attempt to find out for themselves by reading and personal investigation the facts of Modern Spiritualism. But this attitude is rare. If they did, we would have fewer prejudiced criticisms and one-sided conclusions, derived, too manifestly, from secondhand and perverted evidence.

I was astonished to observe the attitude of a well-known liberal-minded teacher in Oxford, and a writer

in the 'Hibbert Journal,' Professor Percy Gardiner, who, in his Jowett Lectures, delivered two or three years ago, in the Passmore Edwards Settlement in London, said, in discussing the subject of miracle: 'It is held by some that the experiments of Modern Spiritualism have tended to obliterate the line of distinction between the natural and the miraculous in this visible world—have shown that spiritual force may act directly on matter. And persons of sound judgment have thought that these experiments may compel us to reverse our views as to the miracles of early Christianity.' So far so good; but he adds: 'I do not like to speak of the phenomena of Spiritualism, because there is much difference of opinion in regard to them, and in any case they are mingled with much absurdity and much imposture.'

I found in that somewhat advanced religious paper, 'The Christian Commonwealth,' a few weeks ago, a lengthy report of a lecture delivered on October 2nd last by the Rev. Principal Fairbairn, D.D., of Mansfield College, Oxford, on 'The Miracles of Christ.' Principal Fairbairn is a very distinguished fellow-countryman of mine, and I naturally expected to find some enlightenment from such an authority. I was sadly disappointed while reading six and a-half columns, to find that the extraordinary occurrences in the life of Jesus were scarcely touched upon. He adroitly turned away from these and said, 'I intend now to assume that Jesus was himself a miracle.' He stated that 'Jesus never did for himself any great miracle.' 'He had too consciously within him the orderly elements of Nature'—whatever that may mean. He continues, 'All his miracles were for men, and only for men.' The Principal seems not to be aware that this is the prevailing characteristic of sensitives to-day. They usually get wonderful things for other people, but little or nothing, as a rule, through their own unusual powers, for themselves.

Principal Fairbairn is not unique in his ignorance of

present-day psychic investigation and its results, for in the same copy of that paper, the much-talked-of Rev. R. J. Campbell, while showing, in regard to previsions, that he is in advance of the ordinary clergyman, is certainly unacquainted with our modern psychical research methods on scientific lines.

These prominent men, and such as these, are representatives of a large class of non-investigating, more or less prejudiced people in all grades of life, who are ignorant of what has been observed. Instead of reading, without prejudice, the records of careful investigators, as Sir William Crookes, Dr. A. Russell Wallace, Dr. Richard Hodgson and others, and then investigating for themselves, they criticise the spiritualistic position without personal knowledge, or they simply ignore it.

In criticising the statement that Jesus was himself a miracle, it is necessary to look at the story of his birth, and the belief which has for so long existed, that he was different in origin from other children of the race—that he was born of a Virgin Mother, but without an earthly Father.

Now this is a point which requires critical investigation from the scientific standpoint, because, be it remembered, we are not dealing with a matter of faith, but with statements as to a family or tribal history. Before giving any heed to a supernormal parthenogenetic or virgin generation, I, as one trained in the methods of Science, must first look at the report embodying the only natural process at present known in the human species.

In reading the first chapter of Matthew, and remembering that the special object of the treatise bearing that apostle's name was to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the expected Messiah, I find it opening with an elaborate genealogy of Jesus, tracing him from David and Abraham.

Matthew i. 1, says: 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ,' and verse 16 says: 'and Jacob begat

Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus.'

Mr. F. C. Conybeare, M.A., in the first part of 'The Hibbert Journal,' October, 1902, discusses this 16th verse, and also writes a special article in 'The Daily Chronicle' of 22nd June last, in which he says, referring to the Virgin birth:—

'The only chapter of the New Testament which attests this miracle is Matthew i. But here the effect of the last seven verses is marred by the recent discovery of the original form of verse 16, which is this, "Jacob begat Joseph, and Joseph begat Jesus."'

For my present purpose it may be one or other reading. It certainly is the genealogy of Joseph, but according to the verses 18 and 25, if these contain a record of real events, he was in no sense whatever the father of Jesus, the child of Mary, for, according to verse 18, 'Before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost,'—(ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου) out of, or of, pure spirit.

I hold that this Incarnation story and the genealogical record are distinctly at variance, and those who support this miraculous birth story are on the horns of a dilemma. I ask, as a truth-seeker, how can any Biblical scholar, in the Church or outside of it, with any show of reason pretend even to see a semblance of agreement? If he be not the son of Joseph, as the newly-discovered reading shows, then the whole tale is absolutely absurd in proving his descent from David and Abraham. Some say, 'Oh, it is not really Joseph's at all, for according to the Jewish law a woman betrothed to a man becomes of his family, and her genealogy is legally his, therefore, it is Mary's.' But we have to compare the genealogy given in Luke iii. 23: 'And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the Son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli.' In Matthew observe that the father of Joseph was named Jacob. Joseph could not have two fathers, Jacob and Heli.

May this genealogy in Luke be Mary's? If so, then Jesus had two grandfathers, and this fact removes any intellectual difficulty. Here I must point out that in Matthew, the Son of David through whom the descent is traced, is Solomon, whereas in Luke the Son of David is Nathan, therefore there are two distinct lines from David.

In studying comparative religions and mythology, stories of virgin mothers are not uncommon, and these are all discarded by the Churches as historically untrue, save the isolated instance of Mary. It is well, I think, to bear in mind the admission of the paternity of her son which Mary made, as recorded in Luke ii. 48—'Thy father and I sought thee sorrowing.' And what is to be said of the contemporary belief recorded in Matthew xiii. 55?—'Is not this the carpenter's son?' There is also the apparently honest statement in Luke ii. 41—'And his parents went every year to Jerusalem,' and also in the thirty-third verse, 'And his father and his mother were marvelling at the things which were spoken concerning him.' I may here note that in the Authorised Version the translators, being so imbued with the Virgin birth theory, substituted the name Joseph for 'his father,' which occurs in the Greek, but it is given correctly in the Revised Version of 1881.

I have found in my investigation of sensitives that there is often a history of supernormal power occurring in successive generations. The parents of Jesus, according to the records, had psychic experiences; thus in Matthew i. 20—'Behold a messenger (*ἄγγελος*) of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream,' and in Luke i. 32, Mary has a psychic manifestation—a messenger named Gabriel appears to her and she hears the direct voice. I am bound to point out that the sequel was not quite in accord with the terms of the message, verse 32—'And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.'

The so-called miracles of Jesus have formed a stumbling-block to the acceptance by many people of

the high moral, ethical, and spiritual doctrines which he taught and exemplified in his life, because of the incredibility of the statements in the Gospels, and because unfortunately, they have been so mixed up with the conception that they constitute proofs of a deified personality. Their investigation has, therefore, on the one hand, been avoided by scientific students, who regard them as mere legendary accounts, unworthy of critical attention, and on the other hand, so-called religious persons have regarded them as of 'supernatural' value, to be accepted by faith alone, and not by intellectual assent.

We are now living in an age of true science, and any phenomenon having been manifested on the physical plane, and a belief founded thereon, must be able to stand the strain of criticism. I hold, therefore, that we are justified in submitting the records to exact scrutiny. We shall find that the spiritualistic facts of to-day indicate an identity, or similarity to those ultra-normal phenomena in the life of Jesus. This seems to some people a blasphemous assertion, for it is often observed that mediumistic powers manifesting to-day have no necessarily intimate connection with ethical or spiritual pre-eminence. We find, however, that in cases where those unusual gifts exist, if the higher phases of character be cultivated, the resulting manifestations are more reliable and of a more exalted order.

The large proportion of the miracles of Jesus consist of healing. In the Oxford 'Helps to the Study of the Bible,' you will find the miracles classified, and out of thirty-six there are twenty-three records of healing. The injunctions which were given by Jesus to his twelve disciples (Matthew x. 8), after telling them to preach, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand,' included 'Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.' Those to-day who claim to be the successors of these primitive disciples do not attempt to carry out these commands. We have plenty of preaching, but no manifesting in the churches, of the gifts of

healing by the same spirit mentioned by Paul (I. Corinthians xii. 9). The Christian Scientists have done much to draw attention to the existence of psychic healing.

I do not intend to go over those twenty-three recorded healings, because to attempt an analysis and discussion of them scientifically would require more definite records than we possess, but to anyone who takes the trouble to find out the many remarkable records of healing effected at the present time by 'Christian Science,' 'psycho-therapeutics,' 'spiritual healing,' 'mental healing,' 'faith healing,' 'hypnotism,' 'suggestion,—conscious and sub-conscious,' 'absent treatment,' 'vito-magnetic healing,' 'animal magnetism,' 'mesmerism,' 'vril,' &c., it is useless to deny that some such results may have happened, although one cannot scientifically explain them without knowing all the details. I admit that orthodox medicine may too rigidly adhere to the mere physical aspect of disease and its materialistic treatment, but I rejoice to know that there are many to-day in that noble profession who are sufficiently eclectic not to limit their means of doing good to the old methods, but recognise that the true man is the invisible divine essence manifesting through a physical organism, and while doing the best they know of for that organism, do not despise Nature's finer forces.

I know that there exists in many individuals a personal something, call it 'magnetism' or what you like. I am sure we have all experienced a certain feeling, not easily described, in the presence of an impressive personality. I know in certain cases the 'laying on of hands,' personal contact, or the making of passes over afflicted persons, relieves pain, and I have seen certain cases in which physical changes have been effected, and results brought about equalling some of those recorded in the early Christian documents. I may say, that I have had some notable instances of the diagnosis of obscure diseases by clairvoyant and

psychometric investigation, in many cases confirming diagnoses made by ordinary methods, and in some superseding our normal means.

A necessary condition for successful psychic healing in most of the records, was what is called faith. It is the Greek word *πίστις* which, with an individual as the object, means trust, and comes from the verb *πείθομαι*, to be prevailed upon, won over, or persuaded, thus indicating a sympathetic *rapproch* between the healer and the patient. The results of Jesus the healer were interfered with by this want of faith, for in Matthew xiii. 58 it is said: 'He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief,' thus showing that he demanded the existence of good psychic conditions to bring about therapeutic effects.

The word demon (Greek *δαίμων*), often employed in the Gospels, does not necessarily mean a devil or evil spirit, but is a term used in the literature of the time to indicate the spirit of a dead man, or departed soul, e.g., departed or gone away from the physical body, or the real man stripped of his corporeal envelope. Those described as obsessing or controlling individuals were no doubt undeveloped spirits. As a matter of experience to-day we find among sensitives, that there is a larger proportion of less highly evolved entities, who are the controls or 'familiar spirits,' giving more or less fantastic names, than highly exalted spirits. Sometimes we have, however, spirits of a high order as communicators, and in my experience I have found that these more developed spirits sometimes require to employ the less evolved as mediums, when sending messages from the other side of life, especially if a considerable interval of time has passed since quitting earth-life. You will often find expressions of disappointment among many who begin to investigate, and are henceforth repelled, because of the apparent triviality of the communications. Thus the late Professor Huxley said: 'Supposing the phenomena to be genuine they do not interest me. If anybody would

endow me with the faculty of listening to the chatter of old women and curates in the nearest cathedral town I should decline the privilege, having better things to do, and if the folk in the spiritual world do not talk more wisely and sensibly than their friends report them to do, I put them in the same category.'

As more sinners than saints have passed the portals of death, and the less evolved apparently linger near the borderland, as I know from my investigations in haunted houses, one is not astonished to find evil, malicious entities controlling, or attempting to control sensitives. I have on more than one occasion found it necessary to 'cast out,' or prevent an evil influence taking possession of a medium, and the more sensitive and less positive the medium, the greater is the liability for a spirit influence of a low order to enter: and it is well to remember that often undeveloped entities are in groups; see Matthew xii. 45, 'Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there'; and Mark v. 9, 'What is thy name? And he said unto him, My name is Legion: for we are many.' This is one of the dangers of spiritualistic practices, and is a serious risk that those ignorant of the laws of spirit control run in developing mediumship. What is called the temptation in the wilderness, related of Jesus in Matthew iv. 1-11, Mark i. 12-13, and Luke iv. 1-14, is a very difficult subject to the ordinary readers of the records. Some time ago a medium of my acquaintance had a peculiar experience, which gave me a clue to the understanding, in some measure, of the story of the temptation. This sensitive was about to devote more time, at the instigation of the ordinary guides, to psychic development, especially for the spread of the higher teachings of Spiritualism, and had manifested great powers of prevision when good conditions existed. At a particular crisis in life a strange influence assumed temporary control, and desired to utilise the powers in a lower direction, promising that much money could be made

by betting on horse-racing, and to demonstrate the prevision powers, gave the winners of every race, prior to the event, during that week; but that same higher impulse which could say 'Get thee hence, Satan,' was paramount, and rather than prostitute psychic gifts to mere material ends, the power was bravely devoted to the spread of the higher aspects of spiritual philosophy, in circumstances in which greater material comfort would have made ordinary life more easy.

Retrocognitions and previsions were given by Jesus, and in one instance at least he showed, according to the record in John iv. 16, the same liability to error as is often observed with present-day sensitives. It is the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus said to her 'Go, call thy husband and come hither.' 'The woman answered and said unto him, I have no husband.' Here, in his retrocognising, he got on the wrong line at first, and this apparent defect in his clairvoyance is quite on a par with what occurs with our mediums now. She sets him right, and he then goes back over her life's history. This can be done by sensitives at the present day, and had I time I could relate many an interesting experience of this variety of clairvoyance. His prediction, Luke xxii. 21, that one of his disciples would betray him was fulfilled, but the statement in the same chapter, verse 30, 'Ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,' has not become history. He foresaw his denial by Peter, the circumstances of his death, burial, and rising out of death.

Previsions, or the acquisition of knowledge regarding events which have not yet happened, are to me very puzzling, and I have had many, through various mediums, of quite a personal nature and some of public interest.

What could Jesus mean by the conversation with his disciples recorded in Matthew xvii. 20: 'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this

mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.' I know by observation and experiment, under test conditions, that ponderable matter can be transported by psychic power, having had several instances of articles conveyed from one room to another in my own house, the doors being shut, and that in good light with several electric lamps turned on; and different articles conveyed over half a mile on two occasions. These are technically called *apports*. Perhaps the multiplication of the loaves and fishes may have been an example of this form of manifestation.

Many of the extraordinary things done by Jesus are done to-day by our psychics. In Matthew xiv. 25 we find an account of Jesus walking at night on the water. This is allied to cases of levitation and transport recorded of several well-known mediums in this generation. The disciples thought that it was an apparition or phantasm, the Greek word being *φάντασμα*, not *πνευμα*.

Jesus in his psychic manifestations experienced opposition and misrepresentation, just as mediums do to-day, and the 'mighty works' performed by him were attributed by the critics of his time to diabolic agency, just as the wiseacres of the present do, who are ignorant of psychic laws, but being obliged to admit 'there is something in it,' that something they assert must be 'the devil.'

I have only time left to refer to the transfiguration and the re-appearance of Jesus after his bodily dissolution, commonly called the 'Resurrection.'

In Matthew xvii. I. Mark ix. 2-9, and Luke ix. 28-36, you will find the records of the transfiguration. The 'unco' guid' opponents of Spiritualism aver that Jesus gave no countenance to such unholy proceedings as spiritualistic séances, but when you ask these bigoted people to read the Gospel records of this wonderful transfiguring and materialising séance, or what is better, read these to them and ask questions, you will

as a rule, soon discover that they had hitherto read these without understanding. Jesus selected Peter, James and John, who no doubt possessed psychic powers, for it is these same three who accompany him, and constitute the members of that remarkable séance at which the resuscitation of Jairus' daughter takes place. Being natural psychics, or developed by contact with that great and highly evolved personality Jesus, they are found to harmonise satisfactorily—one of the most important conditions to-day for success in any psychic investigation. They go up into a high mountain in order to have good physical conditions, with absence of turmoil, and freedom from interruption. Then there is the transfiguring of the face of the principal sensitive, and the shining white garments so common in our séances to-day. Two materialised forms of individuals, long before passed away—Elijah and Moses—are manifested. It is said 'they were talking with Jesus.' When conditions are at their best in our present-day materialising séances, we sometimes have the forms visible and speaking at the same time. I have been present under such conditions.

'Let us make three tabernacles,' say the disciples, 'one for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elias.' The usual clerical explanation of this is simply puerile, but one gets a clear conception of this statement by substituting the word hut or booth, which is placed in the margin. The Greek word is *σκηνος*, a hut or booth—the present-day word is cabinet—and I understand that the best results are obtained when there is a cabinet for the medium, and another for the materialised form or forms, so that the materialising substance and power are concentrated. There is the cloud which is the accompaniment of nearly all cases of materialisation. There is the direct voice, 'This is my beloved Son.' The ordinary Churchman takes this to be the 'Voice of God,' without thinking what that assertion involves. This is often the familiar way that spirit guides speak of their instrument. In Luke there is a prediction

indicated—' they speak of his departure or passing away which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.' I have had predictions given at such a séance; indeed the very fact that I am on this platform addressing an audience of sympathetic Spiritualists was indicated to me some years ago, at that time to me as unlikely a thing, as if some sensitive told me to-night, that in a few years I would deliver an address to a meeting of occultists in India.

It is interesting to observe that Peter and they that were with him were ' heavy with sleep.' I have sat in séance with individuals, possessing psychic powers, who were often very drowsy or slightly under control, while the principal sensitive was in a deep trance. Notice carefully Mark ix. 9: ' He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, save when the Son of man should have risen out of death.' Such warning as this is just as necessary to-day in order to save the psychic and his associates from the ridicule of the ignorant.

The knowledge we have to-day of the powers of invisibles to materialise or make themselves visible and tangible, under proper conditions, has given us a solution of what is called the ' supreme miracle,'—that series of phenomena, the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus. In Archbishop Temple's book, to which I have referred, he says: ' It is quite possible that Our Lord's resurrection may be found hereafter to be no miracle at all in the scientific sense.' This statement, taken alone, is noteworthy; but he proceeds to expound it with the materialistic conception in his mind of a general corporeal physical rising at the ' last day,' expected by orthodox believers, forgetting apparently Paul's teaching, that there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body (I. Cor. xv. 44), and that ' flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' It is strange to note the absurdities that are inseparable from the doctrine of a material resuscitation, and when these advocates recognise their absurd position, they

at once betake themselves to that haven of bigotry and superstition, that 'all things are possible with God,' unconscious, wilfully or otherwise, that the workings of the Eternal have ever been manifested according to law, and that it is man's duty to investigate these laws, and bring himself into conformity thereto.

Read at your leisure the various records of the post-mortem appearance of Jesus, and the only explanation of these, in my view, is the spiritualistic one. The descriptions given of these—including Paul's (who, by the way, is the only first-hand witness of the appearance of Jesus), and his non-recognition at times, indicate that it was his spiritual entity which was clothed with a temporary materialised body.

It is said that Jesus appeared in different forms to different individuals (Mark xvi. 12). Such polymorphic appearances are found to-day, and are apparently due to the peculiar environment from which the material is obtained to make manifest to sense perception, the spiritual body in a physical sheath or mask. I have witnessed on several occasions, indications of imperfect and multiform materialisings. To those who have not had experience of this phase of manifestation, Madame d'Espérance's book, 'Shadowland,' and her pamphlet on 'Materialisations,' are strongly recommended.

I should like to have read the report of that wonderful series of materialisation phenomena through the mediumship of our good friend, Mr. George Spriggs, which took place in Cardiff in 1877, and under somewhat similar conditions in Australia in 1882. The Cardiff sésances were reported in the 'Medium and Daybreak' of June 15th, 1877, and there you will find the record of the appearance of the spirit-wife of one of the circle, and a statement of facts almost parallel to those of the Gospel records of Jesus. (Vide Appendix, p. 35.)

These remarkable phenomena are, in my opinion, the best corroborative evidence of the story of the

*ἀνάστασις* of Jesus. This term, translated resurrection, does not imply resuscitation of the dead body, but simply a rising out of death. The record of the empty tomb may or may not be a historical fact, but to me personally that is no difficulty, as I have witnessed, under test conditions, the passing of matter through matter, and in daylight I have had experience of the disappearance of matter by psychic means. If a living body were transported from Highgate to Lamb's Conduit-street, as was my friend Mrs. Guppy Volckman, then it is quite easy to suppose a dead body might be so removed.

Luke represents Jesus as saying 'a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye behold me having.' Yet in a short time he vanished out of their sight, just as I have seen a materialised form de-materialise which a few minutes before was quite substantial. In the Cardiff séances on one occasion the form walked thirty-five feet from the cabinet, and then slowly de-materialised in front of the cabinet.

The relations of spirit and body are certainly altogether mysterious, but we are hoping much from the present-day investigation of radio-activity, and the relation of matter and energy.

Time fails me to do justice to this most fascinating subject. I should like to say that since investigating Spiritualism I have better understood many of the difficulties in that library of Spiritualism and Occultism—the Bible, and as one who likes to do his own thinking, I have more fully appreciated the high ethical, moral, and spiritual instruction of that great Divine Teacher, being able to go back in imagination to Palestine, and form a more or less consistent conception of his wonderful life.

I cannot close without referring to those interesting 'Fragments' of my friend Frederic W. H. Myers, just given to the world. In his struggle for light he says: 'I found . . . the small sect of Spiritualists at that time

almost the only seekers or transmitters of knowledge from a field far wider than they knew.' He continues : ' My history has been that of a soul struggling into the conviction of its own existence, postponing all else to the one question whether life and love survive the tomb.'

I shall never forget the joy manifested by him, when once in my company, we were privileged to see in the crystal the image of the face of a dear friend of his, who had many years before passed behind the veil. He remarked : ' Wallace, I have been waiting for over twenty years for this conviction.'

His final position he regarded 'as a scientific development of the attitude and teaching of Christ,' whom he looked upon 'as the incomparable Pioneer of all wisdom that shall be learnt concerning unseen things.'

Just a word in conclusion to you active workers in the spiritualistic movement. You ought always to remember that :—

' The truth shall ever come uppermost,  
And justice shall be done.'

Some of you, no doubt, think that such a desirable consummation is long in coming. But let me remind you that the greatest psychic, Jesus of Nazareth, the highest Initiate of the Divine Mysteries, whose history I have to-night tried to elucidate, closed his earthly career in seeming failure and disappointment; but to-day, as perhaps never before, his noble example is the one great stimulus to higher ideals of life and duty.

You Spiritualists are in possession of a truth which you are bravely disseminating, in spite of the jeers and ridicule of the vulgar, and even of those in intellectual high places; in spite of the opposition of sectarian prejudice, and the misrepresentation of the ignorant and the superstitious; and in the face of clerical self-sufficiency and undoubted obscurantism, so manifest in the pious platitudes one hears from a large proportion

of the occupants of the pulpits in our land at the present day.

You are undeterred, too, by the malignant attacks of newspapers and magazines, whose editors, with little or no regard for the promulgation of truth, close their columns to the insertion of any opinions but their own narrow and perverted views of the subject. They advocate open-mindedness and charity, only when these ideas accord with their monetary interests. If they deign to take any notice of you at all, it is only, as a rule, in contorted and grotesque reports of your meetings, produced apparently by some budding journalist, ignorant of the very elements of psychic philosophy.

Great progress, however, is being made, and all interested in the spread of psychic knowledge ought so to act as to present a united front to outside opposition. I hope some day to see, instead of the many small societies at present existing, a great alliance of all psychic students, be they Theosophists, Psychical Researchers, Spiritualists, Occultists, or called by any other name. If every member would adopt the exact methods of the physical science of to-day, and apply these to the great problems on that mysterious borderland of matter and spirit, as has been done by such large-minded investigators as Fred. W. H. Myers, Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace, Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Barrett and others, still greater results might be expected.

Thus employing modern scientific precision in observing and recording the phenomena of the different phases of manifestation, combined with some degree of that spirituality which overflowed in Jesus the Christ, each member of a great spiritual society may—nay, will—become a harbinger of light and truth to many a weary soul, dissatisfied with the ordinary orthodox presentation of only a blessed hope regarding their loved ones who have passed beyond the veil.

He will be 1500  
 and was not aware of our American Movement

Evidence will be substituted for faith, conviction for hope, drear uncertainty will be dispelled by personal communion; and when that day arrives every true spiritual worker will realise in some measure the joyful feeling expressed by the poet :—

‘ The drying up a single tear has more  
Of honest fame than shedding seas of gore.’

## APPENDIX.

## MATERIALIZATION PHENOMENA.

(From 'The Medium and Daybreak,' June 15th, 1877).

To the Editor.

SIR,—The wave of materialisation phenomena which seems just now to be passing over the spiritualistic world has not left this locality untouched. Since Christmas last our private circle (for the purpose of whose meetings Mr. Lewis has kindly set apart a room at his residence, Montgomery-terrace, Roath) has patiently sat two evenings in every week for the development of these phenomena. I need not trouble you with the details of its gradual progress. You are familiar with the 'day of small things' in these matters, the first few faint raps, then the appearance of the tiny luminous cloud moving and shifting to and fro, the growth of this cloud in size and distinctness as the power gets stronger, its gradually assuming more definite shape, and finally, after a number of persevering sittings, the debut from the cabinet of the fully materialised form, arrayed in gracefully flowing garments of dazzling whiteness. One of the best possible proofs of the genuineness of spiritualistic phenomena is the watching their growth from an almost imperceptible beginning to the extraordinary and substantial developments which they afterwards attain.

Our circle is no promiscuous one. There is no pecuniary element in our meetings, but simply the honest and divinely inspired desire for truth and spiritual knowledge. It is not even instituted for scientific investigation and experiment (though I have every sympathy with circles honestly erected on this basis). Every sitting is emphatically a religious service of the most sacred kind. We do not, therefore, indulge in anything in the shape of ordinary tests, but we have instead, as proofs of the reality of the phenomena, first, their gradual growth and extension week after week under our very eyes, and second (best test of all), the tried integrity and known incapability of deceit of the friend to whose mediumship we are indebted for our opportunities of observation, and the proved good faith of his controls during the past eighteen months. At the same time our experience (which tallies with that of many others who have sat under the same conditions) is that the controlling intelligences have, voluntarily and unsolicited, favoured us with tests of genuineness and spirit identity of a more conclusive nature than any we could have ourselves devised.

We have had the medium in view at the same time with the

spirit form : we have had direct writing in various styles done by the form while in the middle of the circle : we have seen two forms at once ; in the one case those of an Indian maiden holding by her side a little child, and in the other case, those of a tall male figure bearing a child in his arms : the black hand of a little Ludian girl has been frequently protruded from the cabinet, and used in such a way as to prove its complete flexibility : the substantiality of the forms has been proved to us by touch, by their handling material objects in our sight in the most decided way, stopping and setting on the musical box, advancing to the centre of the circle and stamping with the foot, exhibiting the hands, bare feet, and knee, breathing on the hands of the sitters, sitting in the chair at the table and writing, and sitting at the organ, pressing down the bellows, and causing the notes to speak. One of our spirit friends, the father of one of the sitters, is accustomed, after establishing the fact of his temporary materiality by pressing heavily on the heads of the sitters and striking their hands, to dematerialise in our sight, the head sinking gradually until within about a foot of the floor, where it remains until dissipated into a white, fleecy cloud, which slowly drifts back into the cabinet. This dematerialisation is a proof that there is no transfiguration of the medium of the kind 'M.A.' (Oxon) has recently written about. We have also had the direct voice to a small extent, single words—uttered with great difficulty—having been heard and understood on several occasions. The robes in which these forms appear are a marvel in themselves, being of a brilliant whiteness, without a single crease, and some of them containing at the lowest estimate from fifteen to twenty yards of material. 'Snowdrop,' whose forte is the materialisation of shawls, has given us many curious illustrations of her art. These shawls are materialised sometimes in our view outside the cabinet, and at other times inside, and then brought out, where they grow larger or diminish in our sight. They are sometimes of a thick, heavy texture, as we have ascertained by touch : at other times they are very large and of a gauzy, semi-transparent appearance : at other times like lace of the most intricate pattern.

These phenomena, occurring as a rule in a good light, have from time to time been witnessed and can be testified to by about twenty-five different persons, men and women of intelligence and uprightness, whose good faith, integrity and ability to observe and judge for themselves it would be ridiculous to call in question ; some of them at first sceptical, but now happily numbered among the faithful.

What will our orthodox friends, who are bound to believe that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, not to mention twenty-five, shall every word be established, say to this?

Up to the present time more than a dozen distinct individu

alties have manifested themselves, sometimes seven or eight in one evening, of both sexes, of all ages, from the little child to the aged adult, and exhibiting different physical peculiarities and marked mental distinctions. Some of them have given tests of identity of the most convincing kind, and among them are included relatives and friends of the sitters, and fellow townsmen recently deceased. As before intimated, our séances are actual religious services. Every effort is made to impress the sitters with a consciousness of the solemnity of the occasion, so as to induce a properly receptive frame of mind. The consequence is that our evenings are harmonious, and therefore pleasant and successful in the extreme. We believe in a policy of discriminating exclusiveness. No doubt there is a necessity in the present stage of the movement for public and paid circles. Those who are fitted for this branch of work will take it up. But there is also a necessity for strictly private and select circles, where the conditions shall be rigidly kept by a number of persons who meet time after time, without addition to their number, in order that phenomena which it is impossible to develop in more promiscuous circles may be cultivated, and the results given to the world through the press by credible persons. This stimulates other circles, by showing what can be done, and it is in these circles that development of new and more advanced phenomena takes place. Having this policy in view, we are careful as to the introduction of strangers. Only one at a time is admitted, who must not only be a friend of one of the members, but known to be a person fitted to enjoy and profit by the privilege. Mere sightseers, curiosity-mongers, bigoted sectarians, and people with unfavourable 'dominant ideas,' we have no sympathy with, and such individuals might as well expect to grasp the moon as to enter the sacred precincts of our 'Temple of Light.' We know the men and women who suit us, and whom we deem worthy to have the privilege conferred upon them—those who are thirsting for spiritual enlightenment, and are not afraid to face the truth and acknowledge it. It is no doubt to this exclusiveness, which keeps the conditions at a superior elevation, that we owe the advanced phenomena we obtain. When anything special is attempted, we are obliged to shut out visitors entirely.

On the evening of Sunday, the 3rd inst., our circle assembled under specially stringent conditions, which, with a view to completeness, I may as well mention, viz.:—Abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and animal food throughout the day—an easy matter for us, since we all, more or less, completely abjure these things—absolute fasting after the mid-day meal, and the indulgence in a bath, a very practical sort of baptism, and no doubt similar to the origin, with the same special purpose in view, of that now empty and misunderstood ceremony prior to

entering the circle-room. This preparation was in order to ensure the purity of the magnetic emanations from the circle.

The occasion was a solemn one, being no other than a leave-taking between the members of the circle and one—the beloved spirit-wife of one of the sitters, who passed from this earthly sphere some twelve months since—who has taken a prominent part in these materialisation séances, and who was about to enter a higher sphere.

After the opening of the meeting by the reading of an invocation and the singing of a hymn, we waited patiently until at length there issued from the cabinet and stood in our midst the fully materialised form of our spirit-friend, clad in robes of such snowy and dazzling whiteness as forcibly to remind us of the 'shining garments' of those other glorified spirits who, eighteen hundred years ago, stood within the sepulchre. Taking from the table a bouquet of flowers, she presented them, in turn, to some of the sitters to inhale their fragrance, an offering symbolical of many bright and beautiful spiritual truths. Then, as we stood up to receive her, she took from the table a platter containing food in the shape of a few biscuits, and herself handed them round to those present one by one. Retiring a little distance she took up a small piece of cake and 'did eat before us.' We then sat down, and she came round handing us pieces of cake. Our spirit-friend then several times traversed to and fro the entire length of the room, and, to prove her substantiality, opened and shut the room door. After this she advanced again to the table, and, taking therefrom a tumbler containing milk, she again passed round the room, handing the tumbler to each in succession for the purpose of taking a sip of the contents; in doing this she had several times to return to the cabinet to regain fresh power, but eventually succeeded in favouring all the sitters in this way, she herself, in each case, handing and receiving back the tumbler. Finally, she retired and stood a few feet from the curtains, and, raising the tumbler to her lips, was clearly observed to drink a portion of the remaining contents; the sound of drinking was quite audible, and the gentleman to whom the tumbler had last been handed, having noticed on his returning it that it was half full, stated that its contents had palpably diminished since our spirit-friend applied it to her lips.

The solemn feast being over, our friend retired into the cabinet, and from thence rapped out a message that she would try and walk downstairs. It was found that at the moment there was more light in the hall than the temporarily materialised form could withstand safely; she, however, took the arm of Mr. Lewis, walked across the room, passed with him through the open door, up a few steps just outside, and across the upper landing as far as the door of a room opposite,

and then returned. The distance between the cabinet and the point thus reached having been measured is found to be about thirty-five feet. This extraordinary effort was repeated. The fanlight in the hall having now been darkened, our friend again took the arm of Mr. Lewis, and proceeded with him downstairs as far as the hall door (which we could hear touched) and back again. This is a distance of about fifty feet from the cabinet. This, too, was repeated. A third time the effort was made, but without the same success, the power becoming weak, and our friend having to retreat rapidly to the cabinet. During this experiment it was imperative on the sitters to remain seated, to avoid interfering with the magnetic cord linking the medium and the materialised form together.

After this, standing at the table in full view, she gave through the alphabet (the direct voice not being sufficiently distinct in articulation to be intelligible) the following message:—'I shall go, after to-night, to a higher sphere.' In answer to questions, she intimated that she had no hesitation whatever in passing through the change, that afterwards she could only come amongst us when the conditions were very superior, that this change was analogous to the physical process of death, but without its gloom and terror, and concluded with a message, 'God bless you all. Go on in the good work.' She shook hands with each one present (placing two or three of her fingers in contact with the sitters, but not grasping hold) by way of farewell, and leading her husband to a vacant seat, which she placed beside her, embraced and kissed him. After having thus (like one of old) talked with us, eaten and drunk with us, shown the hands and the feet, and left her blessing upon our circle, she was parted from us, re-entered the cabinet, and 'vanished out of our sight' Thus ended one of the most affecting and impressive séances I have ever been present at.

The medium, as might be expected, exhibited indications of considerably exhausted vitality.

This lady, prior to her final ascension to a higher sphere of usefulness and happiness, has since shown herself to us again, walked downstairs into the hall, and shown herself to and touched a lady there. She has left messages in direct writing, which we have seen her execute:—'God's truth is hidden; search and you will find'; and, specially for her husband, by way of consolation, the message:—'I am always with you, even unto the end,' and signed with her name.

A more practical commentary upon the occurrence recorded in the last chapter of St. Luke's gospel than the above plain statement of facts (authenticated as below) I am unable to conceive. Who can fail to see the parallel, with the accompanying modification necessarily caused by different locality, age, nationality, and surrounding circumstances?

I cannot close this account without acknowledging our gratitude to the controlling intelligences, whose goodness and earnestness in assisting us to demonstrate the reality of an after life and a spiritual sphere have been without limit, and to the gentleman whose mediumistic gifts had been generously put at our service for the same purpose.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) A. J. SMART.

3, Guildford-street, Cardiff.

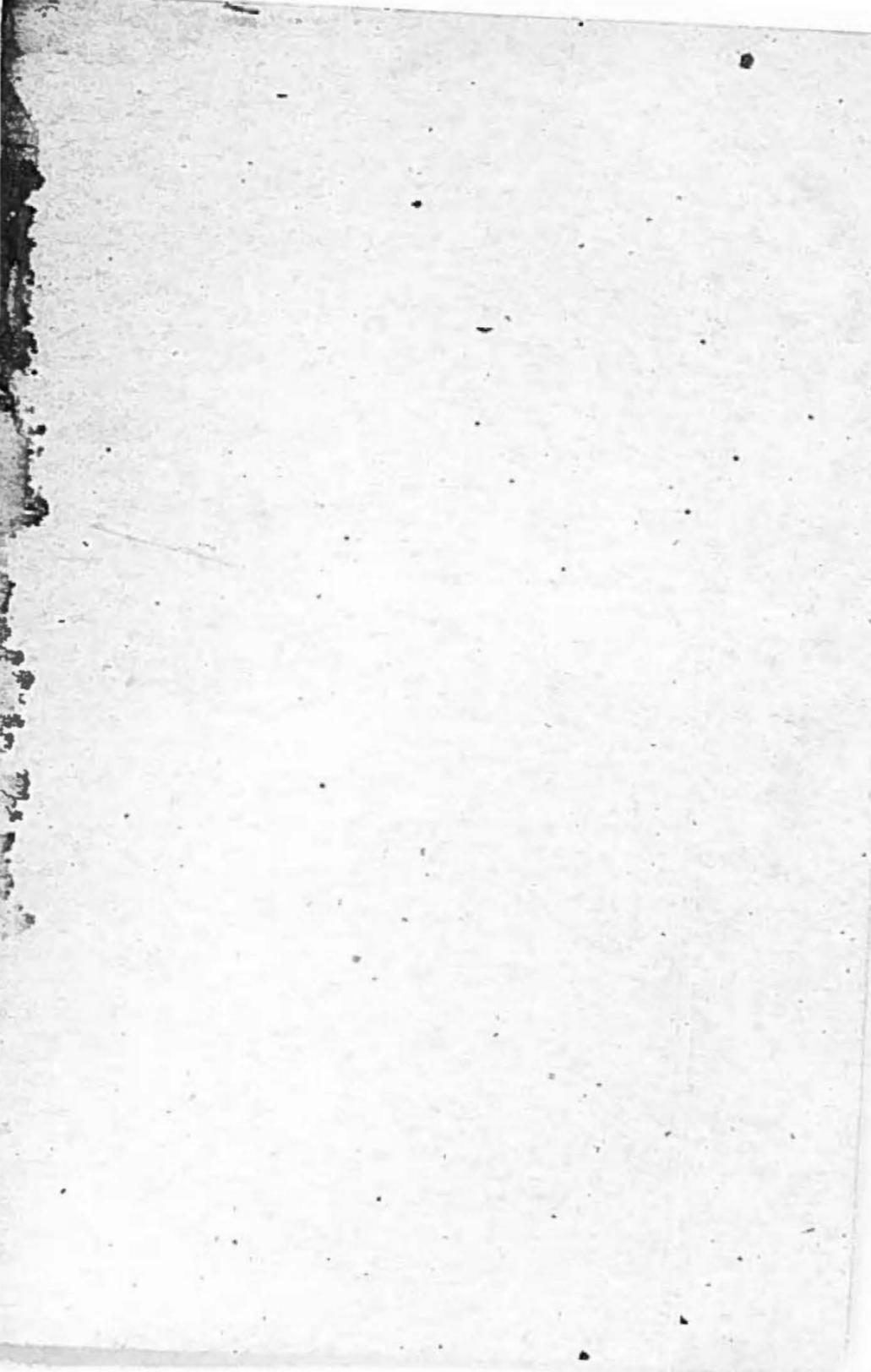
We testify to the occurrence in our presence of the incidents above narrated.

(Signed)

REES LEWIS.  
JAMES A. HOGG.  
MARY C. HOGG.  
S. F. WAYLAND.  
EMMA WAYLAND.

FLORENCE WAYLAND.  
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