

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by the Editor.

My readers will be glad to have the following characteristic portrait of the late Mrs. De Morgan:—



A sermon in brief. Turning over my exchanges, I came on this touching passage, which I find both pathetic and instructive. It is from the "Religio-Philosophical Journal":—

Some weeks ago we received a letter from a subscriber at Elba, N.Y., telling us to stop his paper, as he was going away. Later on the following letter was received from the same correspondent, giving us the first intimation of his situation:—

Linden, N.Y.

DEAR SIR,—Please send me "The Journal" for five months, and enclosed find 1d. for the same. Please send "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," "The Spirit World," by Dr. Crowell, and Finney's pamphlet on the Bible. I enclose in all 4d. I want you to do as well by me as you can, for I am poor and in the poorhouse. Do not send any more papers to Elba. Please send the pamphlet "If a Man Die Shall he Live Again?"—Yours truly,

(Signed) JOHN BRIDGE.

P.S.—Send them in care of C. B. Pixley, Linden, Genesee Co., N.Y.

On this letter was the following endorsement by the keeper of the poorhouse:—

John Bridge is a poor cripple. The money he sends you he has been saving up for a long time. He is worthy of any extras you may send him.—Respectfully yours,

C. B. PIXLEY, Keeper.

Poor and crippled John Bridge! We would rather take your chances in the world to come than those of many a rich man. The books you ordered have been sent, together with some others; and "The Journal" will go to you free as long as you have need of it. In the nature of things, before very long your noble and beautiful spirit will be released from its crippled mortal body, and you will stand erect and symmetrical in the Summer Land where there is no need of poorhouses, and where men are measured by their spiritual worth alone.

There is no need to point the moral. It will be a long time before the managers of the Spiritualist Press are able to make their efforts self-supporting, if only because one of their greatest cares must be to keep a little in advance of the average requirements of their readers, and to raise them by degrees to a higher plane of thought. This excludes the methods by which cheap publications catch the popular ear. It must be remembered, moreover, that papers of a special character can only find a more or less limited audience. It is the self-denial of the few that sustains what is for the good of the many.

Once more, we have only just reached a time when to speak out does not mean social and pecuniary loss. It is pitiful, but it is true that many people hold their tongues for fear of cheap ridicule, and give their evidence, if at all, shame-facedly and with many omissions and roundabout periphrases. What a large family Nicodemus has left behind him! A clear, plain statement of a psychical experience is rare: especially so when properly signed and, where possible, corroborated. Such observations on cases as are sent to medical papers, like the "Lancet" or "British Medical Journal," are what we want in reference to alleged cures of disease by what is known as healing mediumship. Plain recitals of fact, such as are sent to "Nature" and similar periodicals, are what we want in reference to the phenomena which occur in circles and spontaneously in private life. Then we need to follow Mr. Stead's advice and discuss our facts openly and freely, making the results publicly known. This must be done without fear or favour, not to discredit evidence or to pick holes in it, not to point out flaws while ignoring the real points that advance or confirm our knowledge: still less must it be done for the purpose of advertising a preconceived notion. If, for example, the known and acknowledged powers of the human spirit will satisfactorily account for and explain a particular occurrence, we are not to import the action of external spirit, because it is a cheap and easy *deus ex machina* and because we know of such action in other cases. If, on the other hand, the action of spirit other than that of the medium is indicated, we are not to refuse to recognise that action because it does not square with our prepossessions and preconceptions. Offences against these plain laws by which evidence ought to be treated are common among Spiritualists, who carry their jealousy of non-Spiritualist interpretation of obscure facts almost as far as the stiff-necked scientist whose constant cry is, Spirit is the last thing I will give in to. Each fails of perfect candour and impartiality. The Spiritualist gathers much evidence that does not fairly support his theory. The Scientist rejects a mass of truth that finds no place in a

system from which he has practically excluded the action of unembodied spirit.

Among those men of scientific position who have boldly spoken out their convictions, and who are honourably distinguished by a frank recognition of causes not yet accepted by their associates without more or less of a grimace, the name of Carl du Prel is prominent. As an instance of his thoroughness of treatment of obscure subjects the following words of his in "Nord und Sud" may be studied:—

One thing is clear: that is, that psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find: (1) That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate-pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the slate or lead pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language. (10) If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human forms. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions.

Yes, it is cowardly to withhold convictions that have been reached by the slow and laborious processes of patient investigation. It is also foolish to interrupt the patient search by inviting attention to experiments which are inchoate and incomplete or to theories which are not based on sufficiently wide generalisation. It is not less foolish to apply one universal law, which we cannot yet affirm with certainty as to its action, to the vast variety of cases that meet the psychical student at every turn. Spiritualism has suffered from want of attention to these simple principles of investigation.

The following comment in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal" on the first ghost number of the "Review of Reviews" is to the point in connection with what I am now writing:—

It does not seem to be too bold a speculation to believe that the patient methods of inductive science, the careful examination of evidence and the repeatedly renewed experiments of investigation will before long completely re-establish the failing belief in the reality of the world beyond the grave, and leave us with as little room for doubt as to the existence of the spirit after death as we have now for doubting the existence of Behring Straits or of the Pyramids. . . . It seems as if science were once more to vindicate her claim to be regarded as the handmaid of religion by affording conclusive demonstration of its reality.

Such words as these from the Editor of one of the popular and widely circulated magazines, and the fact that to psychical and spirit phenomena one entire number of the publication is given, prove conclusively the importance to which this subject has grown in the public mind. The investigations will be conducted in the future with larger knowledge of the powers and capacities of the mind than has existed hitherto and with greater discrimination than has marked ordinary investigations of Spiritualism. Some of the phenomena which have been regarded by Spiritualists as spirit manifestations may be shown to be due to the latent forces of the subject, but the essential truths of Spiritualism will be, as they are now being, corroborated by the most rigid scrutiny.

No doubt it is a sign of the times that a whole number of a very widely circulated periodical is given up to ghosts. Since this comment appeared in our contemporary another number has followed, and no doubt there are others to come. It is, however, with the two concluding sentences that I find myself chiefly in agreement. Science, especially mental science, will, in the future, help us greatly in our investigations. And I have no fear whatever that the

"essential truths of Spiritualism" will be "corroborated by the most rigid scrutiny."

Reverting to the diagnosis and cure of disease, I find in the "Adelaide Advertiser" (South Australia) a report of an address on "The Progress of Medicine," delivered before the University by Dr. Verco, the appointed orator of the year. In it there are some points to which I desire to draw attention. He is a man of enthusiasm in Dr. Verco, and his eye is on the future possibilities of his art. It is not the body alone that he would treat. Having spoken of the almost boundless field that lies before medical science in the prevention and treatment of bodily disease, he takes a wider sweep:—

I am persuaded that we shall thus be led on to a recognition of the spiritual in man, and to a wider and deeper conviction that spiritual health is essential to a fulness of the physical. That as alienation from the life of man is the sign of mental disease, so alienation from the life of God is the evidence of spiritual disease; that as much of our physical suffering is the result of an aberration from the normal mentally—far short of insanity—so much of our trouble, both mental and physical, is the consequence of a deviation from the normal spiritually. There is a spiritual prophylaxis, the prevention of disease by religion. This inculcates morality. Immorality is a fruitful source of physical evil. We see this demonstrated in the miserable catalogue of complaints induced by intemperance for instance. If the two virtues of sobriety and chastity alone were universal, whole groups of deadly

maladies would entirely disappear. And religion not only inculcates morality but furnishes its incentives. Such virtues demand control of the human appetites. Education, law, self-interest, public opinion have proved powerless to restrain. Religion can and does. Not superstition, or mysticism, or mere scholastic theology. But that spiritual activity which recognises an eternal future as the issue, the "ergo" of the present; realises our responsibility to the Deity, believes in His truth, hopes in His promises, loves Him for His kindness, and rests in the providences of His wisdom and power. Here is a grand prophylactic. Let faith, hope, and love abide, immorality must cease, and with it all the physical suffering it entails. And more, the whole mental state would be so regulated as to promote its stability. Anger, with its fierceness; ambition, with its tension and haste; covetousness, with its chronic miserliness, and its acute reckless plunging; care with its maddening anxiety; egoism in its varied aspects, the very germ of insanity, would be subdued, a salutary and sanitary peace would guard the mind and so mould the life as to repel rather than invite the attack of mental maladies.

Nor is this all:—

There is, too, a spiritual therapeutics, a curative power. If, as many affirm, faith in the medical man is so potent as

element in cure (and it is a large and reasonable one), shall not a stronger faith in omnipotence be more potent still? If the hope of recovery is a valuable stimulant, and fear a depressant which may often turn the scale, may there not be a more powerful adjuvant to treatment in a sublimer hope which robs even death of its terror and gives the patient a perfect peace in view of the dreadful possibilities of disease? And for the self-indulgent egotism, which is so often the precursor of insanity, what better cure can there be than a self-denial and self-control springing from unselfish love. And the time shall surely come when the potentialities of a spiritual prophylaxis and therapeutics shall be more generally employed to the amelioration of the condition of mankind and the prolongation of life. I admit, we are so inter-dependent and interacting, we mutually affect one another to such a degree that, with spirituality at a discount, the carefulness of the individual benefits only to a certain extent even himself. But let obedience to spiritual law become general, and its effects, I venture to affirm, would exceed the highest anticipations of the most sanguine optimist in the progressive vitality of our race. Who knows, if we will but grasp the man in his entirety, body, soul, and spirit, our speed may be greater, our advance further, than any dreamer has ever dreamed, although we shall never gain the goal. Balboa, seeking the water of life, pushed to the confines of the world in vain, but looked out upon the boundless ocean of the still Pacific and found there a better immortality. And what we cannot achieve, shall by the grace of God be given us. The absolute perfection of the eternal state beyond the grave, revealed by seers of long ago, though to some before me to-day no other than the baseless fabric of a vision, is to many millions of our race (among whom I am glad to be numbered) an unseen reality, an earnest expectation, a sure and certain hope. We look for now heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and the spirits of just men made perfect shall be clothed upon with spiritual bodies, incorruptible and immortal, and no one shall ever say, "I am sick, and there shall be no more wars, neither can they die any more."

It was not the place, perhaps Dr. Verco felt that he was not the man, or that the time was not yet come for one in his position to speak more fully of the healing forces which we are learning to transmit from healer to healed, from the healthy organism, with or without the superadded power of spirit, supplementing natural gifts, to the sufferer who has inherited physically the sins of his fathers, or who has sinned against his own self, or is the victim of some of the many vices of what it pleases us to call an advanced civilisation. Of the spiritual gifts there is none more blessed than the gift of healing. As it is with so many other of the obscure phenomena which we are studying we shall find in the intellectual study of hypnotism, a key to and some explanation of its mysteries. But even with the faulty methods hitherto adopted we may safely say that some of the ailments and even diseases of a highly organised generation, which habitually lives at high pressure, will find their remedy in this gift of healing which is so eminently worthy of our attentive study.

MR. JENKINS'S WEATHER ALMANACK.—We have received a Chart (price 6d.) and a Weather Almanack (price 1d.) published by R. Morgan, 65, Westow-street, Norwood, S.E. The two profess to give probable weather for the current year. We believe that Mr. Jenkins was more than usually successful in his forecasts last year. The almanack contains a good deal of useful information which will be serviceable to those who do not pin much faith to weather prophecy.

AMIDST the downward tendency and proneness of things, when every voice is raised for a new road or another statute, or a subscription of stock, for an improvement in dress, or in dentistry, for a new house or a larger business, for a political party, or the division of an estate—will you not tolerate one or two solitary voices in the land, speaking for thoughts and principles not marketable or perishable? Soon these improvements and mechanical inventions will be superseded; these modes of living lost out of memory; these cities rotted, ruined by war, by new inventions, by new seats of trade, or the geologic changes: all gone, like the shells which sprinkle the seabeach with a white colony to-day, for ever renewed to be for ever destroyed. But the thoughts which these few hermits (the Transcendentalists) strove to proclaim by silence, as well as by speech, not only by what they did, but by what they forebore to do, shall abide in beauty and strength, to reorganise themselves in nature, to invest themselves anew in other, perhaps higher endowed and happier mixed clay than ours, in fuller union with the surrounding system.—EMERSON.

SPIRITUALISM :

ITS FUTURE COMPREHENSIVELY CONSIDERED.

BY HON. A. B. RICHMOND.

"Nature is man's best teacher; she unfolds
Her treasures to his search, unseals his eye,
Illumes his mind and purifies his heart;
An influence breathes from all sights and sounds;
Of her existence, she is wisdom's self."

—Street's Poems.

All natural phenomena are manifested to us through the senses; they are the only avenues through which a knowledge of objects or events can reach our consciousness; and although the cause of the manifestations may be hidden in nature's boundless laboratory, yet the effects are plainly visible. Thus we see that a blade of grass grows day by day through the energy called vegetative life, yet what that life is we do not know. We see an apple fall, as did the great Newton, and we call the force that draws it toward the earth the attraction of gravitation, yet science cannot tell us what gravity is, or what causes it. We know that the attraction of matter for matter moulds and forms alike the dew-drops and the orbs in stellar space, yet how, or when, or wherefore, are unsolved enigmas. We know that there is a love among atoms of matter called chemical affinity, that unites an acid and an alkali in a marriage embrace, and an enmity whose antagonistic force will divorce them; but what these contending powers are, science has not discovered. We know that electricity, by a force called induction, begets magnetism, and that magnetism by a similar law becomes the parent of electricity, and the great unsolved problem is: "What are these mysterious forces that are interchangeable?" and that under different circumstances and conditions may become either parent or offspring. Around us on every side we see the effects of natural laws which are as wonderful to our senses as any so-called spiritual phenomena, while their primordial causes are beyond the reach of scientific researches or investigation. The eminent savant Lacono says:—

"We know the effects of many things, but the causes of few."

Mankind recognises the former through the evidence of our senses, while the latter are only made apparent by a process of inductive reasoning. Effects can be proven by the testimony of observers, while causes are the enactments of nature's unknown senate, whose laws govern all movements and formations of matter. The mysteries of human life have evaded the research of science, yet inductive philosophy teaches us that its continuity is not more improbable than its present existence. We witness the present effect called sentient life. We do not know its cause, and we know no reason why it should not continue beyond the phenomenon of death; and if it can and does prove its existence beyond the grave by the same evidence we recognise of this life, how can we doubt or disbelieve?

We receive through the clicks of the telegraph a communication from a distant friend. The operator interprets the raps of the sounder to us; they narrate memories of the past, relate facts known only to ourselves and the distant friend. We recognise them, and know that that friend is living and communicating with us, and upon this knowledge we act in the most momentous affairs of life. There is nothing in the mechanical devices of the telegraph line or office that carries conviction to our minds. We form our opinion of the truth of the message by the innate evidence it possesses of mutual knowledge, memory, or affection. And we could not doubt if we would. Then we receive a similar message from a friend who has "passed away." We have the same innate evidence of its genuineness that we have of the one transmitted by the mysterious throbbings of electricity; yes! even more, for this last communication is written in the handwriting we remember so well. We recognise the mental characteristics of the deceased; the peculiar forms of expression not observable in the telegram are there, and added to this is the well-known signature whose form is indelibly impressed upon our memory; all these unmistakable evidences of personality are there, and the thinking mind cannot but be convinced that the friend still lives, and that the mouldering form in the grave is but the cast-off raiment of this life exchanged for the glorious habiliments of immortality.

In scientific inquiry philosophers do not ignore the evidence of visible facts because their cause is unknown, but

recognising them, they search for the laws that govern and created them. The eloquent tongue is but a clod of senseless matter that raps the air in recognised vibrations to which language has affixed a meaning. "Yes" and "No" are but different numbers of vibrations or raps on the tympanum of the ear, which English-speaking people have agreed should be an affirmation or negation; yet the phenomenon is not different from the raps on the table by some unknown living force. It is not more mysterious than that which moves the tongue; and when both are governed by an intelligence that has human characteristics, how can we doubt the parentage of one more than the other?

If we hear human intelligence manifested by tongue or raps, or see it in the movement of inert and inanimate matter, we must know that a human mind is the unseen "power behind the throne greater than the throne itself," and that all intelligence, however manifested, is but a mandate of the monarch, human reason, whose sceptre is thought, and whose kingdom the boundless realm of intellectual mentality. We know that all phenomena that manifest intelligence are *sui generis*. They cannot be counterfeited. There is no spurious coin among the circulating media of human thought. There is no similitude of the human mind, and when we see it manifested by pen or planchette, or hear it in the raps of tongue or table, we know that we cannot be deceived in the nature of the force that causes the phenomena. If intellect, memory, and love control the unseen forces, then they must be phenomena of a human soul, for they can emanate from no other source. There is no power in the universe that can simulate them. The only mint of the human mind is the human soul, and there can be no counterfeit of either its impress or the pure metal of its coinage.

Life is not more apparent to the senses than is intellect. It is true that there may be life without intellect, but not intellect without life, and where it is manifested, in whatever form it may be observed, it is certain that life is there also; wherefore the faintest raps that convey intelligence are positive evidence of the presence of both life and a human mind. The marks of identification of personal intellectuality are more plain and certain than are those of physical foundations. Men are nearer alike in body than in mind. As in the celebrated Tichborne trial in England, men have often personated other men from a resemblance in form and features, but never in mentality or intellectual acquirements. If an intelligence manifests itself to us by any means, its personality can be determined by proof that is absolutely conclusive. Therefore, when a human intellect with its peculiar mental characteristics makes its presence known to us either by raps, vocal sounds, or writing, no fact can be made more clearly apparent to our senses. It matters not that the casket that once contained it in earth-life has long since been given to death and decay, the soul surely lives and retains its personality if it can remember incidents of the past, and relate them through any physical phenomena, however insignificant they may appear to those unacquainted with the laws and conditions of spirit life.

An orthodox friend remarked to me the other day that he could not believe that the spirits of our dead would stoop so low as to communicate with their earthly friends by raps on old tables and tambourines. A smiling sneer enlivened his intellectual countenance when he uttered this profound argument against well-known phenomena, and I was compelled to acknowledge its force and logic with the remark: "That it was strange, it is true; almost as much so as that a spirit should communicate with a denizen of earth through the sonorous vocal organs of Balaam's old and faithful servant."

The credulity of orthodox Christians will permit them to believe that the spirit world can and has communicated with men through the lips of an "*Asinus vulgaris*," yet they most vehemently deny the possibility of a like occurrence through the hands and lips of their mediumistic friends and neighbours. They believe that such occult phenomena have occurred in times past through the unchangeable laws of an immutable God, and yet deny that they can occur to-day. The priesthood of to-day claim to be the only mediums between man and a future life. They seem to be afraid to admit the possibility of the mediumship of the past occurring at the present time, lest infidelity might draw an invidious comparison between the mediums of Balaam's time and those of the sacred desk or pulpit.

It is common occurrence for orthodox Christians to sneer at the plebeian mode of spirit communications. They seem to forget that in accordance with a belief of their creed, their Saviour, a God, was born in a manger, and for nearly thirty years worked with His reputed father at the lowly calling of a carpenter, and, while on His holy mission, associated with Magdalens and fishermen, depending upon the charity of the public for His daily bread. But what avail the sneers and sarcasm of bigotry and creeds if the facts exist?

Till they can rail the seal from off the bond,
They but offend their lungs to speak so loud.

Under the enlightenment of advancing thought, it is impossible to-day to silence inquiry, or stifle the investigation of any subject in which the people feel an interest. As Professor James T. Bixby in the "Arena" for November says:

"The modern mind is thoroughly wide awake and has quite thrown off the leading strings of ancient timidity. It looks all the questions in the face, and demands to be shown the real facts in every realm. All the traditions of history, the laws of science, and the principles of morals are overhauled, and the foundations on which they rest relentlessly probed. And our modern curiosity can see no reason why it should cease its investigation when it comes to the frontiers of religion. It deems no dogma too old to be summoned before its bar, no Pope or Scripture too venerable to be put in the witness-box and cross-examined as to its accuracy or authority."

Such is surely the spirit of the age in which we live. Science is a relentless Iconoclast, and has no respect for the sacred images of past superstition, whether carved in marble or enunciated in the articles of faith or creedal dogmas. What are the facts to be investigated? is the question of educated thought, and faith and hope to have place in the laboratories of either scientific or mental research? Faith has no scales in which can be accurately weighed the testimony of the senses, but is rather the dust in the cup of the balance, to be removed before facts are placed therein, lest it gives a false impetus to the descending scale; while hope is but an idle wish, often prompted by personal desires and selfishness, and whose gratification would be injustice to the world.

Is there a life beyond the awful mysteries of death? is the all-absorbing question of sentient thought, and nothing but facts will ever answer it to the conviction of reason and reflection. The evidence of facts must be proven by the experience of the senses; no other witnesses can truthfully testify in the case, and when the testimony is before the court of the human mind, the verdict will be as involuntary as are the movements of the heart or lungs. No special pleading by faith or pettifogging by hope will avail to change the decision of that great tribunal. It is certain that a belief in spirit visitations and manifestations is a recorded fact of all ages, and among all people, and to-day so-called modern Spiritualism is permeating all Christian organisations. In a covert way it is whispered in many a sermon from orthodox divines. Church members secretly visit the séance-room and there find confirmatory evidence of the basic facts of all creeds. The great sensational evangelist, Dr. Talmage, in a recent sermon, speaking of death, said:—

"The apparent feeling of uneasiness and restlessness at the time of the Christian's departure, the physicians say, is caused by no real distress. It is an unconscious and involuntary movement, and I think in many cases it is the vision of Heavenly gladness too great for mortal endurance. It is only Heaven breaking in on the departing spirit. You see your works will be done and the time for departure will be at hand, and there will be wings under you, and songs let loose on the air, and your old father and mother, gone for years, will descend into the room, and your little children, whom you put away for the last sleep years ago, will be at your side, and their kiss will be on your foreheads, and you will see gardens in full bloom and the swinging open of shining gates, and will hear voices long ago hushed. In many a Christian departure that you have known and I have known there was in the phraseology of the departing ones something that indicated the reappearance of those long deceased. It is no delirium, no delusion, but a supernal fact. Your glorified loved ones will hear that you are about to come, and they will say in Heaven, 'May I go down to show that soul the way up? May I be the celestial escort? May I wait for that soul at the edge of the pillow?' And the

Lord will say: 'Yes. You may fly down on that mission.' And I think all your glorified kindred will come down, and they will be in the room, and although those in health standing around may hear no voice and see no arrival from the Heavenly world, you will see and hear. And the moment the fleshy bond of the soul shall break, the cry will be: 'Follow me! Up this way! By this gilded cloud, past these stars, straight for home, straight for glory.' "

These utterances of Dr. Talmage, when shorn of their tinsel rhetoric and gaudy verbiage, are a simple avowal of the facts claimed by Spiritualists. They assert a spirit life wherein the spirits of those who have passed away have a knowledge of the events transpiring on earth. That they remember and love those who were dear to them in this life, and that under certain conditions they can return to earth with their consoling influence, and accompany the departing soul to its future abode of supernal bliss. And when the time comes, as it surely will; when the beautiful philosophy of Spiritualism can be enunciated in all the pulpits in the land without danger to the tenure of "Othello's occupation," it will be the religion of the world. Then, and not until then, will the true Millennium come. "Then shall death be swallowed up in victory, and all tears wiped away from all faces," and all mankind shall know "That if a man dies, he shall live again."

And that Death is the crown of life:

Were death denied, poor man would live in vain:

Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign;

Spring from our fetters, fasten to the skies,

Where blooming Edens open on our sight;

The king of terrors is the prince of peace.

—"PROGRESSIVE THINKER."

"NATURAL FOOD."

"Natural Food" is a monthly journal (L. N. Fowler, Ludgate-circus, E.C. Price 1d.) devoted to the advocacy of a healthy system of life as understood by the "Natural Food Society." This system is shortly set forth thus:—

The Natural Food Society is founded in the belief that the food of primeval man consisted of fruit and nuts of sub-tropical climes, spontaneously produced; that on these foods man was (and may again become) at least as free from disease as the animals are in a state of nature. Physiologists unite in teaching that these foods are adapted to digestion in the main stomach, where, it is contended by this society, the great bulk of our food should be digested; whereas cereals, pulses, bread, and in fact all starch foods are chiefly digested in the intestines, and hence, it is maintained, are unnatural and disease-inducing foods, and the chief cause of the nervous prostration and broken-down health that abound on all sides.

Since nuts and fruits—especially the former—are not always obtainable in right varieties and conditions, and since most people have weakened powers of digestion and assimilation, and are thus unable properly to digest nuts, and are also obliged to perform more work than is natural or healthful, it is recommended that milk, curd or mild cheese, and eggs be liberally used instead, and as supplemental to the fruit diet. For all those not vegetarians, and also for all with whom milk and eggs do not agree, the usual diet of fish or flesh is recommended instead. These animal products and flesh foods are "natural" only in the sense that they are suitable for digestion in the first stomach, and are free from the objections made against bread and other cereal and starch foods; and are valuable and necessary as long—and only as long—as men and women, under the exigencies and strain of modern life, are obliged to perform more work than is natural or healthful.

We urge that all fruits in their season—including figs, dates, bananas, prunes, raisins, and apples, &c., fresh and dried, each of many varieties—be substituted for bread and other grain foods and starch vegetables; and experience convinces us that this course will be found by a brief experiment highly beneficial, alike to the meat-eater and to the vegetarian.

That is, provided you eat fruit and plenty of it, you may eat anything else you like except "the staff of life," grain food, and the starch vegetables!

TRUTH.—The most powerful goddess, and one that rules mankind with the most authoritative sway, is Truth. For though she is resisted by all, and oftentimes has drawn up against her the plausibilities of falsehood in the subtlest forms, she triumphs over all oppositions. I know not how it is that she, by her own unadorned charms, forces herself into the heart of man. At times her power is instantly felt; at other times, though obscured for awhile, she at last bursts forth in meridian splendour, and conquers by her innate force the falsehood with which she had been oppressed.

ONE OF MR. STEAD'S "PRACTICAL GHOSTS."

The following account has been handed to us by a correspondent. The details are trivial enough in themselves, but by no means unworthy of consideration as indicating watchful care on the part of those who acted as guardians of the family.

The narrative is given as it was sent. It is evidently written with a strong sense of the protective guardianship of unseen friends, and will interest many of our readers, and perhaps set some "*Cui bono?*" critics thinking:—

A short time since I lost my cook, and knowing the difficulty of obtaining servants immediately before Christmas I decided not to try as I had a temporary helper, so excellent in every way that I deemed it wiser to wait till after Christmas. This woman, whom we will designate Mrs. B., was a quiet, seemingly respectable, married woman, who came to my bedroom every morning for orders and executed them in the most satisfactory manner. I must here mention that I was confined to my room with a sprained ankle, and so my daughters had to give all extra small orders and look after the general comfort. A week passed, and so pleased was I that I had B.'s husband to dinner on Sunday, and wrote to a country friend desiring her not to trouble about me as I was settled, feeling half inclined to continue with Mrs. B. until we should leave this house. On the Monday she came as usual to my room. I asked her how she felt, as she looked peculiarly heavy, and I imagined she had a headache, but she said she was quite well and we had a few pleasant words, in which she thanked me for my kindness to her husband. On Tuesday the same distinguished politeness marked our proceedings. An hour afterwards, up came my elder daughter to say that her own father, my first husband, had seized her hand and told her, "That B. is a beast, don't let her worry your mother." I laughed at the idea and bade her tell him he must be mistaken. At twelve o'clock both my daughters went out for their daily constitutional, but in less than five minutes my younger child (who is a very strong psychic) rushed up to me, saying that neither she nor her sister found it easy to walk, but *her* legs actually refused to move, and her hand was seized and she wrote on her dress, "Go back! Go back!" They came back, got pencil and paper, and again the same spirit wrote, "Don't leave your mother, that beast B. will go and abuse her and upset her." Now, to my shame be it recorded, I was quite cross, and said "Really, this is too ridiculous. A quiet, orderly woman like that: I am afraid, my dear, you are getting fanatical." However, as they had already arranged that one should go out one half-hour, and the other the next, so that one remained with me, I made no further demur. Now comes the sequel. Within half an hour my elder daughter returned. This woman B. picked a quarrel with her over nothing, and rushed up to me. My housemaid rushed after her, begging her not to come to me. But my daughter having been forewarned ran so fast as to get in front of her and then dared her to go to my room. The woman seemed quite beside herself, but my daughter's decision quelled her. Our unseen friends then made rather sarcastic remarks upon my incredulity, and begged me to pay her and send her off, assuring me she was a drunkard and a desperate woman. They said, "She drinks rum, and has a bottle now in her pocket," so I followed their advice, and she went; and now comes the test of their perfect veracity. I said to my housemaid, "Did you know she drank?" "No, ma'am; but on Sunday her husband brought her a bottle of something, I couldn't make it out; it was not whisky nor brandy; it was darker, and had such an odd smell. She offered me some, and it did smell so nasty!" I think this amply proves the rum's identity, and I presume I need make no comment on the value of our dear spirit friends' warning, for all helped, though my first husband was the first to speak. This is not a dreamy experience, and is the more astonishing to us as we are not used to such phenomena, but rather have spiritual teachings.

N. S.

JULIA AND MARY HOWARD, maiden twin sisters, died at their home in Wilkesbarre almost at the same hour. They died on the same day of the year and at the same hour as they were born. They were sixty years of age, and lived together all their lives.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, W.C.

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Light:

EDITED BY W. STANTON-MOSES.

["M. A. (OXON.)"]

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 1892.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

IN THE COURT OF THE GENTILES.

IN the comments which we published last week we were chiefly concerned with Mr. Stead's attitude towards his evidence. He has rubbed his lamp, and genii by the legion come obedient to his call. No further room for doubt. What Spiritualists have known by practical experience these fifty years; what may be read in the history of all peoples, the more primitive the more plentifully; what the Society for Psychical Research is still tentatively nibbling at, Mr. Stead has convinced himself of with an alacrity and a certainty that has left him rubbing his eyes instead of his magic lamp. "There is something in Spiritualism beyond mere fraud and more or less conscious self-delusion." Of course there is: only the purblind and the blind who will not see—whose craft is in danger—now deny that proposition. The race of materialists and pseudo-psychologists of the Carpenterian school is doomed. Mr. Stead sees this, and concerns himself, very justly, more with the possibilities involved in the admission of proven facts than with laboured proof of the facts themselves. Interesting as he finds them on the lowest grounds, it is in their effect on the lives of those who have proved them for themselves that he finds their chief significance:—

If these things be true what a world it is in which we are living, how mysterious, how incomprehensible, how vastly different from the universe in which most of us spend our lives! Whatever may be thought as to the credibility of these witnesses, there is no doubt that they have firmly persuaded themselves, and have succeeded in convincing many others, that there is some reality behind their experience. In many cases there seems to be no doubt that these phenomena, whether genuine or the merest hallucination, have succeeded in doing what the sublimest religions often have failed to do, namely, to banish the dread of death. It is, of course, easy to make fun of the inane drivel, which is often communicated in inspirational addresses, and to declare that the possibility of having to rap on tables and indulge in vulgar horseplay, such as that attributed to many spirits at many seances, is to add a new terror to death. But this is an outside view of the matter. Every religion and every belief must not be judged by the grotesque side which it presents to observers, but by the effect which it has on the life and heart of those who sincerely believe it. Very many of the phenomena now under consideration have achieved that victory over death and the grave which to the majority of Christians is only a phrase or a prophecy. It is that element about Spiritualism which has always seemed to me to constitute its claim to respectful consideration. Granting that its phenomena are often ridiculous, and that its utterances are platitudinous inanities, and that the whole system as it has been presented to the public has been

largely compounded of fraud and insanity, still the fact remains that to many men and women living amongst us this insane and drivelling superstition has come as an emancipator from the dread of death.

He cites the opinion of the late Lady Sandhurst, of the Editor of this journal, of William Lloyd Garrison—"important testimony by a very remarkable man"—who said that of his own personal knowledge "the leading men and women in the Anti-Slavery, Anti-War, and Women's Rights movements, and some other societies of a progressive character, are Spiritualists." He might have added that it was Spiritualism which emancipated the Russian serf and freed the slave in the Southern States of America. But, after all, he is right in fastening attention on the crowning evidence of the potency of this knowledge, that it conquers death and robs the grave of its terrors. It has, indeed, "succeeded in doing what the most sublime religions often have failed to do: it has achieved that victory over death and the grave which to the majority of Christians is only a phrase or a prophecy."

This being so, we may endure to look upon the phenomena of possession, upon the uncleanness, the ineptitudes, and the "objectless lies" (as a prominent Spiritualist once called them) that shelter themselves under our faulty methods of investigation, without much of a shudder. If we improve our methods we shall improve our results. There is, in our opinion, something both manly and genuine in Mr. Stead's attitude to these matters when he demands more light. "Instead of the subject being scouted, and tabooed, and ridiculed, and all information hidden from the common people," he demands that "it shall be openly discussed, freely handled, and the results of the investigation made known to every one. There is nothing in the world as healthy as light. It is because the light has not been let in upon this realm that the atmosphere is so mephitic. 'Light, more light' must be in this, as in all other realms of nature, the constant cry of the searcher for truth." With a saving reservation as to the "so mephitic" we entirely agree with Mr. Stead.

But he has been hardly fortunate in his cases; they must be admitted to be a rather forbidding sample, and they are not a fair sample of results obtained in the family circle—that stronghold of the best Spiritualism—results which from the very sacred nature of them cannot become public property in the vast majority of instances. There is a veil which may not be lifted, and the best cases of the return of departed friends to those who mourn their loss are not likely to be published to a gibing world, submitted to ruthless dissection, or to a smart Old Bailey cross-examination. There is a wealth of fact—the best and most convincing—and this Mr. Stead has not reached.

Moreover, the investigation which he desiderates must be according to knowledge. Nothing is more certain than that the methods which find favour with a certain school of research—"the microscope of Mr. Podmore" as the "Pall Mall Gazette" has it—will exclude a large mass of the best and most instructive cases. This elaborate sifting may secure a good body of evidence, but it will be a body without a spirit, a *corpus* bereft of a soul. These "spiritual things are spiritually discerned," and the best evidence for the truth that we claim for Spiritualism escapes the investigator whose methods are those of the laboratory of physical science.

Nor is this all. It is easy as it is right to point to the obvious dangers that beset the investigation in a promiscuous circle to which (as Colonel Olcott once said) "any chance moral leper who has five shillings in his pocket" has access; it is easy, also, to magnify those dangers to the "moral leper" who will probably do more harm than he gets; but we must go a great deal further than Mr. Stead has gone if we are to eschew all risk and to achieve the best results. Our treatment of these matters must be at present largely empirical. That which we know is as a

grain of sand to the mountain of our ignorance. We cannot reproduce our most successful experiments at will. We cannot command the "intelligent operator at the other end of the line"—if we could he would be on a lower plane than ourselves, and since the avowed object of our quest seems to be cynically confessed to be "Get all and give as little as you can," though *we* might possibly benefit him, he cannot greatly increase *our* store of knowledge or raise us to the plane to which we should aspire.

We know little more than that the affinities of the higher spirits are with their peers. If we would commune with them mental acumen and intellectual ability are not the equipments exclusively required for success. Spiritual qualities are imperatively essential, and these are not found in societies, committees, or organisations. These have their work in tabulating and arranging facts already observed: a poor mechanical work compared with that most delicate of all investigations—if so inappropriate a term may pass for the moment—where spirit is face to face with spirit, and the things of spirit need spiritual discernment. The measure of the success—or shall we rather say failure?—which has attended the humbler labour may indicate the hope of success in that which demands the rarer gifts of the spirit, supplemented, if it may so be, with adequate intellectual equipment.

We are accustomed to dwell on the antithesis of matter and spirit, perhaps more frequently than wisely. For, in plain truth, we know little about the realities that are indicated by those mere labels. It may be startling to suggest that there is often a similar antithesis between the pride of intellect and the graces of spirit which are a passport to the inner court of the temple, the gates of which do not stand idly open to the curious.

Mr. Stead describes himself, with proud humility, as "standing in the court of the Gentiles—a kind of bellman to summon the public." As bellman, he is a distinct success. "His sound has gone forth into all lands and his words unto the ends of the world." He has summoned his people. Now, what is he going to do with them? That is the problem. And many there are whom the sound of his bell will not reach: the best as they are the most inaccessible of Spiritualists.

In Memoriam.

STANHOPE TEMPLEMAN SPEER, M.D., who departed this life suddenly at Clifton, Bristol, February 9th, 1889. Deeply mourned: ever regretted.

DONATIONS TO "LIGHT" AND THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

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"HOW I WAS TAUGHT OF THE SPIRIT" is now once more (for the last time) on sale at our offices (price 6½d. post free). We have some thirty copies; when these are gone, no more can be had.

In answer to inquiries we are in a position to say that proofs on thick paper of the illustration which appeared in our issue of February 6th, "Where is She Now?" will be on sale at our offices in a short time.

"BIG BEN."—A CURIOUS COINCIDENCE.—A most curious coincidence with regard to the death of the late Duke of Clarence has come under the notice of the London correspondent of the "Manchester Courier." It is as follows:—There is, it seems, a superstition that when "Big Ben," the clock at Westminster, strikes irregularly at midnight evil will befall the Royal House within three months. At twelve o'clock on the night of November 14th, the members of a political club within a stone's throw of the Houses of Parliament were astonished to hear the quarter chimes sounding simultaneously with the hour strokes, and to note that "Big Ben" struck thirteen times. The event was commented on, and the day being a critical one in the illness of Prince George, his name was—happily incorrectly—associated with the evil omen. Two months after, to the very day, his elder brother died.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. IV.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

During our separation he had been visiting in a town in the north of the island, where he had lost a valued friend. On August 17th he joined us at Douglas, and on the same evening we renewed our investigations. We had chosen for our seance-room one that led out of the dining-room: a compact, sombre looking apartment, with a stained-glass window, so that little sunlight ever came into it. Mr. S. M. and myself were alone; Dr. S. had not yet joined us. Just as we were sitting down, waiting for him, before turning down the gas and locking the door, the table rose up, and came down with so loud a noise that I confess to feeling greatly startled. This evening the raps were varied, continuous, and some very loud. We counted seven different sounds. Distinct answers were given to questions. We were informed that there were forty-nine spirits* in the room, all good, appointed to take charge of the circle. Mr. S. M. asked whether they wished to use him as an instrument to make known to the world the truth of spiritual manifestations. The noise they made in answer was tremendous; it was like a crowd of people applauding at a public meeting, rapping and knocking with their feet and hands. Sounds were made all over the room, and gave one the idea of pleasure. They made the same jubilant sounds when I remarked that "I always now prayed to be surrounded by good spirits."

This evening Mr. S. M. was moved away from the table, his chair as he sat turned round, and pushed into a corner. The table turned round without contact, and lifted itself up.

The next day was Sunday, and a memorable day it was to us all: one never to be forgotten. At breakfast a butter-knife was lifted out of a deep glass butter-dish and thrown down upon the table, no visible hand near it. During the time we were at church raps were heard by each member of the circle in different parts of the pew in which we were all sitting. On our return Mr. S. M. found on his bed three things removed from his dressing-table, and placed in the form of a cross on his bed. He called Dr. S. into the room to see what had taken place during our absence. Dr. S. heard loud raps on the footboard of the bed. He then locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and left the room vacant for a time. We went to dinner, and during our meal the large dining-table, covered with glass, china, &c., repeatedly moved, tilted, and rapped; it seemed to be full of life and motion. Raps accompanied the tune of a hymn our little girl was singing, and intelligent raps followed our conversation. We paid several visits to the locked-up room, and each time found an addition had been made to the cross. Dr. S. kept the key, unlocked the door, and left the room last. At last all was finished. The cross was placed down the centre of the bed; all the dressing things had been used that our friend had in his travelling dressing case. Each time we went into the room raps occurred. At our last visit it was proposed to leave a piece of paper and pencil on the bed, and when we returned again we found the initials of three friends of Mr. S. M.'s, all dead, and unknown to anyone in the house but himself. The cross was perfectly symmetrical, and had been made in a locked room that no one could enter, and was indeed a startling manifestation of spirit power.

August 19th. Mr. S. M. and Dr. S. sat alone, and had letters and pamphlets brought to them, *taken from the room in which I was then sitting, in the light*. Papers and gloves were thrown on the table; also a quantity of scent. After this I went into the room, and on sitting down a message was given through raps on the table, "Can't my medium rest?"†

August 21st. A book was brought from one room to the other; message rapped out, "To convince." On my going into the seance-room to join the gentlemen, raps came on the table; message given, "Let Mrs. S. sit."

August 22nd. We met again the next evening, and sat under the same conditions. Rapping generally occurred at the commencement of our seances. Mr. S. M.'s smoking-cap was brought to him and placed on his head. Dr. S.'s was thrown across the room; a pair of gloves on to the table;

* I have noticed the symbolism of 7 (the perfect number) × 7, making 49, in other cases. Whether the number is to be taken as real or symbolic I do not know.—S. M.

† I felt the depleting effect of these continuous seances.—S. M.

my card-case, opera-glass, and pen-wiper brought down from the drawing-room through two closed doors, and placed on the table. Paper and pencils were on the table. Mr. S. M. was unconsciously forced to write he knew not what. Light was asked for through the alphabet. On looking on the paper I saw the word "K—d" in the writing of one of our oldest and dearest friends. Dr. S. said, "So the spirit of our old friend, Miss K—d, is present." Mr. S. M.'s hand was constrained to write again, "Yes; I am come back to tell you I am happy. I cannot impress this medium to-night." He was again made to write with the greatest impetuosity, in quite a different handwriting, the following message: "Have you seen manifestations? Shakers? There will be great doings on the earth. He will visit the earth with a new revelation, and dying faith will be replenished. You have a band of forty-nine spirits, who are commissioned to take care of you; who also, through your mediumship, will make known great things to the world. The time has come when the world *shall* know that there is a hereafter, and that the spirits of those who are gone before have a care for those they love. We watch and guard you, and those you love. We are always with you and keep you day and night. He shall give His angels charge over thee."

August 23rd. Mr. S. M. found on going into his room a crown composed on the bed, as the cross had been. He called us to see it. Dr. S. put paper and pencil by it, and locked the door, taking the key. On returning some time afterwards we found written on the paper that had been left: "Cross and crown. We are happy," signed by the same spirits that had written before. That same evening we held a seance, and the medium was controlled to write the following message: "We made the cross, and we made the crown. We wish to show you that the cross shall precede the crown, and that, in your case, the cross that has been shall be succeeded by the crown that is to be. We are watching and guarding you. Shakers referred to a manifestation of which you are yet unconscious. You will hear one day of great manifestations. You asked the name of the chief of your band. You must not know it yet; but one day we will tell you. Meantime you must believe that all that has been done has been done by Divine guidance. God bless you." At this time whenever the medium wrote it was with the greatest rapidity; it sometimes took all Dr. S.'s strength to keep his hand on the paper: it would try to write all over the table. The force used seemed tremendous.

The next evening several things were brought through the closed door into the seance-room: a book from Dr. S.'s dressing-room; a rose and stone from Mr. S. M.'s room; and pencil, three visiting cards, and shell from the drawing-room. The medium was controlled to write the following message: "We do not propose to try our medium much to-night. We have much to communicate, but it tries the medium. One day we shall be able to use him more freely. At present it is like playing on a strange instrument, and we are tender towards him. Do not sit unless under direction. The physical manifestations are for your conviction. Wait.—IMPERATOR."

August 30th. Many things were brought from different parts of the house through the locked door this evening. Mr. S. M. was levitated, and when I felt for his feet they were hanging in mid-air, while his head must have almost touched the ceiling. After he came down a little handbell was rung round the circle.

September 4th was the evening that Dr. S.'s little sister first came to us. We had sat some time, and written messages had been given, when we heard a gentle little rapping on the medium's chair. Dr. S. asked that the raps would come on the table. Alphabet was asked for, and message given, "Dieu vous garde." We were further informed that the French message was given by the spirit of a little sister of Dr. S.'s, who had passed away fifty years ago at Tours, at the age of seven months. Her little raps were most joyous, and before leaving she gave another message through the table: "Je suis heureuse, très heureuse." Then another rap came of quite a different sort, and gave the message, "Benedictus Benedict" (May the Blessed One bless you).

September 8th. We met as usual. This evening many things were brought to us from different parts of the house, and a glove and pin-cushion put into my hand.

September 16th. My cousin, Mrs. C., joined our circle. Raps, and articles brought into the room. Message rapped

out: "We wish to resolve doubts. Keep thyself strong and quiet." The manifestations were disturbed, owing to a fresh influence added to the circle.

September 19th. This evening we met for the last time in Douglas, as the medium had to return to town, and we were remaining longer. Very little physical manifestation occurred beyond raps, and a peculiar sawing sound under the table. We thought the seance very unsatisfactory, considering it would be our last for some time. We had placed under the table a piece of ruled paper, and when the gas was lighted we looked under the table, and there we found the piece of paper with direct spirit writing on it the first we had had. The message was: "Farewell. Reunite some day. Communicate more often. (Signed), IMPERATOR,"* who we now know was the chief of the band. Very much more took place during that eventful month that I have not detailed; raps occurred constantly in daylight; messages given often during our meals; table constantly raised when loaded with things, in fact, we seemed to be surrounded and living in the midst of spirits; their pleasant influence was felt and acknowledged by us all, and whenever I think of that time it comes back as a pleasant dream, and I feel I need not apologise for being a Spiritualist heart and soul. I have the strongest conviction that I shall remain so to the end.

FROM THE RECORDS OF S. M.

August 1st, 1872. I left London for my summer holiday. The psychical development, which had been steadily going on, was evidenced by a case of very distinct clairvoyance. I was an inmate of the house of an old friend who had just died, and I clairvoyantly saw the spirit form on five several occasions: once most distinctly in the death chamber by the side of the discarded body.

I rejoined my friends, Dr. and Mrs. S., at Douglas, Isle of Man, on August 16th. Our seances were of the usual character up to Sunday, August 18th. The events of that day were so remarkable that I give my own version of them from copious notes taken at the time. Mrs. S. had already given an outline of the occurrences, but it is impossible to give any fair idea of the nature and persistence of the phenomena from breakfast to 10 p.m. Raps followed me wherever I went, never ceasing at meals, in church or anywhere. At breakfast a butter-knife was lifted out of a deep dish and thrown on the table under the eyes of us all. The dish was in the centre of the table quite away from any person. On returning from church I found on entering my bedroom (which adjoined the drawing-room on the first floor) that certain objects had been removed from the toilet table and placed on my bed in the rough form of a cross. These were a travelling desk, a pocket book and a fly book (containing flies for fishing).

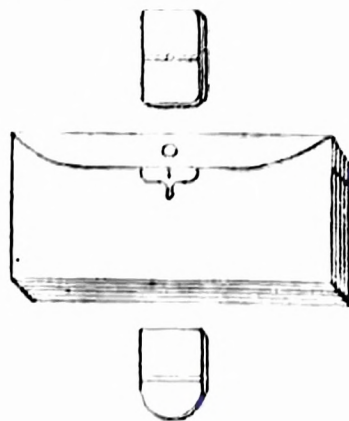


FIG. 1.

I immediately called Dr. and Mrs. S. to see what had been done. Having in mind the evidences of the presence of spirits I instinctively referred this movement of objects to their action. There was, indeed, no one in the house who would be at all likely to play tricks, and, as will be seen, we guarded against anything of the kind by our subsequent precautions. When Dr. S. had looked over the room, under the bed, in cupboards and wherever anyone could be hidden, he went away, whilst I prepared for luncheon. I was sponging my face and afterwards found that my

* See fac-simile of this writing with my comments hereafter.—S. M.

black skull-cap had been moved from its place and hung on the foot-board of the bed. I went to fetch Dr. S. to see this new manifestation, and while I was gone, my collar, which I had removed and placed on the toilet table, was placed symmetrically round the top of the cross which now assumed this form:—

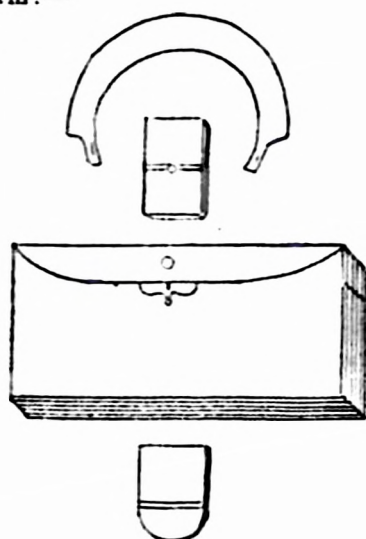


FIG. II.

We examined the room once more and found nothing concealed. At my suggestion Dr. S. locked the door and put the key in his pocket, having bolted the windows before leaving. At lunch our conversation was punctuated with raps of remarkable crispness and precision. There were also loud scrapings on the back of my chair, which was repeatedly moved to and fro. The meal over, Dr. and Mrs. S. and I went to the locked room, and found that the cross had been increased in size by the addition of a clothes-brush and hat-brush from my dressing-case, which lay open on the toilet table.

Locking the door once more, we returned to the dining-room, and found abundant indications of spirit-presence. Raps were loud on floor and walls, on the table, and on the back of my chair. A tune drummed on the table and sung by one of the children was accurately imitated. The heavy dining table, with all that was upon it, was moved out of its place three or four times. After this had gone on for some time, Dr. S., at my suggestion, went alone to the

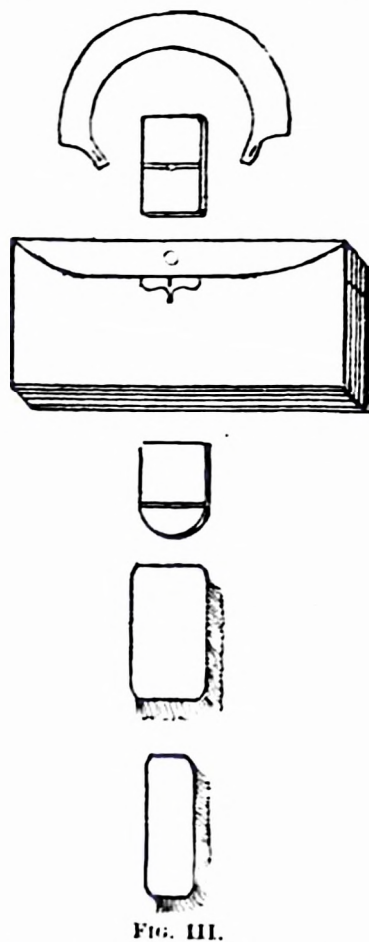


FIG. III.

locked room. On unlocking the door he found that two other articles from my dressing-case had been added to the cross, and so told us on his return. I believe the reason for my not going with him on this occasion was that I felt overpowered by the strong influence that surrounded me, and was half entranced.

He again locked the door and put the key in his pocket, and in about half an hour I accompanied Mrs. S. and him to the locked room, and we discovered that two additional articles from my dressing-case had been added to the cross, which now assumed this appearance:—

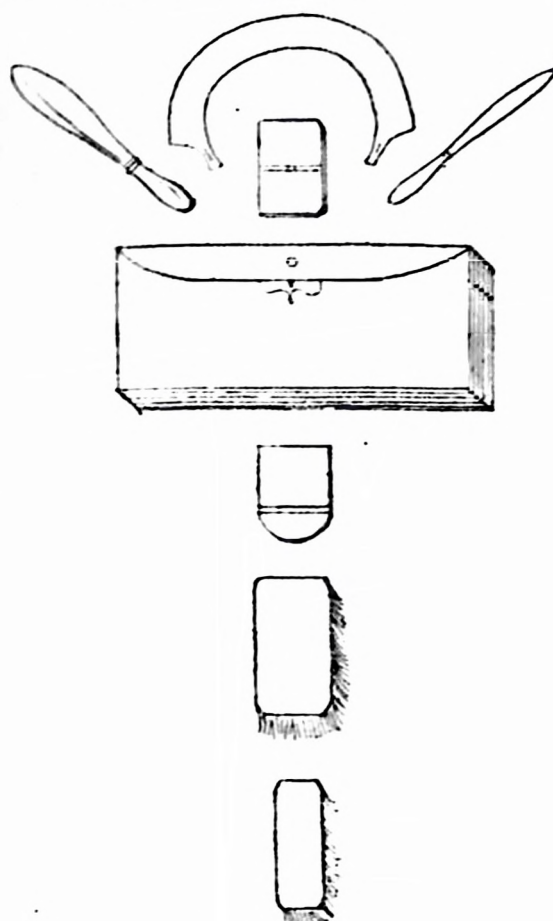


FIG. IV.

After another somewhat less interval we again entered the locked room, and found four more articles added. The cross now assumed this form:—

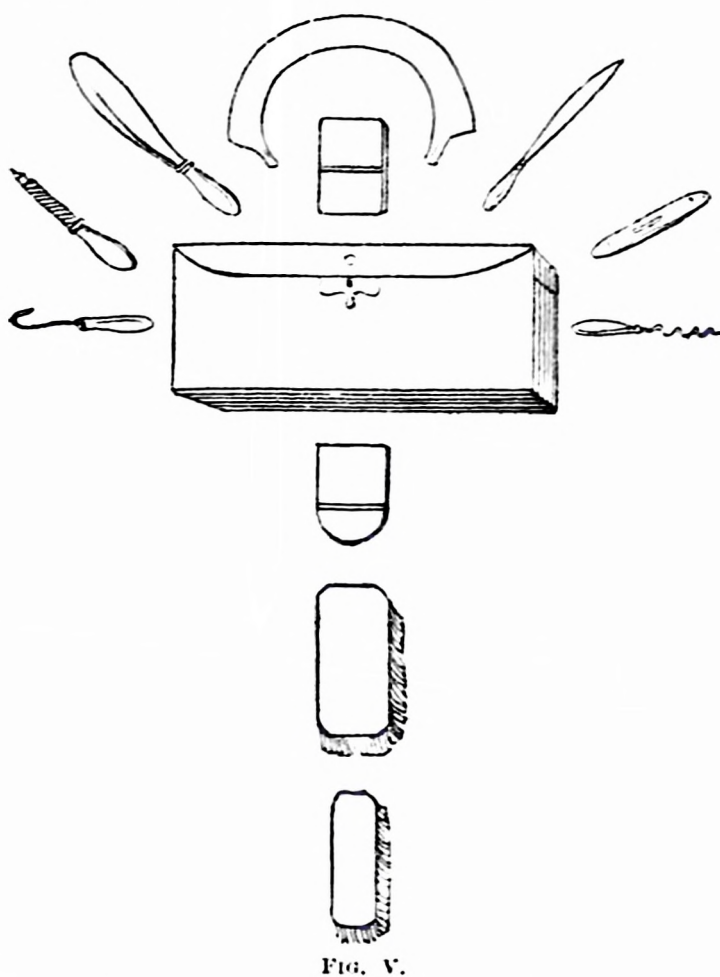


FIG. V.

We elicited communications by the alphabet, the raps being made on the footboard of the bed, and at the suggestion of Mrs. S. we left a piece of paper and pencil on the bed. It was now 5 p.m. On leaving, the door was again locked by Dr. S., who retained the key. When, after a quarter of an hour's interval, we returned, the cross was found to be completed by the addition of my skull-cap (which, as I have stated, had been hung on the footboard of the bed) and a double scent-bottle from the dressing-case. This was the final appearance presented by the cross, which extended from the pillow to the footboard,

exactly in the middle of the bed, and made with perfect symmetry throughout :

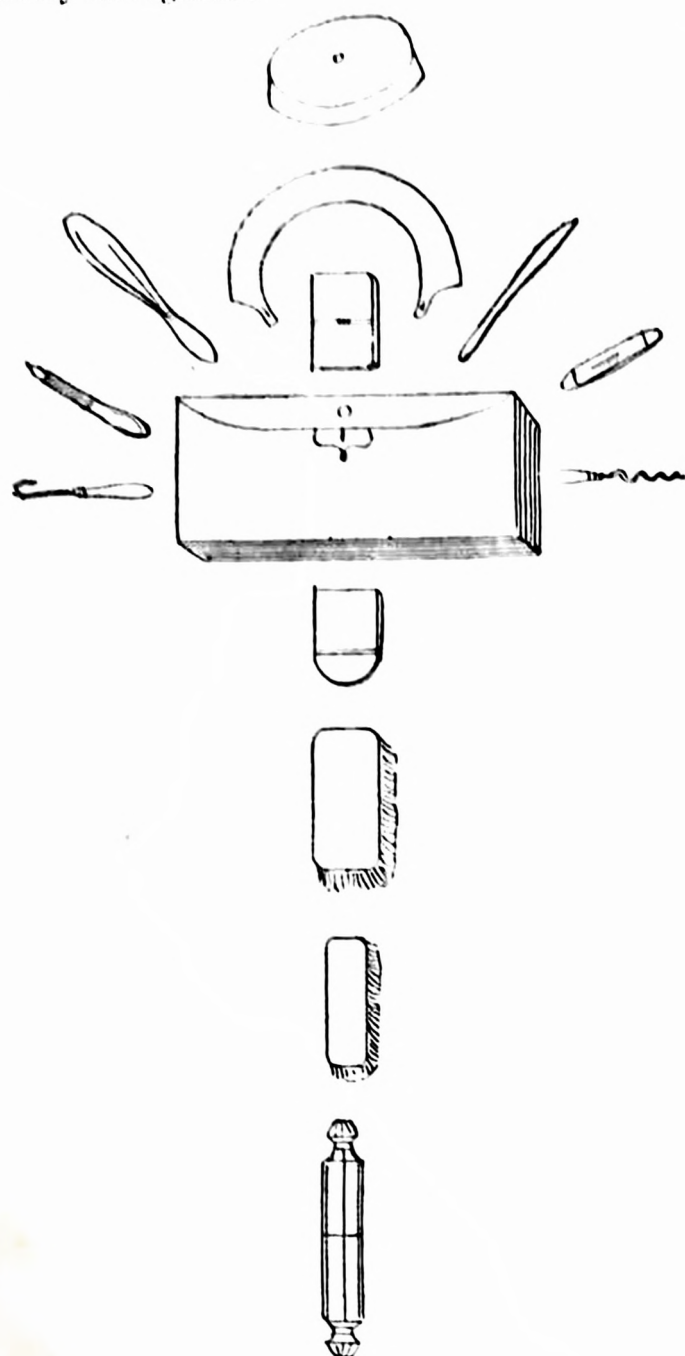


FIG. VI.

The paper left with pencil on the bed bore no mark. I placed under it a square of magnetised flannel, which I had been told to carry about with me for the purpose of aiding the production of writing, direct or automatic. Dr. S. once more locked the door, and we again retired. On returning after a short interval, inspection showed on the paper the initials of three departed friends of my own. Of these one set of three initials was transposed, I. T. instead of T. I. It was explained to us that he had not himself been able to write, and that the error was made by the amanuensis, if I may use the word. Subsequent experience has shown that many communicators are not able to write, and employ the aid of one who has acquired the art. A great portion of my automatic writings was given through such an amanuensis. In reply to a request for some message, "Cross. We are happy," was given in raps of great clearness on the footboard of the bed. We were told that the articles might be removed. Raps continued when we were at church in the evening, and until we went to bed.

This is the manifestation respecting which the late Dr. W. B. Carpenter, of immortal memory, stated with what he, no doubt, considered scientific accuracy, that it occurred in a lumber room or garret open to anyone, which contained articles of crockery that were piled up. He seemed quite surprised and pained, when I challenged his accuracy, but he preferred to let his blunder remain unavowed to deceive others rather than confess that he had made a mistake. As a matter of fact the cross was made almost entirely while the door was locked and the key in Dr. S.'s pocket : the articles were all taken from my dressing-table ;

and the room was carefully searched to exclude the (to me) unthinkable possibility of deception or trick. After the remarkable display of psychic force was over I was thoroughly depleted and worn out. That was the reason for the message which Mrs. S. records as given next day, "Can't my medium rest?" Virtue had gone out of me, and I felt my vitality at a very low ebb.

DO THEY COME BACK ?

It is related of James Skene, of Rubislaw, a dearly loved friend of Sir Walter Scott, who survived him over thirty years, and died at a very advanced age, that one evening, a few days before his death, while sitting alone in his study, his daughter found him with an inexpressible look of delight upon his face, when he said to her, "I have had such a great pleasure : Scott has been here. He came from a great distance to see me, and has been sitting with me by the fireside talking over our happy recollections of the past."

We have all of us had a similar experience, perhaps many times repeated, when the thought and memory of the departed have come upon us so vividly that they seemed actually to have been in our company, sharing our confidences and imparting help and comfort. After a poignant loss that has wrenched us away from the old life-moorings, consolation, when it comes, seems to descend from the heavens, and we gain in some strange way a sense of reunion with the departed. May not this re-knitting of the tie be more real than we believe ? Is there anything illogical in the thought that they do come back as allied with our faith in a continued existence ? The wonders of thought-transference are gradually unfolding, and the time may come when thought will take its place in the world of phenomena as an actual force, operating through space, and working by laws as yet hidden from our understanding.

Here we dimly see a road for that communion with the disembodied spirit that frees the doctrine from grossness and makes more real and tangible the hope held tacitly, but unconsciously, by scores of wounded hearts that their loved and lost are at times near them, do in some unknown way influence their lives, breathe courage and assuage grief, help them to bear their burdens and warn them of danger.

The hope that these things are a reality lies warm and precious at the hearts of thousands who never utter it. They shrink from the thought of material manifestations, and all physical contact, as degrading a sentiment so delicate and intimate ; yet they cannot bar out their dead in isolation and forgetfulness. The hope that in some subtle and imponderable form they do come back to console and bless is a dear and cherished thought.

It is this new sense of union that comes as the great comfort after the pain of dislocation and loss. The great vacuum that only grief filled is gradually possessed by the softened and beautified image of those who left us sorrowing our hearts covered with a black pall. We wake some morning from our desolation, after a vivid dream of the loved one, looking as in life and smiling upon us. Then a little comfort trickles into the breast. We have seen and clasped the mother, the sister, the friend. The conviction grows upon us that he or she lives, thinks, feels, loves, utterly separate from the cold image so foreign to all that once was so dear to us, and which we laid in the grave. Then, again, the gold begins to come back to the sunbeam, the blue to the sky, the brightness to the flower. The faces of men and women again have a message and meaning for us ; and why ?—Because we have found in some intimate experience of the soul a new ground of union with those who are gone. They have come stealing back to us in a new form. We still possess them in the depths of consciousness : the mysterious communings of the night we can never explain to others. Then the wish to touch and handle the departed with our bodily hands, to see them with our bodily eyes, seems a gross impertinence. We apprehend them spiritually as they are spirits. All that was noblest and best in them has been restored to us. Their virtues take a new lustre. We feel that the capacity for loving has grown in them to a height we hardly dreamed of.

There are some who never have this experience, to whose dead come not back, who cannot again get into relation with their memories with the best that was in them, but dwell brooding on the shroud, the pall, the coffin, the worn

the darkness of the grave. How deeply they are to be pitied! There can be no hope of reunion here until this cloud lifts and forms the softened background of life, letting in the sun and the fresh breezes of heaven. Then the thought of our dead becomes winged, and takes the soft sky colours. It lives in the secret place of the earth.

We do not often speak of these things. They are too sacred to come readily to the lips. They seem far removed from the material round of life, and yet they are always with us, carried round in our consciousness, stealing to us through the day's perplexities, coming to us in the night of trouble, helping and comforting in dark and discouraged hours. It is such a rest to turn our thoughts, after the noisy day, towards their peace—the calm that embosoms them, as stars are held in the tranquil spaces of the sky. They are so safe from all the noise and fret and worry in which we give that something of repose and harmony is shed into our souls as we think of them.

Are there any who have lost their loved ones who do not think of them as alive, who actually believe them to be lying in the grave, turning slowly to dust? No; the greatest sceptic and materialist shrinks from that error. They have become invisible to us, as the cap of Siegfried rendered those who put it on; but they are just on the other side of a thin veil; they can feel us through our heart-beats, and we can feel them. Matter is a gross medium of communication in its earthly forms. Nature has more cunning powers in her hand, and we live more by the laws we do not understand than by those we know. The spirit laws are mainly hidden from us; but it would be a sad satisfaction of our higher being that apprehends, though it does not comprehend, to deny their existence.—“Christian Register.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Dr. Ernest Hart and Hypnotism.

SIR.—May I say a word or two on the article, “Hypnotism and Humbug,” in the “Nineteenth Century” for January, by Dr. Ernest Hart?

Dr. Hart has made the grand discovery that hypnotism is a self-induced condition, but surely everyone knows that by this time!

A sceptic by nature, Dr. Hart apparently disbelieves in everything that even approaches the superhuman! I wonder if he believes in *himself* (probably so), but he should *not* do so if he is consistent, for he most certainly must be a superhuman being, or he would not write with such a sublime air of certainty and omniscience, as though from his assertions there was no appeal whatever! Everything relating to the superhuman (the word supernatural is a misnomer, as there may be many natural laws of which we are ignorant, so we cannot absolutely define what *is* supernatural)—prophetic dreams, visions, apparitions, clairvoyance, thought reading, &c.—Dr. Hart sweeps away with a stroke of his quill! He has pronounced them impostures—*igitur* they *are* so, and there's an end of it.

As for the term “Belated” which he applies to the “Society for Psychical Research,” I don't suppose the members and associates will feel themselves absolutely crushed!

Unfortunately for this extremely sceptical “medico,” the whole consensus of human experience and belief is against him, and individually I have had *positive* proof of the genuineness of thought reading, in the case of a young lady who read my thoughts by looking at me, and who divined the exact line of poetry (out of millions, I suppose!) which I and others had in our minds at the time! A very old friend of mine, a most shrewd and sceptical man, told me that against his will he was completely convinced of the truth of clairvoyance, having had proof which no one but an arrant fool or worse would have dared to gainsay! Personally, I believe in apparitions—objective ones—as firmly as I do in the existence of my Maker. I have had such *indisputable* proof of them from friends who could not be deceived. I say nothing of the mass of human testimony in their favour.

But is it not a sorry spectacle to see a doubtless otherwise able medical man calmly denying the possibility of all superhuman phenomena simply because he cannot understand them?

Such has ever been the attitude of empirics in every branch, especially the medical profession. They believe in

nothing they cannot see, taste, or touch, except—in themselves, and here their faith errs on the side of excess, I fear! I pity Dr. Hart's awakening!

Glencroft, Exeter.

F. B. DOVETON.

Spirit Healing.

SIR,—Those who have for many years now been watching and tabulating the phenomena of spirit working in our midst cannot but be struck with the present comparative paucity of physical phenomena, and the marvellous development of other, but more unobserved growths of medial power as exercised in healing.

It seems to me that physical phenomena have made their appeal to the materialistic minds, who forthwith have endeavoured, and are continuing to try to account for all on their own plane; and that is not a spiritual one. Much fraud has been developed in public exhibitions of psychic power, but the fraud detected has not been all that of the public mediums, although it has been usually traceable to public or promiscuous circles. The investigators often have not had prepared minds; but have been frivolous, if not wicked. Public phenomena have failed in their appeal, apparently—but not really: though the results have not been what the truest investigators hoped for.

But our spirit workers are not discomfited. They are moving and working in other channels: and there, without observation, are establishing a deeper spiritual kingdom.

For some time I have been watching and tabulating results: and my object in this letter is to ask all intelligent and observing Spiritualists to do the same. I know of cases where human aid was of no avail, where medical skill had been baffled, and the patients nigh unto death, which have been restored by quiet, unobtrusive spirit aid. It has by no means been often the result of faith (which we know can remove mountains), but in spite of its absence, and in presence of positive disbelief. And the results have been not only bodily cure, but the importation of spiritual life.

I know they are doing a little—a very little—in this direction at the “Spiritualist Alliance.” We should do more if funds necessary were forthcoming: and I would commend such work to the sympathy of outside and perhaps anonymous friends.

Why should not the “Alliance” have funds to engage and set apart a medium, such as Mr. Lees or Madame Greck, to this especial work? or if not wholly, why should they not be partially engaged by us?

Meantime, private workers may do as valuable service—but let it be well recorded. There is difficulty, I know, in getting an acknowledged medical diagnosis to start with, and medical watching and certificates to authenticate cases: but the old healers did not wait for these—nor should we wholly, for to some minds no proofs would appeal. Where possible I would suggest to the recorder to get—

1. A medical diagnosis.
2. A careful record of daily changes or improvement.
3. Personal characteristics of the patient, and his attitude towards spiritual gifts in the outset, and on being cured.
4. A medical certificate of cure.
5. Any clairvoyant or clairaudient accompaniments during the process. (These are most interesting.)

I should be very pleased to be put into communication with any interesting cases. This healing gift should appeal to the churches; and restore spirit and life to what is now only a cold, formal expression of belief.

62, Granville Park, Lewisham, S.E. MORELL THEOBALD.

“If I were a young man,” said Whittier recently, “I should ally myself with some high, and, at present, unpopular cause, and devote my every effort to accomplishing its success.”

THERE is no such thing as a transcendental party; there is no pure transcendentalist; we know of none but prophets and heralds of such a philosophy; all who by strong bias of nature have leaned to the spiritual side in doctrine have stopped short of their goal. We have had many harbingers and forerunners; but of a purely spiritual life, history has afforded no example. I mean, we have yet no man who has leaned entirely on his character, and eaten angels' food; who, trusting to his sentiments, found life made of miracles; who, working for universal aims, found himself fed, he knew not how; clothed, sheltered, and weaponed, he knew not how, and yet it was done by his own hands. Only in the instinct of the lower animals, we find the suggestion of the methods of it, and something higher than our understanding. The squirrel hoards nuts, and the bee gathers honey, without knowing what they do, and they are thus provided for without selfishness or disgrace.—EMERSON.

SOCIETY WORK.

16, QUEEN'S-PARADE, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—At 7 p.m., on Sunday, 21st inst., Mr. J. Burns will be with us, and give us an address on the "Science of Man."—G. D. W.

17, MAIDEN-LANE, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.—Mrs. Ashton Bingham will gladly welcome Spiritualists and investigators at her seances every Thursday, at 8 p.m. prompt; Mrs. Mason, medium.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Spiritual services every Sunday at 7 p.m. Wednesday, at 7.30 p.m., Inquirers' and members' meeting at 7, Belgrave-terrace, Union-road, Leytonstone. Speaker for Sunday, February 14th, Mr. J. Allen, trance address.—J. A.

THE SHEFFIELD PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE will hold its annual conversazione and ball in the Cutlers' Hall on March 14th. Objects of interest will be exhibited; there will also be experiments in Mesmerism, Hypnotism, Psychometry, Clairvoyance, &c. Tickets: Single, 2s.; Double, 3s. 6d. Doors open at seven.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET.—An able address was delivered on Sunday by Mr. Veitch upon "The Utility of Spiritualism." On Wednesday Mr. Veitch's psychometry surprised and gratified several of those present. Sunday next, services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Wednesday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Veitch, psychometry.—J. T. ADY.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—On Sunday last we had a crowded meeting, and several strangers were present, who seemed surprised at our mode of worship. Mrs. Ashton Bingham kindly recited some of her original Spiritual poems, and short addresses were given by Messrs. Francis, Ware, Mason, and Holloway. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., open meeting. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mrs. Mason. Select circle, Saturdays, at 8 p.m.—J. H. B., Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. W. E. Long discoursed on the doings of "The Prophets of the Lord," as recorded in the Bible. On Thursday in last week, at our inquirers' reception, the subject of "Prayer" was treated as a spiritual exercise, and defended. On Thursday next, at 8.30 p.m., the subject will be "Body, Soul, and Spirit: their Difference and Relationship Defined." Next Sunday evening, at 7 o'clock, address.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, W.—"Consolatory Messages of Angel Friends" was the subject of Mr. R. Wortley's very interesting address on Sunday evening. The messages had come through his own mediumship, and were full of consolation, telling of contentment and rest and continued love in the brighter spheres. Mr. T. Everitt occupied the chair. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. T. B. Dale, "Jesus among the Divines"; at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Veitch, lecture. Tuesday, discussion. Thursday, seance, Mrs. Spring. Saturday, seance, Mrs. Treadwell.—C. I. H.

SPIRITUALISTS' CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.—On behalf of the president (Mr. Robert Cooper) and the committee, I am pleased to say the society is growing slowly but surely, having members in New Zealand, Australia, America, Holland, and a fair number in England, thus linking those of a common faith in sympathy together. For the benefit of those who may desire to join, I may add that the society is supported by the voluntary contributions of its members, no one being refused admission to membership who cannot contribute. The principal objects are:—1. To aid inquirers by correspondence or otherwise, by assisting in the formation of private circles for the development of mediumship; also to give lectures on Spiritualism in public halls. 2. To form a connecting link between Spiritualists in all parts of the world for the mutual interchange of thought, &c. 3. To supply the Press with information on Spiritualism and answer Press criticisms. 4. The distribution of Spiritualistic literature. 5. All members of the society have absolute freedom with regard to their methods of propaganda, only pledging themselves to assist in proving the truth of spirit communion. The society beg to tender their thanks to the Editor for the use of space, and literature received in 1891.—J. ALLEN, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex.

TALK with a seaman of the hazards to life in his profession, and he will ask you, "Where are the old sailors? do you not see that all are young men?" And we, on this sea of human thought, in like manner inquire, Where are the old idealists? where are they who represented to the last generation that extravagant hope which a few happy aspirants suggest to ours? In looking at the class of counsel, and power, and wealth, and at the matronage of the land, amidst all the prudence and all the triviality, one asks, Where are they who represented genius, virtue, the invisible and heavenly world, to these? Are they dead—taken in early ripeness to the gods—as ancient wisdom foretold their fate? Or did the high idea die out of them, and leave their unperfumed body as its tomb and tablet, announcing to all that the celestial inhabitant, who once gave them beauty, had departed? Will it be better with the new generation?—EMERSON.

THE ANSWER OF THE SIMPLE FOLK.*

All things that shall be, are;
Nor need we look afar
Into dim vistas of some future being,
For comfort and release,
For blessedness and peace,
Since prophecy is but the gift of seeing
That which around us lies;
But more interior-wise
Than this phantasmal world, the body bounding,
Which doth but symbolise
Worlds that within us rise—
More real worlds—this outer world surrounding.

There, peaks are all aglow;
There, bud and blossom blow;
The hills of Heaven are not as these of ours;—
The glacier and the snow
On those hills lie below;
It is upon the peaks that bloom the flowers.

The realm of ice is Earth!
Till sympathy has birth
All in its fulness. Then shall disappear
The moraine and lawine,
Then through the world be seen
The fruits and flowers of the heavenly sphere,

Which quickens all the hills,
Which even now o'erfills
The pasture-grounds with milk and honey flowing;
Summer is on the peaks,
Spring on the upland speaks,
And ever near the plain the Sun is glowing.

She, who shall come, is near!
Yet, first, must there appear
That Woman-child wherefor Creation prayeth;
Which Faith to Reason bears,
And yet not his, but theirs,
Of whom all things are born on Earth, through Faith

Even now adown the slopes,
Fair Virtues, Loves, and Hopes,
The wise Handmaidens of the Queen, are winging
Their way with lamps and oil,
And robes Earth cannot soil,
And Time but broider with fresh jewels, bringing.
A.A. in "Aurora"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- A.F.C.—What we proposed is delayed by pressure, but not abandoned.
- N.S.—Your narrative is marked for use when pressure on space is lessened.
- M.J.S.—Our best acknowledgments of your kindness. Our desire is to introduce to our readers such valuable matter as occasion serves.
- A.E.W.—Thank you much for good wishes. Matter in hand abundant just now and till end of month: so do not tax yourself.
- E.M.—"If the narrative is one of fact." There is the difficulty. These stories can be so easily made up. But it does read like an ancient legend.
- S.F.—Our best wishes in your trouble, of which we are heartily sorry to hear. When sickness and anxiety permit us, we shall write privately. All the world is groaning from some sad cause or other.

WHAT you call your fundamental institutions, your great and holy causes, seem to them (the Transcendentalists) great abuses, and, when nearly seen, paltry matters. Each "cause," as it is called—say Abolition, Temperance, say Calvinism, or Unitarianism—becomes speedily a little shop where the article, let it have been at first never so subtle and ethereal, is now made up into portable and convenient cakes, and retailed in small quantities to suit purchasers. You make very free use of these words "great" and "holy," but few things appear to them such. Few persons have any magnificence of nature to inspire enthusiasm, and the philanthropies and charities have a certain air of quackery. As to the general course of living, and the daily employments of men, they cannot see much virtue in these, since they are parts of this vicious circle; and, as no great ends are answered by the men, there is nothing noble in the arts by which they are maintained. Nay, they have made the experiment, and found that from the liberal professions to the coarsest manual labour, and from the courtesies of the academy and the college to the conventions of the cotillion-room and the morning call, there is a spirit of cowardly compromise and seeming, which intimates a frightful scepticism, a life without love, and an activity without an aim.—EMERSON.

* See last number, p. 72:—

"Silent the Wise Ones! Then
Turn we to Simple Men."