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A MONTHLY JOURNAL

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A GRATUITOUS DISTRIBUTION FUND

is required to sustain the cost of such arrangements. The cause of progress could not be better aided than by an expenditure of £10 monthly in this work. All contributions will be acknowledged, and the manner in which they have been used will be faithfully stated on this page from month to month.

We have received the *Little Journal of Ideas*, a weekly penny sheet. We would suggest that the title be slightly altered to the *Journal of LITTLE Ideas*. The ideas are either obscure or microscopic.

It is said that Mrs. Hardinge will not return to London till late in autumn. The first importation of her new work is sold. Another is expected soon.

Enquiries after the services of Mr. J. M. Peebles as a lecturer are frequent. A syllabus of Sixteen Lectures may be had on application at our Office. Those who desire a visit from him should apply at once, as his time will rapidly fill up. He lectures at Halifax during the week commencing March 14.

The weather has been so bad that the portraits of A. J. Davis, J. M. Peebles, and Dr. Willis have not been printed in large numbers. We hope to be able to supply all demands in a few weeks.

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This form of Security is strictly defined by the General Deed of Trust, and is unalterable. Thus, the numerous dangers attaching to miscellaneous Investments are avoided; and the Policies issued by the Corporation are protected by the most reliable of all Securities.

The Complete Security of the Life Premium Fund.

All the Premiums (with the exception of one-fifth reserved for expenses of Management, Reserve, and Bonuses), are invested in the names of Trustees for the sole purpose of meeting Policy claims. The Trustees act independently of the Directors.

The Control of the Premium Fund is always retained by the Insurants, through their Trustees.

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An Equitable Surrender-Value Endorsed on each Policy, and Payable on Demand.

From 50 to 70 per cent. of all premiums paid (according to the table under which the Policy is effected) can be obtained, on demand, by Insurants desirous of ceasing premium paying.

All Policies Convertible into Cash on Demand.

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No Lapsed Policies. The Surrender-Value cannot be Forfeited.

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EXAMPLE from TABLE A to Insure £100 with Profits, Payable at Death.

Age next Birthday.	Annual Premium.	Proportion Invested in Government Securities.	Government Stock Withdrawable as Surrender Value or Banking Account.	
			1st Year.	5th Year.
30	£2 11 3	£2 1 0	£1 2 0	£5 18 0

TABLE C.—To insure £100 with Profits payable on attaining the Age of 60, or at Death, if it occur before that Age.

Age next Birthday.	Amount of Annual Premiums.	Proportion invested in Government Securities.	Surrender Value or Banking Account.	
			1st Year.	10th Year.
30	£3 10 2	£2 17 5	£1 19 0	£22 12 0

TABLE E.—To insure £100 with Profits by the payment of *Ten Annual Premiums* only.

Age next Birthday.	Annual Premium.	Proportion in Government Security	Surrender Value or Banking Account.	
			1st Year.	5th Year.
25	£5 1 7	£4 11 6	£3 16 0	£20 11 0
30	5 10 4	4 19 4	4 3 0	22 6 0

NOTE.—By an Insurance under Table E, the whole of the Premiums is paid in 10 years. The sum insured is payable at death, whether that occur during the ten years of payment or subsequently.

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MARCH, 1870.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RE-INCARNATION.

No. V.

HAVING seen that a Religious Theory, in order to command the assent of the era of Positive Science on which we are entering, must be in harmony with the tenor of scientific discovery, and having reviewed, in preceding papers, the latest results of scientific investigation into the nature and origin of the Universe in which we find ourselves, we have now to examine, by the light of those results, the theory of Derivation and Development which it is the object of these papers to elucidate.

The Absolute, Self-existent Being whom we call God, Source and End of all things, necessarily Infinite and Eternal (because, containing in Itself the essentiality of all possible modes, forms, conditions, and derivations, nothing can be extraneous to It in the sense of a boundary or limit), is utterly above the comprehension of our present rudimentary faculties, but may, we are told by our spirit-friends, be approximatively conceived of by us as Intelligence (Essentiality), Thought (Movement, or Derivation), and Fluid (Source of Substance and of Life); the Universe of Spirit, of Force, and of Matter, having no original or independent existence, but being only the ultimatum, into the plane of Derivation, of the Creative Potentialities inherent in the Divine Nature.

The Divine Essentiality (Absolute Intelligence), is independent of Space and Time, which are conditions of the evolution of Derived Existence, and are only predicable of it, as Infinity and Eternity are elements of Self-existence of which alone they are predicable.* The Divine Intelligence, Self-existent Cause of all

* The poverty of human speech often produces confusion, by compelling us to use the same word to express different meanings. Thus we have no word but *Infinity* to express the boundless extension of Space, no word but *Eternity* to express the endless duration of Time; yet it should be borne in mind that Infinity and Eternity are transcendent conditions appertaining to a mode of existence with which

things, is constantly present in every atom of the Universe It creates, as Intention is present in Effect; but It remains as distinct from the forms of the Universe as does Intention from its resulting Effect.* Thus we may say, in regard to the Universe, that God is potentially everywhere, and that HE is personally nowhere.†

The commencement of the Creative Process taking place in the unfathomable and unapproachable abyss of Self-existent Essentiality, and therefore necessarily transcending the reach of our conceptive faculties, the nearest idea that we can form to ourselves of the nature of that Process is stated to be the gradual assumption, by the Efflux of the Divine Thought, of a state, or mode, of concretion only to be remotely imagined by us as that of a Fluid, of a quintessential subtlety absolutely inconceivable by our present organs of thought, and in comparison with which the light of the sun—contrasted with which a jet of electricity shows as a black spot—is immeasurably denser, darker, grosser, more inert, than are iron or granite as compared with electricity. This Primordial Fluid, matrix and generator of the Universe of Derived Existence, is not God, but is the first substantiation of the Efflux of Creative Thought. Its molecules—declared to be the earliest product of the inter-radiations of that Thought, but, in their essence, quite out of reach of our observation or comprehension—are the substratum and continent of all the possible modes, forms, and attributes of Derived Existence that are to be progressively evolved from them through their successive combinations, condensations, and transformations, effected by the attractive and repellant interactions upon them of the vast arsenal of Cosmic Forces—derivations from the Forces inherent in Self-existent Being—which are sometimes, but less properly, termed “Imponderables,” or “Fluids”; Forces, for the most part, unknown to us, but with a few of whose modes of action we are beginning

the indefinite extension of Space and Time have nothing in common, the latter being only the correspondents, in the sphere of Derived Existence, of their prototypic realities in the sphere of Self-existence; realities of whose essential nature we, in the present condition of our faculties, are incapable of forming anything more than a negative idea.

* The distinction of the Causal Power of the Universe from the Universe of which it is the Cause, while remaining its sole Reality and sole Life, may be approximatively understood by considering that although Intelligence (the essentiality of Thought) and Thought (a mode of Intelligence) are both in Effort, which is only a derivation from them, yet Effort is neither Thought nor Intelligence; and that, although Intelligence, Thought, and Effort are all three in Effect (which is only their ultimatum into the plan of Actuality), yet Effect is neither Effort, nor Thought, nor Intelligence.

† For limited intelligences like those of the earth, the only material image we can suggest as giving you an approximate, though inadequate idea of God, is that of the sun, unique centre of your solar system, bestowing light, heat, fertility, whether the state of your atmosphere allow you to behold its effulgence, or whether it be veiled from your sight by the dense vapours exhaled from your soil.
—ROUSTAING, *Les Quatre Evangiles*, vol. i. p. 96.

to make acquaintance as Light, Caloric, Magnetism, Electricity, Vitality, &c., and which, through their mutual attractions and repulsions, are the instruments of the evolution, into the plane of Manifestation, of all the possibilities latent in the Primordial Fluid. That evolution gives rise progressively to two orders, or modes, of Substantiality, viz., Spirit or Psychic Substance, and Matter, or Corporeal Substance; the Cosmic Forces (Imponderables or Fluids) partaking of the nature of both those modes, and forming the link, or intermediary, between the two.

Spirit, or Psychic substance, is an immaterial entity, the substance of Derived Intelligence in its two modes of action, as Affection (or Will) and Thought. It is evolved from the purest and most subtle elements of the Primordial Fluid, as they exist before they reach the phase of concretion in which they have assumed the form of the Cosmic Matter which, occupying universal Space, contains, in the fluidic mode, the constituents of all Material Forms. Being anterior and superior to Matter, it constitutes an order of existence independent of the conditions, limitations, and mutations of Space and Time. It is immortal, persistent, and susceptible of endless development through contact with Matter. Without this contact, the Psychic substance, destined to be individualized into souls, would remain for ever in a condition analogous to diffusion, amorphous, impersonal, and consequently without consciousness; the illimitable possibilities inherent in its nature existing only in a state of catalepsy, or latency, until gradually awakened to life and activity by the reactions of the material incorporations which, through the formative and vitalizing energies of the Cosmic Forces, it is made progressively to assume and to animate, in the course of an education occupying periods so long as only to be vaguely imaginable by us as consecutive "eternities." While thus intimately connected with Matter, on which it depends absolutely for individualization and manifestation, Spirit always remains essentially distinct from Matter, with which it can only enter into relation through the intermediary of the Cosmic Forces which serve as its instruments in attracting to itself the elements of the consecutive material forms that serve, progressively, to condense, circumscribe, individualize, educate, and refine it.

The Cosmic Forces which constitute the intermediary between the two universal modes of Spirit and Matter, are also substantial entities, though of a mode of substantiality too subtle, and too remote from our present sphere of knowledge, to be comprehensible by us. They are declared to be intelligent, but of a mode of intelligence of which we can form no idea, being more elementary than instinct, impersonal, and consequently without self-consciousness or power of self-direction; they are mutually attractive and repulsive, and, through their attractions and

repulsions, are the instruments of Spirit in the evolution of the phenomena of Manifestation.

Matter is the ultimatum of Substantiality, under the form of atoms, into the plane of external Manifestation. Those atoms, absolutely incapable, of themselves, of movement or direction, and possessing no other attributes than those of extension, density, inertia, and impenetrability by one another, are always separated by interstitial spaces occupied by the ubiquitous Forces whose action determines the temporary atomic juxtapositions which constitute what we call material bodies; *i.e.* material moulds which—evolved under the control of Spirit-guidance, and serving, by their reaction, as the educators of the Psychic substance to which they give temporary material form, and by which they are animated during that temporary union—are the manifestation of the corporific potentialities of the Forces of whose agglomerative and qualitative action the production and various natures of material bodies are the result.

Universal Space being a boundless store-house containing, in a fluidic state, the elements—Spiritual, Dynamic, Material—of all the modes and forms of Derived Existence with which the Divine Purpose fills the Universe, and those elements, thus disseminated throughout Space, containing, in a state of latency, the entire sum of qualities and possibilities with which those forms have been pre-endowed by the Creative Thought, it follows—as that Thought is always present in the forms in which it ultimates itself, though distinct from and superior to those forms, to which it stands in the relation of Cause to Effect—that the Universe of Spirit, Force, and Matter, is not to be conceived of as existing apart from that Thought, but is to be conceived of as continuing to exist in virtue of the continued and incessant action of that Thought as its Creator and perpetual Sustainer.* It also follows that, both Spirit and Matter being

* It being impossible for us to comprehend the Divine Essence, we can only form to ourselves an approximative idea of the Divinity with the aid of comparisons necessarily very imperfect, but which may serve, at least, to show us the possibility of that which, at first sight, would seem to be impossible. If we suppose a fluid sufficiently subtle to penetrate all bodies, it is evident that each molecule of this fluid, being in contact with each molecule of matter, will exert on each molecule, and consequently on each body, an action analogous to that which would be exerted by the totality of the fluid. If we suppose this fluid to be devoid of intelligence, it will act mechanically, and as a merely material force; but if we suppose it to be endowed with intelligence, with perceptive and sensitive faculties, it will act, not blindly, but with discernment, with freedom, and with will; it will see, hear, and feel. The properties of the perispiritual fluid may help us to understand this proposition.* It is not intelligent *per se*, because it is matter, but it is the vehicle of the thought, perceptions, and sensations of the spirit. It is through the subtlety of this fluid that spirits are able to obtain access everywhere, that they read our most secret thoughts, that they see and act at great distances;

* As the pulp which surrounds the germ of a fruit is called the *périsperme*, so the fluidic envelope of Psychic Substance, individualized into a spirit, is called the *périsprit*.

successive ultimations of the Creative Thought, and remaining in perpetual contact with that Thought, through the action of the forces which are Its fluidic derivatives, there is nothing "dead" in the Universe; the substratum of that mode of movement to which we give the name of Matter being, though inert, infilled with an infinity of vital possibilities appertaining to the material plane, that remain latent until roused into activity by the occurrence of the conditions necessary for their development. And it follows, still farther, that the evolution of Mental and

it is to this fluid, when it has reached a certain degree of purity, that spirits owe the gift of virtual ubiquity, for they have only to direct a ray of their thought on various points of space in order to manifest their presence simultaneously on all, the extension of this faculty depending on the degree of elevation and purification arrived at by each spirit. It is with the aid of this fluid that a man, also, acts at a distance, through the power of his will, upon certain individuals; that he is able to modify, within certain limits, the properties of matter, to give determinate properties to inactive substances, and to perform cures by the imposition of hands.

But spirits, however elevated they may be, are but creatures, limited in their faculties, their power, and the extent of their will, and cannot, in their action, approach that of God. They may, however, serve us for a comparison. What a spirit can only accomplish within narrow limits, God, who is infinite, can accomplish without limit. There is, moreover, this farther difference between the action of a spirit and the Divine action, viz., that the former is momentary and subordinated to circumstances, whereas the latter is permanent; that the thought of a spirit embraces only a circumscribed point of space and of time, while that of God embraces the Universe and Eternity. In a word, between spirits and God, there is the distance of the finite to the infinite. The perisprital fluid is not the thought of the spirit, but it is the agent and intermediary of that thought. As it is this fluid which transmits thought, it may be said to be, in a certain sense, impregnated with thought, and, as it is impossible for us to isolate thought from its necessary fluidic vehicle, thought seems to us to be one with that vehicle, as sound seems to be one with the air, so that we can, as it were, materialize it to our comprehension. Just as we say that air becomes sonorous, we may, taking the effect for the cause, say that the perisprital fluid becomes intelligent.

Whether the Divine Thought acts upon us directly, or through the intermediary of a fluid, let us, in order to make the subject of the Divine ubiquity easier to our intelligence, represent that thought to ourselves under the concrete form of an intelligent fluid, filling the infinity of the Universe, penetrating every part of Creation, all Nature being plunged in it. As all the parts of a homogeneous Whole are of the same nature, and possess the same properties, as that Whole, it follows that, each atom of this fluid (if we may so express ourselves) possessing thought, that is to say, the essential element of the Divinity, and this fluid being everywhere, everything is submitted to its intelligent action, to its forethought, to its solicitude; every creature, no matter how infinitesimal, is, as it were, saturated with it. We are thus constantly in presence of the Divinity; we cannot hide one of our actions from His sight; our thought is incessantly in contact with the Divine Thought, and we only state a literal truth when we say that God sees into the innermost recess of our heart. . . . In order to extend His care over all His creatures, God has not to send down His Thought from the heights of immensity; our prayers, to be heard by Him, have no need to transverse space, nor to be uttered aloud; for He is incessantly beside us and around us, and our thoughts reverberate in Him.

Far be it from us to think of materializing the Divinity. The image of a universal and intelligent fluid is only suggested as a comparison which may enable us to form a more just idea of the action of the Divine Being than is conveyed by pictures representing Him under a human form, and to comprehend the possibility of His being everywhere, and of occupying Himself with everything.—ALLAN KARDEC, *La Genèse*, p. 59.

Moral phenomena is due to the interpenetrating presence, in material forms (distinct from those forms, though, in the plane of Material Existence, dependent on those forms for its manifestation to human observation), of Spirit-substance, which exercises, in the economy of Derived Existence, the higher, permanent, controlling influence to which the development of the variety of material forms is due. All the phenomena of Derived Existence, whether Psychic or Material, have therefore, as already stated, no original or independent existence; what we call Spirit, what we call Force, and what we call Matter, though realities to our consciousness, and susceptible of development, in the plane of Effect, as illimitable as the Infinity of the Self-existent Cause to whose potentialities they correspond, being only modes of ultimatum of the Divine Thought into the plane of Derivation, and existing, and continuing to exist, only in virtue of the continuous action of that Thought, whose cessation would be the annihilation of the Universe. The Universe of Derived Existence is therefore resolvable into Force and Movement, acting through, and occurring in, an unknown substratum of what we call Substantiality, as the vehicle of Force, and the subject of Movement.

As the constituable principle, or element, of the forms of Universal Life, Matter exists in two modes, or states, viz., that of Etherization or Ponderability, and that of Materialization or Imponderability, which is only a modification of the former; the intermediary term between the two states—*i.e.*, the transformation of ethereal or fluidic matter into tangible matter, and *vice versa*, not being appreciable by our senuous organs, constructed for dealing with Matter in the grosser mode in which it exists at the surface of our planet. The ineluctable substratum of Universal Manifestation being thus defined, it is indifferent whether we speak of it as Substance or as Matter, whether we call it, in its higher state, *Fluidic Matter*, or, in its lower state, *Material Substance*; but, to avoid confusion, we usually apply the term *Substance* to its fluidic state, employing the term *Matter* to designate the denser state in which it becomes cognizable by our senses. To the same end, we apply the terms *Psychic Substance*, or *Spirit-Substance*, to the substantiality of Intelligence and Affection; the term *Soul*, to that substance when individualized into distinct personalities; and the term *Spirit*, to each of those personalities as constituted by the union of that substance with a fluidic body or *périsprit*. And as the two states of material substantiality give rise to two orders of phenomena, constituting two distinct, though intimately connected worlds of Relation*—equally *real* to the perceptions

* At no former epoch of the world's history has science opened up horizons so vast and so grand to the astonished gaze of Man. We now know that the Earth is a stellar body, and that our earthly life is accomplished in the illimitable sky.

and activities of the spirits by whom they are peopled, and whose double mode of fluidic and material corporeality (consisting of a permanent spirit-body, or *périsprit*, as it is called by the

Through the analysis of light, we have ascertained the substances that are in combustion in the sun, and in the stars, at a distance of millions and trillions of leagues from our terrestrial observatory. Through observation we have constructed the history of the sky, and the history of the Earth, in the far-off Past as in the distant Future: terms that are without meaning in relation to the immutability of Sidereal laws. Through patient and laborious calculation we have weighed our own planet and the other earths that gravitate in Space. The globe we live in has become, to our eyes, a stellar atom, rolling on its way through the boundless extent of infinity; and our existence on this globe is seen to be an infinitesimal fraction of our eternal existence. But that which may strike us even more forcibly is the astounding discovery, the result of the physical investigations of the last few years, *that we are living in the midst of an invisible world, whose activities are busy about us on every side.* It is needless to insist on the paramount importance of such a discovery. When we contemplate admiringly the azure of the transparent vault above us, lighted up by the brilliant rays of the sun, when we rejoice in the warm and perfumed breeze that fans our brow, when we feast our sight on the beauty of Nature, our eyes, no matter how wide we open them, see but a small part of what is going on around us! Of every hundred rays that come to us from the Sun, *only one-third are perceptible to our eyes*, either directly, or by reflection from other bodies. The other two-thirds exist and act around us, but in modes invisible to us, though none the less real. They are warm, but without being luminous for us; yet they are much more active than those which are visible to us; for it is they that cause the flowers to turn towards the sun, that produce all chemical action, and draw up into the atmosphere, under a form also invisible to us, the watery vapour which makes the clouds; thus exercising around us, occultly and silently, a colossal force equal to a power of myriads of millions of horses. If the calorific and chemical rays which are constantly active in the processes of Nature are invisible to us, it is because the former strike our retina too slowly, and the latter too rapidly; for our eye only sees things between two limits of rate of vibratory speed, above and below which limits it sees nothing. Our terrestrial organism may be compared to a harp of two strings, which are the optic nerve and the auditive nerve. A certain species of movements causes the first to vibrate, and another species of movements causes the second to vibrate. All human sensations are reducible to these two modes. . . . Yet there exist, in nature, not two, nor ten, nor a hundred, but thousands of species of movements. Physical Science, therefore, teaches us that we live in the midst of a world invisible to us, and that it is by no means impossible that other orders of beings (equally invisible to us) may be living, equally with ourselves, upon the Earth, in an order of sensations absolutely different from ours, and without its being possible for us to be aware of their presence, unless they manifest themselves to us by producing phenomena susceptible of being perceived by our senses. Our retina is insensible to the chemical rays of the sun; but other substances see them, as, for instance, iodine and the salts of silver. The chemical solar spectrum, which our eye cannot see, has nevertheless been photographed. The photographic negative offers no visible image when taken out of the *camera oscura*, although really possessing the image which a subsequent chemical operation renders visible. . . . In presence of positive facts of such a character, and opening up vistas of which we have as yet obtained only partial and imperfect glimpses, how absurd and how worthless appears any *a priori* negation! When we compare the little we know, and the narrowness of our sphere of perception, with the vast sum of existence, we cannot escape the conviction that we know nothing, and that we still have everything to learn. By what right, then, shall we pronounce the word "impossible," when it may be that, in order to explain what we are now unable to account for, we only need the aid of some natural law hitherto partially or wholly unknown to us?—FLAMMARION, *Discourse of April 2, 1869*, p. 13.

In regard to this most suggestive fact of the evidence, in our very midst, of a world of movements not perceptible by us, and thus, as nothing can be useless in

Spiritist School, and the temporary body of flesh that falls away from them at death) enables them to adapt themselves to the relations of the sphere in which, for the time being, they find themselves—we designate the spheres occupied by souls incorporated only in fluidic bodies as the Fluidic World, or the Spirit World, and the surfaces of planets occupied by souls whose fluidic bodies are clothed upon with a temporary garment of flesh, as the Material World, or the Natural World. The phenomena of the Material World constitute the domain of Physical Science, those of the Fluidic World constitute the domain of Metaphysical investigation.

Matter, even in the grosser forms of the ponderable mode, does not really possess the fixity, density, solidity, and impenetrability usually ascribed to it. Not only is it penetrable by spirit-substance, but, consisting of atoms, separated by interstices in which reside the forces which hold those atoms together, and thus constitute the apparent unity and solidity of each body or substance, its atoms are continually susceptible of being brought, by changes in the action of the interstitial forces, into new modes of juxtaposition which will change *in toto* the form and qualities of the resulting substance. Were we sufficiently advanced in the knowledge of those forces to perform the feat, we might—by modifying their modes of molecular juxtaposition, and pushing apart their constituent atoms through the dilatation of their interstices—render, not merely a human body, but a marble

Nature, pre-supposing the existence, simultaneously with ourselves, of other orders of organized beings by whom they are perceptible, take the following statement, by the learned Director of the Observatory of Rome:—"The deepest sounds perceptible by us correspond to 31 vibrations per second, and the highest to 36,000 vibrations per second; the relation between the extremes of the acoustic serie is therefore as 1 to 1126. For the vibrations of the ether, the proportion is much less, and, according to all probabilities, there is an enormous gap between the vibrations of sonorous bodies and the calorific molecular agitations. But it must not be imagined that, because we are unable to perceive certain waves, those waves do not exist. Thus there may be, beyond the obscure limit of our perception, other and longer waves which we are unable to appreciate by means of our present experimental methods, and which may unite the two series. This, indeed, appears to be very probable. Thus the longest calorific wave, and the shortest aerial wave, are separated by a distance of somewhat less than double the interval between the extremes of sound perceptible by us. We have seen that this latter interval is as 1 to 1126; and as Koenig, with the aid of special means, has obtained sounds of 50,000 vibrations per second, this relation may be raised to 1.1560. Now this relation is evidently that of the lengths of the slowest and of the most rapid sonorous waves. The vibrating bodies that emit these excessively high sounds become hot, and at length reach a state of incandescence; consequently their molecules are capable of vibrating throughout the extent comprised between the acoustic and optical limits just expressed. We are therefore justified in concluding that the oscillatory movement of material bodies may be effected with extreme slowness, as is the case in the production of the deepest musical sounds, and may be accelerated until it reaches the incredible rapidity of 946,000,000,000,000 (*nine hundred and forty-six trillions*) of vibrations per second, which characterizes the extreme chemical wave of the spectrum."—SECCHI. *Unity of the Physical Forces*, p. 193.

statue, as elastic as a piece of india-rubber. And as the duration, as well as the nature, of atomic combinations is absolutely dependent on the action of those forces, we can imagine no limit, excepting that of our knowledge of the action of those forces, to the transmutations of material substance that we might effect through their agency; while the mobility of matter, and its amenability to spirit-action, are declared to be incomparably greater in the fluidic state than in the ponderable state. The different states in which the elements of aqueous matter are known to exist at the surface of our planet, as ice, water, steam, dry steam, and in the gaseous form as hydrogen and oxygen—in some of which they are always invisible to us, and in others occasionally so, while it is precisely in the state of invisibility that they are the most active—may help us to form some idea (though a necessarily imperfect one, as all these modifications belong to the terrestrial state) of the susceptibilities of modification inherent in material substance in the ethereal state.

The Material and Fluidic worlds are in close and incessant contact, the Psycho-fluidic element concurring with the Material element, in varying proportions, in the production of all the phenomena of terrestrial existence;* the Material element pre-

* The powers of the organic system depend upon a continued state of change; the waste of the body produced in muscular action, perspiration, and various secretions, is made up for by the constant supply of nutritive matter to the blood by the absorbents, and by the action of the heart the blood is preserved in perpetual motion through every part of the body. In the lungs, or bronchia, the venous blood is exposed to the influence of air, and undergoes a remarkable change, being converted into arterial blood. The obvious chemical alteration of the air is sufficiently simple in this process; a certain quantity of carbon only is added to it, and it receives an addition of heat and moisture; the volumes of elastic fluid inspired and expired (making allowance for change of temperature) are the same, and if ponderable agents only were to be regarded, it would appear as if the only use of respiration were to free the blood from a certain quantity of carbonaceous matter. But it is probable that this is only a secondary object, and that the change produced by respiration upon the blood is of a much more important kind. Oxygen, in its elastic state, has properties which are very characteristic; it gives out light by compression, which is not certainly known to be the case with any other elastic fluid, except those with which oxygen has entered without undergoing combustion; and from the fire it produces in certain processes, and from the manner in which it is separated by positive electricity in the gaseous state from its combinations, *it is not easy to avoid the supposition, that it contains, besides its ponderable elements, some very subtle matter which is capable of assuming the form of heat and light.* My idea is that the common air inspired enters into the venous blood entire, in a state of dissolution, *carrying with it its subtle or ethereal part*, which in ordinary cases of chemical change is given off; that it expels from the blood carbonic acid gas and azote; and that, in the course of the circulation, *its ethereal part and its ponderable part undergo changes which belong to laws that cannot be considered as chemical; the ethereal part probably producing animal heat and other effects, and the ponderable part contributing to form carbonic acid and other products.*—SIR H. DAVY. *Consolations in Travel, or the Last Days of a Philosopher*, p. 207.

Sir J. Herschel, in his Lecture on "Sensorial Vision," delivered before the Philosophical and Literary Society of Leeds, September, 1858, after describing various puzzling experiences of his own—such as the seeing, for a minute or two

dominating in certain categories of phenomena, and the Psycho-fluidic element predominating in others which, rightly interpreted, reveal to us more or less of the characteristics of the higher mode. As the Fluidic and Material worlds are constantly acting and re-acting on each other, neither can be truly comprehended without a knowledge of the other; and although purely fluidic phenomena cannot be perceived by fleshly organs, yet as spirits, even while incarnated in material bodies, are still denizens of the fluidic world, glimpses, more or less distinct, of the phenomena of that world are occasionally obtained by incarnate spirits, at times when, through the concurrence of conditions still but imperfectly understood by us, either the veiling effect of those organs upon our perceptive faculties is temporarily suspended, or disincarnate spirits are enabled to make their action perceptible to us through their command of the fluidic forces which constitute the instrument of Spirit-manifestation in the fluidic-world, as in the material world.*

at a time, sometimes in daylight, sometimes in the dark, and equally visible whether his eyes were open or shut, intricate geometrical patterns, composed of coloured lines of exceeding delicacy, which class of visions he declares to be well worthy of observation, and to belong rather to Psychology than to Physiology—thus expresses himself: “What were these Geometrical Spectra? and how, and in what department of the bodily and mental economy did they originate? They are evidently not dreams. The mind is not dormant, but active and conscious of the direction of its thoughts, while these things obtrude themselves on notice, and by calling attention to them direct the train of thought into a channel it would not have taken of itself. Retinal impressions they can hardly be, for what is to determine the incidence of pressure, or the arrival of vibrations from without upon a geometrically-devised pattern on the retinal surface, rather than on its general ground? Where does the pattern itself, or its prototype in the intellect, originate? Certainly not in any action consciously exerted by the mind, for both the particular pattern to be formed, and the time of its appearance, are not merely beyond our will and control, but beyond our knowledge. *If it be true that the conception of a regular geometrical pattern implies the exercise of thought and intelligence, it would almost seem that in such cases as those above ad-duced we have evidence of a thought, an intelligence, working within our own organization, distinct from that of our own personality.*”

* The prevalent idea in regard to spirits is altogether false. They are neither vague and undefined, like Will o' the Wisps, nor are they phantoms, such as usually figure in ghost stories. They are beings just like ourselves, with a body like ours, but fluidic, and invisible to us in its normal state. A spirit, while living the life of this world, has a double envelope; the outer one, heavy, gross, destructible, is called the *body*; the other, fluidic, light, indestructible, is called the *périsprit*. The latter, during the life of the flesh, is the link which unites the soul and the body; it is by means of the *périsprit*, as an intermediary, that the soul moves its flesh-body, and that it perceives the sensations experienced by the latter. The union of the soul, *périsprit*, and material body, constitutes the being that we call a *man*; the soul and *périsprit* separated from the material body constitute the being that we call a *spirit*. Death is the dissolution of the fleshly envelope; the spirit quits this envelope as we throw off a worn-out garment, or as a butterfly leaves the chrysalis; but it always keeps its fluidic body, or *périsprit*. The death of the body frees the spirit from the envelope that attached it to the earth, and made it suffer; when delivered from this burden, it has only its ethereal body, which enables it to pass through space with the rapidity of thought. Spirits people Space; they constitute a world, invisible to our senses, in the midst of which we live, and with which we are incessantly in contact.

As the fluidic, ethereal, or imponderable mode is the normal mode of matter, so the fluidic world is the normal world of Souls.* The latter are not mere intellectual abstractions, but, as already

The fluid which composes the *périsprit* penetrates all material substances, and passes through them as light passes through a transparent body; no form of matter constitutes an obstacle to its passage. It is thus that spirits enter everywhere, no matter if even hermetically closed. The *périsprit*, although invisible to us in its normal state, is none the less *material*, being composed of ethereal matter. A spirit can, in certain cases, cause it to undergo a species of molecular modification which renders it visible and tangible to us; it is thus that apparitions are produced, a phenomenon not, in reality, more extraordinary than that of steam, which is invisible when highly rarified, and becomes visible when condensed.

It is by means of its *périsprit* that a spirit acts on and through its body while living in the material world; it is by means of this same fluidic intermediary that it manifests itself, after the death of the body, by acting on the inert substances of the material world, producing noises, and the movements of tables, and other objects which it raises, upsets, or carries away. These phenomena should not be deemed surprising, seeing that, even in our sphere, the most powerful motors are precisely those most rarified fluids to which we give the name of "imponderables," as air, steam, and electricity. It is also with the aid of its *périsprit* that a spirit causes the medium to write, to draw, to speak, &c. Having no longer a tangible body of its own through which to manifest itself ostensibly, it makes use of the organs of the medium, which it uses as though they were its own, with the aid of the currents of fluidic effluvia which it brings to bear upon him. It is through the action of these fluidic currents that a spirit moves a table, or causes it to indicate the letters composing the message it wishes to convey. When it raises a table, causing it to float, without visible support, in the air, the spirit does not lift it with arms, but surrounds and penetrates it with a sort of fluidic atmosphere that neutralizes the action of gravitation, exactly as is done by the air in the case of balloons and kites; the fluid with which it is thus saturated gives it, momentarily, a greater specific levity. When a spirit causes a table to adhere to the floor, as though nailed to it, the effect is produced by a process analogous to that by which we produce a vacuum with the aid of the air-pump. When a table moves about the room, the spirit does not move, but merely impels it on its course, by directing upon it the action of the jets of fluid that keep it going. When a spirit causes raps in a table, in walls, in other bodies, or in the air, it does not cause them by a blow, but merely directs, upon the spot where the rap is heard, a jet of fluid that produces the effect of an electric shock. It modifies the sounds thus produced, as we modify the sounds produced by the air. The darkness necessary to the production of certain physical manifestations may naturally suggest the suspicion of fraud; but this necessity proves nothing against the genuineness of the manifestation. It is well known that many chemical combinations can not be obtained in the light; that various compositions and decompositions are effected by the agency of the luminous fluid; and as all spiritual phenomena are produced by the combination of the fluids of the manifesting spirit, of the medium, and of the environing atmosphere, and as these are all *matter*, though more or less etherealized, it is not surprising that, in certain cases, the presence of the luminous fluid should constitute an obstacle to that combination.—ALLAN KARDEC. *Résumé de la loi des Phénomènes Spirites*, pp. 3, 4.

When spirits suddenly produce flowers, fruit, birds, jewels, or other material objects in a closed room, they do so by the uncovering of such objects, which they have previously brought into the room, enveloped in a mass of fluid that renders them invisible until the moment when they render them visible by uncovering them. Spirit-formations will be explained farther on.

* "I have learned, Charley, that we commence to live here before we are born into the world."—*Message of ESTELLE* to her husband, Mr. Livermore, a well-known and highly respected banker of New York, the incidents of whose intercourse with the spirit of his wife are among the most interesting on record.—*Vide Spiritual Magazine for November, 1861, p. 488.*

stated, are substantial (though immaterial) entities, consisting of an inner principle of conscious Selfhood, a particle of Psychic substance, immortal because immaterial, luminous in proportion to its purity, circumscribed into personality by the magnetically-effected accretion, upon itself, of the fluidic envelope, or *périsprit*, which, from the time of its definite formation, is never thrown off, but which (as in the case of the fleshly body, which remains the same body till death, though its particles are entirely renewed every month) is constantly modified by successive eliminations and substitutions of particles, according to the successive degrees of the spirit's progress, and the different material globes and spirit-spheres which it inhabits or visits. Contact with the ponderable forms of Matter being indispensable to the development of Psychic substance in its earlier stages, the *périsprit*, or fluidic body which is the inseparable envelope of spirit, attracts to itself—as will be more fully explained hereafter—through the action of the magnetic forces, the material elements which compose the material bodies that become its continents and instruments of relation in its successive existences in the material sphere. While a spirit remains ignorant and impure, its *périsprit*, composed of fluidic particles corresponding to its state, and magnetically attracted by that state, is almost as dense and gross as a material body; but, as it progresses in knowledge and purity, it attracts to its *périsprit* fluidic particles of a progressively purer and more ethereal order, and, the more etherealized *périsprit* attracting, in its turn, material elements of a higher and less heavy quality, the material bodies successively assumed by a spirit become gradually more and more fluidic, until they attain to states of ethereality so refined as practically to release it from the limitations of Space and Time.

Suns are stated to be foci of electricity, more fluidic than material, and subserving ends upon the consideration of which it would be premature to enter in this place. Planets are the training-schools of incipient spirits in the various stages of their development. Indefinite progress being the law of the Universe, all its arrangements are necessarily hierarchical; and consequently the globes of each solar system constitute a hierarchy among themselves, being more or less material, more and more fluidic, and serving as temporary and progressive habitations for spirits as they arrive at progressively higher grades. The spirit-sphere of each globe is a fluidic zone, surrounding it at a certain distance, stated to commence, for our planet, at about five miles from its surface. That sphere is not separated from the atmosphere of the earth; the space between the material and fluidic spheres being occupied by superposed strata of fluids of various densities and qualities, through which spirits pass to and from the earth with a degree of freedom and rapidity proportional to the

degree of advancement already attained by each. Besides the planetary zones of fluidic existence, innumerable fluidic globes, invisible to us, are disseminated through Space, which, throughout its infinity, contains the fluidic habitations of spirits who, through their gradual advancement in knowledge and purity, have attained to states of existence of whose activity, glory, and happiness we can, as yet, form no idea. There being nothing absolute in our sensations, which result, as we have seen, from the relation between our perceptive faculties and the external conditions among which we find ourselves, the inhabitants, scenery, objects, substances,—everything, in short, that constitutes the domain of manifestation—in the fluidic worlds, though invisible and intangible to our bodily senses, are as visible, as tangible, and, so to say, as *material*, to the perceptions of the spirits who inhabit them, and who are themselves fluidic, as are the people, places, and things of this earth to us. Spirits combine, modify, and elaborate the various fluidic materials of those spheres as we do those of the material sphere, but for the accomplishment of other ends, and by other processes; the imponderable Forces, employed in modes unknown to us* being the tools with which they work, and their will serving as the hands with which they use them,

* Those among the people of the fluidic world who are pretty well advanced in the study of substances and forces, are able to produce from those substances, through their skill in directing the action of the formative and qualitative forces, a far greater variety of objects, and of a far higher character, than we can produce in the material sphere; and can also impart to them a variety of qualities—among others, that of vitality—which renders their labours interesting and amusing to a degree of which we can form but a very faint idea.

“I must leave you now,” said a spirit, one day, to a friend of the writer, “I am busy making a picture, and I want to get on with it.”

“A picture!” exclaimed my friend, “I had no idea that spirits could paint pictures, or would care to do anything of the kind!”

“I said ‘a picture,’ because I can find no better way of conveying to you something like an idea of what I am making; but it is not at all like what you call a ‘picture’ in your world, nor do I paint as you paint pictures upon the earth. I work with fluids; and what I make is real and living. I vitalize my flowers, and my animals, and the thousand things I make, so that they are all alive, though not living as such things live in your world; for there is no spirit in them, and they have therefore no consciousness, and will only last for a short time. Not long ago, in order to receive some friends who were coming to visit me, I made a beautiful arbour, covered with flowers, and full of magnificent singing birds, and it was all living, but only for the short time for which I wanted it. When my friends were gone, I let it melt away again. Those who are more advanced than I am can produce almost any forms or scenery they please, and can make them last longer; but all these things melt away after a time. We never care to keep them long; we should get tired of them. We let them dissolve, and make others. You cannot imagine how charming these creations are, and how much pleasure we take in them when we are not busy with more serious things.” Spirits say that these fluidic creations are not mere amusements, but that, by means of these exercises, they gradually learn the properties of substances and of forces, and thus become competent to take part in the direction of the true spirit-creations of the material spheres, which, as will be subsequently shown, constitute so important a branch of the occupations of the higher orders of disincarnate intelligences.

as is also the case in the production of the so-called "Spiritual Phenomena" now so commonly occurring in the terrestrial sphere of our planet,* all of which, however they may seem, to the uninitiated, to contravene the laws of ponderable matter, are accomplished through the action of the laws that regulate the

* "Invisible to the eye as other atmospherical substances are. . . . The elements of the atmosphere are the channel through which we manifest."—*Communication from Benjamin Franklin. Spiritual Magazine*, November, 1861, pp. 492, 493.

Mr. Livermore, whose intercourse with the spirit of his wife is referred to in a previous note, stated to Mr. S. C. Hall that, on one occasion, when he was sitting with several other persons, a message was given by the invisibles, desiring them to watch attentively what was about to occur, as they "were going to show them how things were made out of the atmosphere." Immediately afterwards a fog-like spot was seen to form itself in the air, just above the level of the table at which they were sitting. This spot grew thicker and thicker, becoming gradually more and more defined, until it had condensed into a bit of cloth. "Examine it quickly," said the spirits, "for we have given it only a short tangibility, and it will soon dissolve into its original elements." The bit of cloth was accordingly passed round the table, from hand to hand, each of the persons present squeezing, rubbing, and examining it, and finding it to be, to sight and touch, as real as the cloth of their coats. In the course of a few minutes, the spirits desired them to lay it down on the table, and to watch its dissolution. "We are going," they said, to unmake it, and to restore its elements to the atmosphere from which we gathered them." The bit of cloth was accordingly laid on the table, its outline growing each moment less and less distinct, until it again assumed the appearance of a spot of fog, which gradually melted away, and vanished altogether. On another occasion, Mr. Livermore cut off a piece of the dress, seemingly of real muslin, worn by the spirit of his wife, and kept it for a few days, when it disappeared.

Lady D— assures the writer that, sitting one evening in her drawing-room with Mr. Home, no other person being present, it suddenly occurred to her to ask him whether he thought that there were flowers in the spirit-world? when, almost before the question had been asked by her, a magnificent white flower, "as large as a dinner-plate, something like the blossom of the Victoria Regia, but of a far more lustrous whiteness, and with long purple stamens," appeared on a chair beside her. It looked precisely like a real flower, and remained visible to them both for about two minutes, when it seemed to melt into the air, and disappeared.

It is probably to these fluidic creations, accomplished by the blending of the most subtle elements of our sphere with the densest of those of the sphere above us, that we owe the legends of the "fairy money" which vanishes out of the purse to which it is consigned. And as the slightest concussion of the air, caused by the speaking of a word, the falling of a ray of light, or even the disturbing effect produced upon the fluidic elements of the atmosphere by a too earnest gaze, or a too intense desire, on the part of the human watchers, is often sufficient to disintegrate these fragile results of spirit-ingenuity, we may perhaps attribute to this source the origin of the popular belief that a "ghost" will vanish if the seer can muster up the necessary courage to speak to it. "ESTELLE," in one of her communications to her husband, remarks—(*vide Spiritual Magazine*, of Nov. 1861, p. 492):—"The thread when broken is hard to mend; the work is not easy to get your conditions right. We surround you with influences which aid you to see us; these influences are so fine and pure that we find it difficult to keep them. . . . The conditions become less electrical; and that which we worked so long to make perfect, dissolves." And yet persons of strongly positive temperament, and often intensely antagonistic to the idea of the possibility of these manifestations—not reflecting that *everything is something*, and that, consequently, mind is a substance, and will a substantial emanation—wonder that the so-called "Spiritual Phenomena," if really possible, cannot always be obtained in their presence!

phenomena of the imponderable state, and those which regulate the combination of the imponderable and ponderable states.*

The absolute immutability of the laws which regulate the evolution of the phenomena of existence is the inevitable consequence of the perfection of the Wisdom from which they emanate. The power of Spirit over Matter is practically unlimited, because its capacity of increasing its knowledge of the Cosmic Laws, and consequently its command of the Cosmic Forces, is unlimited also. No other power is possible to Derived Intelligences than that which they obtain from the knowledge of Natural Laws; and, consequently, spirits are powerful only in proportion to their ability to employ those laws for the accomplishment of the ends they have in view.† A vast variety of what, in former times, were considered as “miracles” in the old, improper sense of that word,‡ but which were really evidences

* You must not suppose that it would be impossible to produce in your planet effects similar to those which obtain in planets of a higher order, in this sense, viz., that such effects would be the result of the same principles, but modified in their action by the different nature of the sphere in which they would be acting. For instance, the production, in your planet, of fluidic incorporations *identical* with those of Jupiter, and of the multitude of other worlds more or less superior to yours, would be a *derogation* from the established laws of the Universe, and no such derogation ever takes place; but the production of *analogous* incorporations, resulting from the application, to your planet, of the same law, but modified in its action according to the difference between the fluids of your world and those of the higher planets, would constitute an approximation, a link, between the two degrees of the scale, and would be, not a *derogation from*, but an *application of*, those immutable laws.—ROUSTAING. *Les Quatre Evangiles*, vol. i. p. 39.

† We will not say, as do those who endeavour to account for whatever they do not understand by the repetition of the hackneyed phrase, “All things are possible to God;” on the contrary, we say:—That which man, in his ignorance, regards as a *derogation* from the immutability of the laws of the universe is not even a *displacement* of those laws, but is an *application* of those laws to the varying conditions under which their action takes place. When man shall have vanquished the difficulties that prevent him from raising himself into space, when he shall have succeeded in decomposing the strata of fluids superposed in the elevated regions of the atmosphere to which he will one day attain, he will see that what, at the present time, provokes the mockery of ignorance and incredulity, will become an acknowledged fact, patent, analysed, decomposed by science, which will wonder that these powerful agents have not always been submitted to its sway, as it now wonders that it has not always had command of electricity, the effects of which it admits *de visu*, but of which it has not yet succeeded in ascertaining the cause.—ROUSTAING. *Les Quatre Evangiles*, vol. i. p. 38.

‡ In its true, etymological acceptance, the word “miracle” (from *mirari*, to admire) signifies something admirable, noticeable, uncommon; it is through a deflection from its natural meaning that it has come to be misunderstood as signifying “an act of the Divine Power contrary to the laws of Nature.” In its usual acceptance this word, like so many others, has lost its original meaning, and has become restricted to a special order of facts. In the mind of the masses, it implies the idea of a fact of an extra-natural character; in its liturgical acceptance, it means a derogation from the laws of Nature, by which God manifests His power. One of the essential characteristics of a “miracle,” as thus understood, is to be inexplicable, for the reason that it is accomplished outside of the action of the laws of Nature; and so certainly is this the ordinary idea of a

of spirit-presence and action, produced—not by a suspension or contravention of natural laws, but—by a larger application of those laws than the science of the time was competent to

"miracle," that, if a fact reputed "miraculous" should be explained, it would at once be declared to be "no miracle," however wonderful it might be. Another characteristic of a "miracle" is to be unique, isolated, exceptional; if a phenomenon, reputed to be "miraculous," should recur, spontaneously, or through an act of will, it would evidently be the result of some law, and, whether such law were understood or not, that phenomenon would no longer be considered a "miracle." Science every day accomplishes results which appear "miraculous" to the ignorant. Let a scientific experimenter fly an electric kite in the fields, and draw down the lightning upon a tree, and the peasants would regard the modern Prometheus as being endowed with supernatural power. If a man who is really dead should be recalled to life, such a fact would be what is usually meant by a "miracle," because it would be contrary to the laws of nature. But if the man, thus recalled to life, were only dead in appearance, if he had retained the slightest amount of latent vitality, and if, with the aid of science, or of magnetic action, he were brought back to life, such a resuscitation, which would pass, in the eyes of the unenlightened, for "miraculous," would be, for enlightened minds, a merely natural event. Joshua's arresting the march of the sun, or rather of the earth, would be a "miracle" in the popular sense of the word, for there exists no magnetizer gifted with sufficient power to operate such a prodigy.* The ages of ignorance have been prolific of "miracles," because everything of which the cause was unknown passed for being "miraculous." In proportion as Science has revealed the laws of nature, the "miraculous," restricted within constantly-narrowing limits, has taken refuge in the domain of Spirituality. Spiritist science, by showing that the spiritual element is one of the living forces of nature, a force whose action is incessantly concurrent with material force, brings the phenomena to which it gives rise into the circle of of natural effects, because they, like all other phenomena, are submitted to the action of natural laws. This science comes, therefore, in its turn, to do what all science does at its advent, viz., to reveal the existence of laws not previously known, and consequently to explain the phenomena which result from the action of those laws. The belief in the Supernatural, founded on unexplained appearances, leaves the road open to imagination which, wandering wildly through the realm of the unknown, conjures up a multitude of superstitions. A rational explanation of those appearances, founded on the laws of nature, brings the mind back to the region of reality, puts a term to the vagaries of unbridled fancy, and substitutes facts for superstitions. So far from extending the domain of the Supernatural, Spiritism explores its extreme limits, and drives the "miraculous" from its last refuge. While demonstrating the possibility of certain facts hitherto deemed impossible, it destroys the belief in others which have been held to have occurred, by showing, in the sphere of spirituality, as Natural Science is doing in that of materiality, what is possible, and what is not. The Divine Power being Infinite, we do not say that God *could not* perform what is commonly called a "miracle." The question to be decided is this, "*Has He performed any 'miracles'?*" or, in other words, "*Does He derogate from the laws He has established?*" It is not for man to subordinate the acts of the Divinity to his own weak understanding; nevertheless, we have, as a criterion by which to judge of the Divine action, our knowledge of the Divine attributes; and as, in God, absolute wisdom is one with absolute power, we are compelled to conclude that He does nothing uselessly. Why, then, should he perform "miracles"? Some will say, "To attest His power." But is not the power of God far more impressively manifested by the orderly grandeur of the works of Creation, by the wise forethought that presides over its least elements as over its greatest, and by the harmony of the laws that regulate the universe, than by a few petty and puerile derogations therefrom that a juggler might imitate? What should we think of a skilful workman who, having constructed a marvel of scientific mechanism, should cause it to go wrong in order to show that he can unmake

* It is certain, moreover, that such an arrest, if it could be effected, would at once, by the transformation of its movement into heat, re-convert the entire earth into vapour.

explain, has occurred in the experience of the humanity of our planet, from the earliest periods of its existence to the present day, when, if repeated, they would be classed with the manifestations of spirit-action now so frequently occurring. It is evident that no spirit, in the flesh, or out of the flesh, can suspend or contravene those laws, for the simple reason that no action is possible except through conformity with the ordinations of which those laws are the formula to our thought. The highest and most powerful intelligences of the spirit-world, as of the lower sphere we inhabit, are high, and are powerful, exactly in the ratio of their knowledge of the Laws of the Universe, and the degree in which they are able to bring their effort into unison with the ordinations of those unchangeable Laws. If, merely as

what he has made? Is it not rather by the regularity and precision of the movement of the machine that the science of its inventor is most conclusively proved? To assert that the Supernatural is the necessary foundation of Religion is to sustain a dangerous thesis; and to maintain that the truths of Christianity repose merely on the basis of the "miraculous," is to place them on a pediment whose stones are crumbling away from day to day. It is not the *Supernatural* that is the necessary basis of Religion, but the *Spiritual principle*, which is often erroneously confounded with the "miraculous," and without which no Religion is possible. Spiritism considers Religion from a higher point of view, and furnishes it with a basis more solid than that of "miracles," viz., the Immutable Divine Laws that rule the spiritual principle as well as the material; a basis that defies both Time and Science, for both Time and Science will strengthen and confirm it.

God is none the less worthy of our admiration, our gratitude, our respect, for not having derogated from His laws, whose grandeur is evidenced, above all, by their immutability. There is no need of the Supernatural in order to lead us to render to him the worship that is His due; is not Nature sufficiently imposing, that, in order to prove the greatness of the Supreme Power, something must be added to its wonders? If we take the word "miracle" in its etymological acceptance, as *something admirable*, we have "miracles" always before our eyes; we breathe them with the air, we tread on them at every step, for everything in nature is, in that sense, a "miracle." Do you desire to give to the masses, to the ignorant, to the poor in spirit, an idea of the power of God? Show them this power in the infinite wisdom that presides over all things, in the admirable organisms of all that lives, in the fructification of plants, in the appropriation of all the parts of every being to its needs, according to the conditions among which it is called to live: show them the Divine action in the blade of grass, in the unfolding flower, in the all-vivifying sun. Show them the love of God in the solicitude that provides for all creatures, however infinitesimal they may be, and His forethought in the constitution of all things, not one of which is useless: in the Good that is always evolved from seeming and temporary Evil; above all, make them understand that *real* evil is the work of man, not of God. Do not try to frighten them with pictures of eternal flames, which they will end by disbelieving altogether, and which will only cause them to doubt the goodness of God. Encourage them by the certainty that they will be able, in time, to get rid of their imperfections, and to repair all the wrong-doing they may have done; show them the discoveries of Natural Science as revelations of the Divine laws, and not as the work of Satan; teach them to read in the ever open Book of Nature, in which the wisdom and goodness of the Creator are inscribed on every page, and they will understand that a Being so great, and able to take thought for everything, must, indeed, be supremely powerful. The ploughman will see Him as he turns up the furrow; the sick and the sorrowing will bless Him in their affliction, for they will say to themselves, "If I suffer, it is through my own fault." Mankind will thus become really religious, because religion will thus be seen to be one with reason.

—ALLAN KARDEC. *La Genèse*, chap. xiii. p. 277.

a subject of speculation, we imagine a rebellious or selfish spirit, in either world, to have obtained such a command of the Cosmic Forces as would enable it to turn those Forces to the subversion of the Divinely-appointed order of the Universe, it is evident that it could only do so through the *misapplication* of Natural Law, and not through its *contravention*; the action of Natural Law, as *Law*, being as absolutely and necessarily immutable as the wisdom of the Will from which it is a derivation. Practically, however, no such difficulty can ever occur; for no spirit (as will be subsequently shown) is permitted to go on adding indefinitely to its acquisition of the Knowledge which is the synonym of Power (and which would therefore be so dangerous an engine in evil hands), without acquiring also the corresponding degree of moral excellence (*i.e.*, of love of God and love of the neighbour), which, practically identifying it with the Divine Intellect and Will, and thus ensuring its co-operation with the Divine Purpose, is at once the sole aim of its creation, the source of its own inexhaustible felicity, and the guarantee of the eternal harmony of the higher spheres. Just as a spirit who has advanced in moral excellence, but whose intellectual faculties, or practical activities, have remained in abeyance, is subjected to experiences that will rouse it to the acquisition, and useful application, of knowledge, so, on the other hand, the spirit whose intellectual faculties have been largely developed while the improvement of its moral nature has remained stationary, is subjected to experiences that will bring the development of the latter up to the level of that of the former, before it is again permitted to accrete to itself the new set of fleshly organs that will enable it to resume, in a new incarnation, the prosecution of its intellectual studies. The inevitable law which, through the wearing out of its bodily organs, compels each incipient spirit to return, at short intervals, into the fluidic world, and thence, after careful study of itself and of its experiences with the aid of its Guides,* to re-enter the material sphere with the new bodily organization that it has been assisted to accrete to itself in view of the needs of its progress, is the means—infallible as the Wisdom which has thus ordained the successive steps of our integral education—by which the “Power that shapes our ends” ensures, at length, the symmetrical development of the intellectual, moral, and affective departments of our complex nature, whose origin, individualization, and destiny, will form the subject of the succeeding paper.

ANNA BLACKWELL.

Paris, February 7, 1870.

* In the economy of the Universe, the lower, the initial—while rendering, consciously or unconsciously, some service corresponding to its stage—is guided and aided by the higher, the more advanced; and, as it reaches progressively higher stages, becomes, in its turn, the guide and aid of its successors in the path of progress.

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

WHERE shall we find a man—an individual in whom is fully represented those characteristics peculiar to humanity; or, in other words, where is the human being who does infinite credit to his race? If such an one does not exist, then man is a stranger to himself, ignorant of his powers, capacities, duties, privileges, and destiny. The forms, functions, habits, and pursuits of plants and animals may be accurately described from any specimen taken at random from the common herd, but the measure of the true man is not to be found in the multitude. Every age and people have produced individuals so distinct from their fellows as to be deemed either gods or devils, and not fit to be included in the category of common humanity. It is from the study of these exceptional cases that the true nature of man can be understood, and an intelligible science of anthropology built up. Man, even in his highest types, is but a promise of what he is capable of becoming by the processes of development and culture. His powers may be expanded infinitely, and cultivated beyond limit. Though finite in the present, he continually approaches the infinite in the future, and the speculations of the loftiest minds can fix no boundary to the realm of genius.

One of the most remarkable persons at present sojourning on earth is the man who is the subject of this paper. As an anthropological specimen, he is an object of intense interest. His psychical career has been most unique and peculiar. The phenomena of his mental development have been characteristic and almost unparalleled. The profound problems involved in the conditions which gave birth to an individuality so marked as that of Andrew Jackson Davis must ever be a source of interest to the philosophic and philanthropic mind; and more suggestions respecting the nature of these little understood laws may be gathered from this author's works than from any other source. His life story is told with great force and interest in that unequalled biography—*The Magic Staff*.* His father was a working shoemaker and weaver, poor as poverty, inflexibly honest and candid, firm and self-willed, impulsive and sceptical, stern and matter-of-fact. He exhibited none of those psychological peculiarities which have rendered his son's name so famous; but his character contained a strong, masculine, positive framework, upon which the noblest superstructure might be built. His mother was of a different type, and gave many indications of being possessed of those rare powers which have come to fruition in her offspring. Could we only estimate truly the arcana of the mother's inner life, we might solve many riddles expressed in

* *The Magic Staff*, an Autobiography of Andrew Jackson Davis. London: J. Burns. 7s 6d.

the various forms of human genius and depravity. This patient, dutiful, clinging, loving woman, in passing through the many vicissitudes of a struggling existence, showed that she possessed an inner light which shone when all around was darkness, and to a great degree mitigated and counterbalanced the embarrassments and afflictions of life. She was indeed a natural clairvoyant or "seeing medium," was the frequent subject of visions and premonitions, and had that deep intuitive insight which enlightens and sustains the soul amidst life's difficulties, and holds as of little account the acquired arts and knowledge of the external intellect. Such were the rich inheritances which the parents of our seer bequeathed to him in lavish abundance. Such, indeed, are the only jewels and possessions which can enrich the real man and bestow the rank of nature's aristocracy upon the brow of genius.

The subject of this paper was born on the 11th day of August, 1826, in an unfinished wooden cottage at Blooming Grove, Orange County, State of New York. This was not long the dwelling place of the family, as the father was rather migratory in his habits, hence the contradictions that are frequently met with respecting the birth-place of A. J. Davis. He was not by any means a precocious child, but rather the reverse, passively clinging to his mother instead of braving the ills of youth as boys usually do. During his early years, incidents of various kinds imprinted on his receptive brain several useful lessons, such as scrupulous honesty, disbelief in superstitious tales, scepticism as to supernatural influences without rule or cause, and forbearance towards those who assaulted or injured him. To love and implicitly trust his mother was another feature of his character. Others of a negative kind might be added: inaptitude to excel in manual industry, dulness at school lessons, and a want of capacity to be early moulded into a sectarian religionist. Before his twelfth year he was a somnambulist—got up at nights during his sleep and constructed machinery and painted pictures. About this age he began to receive impressions, hear spirit voices, and see visions. When in argument he would bring forth replies far in advance of his general mental development: but wisdom did not always guide his early business arrangements. One of his most remarkable instances of early illumination was at the age of fourteen, when his mother died; from this time may be dated his development as an independent, self-sustaining individuality. Soon after this he was apprenticed to Ira Armstrong, boot and shoe merchant and manufacturer, Poughkeepsie. Professor Grimes—a strolling mesmerist—visited the village and tried to mesmerise young Davis on the public platform, but failed. The professor's experiments on others were, however, more successful,

and created much interest amongst the villagers. William Levingston, a tailor, and amateur experimenter in mesmerism, called one day at the shop where Davis was clerk, and asked him in the course of conversation if he had ever been mesmerised. He answered in the negative, when an arrangement was entered into that Mr. Levingston should operate upon him some convenient evening. It was in the month of December, 1843, when that memorable experiment took place. The lad quickly passed into the mesmeric sleep, soon became clairvoyant, accurately described the physical condition of those present, and gave expression to many sage sayings, which both surprised and delighted the philosophic operator. This was the beginning of a new career in the life of the young shoemaker; and as his mental experiences were of the most remarkable kind from that time, it may be well to know with what stock of educational riches he started. He declares—"Added to the several weeks before, it made little more than five months—the whole amount of my attendance at places of instruction;" and as no attempt has ever been made to contradict that statement, it may be received as fact. He had given no attention to literature, having only read part of a tale in which he took no interest.

The physical and mental conditions of Mr. Davis at this time, are very graphically portrayed in his autobiography. He says: "First, mentally, I had a love of truth, a reverence for knowledge, a somewhat cheerful disposition, a deficient imagination, an unbelief (or ignorance) concerning the existence of ghosts, &c., an unconquerable dread of death, a still greater dread of encountering what might exist beyond the grave, a vague, apprehensive faith in the bible doctrine of eternal misery, a tendency to spontaneous somnambulism, an ear for what I then called imaginary voices, a memory defective as to dates, a mind nearly barren of ordinary education, a heart very sympathetic in cases of trial and suffering, and, lastly, I was disposed to meditation and the freedom of solitude. Second, physically, my body was imperfectly developed, my breast was narrow, my spine was short and weak, my stomach was very sensitive, in my blood flowed the subtle poison of my father's alcohol, my muscular fabric was unsound and inefficient, my nervous system was highly impressible and impaired by the parental use of tobacco, my face was pale and marked by a prominent nose, my reverted eyes were almost black, and slightly near-sighted, my head was small in circumference with a retreating forehead, my hair was jet black, and fell awkwardly over my brow, my hands bore decided marks of my trade, and lastly, my whole appearance was calculated to inspire strangers with but little interest in my existence."

The young clairvoyant sat under Mr. Levingston's mesmerism

for nearly two years. He examined diseases and prescribed remedies with great success. He delivered some lectures in the magnetic sleep on the nature of clairvoyance, which were published under the title of "Clairlativeness." He had several very remarkable visions, but could remember nothing in his ordinary state of what transpired when under the influence of mesmerism. While in the sleep the seer would discourse quite learnedly on metaphysical and philosophical matters; though in his ordinary state he was dull and matter-of-fact, without any indication of the remarkable powers he possessed under mesmerism. During these conversations he replied to his questioners by referring them to a book which he was about to give to the world, and this promise was the source of great interest to his enthusiastic mesmeriser and the numerous circle of warm friends they had called round them. But a change began to show itself. Mr. Levingston's mesmerism began to lose its power, and by impression received from his spiritual friends, Mr. Davis was induced to sever his connection with the "kind-hearted operator," and seek the assistance of Dr. S. S. Lyon of Bridgeport. This change constituted an important epoch in the experiences of Mr. Davis, which may be further continued in another chapter.

THE MYTHS OF ANTIQUITY—SACRED AND PROFANE.

By J. W. JACKSON, F.A.S.L.,

Author of "Ethnology and Phrenology, as an Aid to the Historian,"
"Ecstasies of Genius," &c., &c., &c.

N I O B E.

THE PROVIDENTIALLY APPOINTED DISCIPLINE OF SORROW.

"PERFECTED by suffering" was said of the highest, even of him whose moral character was so pure and beautiful and harmonious, that all subsequent generations have agreed to regard him as divine. "Born unto sorrow, even as the sparks fly upward," is an utterance of the wise as regards the inevitable destiny of all the children of mortality. "Whom he loveth, those he chasteneth," so say the sacred oracles. Nor are these ideas peculiar to Judaism and Christianity, for they equally pervade the higher religions, and we may add philosophies, of every age and country, and loom out upon us with more or less of distinctness from the pages of the Avesta and the Shasters, and the sacred writings of the Buddhists, as well as from the books of those whom we are accustomed to regard as more emphatically, the prophets and apostles of the truth.

It is, perhaps, some dim perception of this which has induced that morbid tendency to ascetism which constitutes so marked a feature in certain phases of religious development.

Men, feeling that suffering was a furnace fire, have sought to obtain its purifying influence by voluntary maceration of body and mortification of mind, hoping thus, if not to forestall Providence in its infliction, yet at least to ensure its advent and intensify its burdens. A most unwise procedure, because the substitution of an artificial device for a natural process, like descending into a well for the purpose of catching a momentary glimpse of a few stars during the day, in place of waiting patiently for the advent of night, with its sublime revelation of the glorious galaxy of heaven.

It has been remarked that those things are most common which are best, the highest soulfood of prince and peasant being equally distributed, with that more than royal beneficence which distinguishes the bounty of God. Sunlight and air, the blue sky and the green fields, the bosky woods and the running streams, are the common inheritance of all men, and yet without which nobles would be imprisoned in their castles and monarchs would pine in their palaces. So with the domestic affections; the love of husband and wife, of parents and children, is not peculiar to any rank, but wells up, like a perennial fountain of benign influence, in the homes alike of the rich and the poor; and if experienced with more intensity in one class than another, rather in the cottage of the labourer, where the ties are necessarily drawn close, than in the mansions of the wealthy, where the material convenience of manifold apartments sometimes conduces to moral isolation. And it is the same with grief, which, most happily, is not the special inheritance of any rank, but is equally diffused, if not to every individual, then, at least, among all classes in the community. The angel of sorrow, tearful in his advent yet smiling in his departure, beneath whose sombre pinions, that darken earth as in the shadow of some dun eclipse, are folded the priceless gift of heaven's choicest blessings, veiling his celestial glory and condescending from his high estate, knocks meekly at every door, and with divine humility crosses every threshold.

It has been said that there is a silver lining to every cloud. We may go yet farther, and affirm that there is not only a silver lining, but also a sunny side, to the darkest thunder-pall that ever draped the heavens in funereal gloom. But, then, to see this, you must contemplate the phenomenon from the *CELESTIAL* and not the *terrestrial* side. From the earth-plane the heavens are arched as with the blackness of darkness, utterly impenetrable to a corporeal eye, and through which no ray of cheering sunshine finds its willing way. And yet seen from the empyrean—that is, looked at from *ABOVE* instead of from *below*—and this sombre drapery of despair and death is transformed into a billowy sea of light and glory, on whose rolling waves a cloudless sun benignly sheds an uninterrupted flood of golden splendour.

It is the same with sorrow. Beheld from the temporal plane, whose horizon embraces but the narrow limits of to-day, it covers the heavens with darkness and folds the earth in gloom; but seen with the eye of faith, that is, contemplated from the spiritual and celestial standpoint, and its griefs and cares, mortifications and bereavements, are converted into divinely appointed instrumentalities for the discipline of the soul, and so, clothed to the rapt gaze of the duly visioned seer, in the benign radiance of that Godlike mercy, whose means are infinite and whose purposes are eternal.

It is their lack of faith which renders the sorrows of men so terrible to them. They don't believe in a superintending Providence, ordering all things for their final good. They would none of them elect being "saved, though as by fire." They want the salvation without the cremation. They want the learning without the lesson, the results without the processes. They have no objection to the end, but they dislike the means employed for its attainment.

It has been said that there is no royal road to knowledge, so there is no immunity from suffering. It is a schooling to which kings and their subjects must alike submit, the necessity for its advent being doubtless dependent, not on external circumstances, but interior conditions, which may affect the lordly dweller in a palace as well as the simple resident in a cottage. Verily there are few stranger spectacles to be seen in this world, than the sad, melancholy, and oftentimes careworn faces, that occasionally peer out upon us from carriage windows, with horses in their silver-mounted harness before, and servants in their gold-laced livery behind, all obviously quite inadequate to keep out the barbed arrows that have gone home to the aching heart of the sorrowful occupant of the crest-adorned chariot, which clearly bears not a conqueror but a captive in the dread warfare of life. And is there not divine justice, which we are told is no respecter of persons, in all this? Why should outward circumstances, which, speaking after the manner of men, are so generally accidental, determine the amount of moral sunshine which a soul is permitted to enjoy on its passage through what is, for the most part, but the valley of the shadow of time? Might we not rather expect that the quality and constitution of that soul, would be the principally determining element of its destiny, whether as to the smiles or the frowns of fate? And so it really is, for the blythe and cheery milkmaid, blessed with health and strength, going forth to her matin task through the freshness of the morning hour, with life, vigorous and buoyant, pulsating through her frame at every breath, often enjoys existence immeasurably more than "the land and castle dowered maiden," on whose broad acres she is then possibly treading. Life is full of compensa-

tions, of tidal ebbs and flows, dependent on influences over which we have no control, that strike an even balance in the end. The chief consideration for us all really being, not so much what amount of prosperity we may have enjoyed, but rather what duties we have performed and what good we have accomplished during our short sojourn in this limited timesphere, whose joys and sorrows, with their occasions and circumstances, are but a part of that *fata morgana*, that mirage of the desert, that divine illusion, through which we prodigal sons, we exiles from heaven, are gradually led back to our Father's mansion, and to that all-embracing bosom, where alone the wretched are rendered happy and the weary sink to rest.

"CHRISTIAN" SPIRITUALISM.

My grateful thanks are due to my venerable and venerated senior, William Howitt, for an article entitled "Anti-Christian Spiritualism" written over his initials in the January number of the *Spiritual Magazine*. From the tenor of that article I learn that the writer of it supposes that a very essential difference exists between myself and him as to my intellectual, moral, and spiritual abilities to recognise historical fact, estimate moral purposes, regulate my motives in accordance with the revelations of the Divine Will, and otherwise perceive the basic principles of truth upon which the generalisations of philosophy and details of practical religion rest. This is a mighty difference indeed, and a true rendering of "W. H.'s" meaning, if I am capable of analysing his expressions aright. Seeing that my peculiarities are so very marked and extraordinary I am indeed thankful to "W. H." for calling my attention to the fact, that I may forthwith direct my energies to self-examination, and also, in passing, to a very hurried glance at "W. H.'s" statements and arguments.

I will first call attention to what seems to be the head and front of my offending.—I am not "a Christian." I am not distinctly told what this implies; "W. H." does not explicitly define what it is to be "a Christian," neither does he point out what it is not to be "a Christian," which is certainly a grave omission in view of the terrible consequences pending. I gather, however, that a belief in "the historic Jesus"—"an absolute and altogether historical personage"—is the chief corner stone of Christian excellence. Here is an important change in the programme. The credibility of "Jesus" is not the question, but rather the *credibility of History*. The vital point in discussing the subject of "the historic Jesus" is not whether "Jesus" is a fact, but whether the "history" is in every particular as much of a fact as the *person to whom it refers*. The same is true in respect

to all historical personages. The issue is not whether Henry VIII. or James I. existed, but whether all the statements made respecting them are true. "W. H." knows well that Lingard draws a very different portraiture of historical personages, their character and motives, from that presented by Hallam: and are we not all the subjects of history? I recently lectured on Spiritualism in Wales. One newspaper misrepresented my statements of fact, misconstrued my principles, and grossly abused me personally. Another paper gave a fair presentation of my abilities, motives, and utterances. For months previous a vicar in a certain town went about stigmatising me as an infidel; but a few weeks ago I marched intrepidly into his parish, *held* the largest meeting that has been convened for a long time in that town, delivered a sermon lecture, at which the vicar was to take the chair: but he backed out. He was at the meeting, however, and seconded in most glowing and unqualified terms a vote of thanks in my favour in every respect. Here, then, we have a most instructive illustration of the great change that had been wrought in the "Historical" James Burns of that gentleman's creation, simply by his becoming a little more acquainted with me. But Wales is too far away to go for the most pointed illustration of this important subject. While hundreds of people regard me with feelings of the highest esteem in respect to the soundness of my religious and theological views, my dear friend, neighbour, and fellow-worker, "W. H.," in the pages of the *Spiritual Magazine*, published by myself, brands me for ever with the blackest religious stigma that can be attached to any man in this age and amongst this people. The vital question here is not whether J. Burns exists as a personage, but whether he is the dark, benighted, obfuscated being which "W. H." paints him, or the simple-minded, harmless, harassed little man which those who are disposed to treat him kindly and fairly would readily allow. I have now somewhat straightened "W. H.'s" tortuous logic; and I am ready to ask him if he is prepared to give unqualified assent to all that is narrated respecting Jesus even in the New Testament. Is he quite certain, beyond a shadow of doubt, that all the facts, opinions, inferences, dogmas, theories, speculations, statements, suppositions, and assumptions respecting Jesus therein contained are absolutely and unqualifiedly true, without mistake, or the possibility of us making the slightest mistake, respecting them? This is the pivot of the whole machine; and if "W. H." is prepared to credit the absolute truth of these matters, then let him bring forward his proofs and reasons for so doing. Matters of history are in no respect matters of faith, belief, creed, or opinion. They are matters of fact demonstrable and incontrovertible, or else they are nought.

I have asked "W. H." to define his position; I am, therefore, ready to define mine. To begin. I am not a negationist, I *deny nothing*; I am not an assumptionist, I assert nothing; I am neither an assailant, nor an apologist. I allow these matters to stand as they appear to the individual inspection of all beholders. Who ever heard of me cramming my opinions down people's throats on the point of the sword of spiritual anathema? No, "W. H.," I should have to be constituted a "Christian" pontiff, a "Christian" prince or prelate, or a "Christian" scribe to do that work successfully, though inferior menials try at it. Spiritualism and brotherly love teach me to reason, not to *dogmatize*, to teach rather than to libel with spiritual infamy.

From the statements of history I am, therefore, led to admit the existence of a "Jesus," reserving to myself the liberty of dealing freely with his "historic" appendages. I am not prepared to insist upon any one else seeing as I do in this matter, because that would entail upon me the *onus* of proof which I do not require in my own case, and which I feel I could not produce to the satisfaction of an obstinate objector. I leave this important work to my respected senior "W. H.," who is supplied with the "fullest evidence amid the blaze of Greek and Roman civilisation." I am not prepared to deny the existence of an "historic Jesus," because I am not such a fool as to undertake the proof of a negative. I am ready, however, to admit—nay, even to *prove*—the existence of *such* a person as Jesus. In my mind's experiences I discover tendencies of thought and feeling strikingly parallel to those recorded of him; and I know others in whom his intuitive and miracle-working power is remarkably corroborated. Nay, I even look to the time, and work for the time when men will display the same estimable characteristics as Jesus, with many intellectual, practical, and executive qualities added, which we have no intimation of his having possessed. Thus I believe not only in a "historic Jesus," but in a spiritual or anthropological Jesus, which is going a long way further than the modest criterion erected by "W. H."

The issue raised by "W. H." respecting a "historical Jesus" is a misstatement of the question; and the position of Higgins in relation thereto is misrepresented. "W. H." knows, or ought to know, that the monstrosities quoted by him as acts attributed to Chrishna have also been attributed to Jesus; and that, too, in records which were deemed Scriptural till the Ecumenical Council of Constantine, at which a sifting took place, when certain documents were collected and termed the "New Testament," being considered more credible and consistent than the neglected narratives. "Christian" commentators and Church Fathers have made ample reparation for these omitted histories by assuming very exceptional functions for Jesus; and it

is the acceptance of these doctrinal and posthumous offices of Jesus, and not his mundane existence that is of vital importance as a matter of "saving faith." There appears therefore something of prevarication or gross misconception in "W. H." thus stating the matter, and most notably in his allusions to the Anacalypsis. Any schoolboy would at once perceive that it is not the *personality* of Jesus which Higgins endeavours to identify with that of Chrishna; but it is in their historico-mythical and theological attributes that the identity exists. Higgins is not in the flesh to answer for himself, or he might close "W. H.'s" mouth, by showing that while "W. H." "charitably" impugns Higgins' veracity and disinterestedness, yet the assailant offers no proofs of the calumny he indulges in, while Higgins amply sustains his position, as every reader of him knows. Now, I have drained one swamp, and dispelled the *ignis fatuis* which "W. H.'s" unscrupulous statements and loose logic sent glimmering through the pestilential atmosphere. But my work is not yet done. Another bog, more chaotic and undefined, lies right before me, to which I shall turn my attention next month. J. BURNS.

THE WELSH FASTING GIRL.

To the Editor.

SIR,—The case of the Welsh fasting girl is a most remarkable one; but it appears to me that, in the discussion of it, some most important features have been overlooked. It was, of course, impossible at first not to suspect imposture; but I have the personal testimony of a friend who went to see her that he might investigate her case, that her parents are well known in the neighbourhood as truthful, honest, but uneducated people; and however much deception on their part may be suspected by many, in spite of all efforts, this has not been proved against them; whereas there is very strong evidence that the child really lived without food for upwards of two years. It may be true what some doctors affirm, that an occasional moistening of the lips with water is sufficient to keep life in the body, and this, or scarcely more than this, has been, by the parents' account, occasionally done to the child. But this would have been bordering on starvation, whereas the child never has given the usual signs of being in such a state! There was no wasting of the tissues; on the contrary she is described as looking plump and well, with bright eyes, cheerful, happy spirits, and capable of reading for a lengthened period in a "*loud, strong voice*" up to within a day or so of her death. Had she been accustomed to the *very least* nourishment as a *regular habit*, the entire cessation of it from the commencement of the watching must have produced extreme faintness and exhaustion; but such was not the case according to the nurses' report.

It is then clearly not an ordinary case of starvation for want of food; but we have high authority for saying, "Man doth not live by bread alone."

I have been hoping from day to day that some one far more efficient than I am would suggest the possibility that this poor child's attenuated thread of life was snapped asunder entirely in consequence of the ignorance or blindness of all who were with her to the life-giving or life-destroying power of the mesmeric influence around her.

What is mesmeric fluid? Is it not life itself? Not only the individual life, but the spiritual essence that permeates the universe, and the life particles in the atmosphere we breathe. Does it not form the marvellously subtle connection between matter and spirit, the presence of which can never be detected by the anatomist, nor its absence discovered at a *post-mortem* examination; but the rending of which, in a frame so fragile as the little Welsh girl's, would be all-sufficient to sever her spirit from the body. Such a rending would be produced by the conditions resorted to by the scientific inquirers into her case. Might it not be in consequence of the sudden removal of the mesmeric influence of all she loved, and with whom her life was in harmony; and the substitution of several strange, uncongenial influences, that death would naturally ensue?

I know that the suggestion of such an explanation as this will be received with ridicule by those who are committed to the theory of imposture. But there are many who shrink from this uncharitable theory, and are at a loss to explain the result of what is called the scientific investigation. Those who do not believe in imposture, and yet feel some respect for science, are bound to show if they can why the wisdom of the medical *savans* has failed to explain either the fasting or the death. According to the explanation which I have suggested, the scientific investigation was conducted entirely on wrong principles. The inquiry started from a basis of scepticism; the only question that presented itself was the possibility of life being sustained without food, the negative of which was assumed. The learned doctors overlooked another and a deeper question—what other possible conditions of physical life are there besides those of food-supply and digestion? If they had asked themselves this question they would have seen that the first condition of scientific inquiry is to look at the facts *as they stand*, without making any material alteration in them—to be perfectly sure that the precautions taken to shut out imposture do not disturb the facts by violent interference with those more delicate constituents of the case in which its essential and distinctive character is to be found. When once the question is started in this form, a number of considerations suggest themselves which help us to the conclusion that life may be, and very often is, sustained by other forces than those which food supplies. Those who are accustomed to watch the phenomena of life—health and disease—must have been often astonished at the length of time that patients will go without food, or with very little food, when they are surrounded by all the sustaining influences which are supplied by the unremitting watchfulness and earnest solicitude of the loving and beloved nurses who surround their bed. This may happen at all periods of life—it is perhaps most marked in the very old and the very young. Various explanations of these cases are given; sometimes it is supposed that life, being at a very low ebb, little change by loss and

repair going on, a very little supply is all that is necessary to satisfy this limited demand. Sometimes it is supposed that alcoholic stimulants keep in the ebbing life, and give the force which is usually derived from food. There may be some amount of truth in all these explanations, yet I think it would be wrong to overlook the immense support that radiates from the living sympathy of surroundings. There is, I am persuaded, a scientific accuracy in Mrs. Browning's wonderful picture of Isobel's child—detained on earth, kept back from its home in heaven by the clinging love and agonised prayers of its mother:—

“O mother, mother, loose thy prayer!
 Christ's name hath made it strong;
 It bindeth me, it holdeth me,
 With its most loving cruelty,
 From floating my new soul along
 The happy, heavenly air—
 It bindeth me, it holdeth me
 In all this dark, upon this dull
 Low earth, by only weepers trod;
 It bindeth me, it holdeth me!
 Mine angel looketh sorrowful
 Upon the face of God.*

I tremble in thy close embrace,
 I feel thy tears adown my face;
 Thy prayers do keep me out of bliss
 O dreary earthly love!”

If, then, the doctors will only admit the question—what possible life-supporting influence may radiate from one human being to another, they will see what a horrible mess they made of this Welsh fasting case—how clumsily they acted in substituting hard, professional nurses for watchful, loving relatives and friends—how utterly uninformative they managed to make the case as soon as they put their heavy hands upon it.

Such cases are sure to occur again, and we may hope that the experience derived from this one will not be thrown away. When the inquiry is next undertaken let it be by those who believe in the power of radiating vital force; let them take all possible pains to exclude the presence of food, so long as it is evidently safe to do so, no longer; but let them also take care not at the same time to shut out those influences which have superseded food. When an inquiry is undertaken in this spirit we may get some interesting results.

F. J. T.

THE BLACKNESS OF STELLAR SPACE.

The new proofs of “the blackness of stellar space,” lately given at the Royal Institution, by Professor Tyndall, certainly throw a light upon some of the alleged difficulties of Spiritualism, however little the Professor may desire it; and this celebrated lecture on “Dust,” while removing certain motes from the eyes of the spiritualists themselves—which, considering the known qualities of dust of a contrary tendency,

* Matthew xviii. 10.

we had really hardly any right to anticipate—may possibly tend also towards displacing, in some few cases, the beams from the eyes of the sceptic.

On Friday evening, January 28, at an assembly composed of persons distinguished in science, politics, and art, Prof. Tyndall demonstrated a most interesting experiment, which showed by the destruction, by burning, of the dust which floats in the air and reflects light, that when light was held to a tube emptied of this dust, the tube so emptied presented to the eyes of the material beholder no light at all, but instead of light in the tube, a rolling wreath of darkness was visible, black as night.

The *Daily Telegraph*, commenting on the above, says, "What, then, was this blackness, obliterating the light like an opaque solid, but yet not stopping its passage? The answer comes, 'It is the blackness of stellar space—not darkness by absence of light, but darkness by absence of any and of all matter competent to reflect and scatter light.' And the paradoxical corollary of these beautiful demonstrations is, *that light itself is an utterly invisible thing*. That which renders all things visible is here proved to be absolutely without witness of itself to us, except it have something to strike upon—a body to fill with the subtle life of illumination. The beam crossed unseen the black chasm, produced by the flame or by the gas, but emerged into the floating atoms beyond with the identical brilliancy exhibited among the atoms on the other side. 'The light shined in the darkness,' in fact, 'but the darkness comprehended it not.'"

Two inferences interesting to spiritualists arise from the above—

1st, That spirits, whatever may be their idiosyncrasies, once out of the region of the grosser matter, are in that condition which would be to those who see alone through the retina of the material eye, a state of utter darkness, although we well know that what we call darkness is no darkness to spirits divested of their earthly shell. Veritable, therefore, as is the apothegm when applied to ourselves, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light," so is it—interpreted by our means of seeing—equally inapplicable when spoken in reference to spirits; unless, indeed, we could imagine them all earth bound, or necessarily environed wherever they go by gross particles of matter, small though they be. Moreover, hitherto darkness has been found to be most agreeable to the condition of spirits, whatever may be their degree, of which fact many proofs exist both of ancient and modern date.

2ndly, We have new reasons to surmise from the above, that, although light is no especial hindrance to the presence of spirits among us, yet that it is a hindrance to some of their manifestations, though by no means to all of them. Nor need we any longer wonder why the self-same spirit who can communicate intelligently through physical signals and moving force in broad daylight, may be unable, or may find it inconvenient, to speak in an audible voice, or to demonstrate to the material eye a spiritual form, or to cause matter to pass through matter, &c., &c., without the condition of darkness.

Furthermore, knowing as we now do, certain physical forces are not only mutually convertible—that is, pass from one unto the other, but

that the presence of one frequently also interferes with another, as light interferes with chemical action in the photographic process, and as light interferes with heat in the familiar instance of the sun deadening an extinguishing fire, or as electricity interferes with chemical action, magnetism, &c.,—so, too, light may well interfere, and, in fact, does interfere with the more difficult and delicate spiritual manifestations, intimately connected as they are with the correlatives of light, electricity, magnetism, and the odic force.

W. R. T.

ENGLISH SPIRITUALISM.

The crotchets of our insular Spiritualism are hit off by Mrs. Hardinge in the *Banner of Light*. She defines:—"The popular tone assumed by Spiritualism in England is at present almost entirely phenomenal. Owing to the tendency of mind hinted at in my last communication, the English spiritualists being—like a certain apostle of old—'determined only to know the Lord Christ, and him crucified'—receive, as every experienced investigator may surmise, only such communications as endorse their own peculiar views; and where the spirits who come cannot be psychologised into endorsing good old-fashioned Methodism, stern Calvinism, High Trinitarianism, or Vicarious Atonementism in some form or other, they are either exorcised with the solemn formulæ for trying the spirits prescribed in St. John, or sternly advised to confine their demonstrations to physical performances, and leave their awkward infidelic theology to your humble servant and her Yankee compeers.

"Sitting once in a circle in London where some very orthodox investigators were discoursing solemn platitudes, and very resolutely desiring an endorsement from the spirits concerning their views of the 'Saviour,' my clairvoyant perceptions and long-continued methods of holding direct intercourse with spirits convinced me my not invisible friends were quietly laughing in their spiritual sleeves, or, in other words, humoring the pious inquirers by responding to them after their own fashion. When an opportunity occurred I questioned these very self-same spirits how they could thus pander to what they knew to be the conservative spirit of ancient superstition, when my friends answered me by asking if I could tell *why the priests and sages of antiquity did not break up the images that the people worshipped, before they had learned to comprehend that they were only the mythical external embodiment of a spiritual idea?* I was silenced, but not fully convinced. Besides the Orthodox, who dismiss every spirit that does not acknowledge that *God came in the flesh*, &c., there are a goodly number of noble minds and clear intellects who hold on to the atonement and all its marvellous adjuncts of what they call 'revealed religion,' as they do to the organism which their fathers bequeathed to them, and yet, strange to say, receive and fully credit the stupendous revelations which spirits make concerning a hereafter of infinitely graduated scales of supreme bliss and of ghastly misery; and all growing out of those same 'works' of which *faith in a Saviour* makes so little account. How these noble minds, for such many of them undoubtedly are, man-

age to reconcile the use or functions of a 'Saviour,' with the solemn asseverations of returning spirits, that the good are in bliss without the aid of a 'Saviour,' and the evil-doers are in torment despite the atonement that was assumed to have washed their sins away, my blundering commonplace sense cannot well comprehend. Such, however, is the case, in proof whereof consult a file of the *London Spiritual Magazine*, where numerous admirable, startling, and instructive communications are cited on the compensative and retributive condition of the spirit after death."

Yet, according to Mrs. Hardinge, there is a "brighter side":—"The sterling worth and classical tone of the *London Spiritual Magazine* has been too many years before the public to be questioned now. The bright, sparkling periodical, *Human Nature*, is still admirably written up by Mr. J. Burns, its talented and enterprising London publisher, whose industry, energy, and self-sacrificing spirit would do honour to any cause; and all this, together with one or two fair public test mediums, constitutes a wealth of phenomenal Spiritualism which I do not exaggerate in affirming to compensate in quality for what it lacks in quantity.

"During the past winter, we have had for several months series of capital public conferences, presided over by T. C. Luxmoore, Esq., as chairman. Many associative efforts have been attempted besides these interesting conferences. The most important, and the one which promises the most permanent success, is the publishing house and home for transient visitors, place of meeting, Spiritual and Reform Library, &c., conducted at 15 Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, London, by Mr. James Burns, the enterprising editor of *Human Nature*. It was here that the cordial semi-public receptions awarded to Messrs. J. M. Peebles and Dr. F. L. H. Willis took place; and here, that many an earnest investigator learns to estimate the unpretending but really sterling character of European Spiritualism. I have not yet spoken of the *progressive* element in English Spiritualism, which without the disruptive ban of that license so fatally prevalent among a certain section of the American ranks, or the sneering materialism which characterises another portion, really endorses all the broad progressive ideas which form the best characteristics of our best spiritualists in America. The numbers of such thinkers are few, still they have their place in Europe, and wait and watch, aye, and labour too, for the 'good time coming,' when all men shall recognise that 'the truth shall make them free.'"

MR. J. M. PEEBLES.

The readers of *Human Nature* will, we are sure, be glad to learn that the labours of this gentleman on behalf of spiritual freedom and enlightenment are being heartily appreciated in London, and such other places as he has visited. The Sunday Evening Services inaugurated by him in the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer Street, London, have supplied a long-felt want, and the effort has been amply sustained by hearers and friends. A committee has been formed, the hall has been taken for a term, and Mr. Peebles has received a call to

prolong his sojourn in this country, and be regular speaker on Sundays at these meetings. The work of organisation is going forward rapidly; a choir has been formed to conduct the singing; an accomplished organist performs on an efficient instrument, and afternoon conferences and a children's Lyceum are contemplated. Everybody rejoices that free meetings have been established for the enunciation of the facts and principles of Spiritualism on Sunday evenings, in the Metropolis; and it is hoped that this door will remain open for a long time, inviting all to enter and hear of Spiritualism.

The work is extending itself into the provinces. Mr. Peebles has visited Norwich, and addressed earnest, intelligent, and influential meetings. He is invited to Halifax, and other places are making arrangements. Where there are two or three spiritualists in a place they need be under no misapprehensions in making arrangements for Mr. Peebles. The first two meetings should be called by special invitation, and be held in some gentleman's drawing-room or parlour. Another spiritualist might invite his circle of friends to his house on the following evening; after which a modest public meeting might be ventured on, to be followed by a second, which might be considered enough for a beginning. From such safe and agreeable proceedings useful organisations would certainly spring up, and great good be effected. Mr. Peebles is just the man for this important work—a work which is sternly demanded in England, and which every earnest reformer sighs for.

PROPOSED VISIT OF DR. NEWTON TO ENGLAND.

To the Editor.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have this afternoon received a letter from Dr. Newton, of America, an extract from which it gives me great pleasure to send you, and which be so kind as to forward to Mr. Shorter, whose address I have mislaid. Dr. Newton says:—"I have lately decided to go to England for a year or more to heal, and you are the first that I inform of my decision. I shall leave here as early as May 1st. What impels me much is, that I have much more power of late than I ever had before. I propose to heal in Swindon for two or three weeks, beginning May 15, after which I would go to London. I have faith that I have a great work there. I shall not go as a spiritualist, but as a practical follower of Jesus, professing to heal as he did, and by the same power, leaving the people to say of it or call it what they please. My wife will not accompany me. I shall come alone. It will be great pleasure for me to see you in person, and relate my experiences with mediums since I saw you." This is glad tidings of great joy which I leave you and others to make known as you may think most expedient. I need scarcely suggest the duty of all spiritualists to give Dr. Newton a fitting and public welcome, not only on his arrival at Liverpool, but also in London. We shall do our very best here to show our sense of the blessing he has conferred upon me personally, and through me upon many others. Feeling assured that you will rejoice with us, I remain, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

FREDERICK ROWLAND YOUNG.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA.

SEANCES IN GLASGOW WITH MR. D. D. HOME.

On the evening of 12th January, a party of about a dozen met in Mrs. Gr——'s, Glasgow, to spend an evening with Mr. D. D. Home. Were we writing for a newspaper it might be necessary to say that Mr. Home had never been in the house till that evening, and that the worthy hostess, by whose invitation the party had met, is quite capable of judging as to the genuineness of spiritual phenomena; that while several of those present were previously quite unknown to each other, every one was far above the slightest suspicion of abetting trickery or imposture; that the writer and an intimate friend accompanied Mr. Home from his hotel to Mrs. Gr——'s residence, and are quite certain that the only electrical apparatus they took with them was contained in their own organisms; that the only machinery about the table used at the *seance* was removed before the seance began, said machinery consisting of a large steaming tea-urn, sundry well filled cake baskets, &c., &c. However, as our report is for those who already know something of human nature in its more immaterial developments, we may proceed with our outline.

After tea in the drawing-room, we got seated round a large oval table in centre of the room, having a full blaze of gaslight and a good fire. Mrs. Gr—— inquired if Mr. Home did not begin his sittings with prayer; he replied he always did so with *mental* prayer, as in promiscuous assemblies one cannot tell what are the wishes or feelings of strangers. Mrs. Gr—— expressed the desire that all should unite in prayer, and Mr. N—— was chosen to lead; his unction communicated itself to all, and "the motion of a hidden fire" trembled in each breast. After prayer there was silence for a brief space. Conversation had scarcely commenced again when knocks were heard on the table, along the top, from side to side, in the pillar, and on the block. Worthy Mr. E——, of D——house, the eldest gentleman present, was asked by Mr. Home to go below the table and examine it while the knocking was going on, to make certain that no one was operating on the table. At first he declined, as he said the idea of any one being able to produce such sounds and such a tremulous motion in the fibres of the wood was too absurd to entertain. Mr. Home suggested that some one who did not understand such phenomena might inquire, "Did they examine the table while the raps were being made?" and again solicited Mr. E—— to go below the table and examine it. Mr. E—— was ultimately prevailed on to do so, and the raps continued, not only on the table, but on the floor and walls of the room. After Mr. E—— resumed his seat, Mrs. N——'s chair was gently rocked, then Mr. Home's chair, next Mrs. Gr——'s chair, and also a couch on which three persons were seated; then the whole room seemed to be moved with a gentle tremulous motion.

Mrs. N—— (the lady in whose hand Mr. Home placed burning coal on the evening of 10th January), stated that some one (a spirit) was at

her back touching her on the shoulder. The touch was not unpleasant, as she smiled each time it was repeated.

Mrs. Gr—— also stated that some one (a spirit) was touching her on the shoulders; her hands, first the right one, then the left, were slowly drawn off the table and drawn behind her back. In this position she sat motionless, yet the upper part of her dress was moved several times.

The attention of Mrs. N—— and Mr. Home was simultaneously directed to a hand which appeared to them between Mrs. Gr—— and the table. Mr. Home said that hands were also busy at his head and shoulders. We presume his spirit friends were magnetising him, for he immediately thereafter passed into the trance state. In this condition he gave a lengthened, eloquent, and practical address which we cannot attempt to give the substance of; suffice it to say, that he treated the topic of the great hereafter with due solemnity, and appealed to revelation with becoming reverence. In reviewing the past, he brought each soul into the court of conscience, and from the experience of the feeling which that brings over every man, he led their minds upward to the future glory. Who the spirit was who gave the address through Mr. Home was not stated, and probably no one cared to inquire. Each felt the gentle admonition. Each grew, it is hoped, in humble trustfulness in the loving care of the Divine Father. One of the circle, however, had *thought* that if some noted Archbishop would return and give just such an address the circumstance might have more weight with the most of people. *The thought was seen*, and ere fully formed, was replied to:—"Do not," Mr. Home said, "seek for earth's great ones, or you may fall into a snare. Sit at home in your own quiet family circles, and seek counsel from your fathers, your mothers, your sisters, and your brothers who have gone before you; they still love you, they can guide you, and will counsel you aright." Continuing in the trance state, Mr. Home went to the back of Mrs. Gr——'s chair, made passes over her right shoulder, and stooping down, breathed upon it. About an hour afterwards we asked the lady if she had been affected by the passes. She stated that during the early part of the evening she had been suffering from a rheumatic pain in the shoulder, Mr. Home had removed it, and that she had felt a strong glow of heat from his hand while making the passes. Mr. Home also informed her what to apply to her shoulder afterwards, and how to apply it. He then passed to Mr. R. G., took him by the hand, and led him out of the room. This gentleman was under medical treatment. Mr. Home gave him a prescription, but we did not ask particulars. On returning to the room Mr. Home stooped down close to the fire and joined in our conversation, and at the same time placed his hand immediately over the fire, and seemed about to grasp a large piece of burning coal. In a few seconds he withdrew his hand and again replaced it. Mrs. Gr——, who was sitting next him, quivered slightly, and he again withdrew it, saying to Mrs. Gr——, "Oh, little faith!" On attempting at home to illustrate how his hand was placed, we found it impossible to give a practical illustration of the little we had seen of the fire test.

Passing from one to another, and conversing with several, Mr. Home

gave interesting statements regarding spirits which, he said, were in the room, and were related by ties of kindred or affection to those with whom he conversed. But he was led to say that the spirits could not get their ideas stated distinctly through him, owing to the number of persons present and to the non-blending of their magnetisms. In one case a spirit named G—— A—— was very desirous that his former school-fellow Mr. R. Gr—— should remember him. The communication was made indirectly, and the spirit medium named some incidents to refresh Mr. R. G——'s memory. The latter, however, said there were so many at school of that surname, that he had great difficulty in bringing this particular one to mind. Some further statements conclusively convinced Mr. R. Gr—— who his spirit friend was, and the joy at recognition seemed mutual.

Mr. Home, while naming a number of the spirits who were present, said there were two mothers, both named Elizabeth. Our hostess said that was her mother's name. Mr. Home nodded assent. The writer said that was his mother's name. Again Mr. Home nodded assent, and passing round to the back of the writer, named some leading traits in his mother's character. Suddenly he stopped, looked round, and passed to another. It was right he should. That father had a little one, a mile or two distant, to whom his thoughts occasionally wandered, for disease had made too much progress in the little one's frame. Mr. Home whispered words of hope and comfort in the father's ear. Told him what to do immediately on getting home to induce sleep, and how to proceed to effect a cure.

Mr. A. G—— inquired whether, if his mother were still present, an explanation could be had through Mr. Home of the nature of the light which she saw shortly before she passed away. Mr. Home replied that the incident was a somewhat frequent one, and arose from the partial opening of the spiritual perception. Mr. A. G—— again asked whether the light was the same in kind with that seen in another instance of which he was cognisant, and in which case *the person in attendance also saw it*. Mr. Home replied, "The same, and the fact of the attendant seeing it, proved her to be a highly mediumistic person." Another phenomenon which also sometimes happens on these occasions is spiritual music. "If you be quiet," he said, addressing all, "we shall try to produce a strain," and a strain was produced. It was difficult to produce it, he said, owing to the confusion from so many being present, but softly and sweetly the music floated in and through the room, as if a zephyr had floated over a fine Æolian harp.

A. G.

On the evening of 14th February I had the pleasure of being present at a seance with Mr D. D. Home at the house of my friend Mr. H. Nisbet. The circle included Mr. and Mrs. Nisbet, two of their daughters, a friend and his wife, Mr. A. Keith and his son, Mr. Home and myself. For a considerable time we did not see or hear the slightest indications of spirit presence, during which we engaged freely in conversation. At length slight knockings began to be heard on the floor, gradually growing louder, and extending to the heavy pillar-and-claw table, where they varied exceedingly in character,

thus plainly indicating diversity of spirits present. To most of those present, the knockings were no novelty; but Mr. K. and his son, not having heard anything of the kind before, seemed deeply interested. Mr. K. began to read the literature of Spiritualism about two years ago, having been led to do so by excess of sorrow for the loss of a beloved son,—a youth of great promise, who was suddenly cut off in the bloom of early manhood; so that, though an earnest student of the new philosophy, he had witnessed almost nothing of its phenomena. It was thus the more wonderful to him to hear knocks all over the table, and to see it tilted to an angle of forty-five degrees while only the tips of our fingers rested upon its surface, and while his son, by Mr. Home's direction, sat beneath the table to satisfy himself that nothing in the shape of trickery or imposition was attempted. Mr. Home then called for an accordion, and one was handed to him which he had no possibility of before seeing. Taking it by the bottom with his right hand, he held it for a few seconds beneath the table, his left, meanwhile, resting on the top in view of all. We now began to hear the "sough" of the moving bellows, then the sound of the notes as it gradually acquired power, and then a symphony was played as if to test the powers of the instrument. Meanwhile Mr. Home brought it from beneath the table that all might see its movements. He said we might, if we liked, request some particular air to be played. I suggested "Sweet Home," and a portion of it was played; but there being an apparent want of force, it was not finished. The well-known five raps were then heard on the table for the alphabet, when the words "My Great Joy" were spelled out. This was immediately followed by a strain of peculiar beauty on the instrument. In listening to this piece it was evident that at least two hands were manipulating the keys, though nothing was visible to those looking on. There was something in the tones produced in this piece which reminded me not a little of the *Æolian* harp; now rising into a grand chorus, then dying away into thread-like echoes, as if in reply from some celestial instrument in the distance. This was followed up by the "Last Rose of Summer," which was played with great taste and sweetness, accompanied by a gentle drumming, as of fingers upon the table.

During this performance both Mr. K. and his son were touched several times on the knee by an invisible hand; while Mr. Home declared that he felt a warm hand laid upon that with which he held the instrument. Upon Mr. K. remarking that he thought there were friends of his present, three knocks were given in the affirmative, while through the alphabet was spelled out, "I touched you both." The spirit being requested to give his name, gave through the alphabet the christian and surname of Mr. Keith's deceased son, adding, "I do not forget," immediately on spelling out which, part of the tune of "Auld Lang Syne" was played on the instrument—thus forming the sentence, "I do not forget auld lang syne." Here Mr. Keith, jun., fairly broke down through emotion, upon which it was spelled out, "No tears for me; I live, and love you and my mother." But the most remarkable part of this communication was, that while spelling out the last letters of the surname, it was pro-

nounced audibly, and heard by the majority of those present,—just as if the spirit in his impatience had made a strong effort to make himself understood. Another peculiarity was that the name was spelled out by raps not only on the table, but on Mr. K.'s knee. I should also have stated that, previous to the communication, "Sweet Home" was played with exquisite taste and feeling,—just as Mr. K.'s deceased son used to play it at his father's fireside.

As was to be expected, the announcement of the beloved name deeply affected both father and son; tears and sobs of joy mingled with broken ejaculations of thanksgiving and praise to God for this—to them—unquestionable evidence of the beloved one's presence. Mr. Home now went into trance, being evidently controlled by the spirit of H. W. K. Rising from his chair, he went over to Mr. K., laid his head lovingly upon his shoulder, caressing him the while in the most endearing manner. After which, in the same manner, he embraced Mr. K. the younger. The spirit then addressed his father, as near as can be remembered, as follows:—"Father, I know you were sorry to see me fading away, and your grief may have been heightened by the thought that I possessed, perhaps, *some* little talent;* while to me it was sad to think that I would have to close my eyes on those I loved so dearly, with the certainty that I must soon pass into another world, and feeling that I was not prepared. Ah, prepared! How little I knew then of the love and goodness of God, or I would not have been so distressed. And when I awoke in the spirit-life—oh, how bright and glorious the scene that flashed upon my soul! What a contrast to that I had just left! Yet amid all its beauty and bliss I never forgot those loved ones I had left in such deep sorrow. No; heaven is not a place where we can forget those we have left on earth. On the contrary, here our sympathies and affections are far more intense. Oh, I remember when a boy, as I used to sit and watch you at your work (painting), and thinking of the great questions of life and death, telling you that were I to die before you and go to heaven, how I would like to come sometimes and sit beside you as I used to do."† Here a lady who had lost a dear

* This is explained by the following obituary notice:—"DEATH OF A PROMISING ARTISTE.—We this week record the death at an early age of a vocalist of great promise, Mr. Haydon William Keith, at the Bridge of Allan. This gentleman was for three years a pupil at the London Academy of Music, and under Signor Schira made great progress in the cultivation of his voice, a tenore robusto of great power and remarkably sympathetic in quality. He intended spending a twelvemonth in Italy before his appearance in public, had not a neglected cold brought on a severe attack of bronchitis, which ended fatally.—*Orchestra*.—[We understand the above promising young gentleman was son of Mr. Alexander Keith, W.S.A., Glasgow.]"

† Since writing the above, Mr. K., in a note, tells me that this actually occurred when the deceased was a boy of five years, and that he was so impressed with the remark at the time, that he wrote some verses on it; and as he is sure no one present at the seance knew of the incident, it was to him a precious test of the spirit's identity. Here also I may state that Mr. Home, before sitting down, laid his hand upon Mr. Nisbet's arm, the spirit meanwhile thanking him for the opportunity that had been afforded him of meeting with his friends. It also accounts for the fact that a day or two previous to the seance, Mr. Home felt an intense and unaccountable desire to be introduced to Mr. Keith.

little one about a month previous became deeply affected. Turning to her the spirit said, while a beautiful expression lit up the face of the medium, "Do not cry; God gave, but he has *not* taken away; he has only taken him a little nearer to himself. Often in heaven, when we weave a chaplet of flowers, to make it more complete we come down to earth and cull a few buds from your earthly parterres to intertwine with ours, and these we cherish more than all the rest." He then laid his hands on the heads of father and son, and lifting up his face toward heaven, he uttered the most sublime and impressive prayer I ever listened to, praying especially that the divine blessing in all its fulness of joy and consolation might rest upon the heads of those he loved. And while blessing God for his mercies, he said, that if men only knew a tithe of the happiness he has prepared for his children, earth would become one immense temple resounding with his praise. All through the prayer, Mr. K.'s eyes never left the face of the medium, which seemed to wear the very expression of his deceased boy, while he gave utterance to such expressions as, "My God, I thank thee! Oh, this is wonderful! What are millions of wealth compared to this!" So great, indeed, was his emotion, and so real the impression that his son stood before him, that he threw his arms round the neck of the medium and kissed him again and again. While this scene was enacting, it may well be imagined what were the feelings of all present,—even bearded men had enough to do to control their feelings. Truly I must say that it was the most extraordinary scene I ever witnessed, while on no other occasion have I ever realised such overpowering sense of the presence of the departed. Among the last words uttered by the medium before he resumed his seat were, "There is no death—no! no! there is no death!"

JAMES NICHOLSON.

To the Editor.

NAPLES, February 8, 1870.

DEAR SIR,—In my previous letter to you I have mentioned the interesting seances very frequently held at Mr. and Mrs. Guppy's. At one of these, which took place on Saturday the 5th instant, there occurred a phenomenon that neither myself nor any of the spiritualists present had ever experienced before, and which I think worth chronicling. There were at the seance, besides the worthy hosts, four English young ladies, one German, our esteemed friend Dr. F. L. H. Willis of America (just from Florence and Rome), Dr. Pauli and Signor Acampora, both of Naples, and myself. On the lights being extinguished, and the usual phenomena of the playing of an accordion, a bell, &c., being over, we were at once startled and delighted by the appearance of a luminous, well-defined, and well-shaped butterfly, which, with unspeakable grace, would flutter about the room, or, at desire, approach or settle itself upon the different members of the circle, and even upon two young ladies outside, who so desired it. This interesting manifestation lasted for about one half hour, leaving the most delightful impression upon us all.

Believing this to be a phenomenon either not yet witnessed or not yet recorded, I send this brief account of it, in the hope that it may interest some of your readers. Let me add that these seances at Mr. and Mrs. Guppy's have become a source of great interest to the investigators of spiritual phenomena, and a means of converting many an obdurate unbeliever, both amongst Neapolitans and the English residents or travellers. May these useful and enlightening meetings long continue in Naples with the presence of worthy Mr. and Mrs. Guppy.—I am, yours sincerely,

G. DAMIANI.

REVIEW.

MEBER DEN VERKEHR DER GEISTER DES JENSEITS MIT DEN MENSCHEN
(The Intercourse of Departed Spirits with Man). Two Lectures
delivered in Leipsic by Count Adolf Poninski. Leipsic: E. L.
Kasprowicz—1870.

THESE two lectures were recently delivered to crowded houses in Leipsic, by Count Poninski, and their value may be inferred from the fact that they are commended by the "Committee of the Society for Spiritualistic Studies" in Leipsic. The Count develops his subject in the following manner:—1, How long has this intercourse existed? 2, On what natural laws does this intercourse rest? 3, Is this intercourse absolutely sinful, or does it become so only by misuse? 4, What end has God in view in his love for mankind through the general knowledge of this intercourse? The subject is treated in a manner rendering the work interesting alike to spiritualists and non-spiritualists. We can here only give a bare idea of the work by extracting some of the principal points touched upon. He refers first of all to the blessings of the intercourse with spirits. The conflict, he says, which Spiritualism has had to pass through was necessary, and resembles the early struggles of all sciences. God has a purpose of his own in permitting a greater intercourse with departed spirits at the present time. The fundamental principles of all spiritualist societies is, "Without love there is no salvation!" Count Poninski brings some excellent historical proofs of intercourse with spirits, showing that the prohibition of Moses against intercourse with spirits is not binding at the present time. This proof rests on the authority of Saint Augustine, who says in his work, "De cura pro mortuis" (chap. 10), about intercourse with the departed, "I remember well that Profuturus, Privatus, and Servitus, whom I knew in the cloister, have spoken with me since their death, and what they told me has also literally come to pass." What this Church father records as having occurred in the fourth century of our era proves that intercourse with spirits was not sinful then, and, of course, is not now. In answer to the fourth question—What end has God in Spiritualism?—Count Poninski says:—First, The opposing of materialism, and the conflict with egoism; and, lastly, the preparation

of the whole world for the reception of the "world-religion in Christ." We commend the book to the perusal of all our German-reading subscribers, though we do not, of course, agree in all the learned author's views. We shall heartily welcome more lectures of this description from the German spiritualists.

THE FASTING GIRL.

10 Basinghall Street, E. C., Feb. 12, 1870.

SIR,—I hope Mr. Wilkinson will persevere in this matter—that the body (whether in an abnormal state or otherwise) can be nourished by other than the usual means is by no means unlikely; and I write this to say that in Spear's *Educator*, at page 382, is the following:—"Man can be sustained by the absorption of nutritive substances without receiving them by the ordinary way. Let one who is thirsty remove the usual covering from the negative foot (the left), immerse it in water, and thirst would be quenched." Let the foot be "immersed in the ordinary grains which are used as food, and nutriment would be received. By the same way foods may be taken through the hands." I would suggest that two or three lines in the next number of *Human Nature* mentioning the same would be useful.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

THOS. SHERRATT.

REPORTS OF PROGRESS.

MR. EPES SARGENT writes from Cannes, France—"I am happy to be able to tell you that I am improving daily in health in this bright, charming climate, and that I hope to go northward in April."

MISS BEAUCLERC, of Birmingham, inaugurated a phonographic class, by giving a public lecture on the subject. She has fifteen pupils, and they are getting on remarkably well.

WE hear that M. Pierart intends some important changes in his *Revue Spiritualiste*. It will be published twice a month. Some change in the matter is also contemplated.

Mrs. H. F. M. Brown, *en route* for California, sends us a letter from the Rocky Mountains, which will be read with interest. We call the particular attention of our readers to the excellent test of one of the spirit messages published in the *Banner of Light*, which she notices.

A LADY writes:—"Miss Godfrey, 55 William Street, Regent's Park, is one of the best mesmerisers and the most truthful and reliable clairvoyantes I ever met, because in her sleep she always tells you where her power of seeing ends so clearly, instead of trying to see as many do."

BARON KIRKUP, of Florence, thus writes:—"I have likewise to thank you sincerely for the introduction of Mr. Peebles, whose talents and accomplishments as a scholar and philosopher are equal to his well-bred and courteous bearing as a gentleman."

MRS. MARY MARSHALL has informed us that she only admits her personal friends to her seances. The public need not apply.

Most extraordinary phenomena have recently been witnessed at the residence of Mr. Berry, London. A well-known West-end clergyman who is a powerful medium, was lifted bodily by the spirits and placed on the table upon a chair which had been previously put on the table by the spirits. There was sufficient light streaming through an open door to confirm this fact without doubt.

A NEW SPIRITUAL SOCIETY has been formed in Paris on the ashes of the old Allan Kardec organisation. It is doing a good work. At a recent meeting the account of M. Leon Favre's cure by spiritual magnetism was read, and a discussion followed on the difference between the magnetism of men and the magnetism of spirits. Writing mediums stood by and got information fresh from the spirits on all difficult points. Why should we not have a similar society in London, to meet on Thursday evenings, at the Progressive Library?

A HEALING MEDIUM IS COMING.—We have had a letter from Dr. W. Persons, who is well known among the spiritualists in America as a healer by the laying on of hands. He was formerly an allopath. He founded the Dynamic Institute, Milwaukee, and has treated nearly one hundred thousand patients. He is now in Texas, and hopes to reach England in summer. A photographic likeness of the doctor accompanied his letter, also a sheet of testimonials from patients and others. We know nothing of Dr. Persons personally, but would be most happy to see such a healer as he purports to be busily engaged alleviating the sufferings of humanity.

SPIRITUALISM IN BELGIUM.

A leading spiritualist in Bruxelles has been kind enough to favour us with the following statement:—

Our "Société Spirite" is as yet very small, the mediums not having as a general rule faculties striking enough. There are, I believe, a great many spiritualists in Bruxelles; we even hear now and then of very good mediums, but almost everybody keeps out of avowed spiritualism, being afraid of public opinion. There are, I feel certain, a great many families who invite a discreet friend or two to their own family seance, but dare not come to us.

So much for Spiritualism in Bruxelles; as to the other Belgian towns there is not, I believe, a single one having a little importance, including even Malines and Louvain—so very Catholic—where there is not a more or less numerous official circle or "société spirite" upholding bravely the creed of Allan Kardec as their banner.

Punch may advertise for haunted houses as much as he likes, and other witty papers may poke fun at us; it rests, nevertheless, a matter of fact that Spiritualism is spreading gently everywhere, even in this jog-trot little country of mine.

LANGERMANN.

SAN FRANCISCO.

Mrs. Spear writes as follows :—"A long time has passed since I have written to friends in England, because of my being so fully occupied with duties here. The Woman's Suffrage Association of San Francisco, of which I am a member, is making every exertion to send a large petition to the present legislature, and to forward the movement in every way. The last week in this month a convention will be held in this city to form a State organisation that in time will aid to form a Pacific slope organisation, auxiliary to the national or American association. So you see the matter of woman's suffrage is a thing determined on by its friends in this as in your country. It is only a question of time, and if efforts will hasten that time, it will come in my day. Many persons are very sanguine in respect to it; but it seems to me that opposition to it is yet to be very violent; for, though it is more just and sensible than enfranchising the slave, it will cause a revolution in every department, almost like constructing society anew. I have had the honour to be made a *permanent* member of this convention, and am intrusted with the superintending of the presentation of the petitions to the Legislature. A bill has passed both Houses of the Legislature of Wyoming Territory allowing women to the elective franchise under the same conditions that men have it, and many are emulous that California be the first State of the Union to pass a law to the same effect." Mr. Spear is much occupied in giving psychometric delineations of character, and we may state that any person in England desiring the services of Mr. Spear in this respect may address him, "J. M. Spear, San Francisco, California." The only difference will be that his clients will have to wait a few weeks longer for a reply, and pay threepence postage on letters. Mrs. Spear encloses the circular of a "Lyceum for Self-culture," of which she is vice-president. It meets on Sunday afternoon in Dashaway Hall. One paragraph reads thus :—"We aspire—we reason—we welcome instruction. We extend a cordial welcome to all, and invite every seeker for truth to aid by presence and co-operation the accomplishment of our common desire. We have no *ism* to establish, no system of proselytism, nor any pre-established mode of warfare on existing systems."

RELIGIONISTS IN LONDON.

At no period of history, probably, since the schools of religion and philosophy jostled one another in the streets of Alexandria, have the forms of religious life been more exuberant and diversified than in London at the present time. To mention only the most prominent—quite apart from recognised sects or bodies, however unorthodox—we have the strangest spectacles of groups of religionists gathering round a single teacher, or linked together by a common sentiment, which would scarcely appear capable of forming a nucleus of spiritual life. Mr. Bradlaugh, disavowing the negative creed of Atheism, dispenses to his hearers the novel doctrines of Anti-Theism. Mr. Peebles, at the Cavendish Rooms, succeeding to the mantle of Mrs. Emma Hardinge, discourses of Spiritualism to the accompaniment of approving raps,

presumably from Hades. At St. George's Hall, philosophers lecture in the afternoon on the Deep Sea and on Parasitic Animals; whilst, in the evening, ladies discourse sweetly of Shelley, to the accompaniment of "a band and chorus of 150 performers." Ned Wright, in the Gospel Hall, tries to reclaim his quondam associates; and last, not least, the Reverend Father Ignatius, having metamorphosed to that time-honoured title his mundane appellation of the Rev. Francis Lyne—throws open the doors of his "Benedictine Monastery," No. 51 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, and, by public advertisement, invites the curious or the sympathising to hear him unburthen himself on a Saturday evening.—*Daily Telegraph*.

LECTURES ON SPIRITUALISM.

MR. J. M. PEEBLES (United States Consul at Trebisond), delivered the second of his lectures on the above subject, on Tuesday evening, in the Lecture Hall, St. Andrew's, when Mr. C. W. Pearce, of London (formerly of this city) occupied the chair.

The lecture consisted principally of details respecting the phenomena which Mr. Peebles had himself witnessed. He prefaced his narrative by remarking that similar phenomena had been witnessed and were believed in in America by five millions of people. He began his career in connection with Spiritualism as a sceptic. He was the minister of a church in the United States at the time when he first heard of it, and he considered it to be the work of the devil and that it ought to be put down. He prayed that it might be overthrown and defeated as the last device of Satan to ruin Christianity. He found, however, that Spiritualism had taken root in his own congregation, among whom there were various mediums. At length he was induced to visit a medium, and for this purpose he went to a place called Auburn. Here in a pleasant room he found a child, a lady, and a table. The lady placed her hand on the table and immediately he heard three raps. He said if they were spirits who produced the raps they might come from somewhere else besides the table. Immediately they did so—from the floor and from the wall. Still he thought the sounds might have been produced by machinery, but when the raps came upon his "coat collar" he was satisfied that no machinery had anything to do with them. The second time he went he had his cousin's name spelled out to him, with a statement as to where and when she died, together with several other particulars which he did not then know, but which he subsequently learned to be true. The lecturer's next experience was with a trance medium—a lad only fourteen years old—who undertook to address an audience upon any subject that might be proposed. The lecturer was one of a committee appointed to test the case, and he proposed as the topic for the boy's discourse, "The relation of the ancient civilisation of India, Egypt, Babylon, and Greece to the civilisation and governments of this day and age." As soon as the subject was announced, the boy became spasmodic and stepped upon the platform. His first words were, "In all ages reason has been God's seal of manhood." He then went all through the histories of the ancient nations in a

strain of eloquence so logical and philosophical, and with language so noble, that every one was charmed. The lecturer, who had not before overcome his scepticism, had nothing to say. He went to laugh—but he returned home to pray. His next experience was with a Dr. Redman, a test medium, who wrote for him a message from a deceased Quaker preacher who was called the “Good Samaritan,” and in which two facts were mentioned known only to the Quaker and the lecturer. He afterwards came in contact with a lady medium, who wrote with both hands at the same time upon different subjects. He saw her take a pencil in the right hand and another in the left hand. With that in the right hand she wrote upon Geology, and with that in the left upon Aspiration, while all the time she was talking with the company. He next saw a young man who wrote poems through the agency of spirits. On one occasion a committee of freemasons were appointed to test him, and they gave him as a subject the one word “Abiff,” a name well understood by all masons. Though the youth knew nothing about masonry he immediately commenced to give in rhymed poetry a history of Hiram Abiff, and he also gave the masonic signs of the first three degrees. The lecturer was once at a seance in Cleveland, Ohio, where were two powerful mediums. Thirty or forty persons were present. A circle was formed, and the hands and feet of the mediums were tied. In a short time a number of musical instruments sailed round the room over their heads with no mortal hands near them. Presently there came over the room seemingly a light foggy cloud that gradually assumed a human form, and appeared to straighten itself up. As they gazed upon it, it disappeared. The whole of those present saw and heard precisely the same things as he himself did, so it was not a mere illusion. Again, he had seen Dr. E. C. Dunn raised up in the air and float like a feather with no human being near him. He had also seen him put his hand into a flame of fire and hold it there five minutes without being in the least burned. One June evening when he was holding the hands of this gentleman (Dr. Dunn), something came in through the window, and passed around them. He thought it was some large insect; but it turned out that it was two beautiful rose-buds just picked, which he had still preserved in his library. Mr. Peebles then mentioned that he had once sat by the side of his wife and seen a lady in a condition of trance draw a beautiful spirit picture of one passed away. He then mentioned the circumstance of a spirit whom he had talked with for nine years, and who called himself Aaron Knight. He talked with him mainly through the mediumship of Dr. E. C. Dunn. On the first occasion, about nine or ten years since, the spirit told him that he was born in Yorkshire, in England; that his brother's name was James Knight, a clergyman, and that his father also was a clergyman. He also told the lecturer about horse-racing and fox-hunting, sports which they had not in America, and which he did not know even the meaning of. He told also about York Minster and the pictures in it; about St. Mary's Abbey in ruins; about the river Ouse; about the very stones on which he used to walk 170 years ago, when he was in the mortal body. Landing last July in Liverpool, the lecturer thought he would at once go to York. There

he saw the Minster and the various things of which he had been told. He then sought for the name of James Knight, a clergyman, as Aaron Knight had told him that he died young and left no name or fame on earth, but that his brother might possibly be heard of. He was at last successful at the Will Office. There he found recorded the will of the Rev. James Knight, who died about 170 years since, with various other circumstances, exactly corresponding with what he had been told in America. The lecturer having enumerated a number of other particulars, spoke of the uses of spiritualism, and the blessings associated with the knowledge it gave of the presence of those who were deceased, and who continued to take an interest in their friends still in the world.

At the conclusion of the lecture the Chairman confirmed what Mr. Peebles had stated by referring to his own experience in his family, where he constantly had communications similar to those that had been enumerated.—*Norfolk News*, Feb. 10.

MISCELLANEA.

ONE Hadji Athanassi, a Greek, has just died (says the *Levant Times*) at Vourla (Smyrna) at the patriarchal age of 125, having lived in the reigns of nine sultans! He preserved all his faculties to the very last. His regular diet was fish and vegetables: meat he never ate except at Easter.

SINGULAR STATEMENT.—A letter in the *Spectator* says:—"In your review of the 'Life of Faraday' (Feb. 12), you state that he refused to bring to bear upon the highest things those mental operations which he delighted to apply to very high things, and that in religion he neither investigated nor reasoned. This is quite true, and I am able to corroborate it from having heard Faraday express himself in terms almost identical. A relative of mine, at whose house Faraday was staying some years ago, put this question to the philosopher:—'How is it that you are a believer in the doctrines of your sect?' His reply was:—'I prostrate my reason in this matter, for if I applied the same process of reasoning which I use in the matters of science, I should be an unbeliever.' Faraday was, as I have good reason to know, a practical Christian in every respect."

MONSIEUR JULES FAVRE believes in magnetism and somnambulism, and he has often spoken out in defence of these subjects. At the time of the outbreak of spiritual phenomena in France, wishing to satisfy himself about these things, he constructed a table, with a pivot in the centre, to which he fastened an index, like the hand of a watch. When hands were placed on the table this was moved round, and spelled out sentences by stopping at letters which were marked on the table. By this means M. Favre has obtained extraordinary and precise communications, so much so, as to leave no doubt in his mind as to the genuine spiritual source of these phenomena. By the advice of his medical man, however, he has discontinued these experiences, as the excitement thus caused to his nervous system was likely to have been injurious to him.

THE English Parliament of 1770 was so ungallant as to enact that "Whoever should lead into matrimonial bonds any male subject of His Majesty by means of rouge or powders, perfumes, essences, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish cotton, iron corsets, crinolines, high heeled shoes, or false calves, should be prosecuted for sorcery and the marriage declared null and void." What a time there would be now-a-days if such a law was in force, remarked *Digby*, after reading the above.

A HAUNTED RAILWAY.—The Boston papers publish the following as a strange but well-authenticated story:—"The engineer of the freight train on the Boston and Lowell Railroad, which leaves Boston about three o'clock in the morning, has on several occasions discovered a red light swinging at a furious rate at the Woburn Station, where the train stops for water. The light would sometimes be in front, and sometimes in the rear of the train. When the engineer would stop his train and send some one to learn why the signal to stop was made, the messenger would be greatly surprised to see the light vanish. Investigation has proved that no person was there with a lantern, and the brakeman and conductor concur also in having beheld the phenomenon, which, so far as known, is without visible cause. Some labourers living on the line of the above station state that a few mornings since they were coming down the road in a hand-car, when they suddenly heard the approach of an engine and train, and knowing that no train was due in the vicinity at that hour, they became greatly frightened, and, jumping out of the car, threw it off the track to await the train which, they thought, was coming at a rapid pace upon them, but which, it is needless to say, did not come. The superstitious regard the affair as a forewarning of some disaster, while the spiritualists have the ready theory that it is the spirit of a man who was killed there about two years since."—*New York Times*, Jan 30.

THE effects of "Electro Biology" are thus described in an account of Miss Montague's entertainments:—Miss Montague, on this occasion, herself submitted to be mesmerised, and fell into a state of apparent sleep and insensibility. After various phrenological results had been shown by the person who operated upon her while in this condition the operator gradually drew one after another of the youths about the platform into a mesmeric state, until he had about half a dozen thus. A youth was then drawn from his seat, and came forward slowly trembling. "Poor boy," said the operator, and the looks of awe, curiosity, and sympathy with which they slowly approached him were more real than the finest acting could be. "See he is shot—shot in the breast," exclaims the operator, and the lads and Miss Montague crowd round him, lifting him tenderly in their arms, the boy meanwhile quivering from the imaginary wound. His waistcoat is torn open by the lads around him, and handkerchiefs applied as if to staunch the blood, when, just at this juncture, at a word from the operator, the busy group was transfixed instantly, and remained as motionless as a block of statuary, with expressions which an artist might have envied. They were afterwards set dancing, and again transfixed, this time in the very action of dancing, in postures which under any other circumstance it would have been impossible to sustain.—*Wisbeach Mirror*.

TO THE READERS OF *HUMAN NATURE*.—At a meeting of a few friends and admirers of Mr J. W. Jackson, it was resolved to take steps to raise a fund for a testimonial to be presented to that gentleman in recognition of his able and valued services as a writer and lecturer on Mesmerism, Phrenology, and kindred subjects. A committee was formed to promote the object for which the meeting was called; and among other arrangements they think that an appeal to the readers of *Human Nature* might well be included, as they feel satisfied that there are many of the readers of this magazine who might desire to testify their respect to Mr Jackson in the manner proposed, as an able and gratuitous contributor to these pages. They have reason to believe that the readers of this magazine include many who entertain sentiments of high admiration for Mr Jackson, as one whose literary ability and professional skill, displayed in a cause which has encountered much opposition, is entitled to some public mark of recognition of a substantial character. Without entering into details, it may be stated generally, that Mr Jackson has devoted the greater part of a long life to the advocacy of, and instruction in, Curative Mesmerism and Phrenology, a work which the readers of a magazine such as this, to whose pages he has, as already stated, been an able contributor, are presumed to be interested in; and the committee think that no apology is necessary in asking their assistance in promoting the object in view.

Subscriptions sent to Mr Hay Nisbet, printer, or to Mr James Burns, publisher of *Human Nature*, will be duly acknowledged.—In name of the Committee,
Glasgow, April, 17, 1869. C. GRACIE, Secy.

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