



A WEEKLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE HISTORY, PHENOMENA, PHILOSOPHY,
AND TEACHINGS OF

SPIRITUALISM.

[REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER FOR TRANSMISSION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ABROAD.]

No. 626.—VOL. XIII.]

LONDON, MARCH 31, 1882.

[PRICE 1½d

SPIRITUALISM AND ECCLESIASTICISM.

CONJURERS, PARSONS, AND BISHOPS IN RELATION TO SPIRITUALISM.

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(Reported by Mr. John Fowler.)

Spiritualism has rapidly won for itself a place in the scientific and religious thought of the age. A variety of extraordinary natural manifestations of spirit power have been witnessed by credible and independent persons whose valuable testimony cannot be set aside by the bigotry and incredulity of Conjurers and Bishops. The meaning of these phenomena is, that mind survives the destruction of the body, and, as an intelligent agent, stands in close relationship to man. It is not our intention to describe these facts—they are to be had by seeking for them according to natural law; when known conditions are produced by investigators, certain definite results follow. The most authoritative researches into these phenomena are of course those which scientific men, trained to accurate observation, have made. William Crookes, F.R.S., in his valuable "Researches," gives his complete and impartial testimony to the reality of these marvellous occurrences. Alfred Russel Wallace, a prominent name in literature and science, has made some independent examinations into these alleged spiritual manifestations, and he emphatically gives his testimony to the genuineness of certain manifestations he witnessed. When men in the first rank of science give their evidence without hesitation or equivocation, there is certainly some ground for treating the claims of Spiritualism in a serious manner, but, when we come to consider the overwhelming weight of testimony which could be produced from the private homes of the people of this country, we have an array of authorities that cannot be set aside by what Basil Wilberforce called the "ecclesiastical pooh pooh." This vast array of facts, which are found in the works of the distinguished gentlemen we have alluded to, and the current literature of Spiritualism, are unanswerable demonstrations of the entity of the soul continuing its existence in another natural mode. It belongs to Modern Spiritualism, does the

glorious achievement, of being able to demonstrate the continuity of life apart from bodily organisation. The Church has valued Bishop Butler, Samuel Drew, and many others for their masterly arguments in favour of the immortality of the human soul. Notwithstanding their powerful intellects, their culture and learning, their metaphysical reasonings have been clouded with a haziness that plain minds could not penetrate. Their metaphysical subtleties have raised more doubts than demonstrations they have clenched. All their reasonings have been unsatisfactory, because they lacked an experimental or empirical basis. The Church has honoured these. They are great and shining lights, and in all controversies with unbelievers and atheists, it is enough to silence the clamour of any logician to be told that Bishop Butler said so and so!

Modern Spiritualism provides that experimental demonstration, which the reasonings of Butler and Locke needed. The Church, represented by the intelligence of its clergy, does not want this demonstration. Churches founded upon faith require no demonstrations. Belief accepts. Demonstration requires a thinker. A thinker is not wanted by the Church. Believers only are favoured and blessed, therefore, Modern Spiritualism is essentially revolutionary. It threatens the stability of theological unity and supremacy. A religion with a faith divinely inspired wants nothing more. Innovations and changes are opposed to the spirit of faith, therefore, it is natural that the Bishops and the Clergy should make common cause with money-making conjurers against Spiritualism. A Bishop is a different man altogether from a scientific investigator. The latter is trying to find something new in the realm of Nature, some great law or laws, which will throw light upon well-observed phenomena. The Bishop has got a book with a mysterious history. It was written by somebody somewhere at sundry times; more than that he does not know. He has been taught to accept the book as the word, the real word of the Creator of the Universe. He believes,—that is all he can say; he cannot give a reason. Faith does not want one. His intellect plays blind-man's-buff. He hates the man of science, because he is letting day-light into the minds of men. The more free and enlightened the thinker, the less he is influenced by Bishops. Their great ecclesiastical grandeur went with the development of the reformation, nonconformity and

modern radicalism. Before they were troubled with the printing press, they were honoured and adored. The slavish ignorance of the people, magnified their virtues and followed with fidelity their unctuous words. But now, this is all departed. The Bishop now serves as an ornament to grace the opening of Parliament, a Royal Wedding, or a Country Confirmation, for which he is remarkably well and handsomely paid, but the charm of his influence and sacerdotal pre-eminence have lost their glow. The impious and scornful mock at their lawn sleeves, caricature their ecclesiastical vanity, and denounce their unfitness as lowly followers of the humble man, Jesus. Bishops, as a class, never have wanted improvements. Two things they have always done: first, they have always resisted the spirit of political and philosophical progress; and, secondly, they have always drawn their salary.

Now, these men thus sketched find out that it will not serve their interests to patronise Spiritualism. It is something new. It will change old land marks and imperil the stability of popular veneration. But they have not fairly comprehended the best possible way to defeat Spiritualism. They have thought of several ways, and broadly hinted that they all may be put into operation. The first way they have suggested is to traduce these phenomena, alleged to be spiritual, by declaring them to be the work of the devil. To those weak-minded people who believe in a devil, this plan is quite satisfactory. It is enough if the Bishops don't like it. Guided by apostolic wisdom, it cannot come from any source but that dark and infernal one, the devil. To those who are so wicked, as not to believe in the existence of his satanic majesty, this plan carries no weight. It will do very well for Church people who can digest sermons, but for those who seldom get under the steeple, it is treated with scornful contempt.

But they have another plan, which is intended to apply where the other is not effectual. It is thrown out as a kind of supplement, or to change the figure, an outwork which will perfectly secure the internal citadel, that is, that all these phenomena are the result of fraudulent conjuring. To make out their case they have secured the services of a number of very clever nimble-fingered professional gentlemen. They perform under distinguished local patronage in the towns and cities of the United Kingdom. They thus get a fashionable airing to performances which had long ago lost all public interest. The profession of a conjurer was thought to be incompatible with the character of a christian gentleman. Good men of the old school warned the younger members of their families that the conjurer's entertainment was a dangerous, if not a bad place for young persons to attend. This is all changed. The art of the conjurer has been revived. He is now wanted to do church work. He is elected first man in the crusade against Spiritualism. It is very significant that their new patronage does not improve them, but that it rather gives more extended facilities for carrying on successful financial operations. We do not blame the conjurers so much as those who employ them. They are doing work. They would do other work if handsomely paid. They are in for the big loaf, and for the present their connection with the Bishops is the most successful. It is natural for us to ridicule the Bishops for this ridiculous manifestation of their anti-spiritualistic zeal.

They have bestirred themselves so much lately, that it behoves us to point out to them that they entirely fail, in their exhibitions of legerdemaine, to refute the genuine facts of Spiritualism. It is difficult for an experienced Spiritualist to trace any resemblance between the ridiculous performance of the conjurer and the true spiritualistic seance, so wide are their exhibitions from the mark. We should judge they had never witnessed any spiritual phenomena at all. Their efforts are like the attempts a man would make to imitate the manners of a people he had never seen. We have to

complain against this vile and wicked misrepresentation of our phenomena. The appliances which they have to introduce, the conditions they require, and the indispensable assistance they need from others to carry out their performances, imply that the Spiritualist must be absolutely destitute of power of observation and common sense. After what they call the reproduction of a spiritual manifestation they say, "this is the way it is done," and a ready-believing Bishop titters with delight, and a vulgar inexperienced audience is led to believe that all Spiritualists are knaves or fools.

To shew the hollowness of these pretended exposures a challenge was made through the Bishop of Liverpool, who, as an ecclesiastical personage, is very active in his diocese. Alarmed at the brave utterances of some members of the clerical profession, and the alarming proportions to which the Spiritual Movement has grown in this country, he joined hands with a certain conjurer, but the Bishop, notwithstanding a considerable amount of pressure being put upon him, never caused his colleague to accept this challenge. The Bishop did not like the challenge. He did not want to have anything to do with Spiritualism in the way of investigating it. He was its enemy because he regarded it as calculated to throw light upon certain obscure matters in which he had an unusual amount of interest. One could hardly think that even religious zeal could stamp out of the mind of a gentleman those natural demands of truth. These alleged spiritual facts the Bishop expressed his ignorance of, but occupied the humiliating position of assisting at a farce to pour ridicule upon them, and realise its inspiring presence.

We have been wondering how we could cross swords with these opponents of Spiritualism. We have challenged the conjurers to mortal combat, but they decline the gauntlet on our terms. Perhaps the Bishops are made of better metal. If they are we shall have no objections to try to remove their visor of brass, and bring them face to face with those problems of life which have ever had a charm for pious and speculative minds. We offer a challenge to meet and debate the question, "Is Spiritualism true," with any one, or all who have or may bring the weight of their ecclesiastical patronage to the exposé entertainments of conjurers.

This juvenile Bishop stands self-condemned, inasmuch as he has confessed himself ignorant of Spiritual Manifestations, never himself having assisted at a spiritualistic seance. His judgment and condemnation to an ordinary man of sense will carry no weight, but a large class of people as ignorant of the subject as himself, will be heavily prejudiced against the investigation of Spiritualism, because, as their Bishop, he has taken up a position of uncompromising hostility. He does not stand alone. Several brother Bishops have joined their influence with his, and lesser lights have also joined in to swell the ranks of opposition. We have not the slightest doubt but what they are all sincere, but a man may be very sincere and not very wise. Wisdom is something different from the practices of the partisan and the zealot.

It has been remarkable in the priesthood through all ages to bestow the weight of their influence against inevitable spiritual changes. There is nothing unaccountably wonderful in the attitude of the Church. It must maintain the ancient lines of demarkation provided by faith and dogmas. Her beliefs are venerable and hoary with age, not necessarily true for that. A thing that is very old, sometimes is the least useful. The spirit of the present time and modern thought demand some rearrangement and consideration of the disputed problems of theology. The scientific triumphs of the present century, make it impossible for the Church to remain silent. The garden of Eden episode is knocked out of time by the discoveries in geology and astronomy. Huxley, Darwin and Tyndall are not vulgar nor blasphemous characters. Their high qualities of personal character are universally esteemed. As students of Nature, they take the first rank. They

have left a personal God behind them as a myth, and know nothing of a life after death. Eloquent young students read their books, quote their choicest sayings, and swear by them. Oxford and Cambridge breed doubters and Atheists. The influence of science is destructive to faith. Mr. Bradlaugh is a terrible character. His enemies bestow upon him the exuberance of their hatred, because he will not swallow Christian dogmas. The humble classes have accepted his apostleship and swear by him. These influences are actively at work around and in the Church. The learned saven and popular leader have declined the shackles which Faith imposes. Christianity is losing its hold upon the people. Church attendance is getting less. Sermons have become stale. Theological dissertations have become repulsive. The people stay at home on the Sundays to read their weekly paper and talk about politics.

Now, what have the prelates to propose? Some of them want more praying, but it is no use praying against the demonstrations of Tyndall. The Bishop of Liverpool writes tracts, but tracts are not the thing. Some want more stirring and able sermons, while others with large credulity, think that a revival of religion will remedy all that is complained of.

We think that the prevalent scepticism is due to the growing intelligence of the people, and more exact methods of studying the laws of Nature. Spiritualism meets the comprehensive condition, by affording scientific demonstration of another life. One would imagine that a chair would be provided in one of our great universities, for a professor of Spiritualism, whose chief functions would be to lecture upon the occult forces identified with the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism. This subject provides a method by which the scientific doubter can be healed of his doubting. The proof palpable given of immortality would recall the wandering tribes of sinners which have strayed away from their parent fold. It is the only way the lost power of the Church can be restored. This time is the Church's opportunity. If it be neglected, it will possibly never come again.

Spiritualists hold, in common with Christians, that there is another life after death. The Spiritualist believes it, because he finds in nature certain laws expressed in determinable facts, shewing that man is cognisant of experiences after the body dies. The Church does not think at all about it, denies the facts which as such are verifiable to-day, and relies upon a class of facts found in an ancient book. This book is deemed of more authority than a man's own eyes. The Church calls upon all to believe. It does not say, Believe when I have given you evidence. The authority is so unimpeachable, that no evidence is needed, and it comes to you with the declaration, Believe or be damned. The authority is finished and complete. Who would exchange the prerogative of superstition enforced by the dogma of, Believe or be damned, for the meek and poor substitute of a scientific demonstration. It is far better and more spiritual to them, to believe that these things called miracles in the New Testament, did take place, than it would be to have them demonstrated before your eyes. No, no, the Church declines to change horses. The dogmatic coach will travel the old roads of theology for many years yet, and the Bishop sitting upon the coach box will crack his whip as well as any Sam Weller did in the bygone ages. He will mind his driving, but all at once ere long when he has gained the summit of a hill, he will see the railway of scientific progress at express speed running along the valley, carrying with it the blessings and the facilities of civilisation. The elegance of the scientific Pulman car will supercede the tottering old coach. More effective appliances will be substituted for meeting the requirements of nature. The Church stands in its own light. Its bigotry and dogmatism curse it with blindness. It will require the healing power of Spiritualism

to restore its sight, and it will do it effectually. The race of conjurers will have to disappear. The Book of Nature will have to be opened, and studied side by side with Revelation. One will have to explain the other.

The most effective way to crush Atheism, is for the Theists to demonstrate Theism, and for the Church to demonstrate the natural immortality of man. If man be not immortal, as a Church it is of no use. Its sermons, prayers, offerings, rubrics, ceremonies, synods, confirmations, baptisms, and saint's days are all utopian chimeras, blank-cartridge shot into the gulf of the unknown. If immortality be a fact in Nature the Church can have a foundation, and rest upon something broader than the Bible, more authoritative than Revelation. It meets the materialist on his own ground, and adds a new chapter to the Science of Life. The Church, instead of decrying the facts of Spiritualism, ought rather to hope for their truth, and pray for a fuller demonstration, even as a policy of expediency.

The part it has taken with conjurers, has been the most contemptibly suicidal. The merest tyro knows very well that the conjuring tricks are conjuring tricks, and nothing more, but it would require a dogma to make a sensible man believe that these tricks were duplicates of Spiritual Phenomena. These performances will do very well for those who do not know anything of Spiritualism. They are set up, and will serve the purpose admirably, as scare-crows are set up in a corn-field. They may frighten the "goody goody" ones away, but a man who wants to stand on his own feet, and do his own seeing, they only incite the more, and produce an anxious spirit of enquiry where no such spirit existed before. For ourselves, we know the reality of these phenomena: bright as the thought of heaven, true as the light of day, radiant with celestial truth the spirits come. Their inspiration is the life of human progress. Their separate intelligent action, the hope of the young, and the consolation of grey hairs. Yes, spirits, come, there is no mistake about that, and for the conjurer to try to duplicate these phenomena, is as absurd a piece of impudence and gullibility as an attempt to imitate the glories of Rembrandt's aerial tints, and soften skies with the kitchen-maid's blacklead brush. Duplicate by conjuring, forsooth! nobody would ever dream about such a quixotic chimera, but he who is lost in the narrow defiles of an undeveloped theology. A man might as well try to paint out the ancient lines of Roman history. You might as well say that Homer was a myth, that Alexander was an ideal creation of the poets, and that Carthage was a creation of the historian, as to say that spiritual communication was impossible. Spiritual communications began after the first man went into paradise. The golden link of inspiration has never been broken through the lengthening ages of the past. The copious volume of to-day is more effulgent and prolific than ever it was before. Let the clergy coquette with conjurers, let conjurers impose upon their patrons: the natural truth of immortality will become all the more firmly established.

The statue of Venus, shaped by the divine genius of the sculptor, may become incrustated with dust and the smoke of centuries. The uncultured eye of the barbarian may see no beauty in its classic proportions. The "wavy lines of beauty" may be inarticulate to his soul, but the high gift of genius is stamped upon the marble silently under its clothing of dust. It is waiting to be recognised by the gifted eye of the Artist. The Artist will come, and those smoke-begrimed limbs will again become radiant in the sunshine, and speak to man the language of a poet's ideality. So Spiritualism cannot be affected by the derision of Bishops or the cant of of fools. It stands as a fact in Nature, established like the everlasting hills, waiting for the eye of humanity to catch its superior spirit.

Mr. E. Foster and his opponents keep up the conflict on Spiritualism in the "Accrington Gazette."

THEOSOPHY.

THE LESSON OF SCIENCE.

[The Goswell Hall friends follow the excellent practice of meeting in Conference on Sunday at 11 o'clock, for the free expression of their views on various phases of Truth. The following eloquent essay was recently read at one of these Conferences by the talented Secretary of the Congregational Committee.]

I have called my paper "the Lesson of Science," but I am not very sanguine as to how far I can justify the use of such a pretentious title in the few remarks I wish to place before you. The advantages of a science culture are of course unquestionable, and the lessons to be derived from the study of Nature are too many and too important to be dealt with at length in this short paper. My object is chiefly to show the tendency of Science to modify our religious opinions and prejudices, to exalt our ideas of the Great Creator of the Universe, and to lower our own pride and self-importance. It is strange to note how little of the beautiful humanity taught by our Great Exemplar Jesus Christ, is to be found amongst even those who profess to regard him as their ideal of a perfect man, and the model by which they shape their own lives.

Of course as a general rule this would be the result of ignorance, yet it very often happens that minds gifted to an extraordinary degree with many rare and valuable qualities, fall short of the possession of that *sine qua non* of true greatness, humility, and their pride and self-esteem, instead of being modified by a knowledge of their true position, are excited by an over estimation of their own importance as inhabitants of an all-important world existing under the special providence and protection of its maker. This is particularly the case with those whose judgment has been warped by national and hereditary religious prejudices.

The great scheme of Christian Salvation, on which so many millions pin their hopes of happiness here, and hereafter, knows no other world than this little globe of ours; and that faith numbers amongst its upholders some of the wisest and clearest heads in other respects that have ever contributed to the world's intellectual store, but their ideas have been limited and shackled by dogmatic theology, in which they have exhausted all their highest energies and deepest thoughts. Popular theology owns no greater enemy than Modern Science, and the prejudice of minds of those who uphold that theology, look upon Modern Science with feelings of the deepest horror, as threatening the downfall of all their most cherished hopes. This state of things however, is fast giving way, as iconoclastic science slowly but surely destroys the fabric upon which these prejudices are founded. As one from a mountain top would look pityingly down upon a battle below, so the student of Nature regards those wrangling theologians of his day who waste their time in splitting hairs over dogmas they do not understand, especially when he realizes, as only a science-student can realize, what an infinitesimal speck our earth forms in the vast Universe, and how small a part we play in the economy of Nature, and consequently how absurd it is to suppose our little world to be so important to its Great Author as to call for his special attention. I will lay aside altogether that absurd teaching which would make us believe that God himself died personally for our sakes, to satisfy his own attribute of justice, and because there was no other way open to him of doing so. To my mind it seems really marvellous that there should be persons sane in other respects, and possessing the smallest degree of reason, who can firmly believe such a monstrosity. They certainly must have a very poor idea of the magnitude of the Creation, and must look upon the stars in the same light as the little child in the story, who supposed them to be "the holes the Angels made in Heaven to let the glory through." It is impossible that they can have any idea of the real nature of these so-called stars. Science tells us that they are worlds, probably inhabited, of a vastness and magnitude not to be compared with our own little globe, and that they probably act as great centres of systems like our own solar system, having other worlds revolving round them periodically in the same way that our earth and its planetary companions revolve round our own sun. Considerations of this kind will not allow much room for such selfish ideas of the pre-eminence of our own globe and its inhabitants, and really, if the same scheme of salvation by vicarious atonement was necessary in all the probable worlds in the Universe, the individual who undertook the task would have his time fully, if not pleasantly, occupied.

It is very difficult to realize that this world, which seems so vast to us, should be so small by comparison with other stellar bodies, although on the other hand we can fully recognise that infinitesimal as our globe may be, and insignificant as we ourselves are, the world is neither so small, nor we so puny, as to be overlooked by the all-seeing Eye in the light of whose favour we exist. All share alike, the bounty and love of one common Father.

I will illustrate to you a very curious theory which came under my notice lately, which, although beyond all human

probability to verify experimentally, still serves well to convey to the mind a faint conception of the immensity of space. My only apology for the digression will be, that the theory is the greatest possible assistance to a realization of the possibilities of Nature, and if fully understood cannot fail to impress the mind deeply with a sense of the profundity and vastness of the Universe. It has been ascertained by calculation with great accuracy, that light travels progressively at the rate of about 12,000,000 miles in a minute of time. This has been demonstrated by several methods, each corroborating the other. You must please imagine yourself endowed with the power of seeing to enormous distances by the aid of a gigantic telescope. If you could mount a telescope powerful enough at the small distance of 11,870 billions, 50,400 millions of miles from the earth, you would be able to observe the whole Tragedy of the Redemption, as it was taking place 1882 years ago, that distance being the spot where the light which left the earth at that period will have arrived in 1882 years. Thus you see it is possible to have ocular demonstration of the truth of the record in the New Testament, under certain conditions. Of course one could, by the same rule, mount the telescope some three times further off still, and view the whole operations of the Creation, which took place according to Scriptural Chronology, about 4000 years before the birth of Christ. I think most of us would consider that an interesting spectacle. There is another extraordinary possibility in connection with the same subject. You will please imagine the earth as seen from a distance, to be a gigantic illuminated clock dial, with the hands at 12 o'clock, going exactly the same as an ordinary clock on a large scale. You must still further suppose yourself endowed with a speed slightly greater than that of light, and travelling away from the earth with your eyes fixed on the dial. A very curious effect would here develop itself. You would see the hands of the clock slowly moving backwards instead of forward. In an hour, if you kept the correct speed, the hands would have moved back to 11 o'clock, and you would positively reach 12 o'clock the previous day in 24 hours. This is a very startling theory, but its truth is self-evident, if you reflect that the movement of light is progressive, and that if you travel faster than light, you would overtake that which left the earth before you, and you would consequently be able to witness this curious spectacle as described, and time could be proved to have no existence, since the order of things would be entirely reversed. There can be no possible limit to space, and the human mind can neither conceive its limitation nor its eternity. If you ascribe a limit to it at any point however remote, you would have to be able to answer the question, "What is on the other side," and no satisfactory answer could be given. It is impossible for the mind to grasp such immense distances, and we can only speak of them as we speak of immense numbers, as things naturally possible but incomprehensible.

If we turn from a contemplation of the great things in Nature to a consideration of the microcosmical hidden world, brought into view by the microscope, we still trace an infinity in the other direction, everything coming with new and startling surprises for the seeker after knowledge. If he should selfishly feel disposed to ask, "What is the use of this?" or, "What useful purpose can that serve?" the wonderful provision made for every living thing existing, rebukes his selfishness by showing him that everything exists, not for man's use, but for itself; and that its life is given to it with no thought of the purpose it might serve for humanity, but for its own enjoyment and profit, and that, therefore, the life of the lowest is as sacred as the life of the highest. Those who have been educated in orthodox opinions, and who are accustomed to believe that every good thing upon the earth, animal and vegetable, was created solely for their enjoyment and profit, cannot realize this. This cannot fail to be the case where science and religion oppose each other. There can be no true religion without science, and while the two are in opposition to each other, religion must necessarily cramp the minds and dwarf the understanding of its followers. On the other hand, when the delighted student of Nature enters upon a consideration of the grand facts that Modern Science opens to him, his mind, freed from the shackles of creedal slavery, expands and becomes illuminated, and his soul goes out in a rapture, which none but an ardent lover of Nature can realize. When film after film is cleared from his mental vision, and as he gradually grasps the wonderful effects of natural laws, one by one, and looks with reverence and in all humility "through Nature up to Nature's God," then it is that he feels that holy awe of the Grand Designer, that love for the Wonderful Creator, which comes through no other channel; that gratitude which nothing but a realization of the mighty blessing bestowed upon him in his own existence, can bring. And when, under the ennobling influence of such emotions, a song of thankfulness leaps from his enraptured soul, he realizes a foretaste of the joys yet to come, and appreciates to the full the truth spoken by the Nazarene of old when he said, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted." True humility is the lesson of Science: a realization of our own utter littleness, and an imperfect though grand conception of the wondrous love, majesty and omnipotence of our Creator and our God.

R. W. LISHMAN.

LITERARY NOTICES.

"RELIGION AS REVEALED BY THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE."

(New York: Babbitt & Co; London: J. Burns. Price 6s. 6d.)
(Continued from last week.)

From the account Dr. Babbitt gave in our last of his mental experiences, the reader will undoubtedly have drawn this inference, viz., that the gift or power of spiritual intercourse, which every one possesses more or less, is valuable and productive of high results, when exercised by a thinking unbiassed mind. His is decidedly the kind of Spiritualism that should prevail. Fortunately the prospects of the Cause now appear a little brighter. The "hair-stand-on-end" work and dark seances have pretty much had their day; and silly wonder hunters must now seek out something else with which to gratify their morbid palates. It is certain, therefore, that the Movement will ultimately be cleared of both folly and imposture; and although these black tributaries will be cut off, the Spiritual Stream will not gain perfect purity at once, as we shall still have the "trimmers," a set of harmless, weak souls, who although convinced of mere external phenomena, etc., are not sufficiently developed to see that truth is independent of authority, and hence they will continue to make a noise about Jesus and the Bible. So far as the common theological faculty are concerned, they can, like Demetrius of old, plead "business," for it is evidently clear to them that without very clever trimming, "not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute, but also that the temple to the great goddess, Diana, be made of no account." (Acts). Too clearly are the mental states of these, our brethren, most potently governed, not by the spiritual world, but by the lowest "sphere" of the material world. Who then are the deluded? Surely not those who aspire to realities, but those who love gold, position and worldliness.

The progress of Spiritualism cannot be retarded by the influence of such minds; it is bound to move rapidly forward, and all the more so when we have such literature as that from the pen of Mr. Babbitt. His last production—"Religion as Revealed by the Natural and Spiritual Universe"—is a perfect gem, and blends philosophy, religion, poetry and art harmoniously. In this work Mr. Babbitt builds religion on the broad and solid foundations of Nature and the Soul. He has already himself, in his letter of experiences, stated what are its chief contents, and it only remains for us to call attention to one or two significant points. The chapters on the "Supreme Mind," wherein is developed what may be termed the law of subordination and government, are really fine, and put, we think, Theism on a scientific basis. He says:

"I have demonstrated that every leaf and flower, and tree, and shell, and crystallization, and organic growth in Nature, has its centre of unity, or axis of polarization, where its power culminates; that every solar system its sun-sphere, around which its planets, moons, comets and nebulous masses revolve; that large numbers of solar systems, including our own, are revolving around a still mightier centre, which by some astronomers is said to be Alcyone, one of the Pleiades. But this is not all, Alcyone itself with its vast burden of worlds and perhaps the millions of other suns which constitute the Milky Way, must be circulating around some centre of amazing power; otherwise what can hold them in such a brotherhood, separate from the rest of the Universe? Again there are thousands of other star clusters, similar to the Milky Way, each of which must have its centre of unity in some tremendous ruling sphere. So far then we see that suns, planets, comets, nebulae, and all of the known universe, are in everlasting motion around some central and directing spheres, which are the bonds of unity and points where power culminates. Shall we not then in harmony with all analogies, and consistent with the all-pervading law of unity, admit that there must be an almighty and infinite Centre, so to speak, around which all the star clusters and forces of the universe are making their sublime circuit through the eternal ages? Knowing, as we do, that all power is exerted in harmony with a great system of laws, in which spiritual and material forces must ever work in correlation, we are driven to the conclusion that the vivifying spirit of this all, embracing central power, is God."

The author next refers to what he has written on the duality of force, and briefly shows that no action can be possible without positive and negative conditions, without finer and coarser elements combined, without a body and soul principle in every portion of the universe, and then proceeds to argue that "the Centre of universal Being and the Primate of all power is two-fold, of which the vast material sun-centre alluded to must be the negative pole, while at a distance therefrom, and situated in the most refined part of the universe, must be the mighty Spiritual Sun-centre as the positive pole. These two centres are like the two foci of an ellipse, and work in correlation as the pivotal points of all gravitations, all attractions, all repulsions, around which the whole potentialized universe revolves. We have the culminating glory

of God, then, in this spiritual sun, whose beams animate the universe and constitute the starting principle of all force, while the culminating point of all matter is to be found in this great material sun, which constitutes the lever power, by which Deity controls all worlds and systems, and also the reactive power by means of which all worlds and systems send their waves of influence back upon Deity." Swedenborg and Davis have both written on the "Central Sun," but they have presented the subject in a crude form compared to Mr. Babbitt, whose arguments are clear and logical. The reader will find his chief demonstrations in his large work, "Light." To the objection that infinitude cannot have a "centre," he holds that, "although space is absolutely infinite in extent, the potentialized portions, known as the universe of star clusters, nebulae, solar systems and comets, is not absolutely infinite, but is ever expanding and developing, hence, the real organized universe is not without its circumference, and must positively have its great Central Potency, for the wielding of force is absolutely impossible without a central principle of power to prevent discord and ruin, and to act as a basis of organization."

The chapters on "Life under a Spiritual Religion"; "The Future Life"; "Prayer"; "Philosophy of Evil," etc., are full of thought, and should be read by everyone.

In "A Diviner Bible presented," Mr. Babbitt shows himself to be a great nature-scripturalist. A transcendentalist can invest any legend with spiritual beauty, and our readers will remember how Swedenborg, with his idealistic brush, gave the book of Genesis a touch which no doubt has astonished its simple-minded writer. Mr. Babbitt, however, instead of attempting to force new spiritual wine into old bottles, transcribes God's word as it appears written in the leaf, flower, tree, etc. We shall, therefore, quote his—

SACRED TEACHINGS OF A LEAF.

1. In the first place every leaf has its central fibre or stem as its point of unity around which all other fibres organize. We have seen that there can be no organization without a centre of unity, and this centre in the leaf is the parental principle which kindly gives its juices and forces to the dependent fibres and parts, and thus exemplifies parental love both human and divine, as well as the law of organization.

2. These smaller fibres work harmoniously together side by side for the beauty and perfection of the whole, and thus teach fraternal love.

3. Uniting their force and harmony with the parent stem and adding to its power, they teach us to turn affectionately to our parentage both earthly and heavenly, thus inculcating filial love.

4. The two parts of most leaves spreading our affectionately side by side, one side being a little bolder or longer than the other, typify conjugal love. Those leaves, shells or other objects that do not seem to manifest this two-fold arrangement to the eye, nevertheless have their duality of forces and teach the same principle in another way.

5. Each of the fibres pursues its own independent channel in its own way, and more or less differently from all the rest, thus exemplifying the law of freedom, diversity, individuality and self-reliance.

6. The fibres never run over each other or interfere with each other's rights by selfishly drawing away the juices that belong to its brother fibres. This is the law of justice, and is applicable to both family and social life.

7. The fibres increasing in size and power as they move toward the central fibre teach the law of progression or gradation. Much of the beauty of the leaf as a whole also comes from its progression in size and then in delicacy, like a crescendo and diminuendo in music. Curvature itself is a progression in direction, and the outlines of leaves as well as the little pointed arches that so often form their fringe-work teach progression.

8. Developing on both sides in symmetrical harmony the leaf teaches us to avoid one-sidedness of culture.

9. Drawing its juices and coarser elements from the earth, it also drinks in its most refined elements from the sunlight, a method of teaching us that while we draw sustenance from physical and earthly conditions we must also look above for our inspirations and a diviner life.

10. The very fact that the leaf gains its highest beauty by thus exemplifying goodness and perfection, proving the poet's words that "truth is beauty," should teach human beings that their highest beauty of character must come from exemplifying the same qualities, while deformity and hatefulness come from reversing them.

I have thus formulated a decalogue of great principles which the Most High has engraved upon the two sides of a leaf instead of upon two tables of stone, and if these teachings alone could be carried out in the world, they would banish all wars, all selfishness, all despotisms, and bring about the joys of the millennium. It would take a book as large as our English Bible to embody all the teachings of a single leaf, including its microscopic aspects, its esthetic character, its wonderful chemical laws and the principles of force therein displayed. Let us look upon it with reverence, then, as one of God's holy books which he hangs in such countless numbers upon all our trees for our up-building and happiness.

THE TEACHINGS OF FLOWERS.

1. Flowers teach the same divine lessons as leaves in a still more exquisite style. They have a greater number of points of diversity, combined with an equal number of points of unity, a more complete symmetry and all-sidedness, and proclaim the fraternal, filial and parental love with still greater emphasis. How affectionately the leaves of the rose all combine, and then all wind about the parental centre; what fine progressions of colour and form, what delightful radiations of its own sweet nature in the way of fragrance! The greater the number of parts that best combine to teach these lessons in a flower or other object, the more beautiful it is as a whole. There is a wonderful individuality in flowers, each kind teaching these same great lessons in its own peerless way.

2. Alfred Russel Wallace, of England, states that flowers which are white or pale or not endowed with the most gorgeous colours possess the sweetest fragrance, and it is well known that birds with the most brilliant plumage are generally the poorest singers. Let us remember, then, that there is ever a law of compensation in nature's dealings, and that if our station is humble and our personal charms not of the dazzling kind, we may, nevertheless, exhale the sweetest elements of character, and possess the higher spiritual beauty.

THE DIVINE LESSONS OF A TREE.

1. A tree is quite a little world of itself, with superb organization, a great unity of unities, a whole nation of individual beings. It preaches on a grander scale the same great truths as do the leaves in their more modest way. Its central law is in its trunk, around which the branches cluster and blend in such fraternal harmony as to form the grand outline of the whole. It exemplifies in a beautiful way a perfect republic. While it centralizes its force in its trunk so that it may be powerful, it also branches out with great individual freedom in all directions. If the tree were a despotism it would mainly converge all its powers into its trunk, drawing the forces away from the leaves and branches without giving much in return; but it is a true republic, whose multitudinous individuals in the forms of leaves draw the sunlight and carbon and other fine elements from the sky and then concentrate them all in the trunk as their law of unity, but the trunk in its turn sends its juices and forces back into the branches and leaves as its principle of diversity and freedom. Several individual leaves combine and constitute a little family, which we call a twig; several twigs combine into a kind of town council or sub-branch; several of these sub-branches send their delegation of central stems to a still larger branch, which represents a county. These county branches combine into great branches which may be called state legislatures, and these great branches combine to form the great central government or trunk of the whole tree.

2. One glory of the tree is that no part lives to itself alone, and no part interferes with the rights of its neighbour. The loftiest branches that float in the sun gather all they can of the pure ethereal elements that surround them, and freely send them, not only throughout their own twigs and leaves, but throughout the whole tree, not forgetting the humbler roots that delve in the soil. The roots, on the other hand draw up and strain off by means of their spongioles the choicest elements of the soil and send them, not only through their own minute structures, but throughout the whole tree without the least jealousy towards even the highest leaves that float heavenward, for all classes of this great foliated nation are dependent on each other, and they wisely work together, not all for themselves and not "all for others," but on the law of "loving their neighbour as themselves."

3. Too much centralization, and too much expansion of the trunk to the neglect of the branches which form the leading beauty of the whole, is a depotism. Too much development of leaves and branches without reference to trunk and foundation gives a top-heavy character. The greater the diversity and individuality of growth, the more beautiful is the effect, if the unity and organization be equally strong. When the winds of passion tear a branch from its parent tree then we have states' rights run wild. The withering process will soon commence with the broken limb, while the tree itself will receive more or less injury. Such trees as the oak and the elm show with what a magnificent freedom and individuality the limbs can branch out in all directions and yet blend into a majestic unity as a whole.

THE TEACHINGS OF A FOREST.

1. Even the trees of a forest show their fraternal fellowship by combining their form side by side, usually in parallel lines, their diversity and individuality by their variety of sizes and styles, and yet their unity by the general oneness of mass, of height and of direction.

2. We have seen that a tree is a good type of a nation. May the time soon come when all nations shall dwell together with the same unity as the trees of a forest, and yet with a diversity of accomplishments and characteristics that add richness to the whole.

LESSONS FROM THE SHELLS.

It will be sufficient simply to hint at conchology which re-

veals a little world of beauty of its own. These shells find multitudes of ways of exemplifying unity and its contrasting principle of diversity. Notice how differently the shells inculcate the idea of progression. The scallop shell has its lines which radiate side by side, commencing at a common point of unity and progressing in size as they move outward. The ammonite has a wonderful system of little chambers

THE TEACHINGS OF CRYSTALLIZATION.

1. All crystallizations have their axis as central lines of unity around which their atoms become segregated by an absolute system. Nearly all snow crystals, ice crystals, and many others have an absolute unity of form as well as of force. This, like most other snow and ice crystals, has six leading lines, the feature of unity being, that all are of the same length and all concentrate at one centre, while their points of individuality are that all have their different lines of direction just sixty degrees apart. But these lines are themselves centres of unity for a series of smaller lines near their outer end. Then there are six diamond forms with their exquisitely finished form, which constitute another delightful brotherhood between these longer lines.

2. Common salt, gold, silver, copper, etc., crystallize in the form of a cube; the diamond, alum, fluor spar, etc., in the form of an octohedron, having eight triangular sides; most snow and ice crystals are hexagonal, or at least arranged in sextuple divisions, while all other crystallizations present some definite form, and show how even what is usually called dead matter conforms to divine law.

3. Crystals, abounding as they usually do in straight lines and angles, inculcate principles of decision and straightforwardness. Curves belong to grace and tenderness; angles, to spiritedness and power.

There are other chapters of Nature's Gospels, but we think we have quoted sufficient to show that Mr. Babbitt is a truly inspired writer, and that our readers must peruse his books for themselves. We can promise them that they will have a feast of no ordinary kind, while those who are in orthodox prisons, may come forth and be exceeding glad.

J. R.

"HAFED, PRINCE OF PERSIA."—I have just finished reading this book, and have never been more interested, except in the Bible, which to me is the book of books. Apart from his valuable and interesting testimony to Spiritualism, "HAFED" bears a noble witness for Christ, and the Scriptures; against sin, and for holy living, after the example of Christ. Few, I think, could read this book free from prejudice, and not feel interested, and profited. This is the sort of Spiritualism which is needed. All who are truly spiritual would rejoice in it, as the testimony of one who knows whereof he speaks, from experience both in the body, and out of it.—K. Wood.

Plymouth.

TRUE AND FALSE SPIRITUAL POLITY.

PROVERBS, XXV., 11.

To the Editor.—Sir,—I hope your readers will carefully consider the "wise words fitly spoken" in a few paragraphs which appeared under the heading of "Spiritual Polity" in the MEDIUM, March 24. If the truth contained in these paragraphs meets with the acceptance it deserves, much good will be done.

Developing circles as a rule are failures. Men and women waste hours weekly in developing circles, who do not read one useful and instructive book from year's end to year's end. I will not now go into the subject of existing abuses connected with developing circles, and the promotion of Spiritualism; my object in writing is to call very especial attention to the remarks which appeared under the heading of "Spiritual Polity" in last week's MEDIUM, and, if possible, to call forth an expression of opinion, as to true and false methods of investigating and promoting Spiritualism.

In the mean time, if developing circles were discontinued, and Spiritualists gave a little more time to the cultivation of their brains and the improvement of their characters, in other words, to the development of the angel within them, the Cause of Spiritualism would be better served than it is at present.

I must not trespass further at present, and will conclude by thinking you for your few faithful words about bazaars and dancing. Can folly go further, than when it supposes Spiritualism is to be promoted by dancing parties.—Yours respectfully,

THOMAS MCKINNEY.

New Fletton, Peterboro, March 27, 1882.

[We cannot print all that has reached us, on the "shilling hop" polity. A London medium has expressed his feelings as to the effect produced upon him, when on Sunday evening, after spiritual worship, he heard, hand-in-hand with the benediction, the announcement that this heaven-born Cause was to be "celebrated" on its Natal day by a dancing party. Persons who would otherwise dance with vigour and legitimate enjoyment, object to this manifest substitution of agility for inspiration.—Ed. M.]

MR. HUDSON, SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS,

AND THE

CELEBRATION OF THE THIRTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF SPIRITUALISM.

YOUR kindest sympathies and active help are earnestly solicited on behalf of the Movement now on foot in aid of Mr. HUDSON, who suffered so pitifully because of his being a Spirit Photographer, some years ago, and has not yet been able to rally himself.

To add to his sufferings, Mrs. HUDSON recently passed to the Spirit world.

It is confidently hoped that with a suitable glass house, and means of existence for a short time, Mr. HUDSON might be once again established in business as a photographer, and obtain, as he did before, the photograph of spirits, in addition to the sitters.

A proposition having been made in the Spiritual Periodicals, by SIGNOR DAMIANI, and which has been well supported by other correspondents, a Committee has been formed for the purpose of raising funds to help Mr. HUDSON, by Subscriptions, and an Entertainment to be given on APRIL 20, at NEUMAYER HALL, HART STREET.

Will you be so good as to favour the Committee with your friendly aid—

- (1) By contributing a Donation;
- (2) By the purchase of Tickets;
- (3) or, by both?

Much good may be done by naming the matter to all friends favourable to the Cause, and taking steps to secure their kind help.

All Contributions should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, J. WOOTTON, Esq., 33, Little Earl Street, Soho, W.

TICKETS: Special Seats, 5/-; Reserved Seats, 2/6; Body of the Hall, 1/- are now ready, and may be obtained of the Honorary Secretary,

15, SOUTHAMPTON Row, W.C.

AMY IVY BURNS,

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

AN EXHIBITION OF SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY, AND RECOGNITION OF MR. HUDSON.

At the Committee Meeting on Tuesday, further subscriptions were reported and sale of tickets.

Eminent Spiritualists from various parts of the country are expected to attend and speak. Mr. Ware, of Plymouth; Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool; Mrs. Nelson, of Northampton, and others, have signified their intention of being present.

Mr. J. T. Dales, 289, Crystal Palace Road, East Dulwich, writes: "Miss Young has kindly consented to give a seance here, on Sunday, April 16th, on behalf of The Hudson Fund."

Application for tickets should be made to Amy Ivy Burns, Hon. Sec., 15, Southampton Row, London, W.C.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED.

	£.	s.	d.
Mr. H. Wedgwood	2	0	0
Mr. A. Vacher	2	0	0
Mr. J. Wootton	1	0	0
Signor Damiani	1	1	0
Mrs. James—per Miss Houghton	0	10	0
Mr. S. O. Hall	1	0	0
A Friend	1	0	0
Mrs. Towns	0	10	6
"Nicodemus"	5	0	0
Miss Douglas	1	0	0
Sir Charles Isham, Bart.	0	5	0
Rev. W. R. Tomlinson	2	2	0
Mr. Percy Wyndham	1	0	0

Mr. J. Bowring Sloman	0	5	0
Mr. A. Tennyson	0	5	0
Mrs. Tebb	1	1	0
Mr. R. Glendinning	0	10	0
A. T. T. P.	2	0	0
Mr. John Fowler	2	0	0

Further contributions are earnestly solicited from all Spiritualists far and near. Remit to Mr. J. Wootton, Treasurer, 33, Little Earl Street, Soho, W.

Mr. Freeman begs to acknowledge with thanks the following contributions to the fund being raised for Mr. W. G. Haxby, who still needs friendly aid:—

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged	10	1	6
Mrs. B—	0	5	0
A Friend	1	0	0
Miss S—	0	5	0
R. W. S—	1	1	0
Mrs. MakDougall Gregory	3	0	0
Mr. Swinburne	0	5	0

£15 17 6

74, Acre Lane, Brixton, S.W., Mar. 29, 1882.

HUMAN IMMORTALITY PROVED BY FACTS.

Report of a Two-nights' Debate on Spiritualism, in the Hall of Science, London, between C. Bradlaugh, Secularist, and J. Burns, Spiritualist. Price 6d.

Man, and his Relationship to God: An Inspirational Discourse, Delivered at Walsall, by Walter Howell. Price 1d.
London: J. Burns, 15, Southampton Row, W.C.

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The MEDIUM is sold by all news-vendors, and supplied by the wholesale trade generally.

Advertisements inserted in the MEDIUM at 6d. per line. A series by contract.

Legacies on behalf of the Cause should be left in the name of "James Burns."

SEANCES AND MEETINGS DURING THE WEEK AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, 15, SOUTHAMPTON ROW.

THURSDAY.—School of Spiritual Teachers at 8 o'clock.

THE MEDIUM AND DAYBREAK.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 1882.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Mr. Babbitt's Philosophy chimes in harmony with that of Mr. McDowall, as to the continual enlargement of material existence, and the demonstration that there are grades of quality in the universe as well as extent. A new Scripture is, indeed, been written daily, giving the mind a grander view of the All than has ever yet been presented. It is not at war with any of the older Scriptures, though it clashes with priestly dogmatism, which would enforce truth by authority. Every mind has in reality to make its own Scripture, though other books may assist.

The words of the child quoted in Mr. Lishman's beautiful essay, are full of that truth set forth in the above named philosophy. The solar spheres of space are indeed points through which the more interior or soul elements communicate with the external or material. When we light a candle, we make a pin-hole into that more interior realm. Modern Science collects facts, but it knows not of the great truths behind them, of which that child caught a glimpse. The views set forth by Lishman and Babbitt somewhat differ. Let there be liberty.

Thus writes A.T.T.P.: "The very essence of Spiritualism is individuality self-acquired, not vicariously. Its object is to teach men to think for themselves, and do away with preachers and teachers of all sorts. I believe if Jesus of Nazareth were to control, and to tell his own story, no one would express more astonishment than himself at the twistings and contortions of his sayings and doings. Thinking for others has always this conclusion: the thinkers become despots; the people who are guided by them, slaves."

QUEBEC HALL, MARYLEBONE ROAD.—The Sunday evening meetings are evidently gaining ground under the regular lecturing of Mr. Iver MacDonnell. His last lecture was on the "Atonement of Christ for the Sins of the world," and a more complete exposure of the unchristian character of this doctrine we have seldom heard. Salvation, he maintained, depended on ourselves. If we forgive, we shall be forgiven, was the substance of forty or fifty texts quoted, all being the words of Christ, while the sacrificial idea was untaught, or at best, only an implication. A discussion for over an hour followed, in which the main question was untouched, and we only regret some able evangelical "believer" was not present to maintain his views.—REPRESENTATIVE.

MISS KEEVES AT EAST DULWICH.

History tells but one simple tale, with regard to the manifestations of Spiritualism, and not only is this simple tale told ever in one uniform manner, but it teaches one uniform truth, and that truth is this: that the spirit is not dignified by the building, or the place where it operates, but, on the contrary, it is the spirit that dignifies every mean thing, no matter how common, with which it comes in contact. Men do not see this; they are not content to leave the dignifying power in the hands of the spirit; and so they build, and they carve, and they make all manner of enticing things, to coax, and lure the spirit to its manifestations. Ought we not, therefore, in these days to be overcharged with the power of the spirit, seeing these things, especially if that power responds to the invitations of the polished elaborations of esthetic phantasies that are constantly standing, and with uplifted hands, imploring and invoking fire from heaven. These thoughts bring before me these words, and they almost sound audibly in my ears: "When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my court?" Who indeed! The holy ground of God's presence requires bare feet. If a pair of sandals could not be tolerated where nothing of man's ingenuity counts in his favour, what becomes of all the vast machineries of study, and skill, that are perpetually throwing off endless repetitions of Greek, of Roman, and of mediæval ornamentations? And all to propitiate a power that says, "put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The ground itself is purer than man's meanest garments. The bare-footed impress of God's footsteps has ever been asserting the extreme simplicity of religious truth. Let old shoes and ecclesiastical upholsteries go together—the same old lumber closet for both.

It was while entertaining such thoughts as these in the guest chamber of my mind, that I found myself before the residence of Mr. Dales, at East Dulwich. As I stood there, I could hear the faint echoes of a worship bell calling the people to prayer; and, for a moment, I allowed the tinkle to, like the call of a spirit voice, wake up afresh the thoughts that had fallen into repose. "Is," I said to myself, "Spiritualism on the road for the bell? Are the priests beginning to drop in with their accommodations, as they ever have done with every grand movement, to patronize it, and smile on it, till it lies before them fascinated into a stone, whereon they may build their own exaltation?" Let me utter the warning voice, here! in the front of Mr. Dales' house! If you would keep the charge that you have in your hands pure, take off the shoes from off thy feet. Have nothing between your bare feet and the holy ground. The holy ground will not shrink from contact and touch of yourselves. But the moment you get too proud for the humbleness of bare feet, the holy ground will sink from under you. Your Spiritualism will take to ecclesiastical leather, soles, uppers, patent polish, enamel, silver buckles, precious stones, all sorts of ornaments, bows and decorations, but no holy ground. These thoughts are not strained, or dragged in here, they are the natural issue of the situation as I see the people coming together, dropping in one by one, and not allured by the fineries of superstition; convinced as they assemble that all beyond a humble lowly and obedient mind, is so much covering that must be got rid of, if we would stand clear upon pure spiritual ground.

On this Sunday evening, March 26, Miss Keeves had kindly promised to further Mr. Dales's spiritual mission with one of her inspirational services. And, true to her promise, she was present; and by the devotional character of her visit and utterances, she aided the aspirations of those present to find that they were treading upon holy ground, and it was good to be there. The subject chosen by Miss Keeves, for her inspirational paraphrase and spiritual application, was, "Belshazzar and his feast." It was a very eloquent and fluent address.

While Mr. Dales can command such responding assistance as Miss Young, Miss Keeves, and Mr. Towns, the good work that he has undertaken will be sure to be maintained.

Atwell House, Peckham.

JOSEPH CARTWRIGHT.

BREAKFAST ON GOOD FRIDAY AT QUEBEC HALL.

As our room is limited, and being wishful to ensure entire comfort, we shall be glad of a Post Card from all friends intending to be with us at 10.30 on Good Friday morning, before, or not later than Tuesday morning, so as to guide us in providing.

The help of Ladies to arrange Flowers, etc., on Thursday evening, between 5 and 9 o'clock, will be exceedingly acceptable. No charge will be made. We shall depend upon Voluntary Contributions. Profits, if any, will be appropriated to formation of Fund for visiting Sick and Distressed.

J. M. DALE, Hon. Sec.

Neptune, Astro-philosopher, has returned from New York, and will be glad to hear from his friends. Direct letters, Neptune, 24, Walgrave Road, Earl's Court, London S. W.

Mrs. Britten's subject at Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool. On Sunday will be; Morning at 11, "Are all men immortal?" Evening at 6.30, "The anniversary of Modern Spiritualism."

SPIRITUALISM, THE PIONEER OF A RATIONAL AND REVERENT RELIGION.

My dear Mr. Burns,—I have followed in the MEDIUM all the arguments against orthodox belief, and think it high time that we should throw aside creeds that are only fit for the nursery, and that theologians should leave off shamming and at length descend from their Olympian altitudes of tomfoolery, down to the more congenial level of common sense.

For instance: How can people, gifted with reasoning powers, talk earnestly about *eternal damnation*? I hold that those who entertain such a preposterous idea are unconsciously guilty of blasphemy, it being, in fact, a *quid simile* to saying that our *bounteous Lord*, our *merciful Father*, is nothing more nor less than the very fiend, the evil spirit, the devil in person!

What? We live here one moment—are so created as to be full of imperfection,—which is God's own fault, for *He* might, in His mercy, have made us less imperfect had He really wished us not to fall a prey to continual temptations; and then, if we act (as may be expected) wrong in this world of *time*, we are to be tortured for ever and ever in the world of *eternity*? This is quite monstrous!

Our span of life is like an *atom*, whereas eternity is, in comparison, even millions of times greater than the whole material universe all put together; and we, because we have sinned in this *atom* of time, are to be punished in a manner equal, to continue the simile, to millions of worlds and universes, so to say, as an equitable retribution for our *atomic* guilt?

No! They who utter such egregious and wicked nonsense, have a very lame idea of God and of eternity.

No! I repeat: if in our present life we do not succeed in bringing our moral qualities a step nearer to the source of perfection, and that on the contrary we rather recede from it, our punishment naturally lies in our being forced to lag behind and continuing in another existence our path in a humbler position than the one we now hold,—thus lengthening our pilgrimage towards the final goal. (?)

Such an idea does not clash with our sense of justice, whereas the other does and grossly so. St. Paul says: "*Sit rationabile obsequium vestrum*," which liberally translated means: *Let reason direct your ideas respecting the Deity*;—and St. Paul is a trump! though Renan makes him out a blunderer.

We live in moments of transition—all the paraphernalia of religious ideas are waning and fast setting. Let us hope that the new creed, destined to dawn on mankind and fill up the gap, be worthy our "*Secolo di Lumi*," as we Italians call this our Century! Let us trust that, with St. Paul, in the novel tenets (that are to be), we may stick to reason as our sure guide, and not follow on the track of St. Austin's idea, whose chief argument for believing was, "*Because the thing is absurd*"—"credo quia absurdum"!

This great step in the future belongs to Spiritualism, and we must all prepare our minds and hearts to do our duty well.

Believe me, with sincere regards and brotherly feelings,
yours truly,

SEBASTIANO FENZI.

P.S. Here our ideas are gradually spreading.

Florence, March 16th, 1882.

ELEVATION OF EARTH-BOUND SPIRITS.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—Your correspondent, Hester Mitchell, is doing good service by calling the attention of earnest Spiritualists to the above subject: but I believe that no small or large circle is required for the purpose.

Let all who feel convinced (as I do) that though yet in the flesh, it is in our power to be the means of elevating poor suffering earth-bound spirits, by raising our hearts daily in prayer to our loving heavenly Father, beseeching Him that the spirit of Christ may again preach to spirits, captives, and release them from their prison, the bondage of sin, whilst on this earth.

Such daily prayers offered by all in spirit and in truth, would soon be the means of bringing many poor souls to rejoice in heaven, and we will be amassing treasures for ourselves, which will be everlasting.—Yours truly,

A JERSEY CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST.

Jersey, March 27, 1882.

Mr. T. M. Brown is now in Nottingham; expects to be in Manchester by the week end, en route home. Address letters up to Wednesday next, care of Mrs. E. Mills, 14, Victoria Street, Ardwick, Manchester.

A YEAR OF YEARS.

A PAPER READ AT THE SPIRITUAL INSTITUTION, 15 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, ON THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM, FRIDAY, MARCH 31, 1882.

The year consists of twelve months, so that by comparison twelve years may be likened to twelve months, constituting a Year of Years.

With the number of the MEDIUM published this week, it has been in existence twelve years as a Weekly Organ of Spiritualism. These years in many respects represent, by the succession of events in the progress of Spiritualism, the phenomena of the twelve months of the solar year, the beginning and the ending of a period, which can never be lived over again; it is now a portion of history.

The year begins in winter, and winters differ vastly; some are very severe, others are quite mild. Some winters have their hard weather early in the end of the old year, others again extend their winter far into the months of the new year. Thus, some seasons are late and others are early, and similarly, autumnal leaves fall sooner one year than another.

Though light and heat are at a minimum at the new year, and of all seasons it is, therefore, the climax of darkness and gloom, yet it is pre-eminently the time of hope and gladness. With the birth of the new sun and the inauguration of the new period, greater joys are experienced from anticipation, than the reality is capable of producing when the orb of day has attained his greatest splendour. And yet no one has seen that new sun, no one has tasted the sweets of the new future that is opening out. The weather may be tempestuous and overcast, and the light and comfort even less than on December 31, but on New Year's Day there is gratitude expressed for that which has yet to be enjoyed.

Twelve years ago the Movement was expectant of a change—a widening out of its sphere of action. Some autumn seed had been sown to prepare for the harvest of the Year just closed. DAYBREAK had been in existence as a monthly paper, and the "Spiritualist" had been commenced fortnightly. To our great regret it was not weekly, as we shrank from the task of taking up the burden of a weekly paper, and hoped the "Spiritualist" would step in and save us. Sunday Services had been started at Cavendish Rooms by Mr. Peebles, and a Penny Hymn Book had been printed. The Spiritual Institution was at work, and means for bringing the Phenomena before the public were in operation. There was at that time no public movement; but the elements of such a thing were in a state of combination and development.

The experienced journalist will smile when told that when we set about the first number of the MEDIUM we had no contributors, no means, no experience, no ambition, no end to serve. The spirit-world required a "medium" of the press, and we gave it one, by the aid of a kind lady, now in the spirit-world, who came in and laid a £5 note on the counter. Like a little stream at its fountain head, our first number was insignificant, and contained no specious promises for the future. We felt the shadow of years of suffering and toil enveloping us, and moved in our work, as the hands do on the face of the clock, with no purpose of their own, but obedient to the unseen power within.

The healing power consecrated the first month of the Year we are speaking of. Dr. Newton arrived a few weeks after our commencement. His work was a great success, and led to the development of Mr. Ashman, who has been consistent to this day, and the healing power has now upwards of twenty practitioners in London alone.

The departure of Mr. Peebles for America, was the first grand gathering of Spiritualists and festive evening; his place was soon filled by Mrs. Emm

Hardinge, the close of whose ministry was marked by another excellent meeting. Thus we wore into the spring season, and local speakers began to take up a portion of work in London, so that Sunday Meetings were regularly sustained. The Phenomenal branch thrived with amazing vitality; the mediumship of Herne and Williams graduated from powerful physical manifestations, to the direct voice, materialisations, and Mr. Hudson had concomitantly the spirit photographs. At an earlier date Mrs. Everitt had voices and writing, but that belonged almost to the preceding epoch.

The "John King" Number of the MEDIUM, published in the summer of 1873, marked the luxuriance of phenomenal activity in that heyday of early summer productiveness. Then the professional element and the political element began to branch out as varieties of the crop being produced on the field of Spiritualism; like aggrandising weeds they strove to cover the whole field. These were not days of discrimination: all who were "mediums" were innocently regarded as the instruments of heaven, and all pretentious schemes to push on Spiritualism by main force were hailed as near cuts to the kingdom of heaven. Hence a form of Spiritual Polity became the vogue which too greatly depended upon externals for its success. Phenomena were sought for their own sake, and produced with such intemperance, that mediums became demoralised and the results deteriorated. Mental mediums, intoxicated with the praise which their controls evoked, pocketed it as a personal compliment, and like the pampered goose, acted as if the Cause had been made for them. The professional forces and the "leading" organisations figured as if spirits and spiritual principles were almost unworthy of notice except as a convenience to lead to the success of the scheme, or the celebrity of the individual. The Holmes's, the Fays, and others tried to reduce the power of mediumship to an exhibition, which reached its culmination in the practice of Dr. Slade.

The mid-summer glory of the year was certainly, in a mental sense, the lectures of Mrs. C. L. V. Tappan. Her advent was the grandest of all public successes. The Anniversary in the Co-operative Rooms was of the same period, and indicated the acme of vital power in the work.

From that time the shades of autumn gradually deepened, and the fruits began to ripen. Committees, Associations and other political machines, ran their wild high-handed course, and, like wormed fruits, fell early and wasted away. The Gospel of "Seeing is believing," had its day. The month of competitive marvels was at its height when the crash came, and a long series of frosty blasts howled amidst the orchard trees, detaching the fruit and withering the once luxuriant leaves. Unbelief took the place of belief. A mania of scepticism and detraction seized minds once regarded as spiritual and credible, and it is not yet that these exhibition methods, which have been the cause of much woe, have been abandoned.

The professional and political elements by a frantic combination, in these latter months of our Year, strove madly to gain the whole Movement into their hands. They seemed to forget that the spirit-world had ought to do with it. To their view it was purely a temporal affair; a matter of patronage, share companies, intrigue, committees, subscriptions, engagements, &c. This sphere of action gave rise to personal attacks of a very painful kind, till the bare stubble-field became covered with the wreck of personal reputations, and misdirected efforts. These sharp frosts of early winter doomed to complete decay the transitory products of the Old Year, and prepared the way for the glad New Year, of which this night is the eve.

We have no word of reproach or ingratitude for the weather and crops that have been experienced and reaped in the Year of twelve years just closed. As the spirit, "Mr. Robinson," said at Mr. Herne's circle on this night week: "It is only that which is worldly

and of the earth that has perished from the Movement; all that is spiritual and good still remains, and will yet burst forth with renewed vitality."

These words are wise and true. To the wise there is nothing regrettable; but even if we unwisely regret ought that has been a product of our Year, we must at the same time admit, that the impression that Spiritualism has made upon the public mind far exceeds the most sanguine expectations of twelve years ago. That spirits can manifest themselves to mankind is an universally accepted fact in intelligent society, few of the members of which have not learned something of Spiritualism. The sound fruit gathered is of incalculable quantity.

Our particular work has been to lead to improved methods of spiritual working. When we look back, we find that many plans which we inaugurated, when passed into other hands, soon left the ideal line in which we expected them to move. Failures have, however, taught lessons which precept never could have conveyed, and we close the epoch with the satisfactory feeling that warnings which we have given, years in advance of events, have from the first faithfully indicated the tendencies of the Movement.

But the work, as far as we are concerned, has been that of the spirit-world. To that sphere of Light, all the credit belongs; the failings and errors are ours alone: not to our reproach, however, but as lessons which a kind Father has placed before us for spiritual growth and culture. We still remain in the Service, with hands full of work, and heart full of gratitude, which our mind thankfully accepts as approval from the Master on High.

PRESENTATION OF PORTRAITS TO MR. AND MRS. WARD, NORTHAMPTON.

On Sunday last the friends of Mr. and Mrs. Ward, Cowper Street, Northampton, made a presentation to them, the nature of which is stated in the following letter sent by the promoters to friends soliciting their support:—

"A few friends of Mr. and Mrs. Ward desire to present them with a small token of their regard, and solicit contributions to procure some suitable testimonial. Mr. and Mrs. Ward have, for so many years past, opened their house to all comers in the Cause of Spiritualism, and often at much personal inconvenience, that those who have the pleasure of knowing them feel desirous of making some slight recompense."

The following contributions were received:—

	s.	d.
Sir Charles Isham, Bart.	7	6
Mr. Middleton, Crick	5	0
Mr. P. Manfield	5	0
Mr. Holton	2	6
Mr. H. Manfield	5	0
Mr. Wm. Toms	1	0
Mr. and Mrs. Nelson	2	6
Mr. E. C. Gubbins	2	6
A far-off friend	2	6
Mr. and Mrs. Jacobs	2	0
Mr. Smith	1	0
Mr. Langhorn	1	0
Mr. Beeby	5	0
Messrs. Green & Son	2	6
Foleshill friends... ..	5	0
Mrs. Watts	0	6
Mrs. Trolley	0	6
Mrs. Johnson	0	6
Mrs. Hicks	1	0
Mr. Westby	1	0
Mr. T. Ward	1	0
Mr. Wright	1	0
Mrs. Ansell	1	0
Mr. Warren	1	0

The testimonial consisted of Portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Ward; enlarged Photographs finished as oil paintings, by Mr. Harry Baynton, 6, Queen Street, Coventry. They are placed in massive gilt frames, are fine likenesses, and a marvel of cheapness at 3 guineas for the pair.

No publicity had been given to the event except by word of mouth from friend to friend, for the matter had been kept secret from the family till the last; but when the use of the room was asked for, the purpose had to be divulged. It is true Mr. Burns, of the Spiritual Institution, London, was present, but his reply had not been received till Saturday morning, so that the success of the effort depended entirely on

purely local influences; showing the great respect in which Mr. and Mrs. Ward is held, and the ability of Mrs. Nelson to sustain the interest of the meetings by her mediumship.

It was not expected that many would attend in the afternoon, but the room became quite crowded. The proceedings were entirely informal, yet most orderly. Mrs. Nelson occupied a corner of the room to which the attention of the meeting converged. Hymns were sung, and Mrs. Jacobs was controlled to give an address. Then, between hymns, Mrs. Nelson was controlled by spirit after spirit, "Lemuel Hilliard" being amongst the number, who greeted his formerly London correspondent, and alluded to business that had passed between them. All the spirits were recognised, and through Mrs. Nelson, who was in the unconscious trance, spoke in a characteristic manner.

After the close of this meeting, there was a tea upstairs, which was well-attended, and a truly sumptuous repast was served.

In the evening the lower room was crowded to excess; chairs were brought in from other places, till there was not a foot of unoccupied space anywhere. There must have been 60 or 70 persons present. Mrs. Nelson was controlled by Mr. Arlidge's son—and the father present recognised him—who delivered a beautiful spiritual address. The control of spirits then began, but with this peculiarity that they were all children who came seeking their mothers who were present in the meeting. Some of these mothers were strangers to the medium, but the children in spirit knew the voice of their own mother when she responded. Many tears were shed at these unexpected meetings, and the proceedings were deeply affecting. There were no "tests" and fortune-telling efforts. The spirits quietly came and offered themselves for recognition, and, as it appeared to us, successfully in every case.

THE PRESENTATION.

After nearly two hours of these exercises, Mr. Burns, of London, made a few remarks as a presentation of the pictures to the host and hostess. He said:—

The highest examples of spiritual teaching enjoin love to one another, and an honourable preferment of the brother to oneself. The Spiritualists of Northampton, in the act of this evening, have set an example to the whole Movement. They have also in thus acting followed the example of Mr. and Mrs. Ward, and indeed the Ward family, who in building their home specially planned this commodious apartment as a home for Spiritualism and Spiritualists. For many years the Cause has enjoyed this home as often as was required, without rent or consideration, and the cheerful inmates of this house have vied with each other in making their visitors comfortable.

Now, in giving these pictures, we do not offer a gratuity to our friends for services conferred. Such an idea would insult them. These beautiful pictures are not articles of use and commercial value, are not worldly but spiritual offerings. These pictures, like the coin bearing the head of the Queen, represent the immortal spirits of our good brother and sister who, out of the fulness of their spiritual worth, have bestowed so much upon us and the Cause: and in handing over to them, and to their family these symbols, we pay respect to their spiritual part—we do not minister to their worldly requirements. In years to come, when we have all passed to the higher state, these portraits will tell to the observant eye what manner of pillars the Church of the Spirit had in its early days; and the tradition will be handed down, that these were given in recognition of spiritual services unselfishly performed in obedience to God's will.

For Mr. and Mrs. Ward have solved the great problem of Spiritual Polity. This grand meeting, called forth by the direction of the spirit-world, shows how to work our Cause cheaply, successfully, beneficially, and without encroachment on the prerogatives of others. Yea, let every man be King and every woman Priest, under their own vine and fig-tree, no one daring to make them afraid. What surplice or priestly vestment do we require, but that fountain of pure unselfish love in the heart, which, like the bright robe, washed and made white in service and tribulation for goodness and truth, covers us as with the glorious rays of the Sun of Righteousness. And what crown, diadem, tiara or mitre can exalt our brows more than the flame of Divine Inspiration, which coming direct from the godhead within us, shall guide us into All Truth, and make us victors over all beneath the heavenly plane!

The following verses by a Northampton medium, at present residing with her parents at Weedon, were read during the evening:—

A CHILD FOUND DROWNED!

Little Carrie Wren, aged 2 years and 5 months, was found Drowned, on Monday afternoon, March 20 1882, in the winding stream that flows past the foot of the cottage garden, Weedon, Northamptonshire:

Beautiful Brook! thy mission tell,
As thou windest on through the mossy dell,
By flowerets fair that bow to thee,—
Thou art ever sparkling, bright and free.
The children on thy margin play—
Oh, who so happy, now, as they!
Thou smilest on, sweet Brooklet, still,
And babblest at thine own free will.

But, as I gaze on thee, to-day,
My heart is sad, I am not gay;
For, 'neath thy ripple, 'neath thy wave,
I hear an echo of the grave:
A childish face, a vision fair,
With still, closed eyes, and floating hair,—
With folded hands, and peaceful breast,—
A little floweret lushed to rest.

O Brook! I turn away and sigh,
My heart is sad, I know not why:
The tears will start; something has fled—
A life, a smile;—all dark and dread!
A life has fled, a simple child,
Even so tender, young, unsoiled
By life's sad care: perhaps the best;
To Heaven, alone, we leave the rest.

A coffin, and a sweet, calm face;
A little hand of childish grace;
The scent of flowers, a rich perfume,
That seems to lift the earthly gloom,
And give a glimpse beyond, to where
We see the object of our care.

Oh, heavenly calm! supreme content;
We feel that she was only lent,
A little while to linger here,
Our hearts to comfort and to cheer.

MARY R. BURNHAM.

On his way home, our Representative called at Weedon, and with Mary Burnham stood by the bank, where the inspiration was received so beautifully expressed in the above lines. The poem has been printed on a card with a gold and coloured border, and is fit to grace the walls or scrap-book.

While near the spot we visited the actual centre of England. It is marked by a splendid oak-tree, with straight clean bole, and a symmetrical umbrageous top. The Genius of a nation could not be more fitly symbolised.

OBITUARY.

FIRMAN, (JULIAN ALFRED REGINALD.)

Passed away at 24, Rue Freycinet, Paris, on the 25th of March, through inflammation of the brain, Julian Alfred Reginald, the eldest beloved child of Alfred and Emma Firman, age six years and three months, regretted by all who knew him.

The friend who incloses this announcement remarks: "I am sure you won't refuse to publish this obituary. It is the only sure means open for this poor lady here, to make the news known to her husband, whose whereabouts she knows not. She is a good little woman, and, with her poor children, almost dependent on charity." Such is the domestic character of the latest recruit of the Christian Church in its war against Spiritualism.

WALSALL.—On Tuesday last week, the well-known medium, Mr. J. C. Wright, gave inspirational addresses upon subjects chosen by the audience: "The struggle for a Free Press," "And the origin of evil." The first subject seemed to be in harmony with, and in the sphere of knowledge of the guides of the medium, for in about 35 minutes, a whole history was painted upon our minds, from a religious, social and political aspect. Heroes of the past, whose minds were susceptible to the progressive spirit of the age in which they lived, were marvellously brought upon the scene, and their struggles so really set forth in language, that one for the time could feel their trials, their struggles and difficulties in the great battle of freedom of thought, liberty of conscience, and a Free Press. Mr. Wright well deserved the repeated applause of the audience, for a more brilliant discourse it has never been our privilege to listen to. The second subject was handled in the same masterly manner. The theological story of the "fall," and the "origin of evil," were contrasted with the evolution theory; and the more intricate theological points were made clear when exposed to the day-light of God's laws in and through nature. Our Society beg to thank Mr. Wright for the invaluable service he has rendered us during our late controversy, and more especially for that of Tuesday last, when we had a Dr. Holden, in his "exposure of Spiritualism." We also return many thanks to you, Mr. Editor, for the big parcel of MEDIUM for free distribution, you so kindly sent us. The MEDIUM gets more and more interesting, and is doing a good work here.—J. TIBBITTS, SEC.

On Sunday next, Mr. J. C. Wright, will exchange platforms with Mrs. Hardinge-Britten, who is speaking for the Manchester Society. Mrs. Britten will speak in the Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool, morning at 11, and evening at 6.30. Mr. John Lamont will take the chair. Mr. Wright will speak in Manchester, at the Mechanics' Institute, Major Street, at 2.30 and 6.30, in the place of Mrs. Britten.

PROGRESS OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

PLYMOUTH.—RICHMOND HALL, RICHMOND STREET.

The recent visit of Mrs. C. from Newton St. Cyres, is worthy of particular notice, both on account of the mutual advantage accruing therefrom to our Cause and to herself; and also to present a general view of the strength and status of the Movement in this place at the commencement of the second year of its existence. During the ten days that she remained with us she visited some ten circles in all, and following upon the Anniversary Celebration, nothing could have been more appropriate and advantageous. The advantage to herself has been, that she has had an opportunity of hearing for the first time other good mediums; in some of the circles, three or four including herself, took part; then again her mediumship has been strengthened and improved for her work at home, where she has to labour, so to speak, single handed; no small matter for a meek, quiet, timid female, in a now constantly increasing circle of believers and inquirers. The result of her visit to the Cause here, has been the gathering of all the friends in a consecutive series of circles to the encouragement of the former, and the consolidation and strengthening of the latter.

THE INDIAN CONTROL, AND THE GENTLEMAN FROM INDIA.

A remarkable and memorable incident of Mrs. C's visit, has been the conversations that have taken place between her Indian guide, "Hire," and a gentleman who lived fourteen years in India. This gentleman, Mr. Wilkinson, was originally from Plymouth, and has recently returned to this town. Although he had read a good deal about Spiritualism, he had never witnessed any phenomena, and his first sitting in a circle was at Richmond Hall, last Saturday week. It seems that he was drawn chiefly by the loss of his wife, who passed away about Christmas. One of Mrs. C. chief guides is an Indian female, with whom the medium had lived for a few weeks many years ago; this spirit-friend is so agreeable, useful and good, that she wins the hearts of all who hear her in her broken English, interestingly varied by her voluble native talk. At the circle at Richmond Hall, on Monday week, she commenced to speak in her native tongue, and to our great surprise and gratification, and the great delight of the spirit, our new sitter, so quiet and reserved, and a total stranger to all, was able to converse with the control, and at once they were perfectly at home with each other; able to converse on any topic in the Indian tongue.

The gentleman was astonished to be told that the medium had never seen India, nor knew a syllable of the Indian language; he assured us that the language spoken was pure Hindostanee; that the utterance and manner were those of a pure native; and that the speaker had given proof evidence of perfect knowledge of all the manners, customs, and characteristics of Indian life—giving names and places with perfect correctness, answering all the questions almost before they were put. This testimony from an entire stranger to us, and to the phenomena of mediumship, coupled with my assurance that the medium was simply a female acquaintance of my own; a homely uneducated person; a native of a Devonshire parish, and the daughter of a working man, led Mr. Jutson, a Spiritualist of many years standing to say, that it was the greatest test we had ever received; and all the friends present were much delighted. Here was "the gift of tongues" indeed! We thought this of so much importance that at our invitation the gentleman sat with us in four successive circles, so that many of our friends had the opportunity of hearing this. On each occasion, though tested in every way by Mr. Wilkinson, our lively, witty, Indian spirit-friend acquitted herself in a perfect manner. One wonders how this remarkable coincidence was brought about; no doubt by a higher wisdom than our own. Many excellent tests were also given through Mrs. C. in the various circles; in one case the Indian friend told a lady, that there was a spirit behind her with a bottle in his hand, and that he kept a shop for the sale of medicine. The lady's late husband had been a chemist of Plymouth, but the medium had never heard of it.

NEWTON ST. CYRES.

Mrs. C. and myself returned together to our native place on Saturday. Both the medium and the guides have expressed unqualified satisfaction with their visit to Plymouth; the spirit friends have repeatedly expressed their gratitude to the friends there, at the extremely kind, affectionate, and generous manner, in which they and their medium were received; they also speak in the highest terms of the work in the town.

The Cause is spreading wonderfully in this neighbourhood. The people have hitherto been sadly destitute of religious knowledge and spiritual life; this my beloved native parish has been counted notoriously dark and wicked. "Can any good come out of Nazareth: Come and see!" A remarkable spiritual awakening has taken place amongst some of the least religiously inclined of the people; and what has done it? Neither the church nor the chapel, these are doing almost absolutely nothing for them. Nay, it is this grand, heaven-born religion of SPIRITUALISM that is doing it; many who were totally devoid of spiritual interest, have found in

Spiritualism a pearl of great price, and it is bidding fair here to speedily influence the entire population. This is the outcome of the blind policy of the religious authorities, which by excluding one of their ministers set him free to become a zealous, enthusiastic, and irrepressible advocate of Spiritualism. During the two months of my stay home at the beginning of last year, we were able to establish our circle, and develop our medium, and one, knowing the blessedness of this truth, might well be proud of the results! Since my last visit home in October, many who were indifferent and incredulous have become devoted, enthusiastic Spiritualists; and what is more impressive, some who were the bitterest opponents and persecutors, have become the most zealous advocates. With many tears they have prayed to God for forgiveness; and they came holding out the hands of warm welcome to myself whom they formerly thought in league with the devil.

There is now a fine company of friends gathered at the circle and meeting regularly three times a-week, and on Sunday I had the privilege of addressing two good audiences—about thirty in the afternoon, and some forty in the evening; whereas the most I spoke to when home last was twelve.

It was with a thrill of pleasure that I stood up in the midst of a house crammed full of friends, relatives, and acquaintances, to proclaim and explain this great Truth. How could a man, himself full of the spirit, help being eloquent under such circumstances? All present, too, had an opportunity of witnessing the table moved by spirit power. There is no question about Spiritualism being established here, and spreading, too, to a remarkable extent. Yes, some good shall come out of Nazareth! What shall the harvest be? OMEGA.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE IN FRANKFORT STREET, PLYMOUTH.

To the Editor.—Sir,—I read with much interest the humorously-written paragraph in "Western Notes," in the "Western Daily Mercury" of Tuesday, relating to the above case. I am too sensible of the pressure on your valuable space at this juncture of Parliamentary and other matters, to expect you to open your columns to the discussion of the subject of Spiritualism, which my friends and myself have so much at heart; and I will not obtrude that subject upon you, but having had something to do personally with the investigation of this "haunting" case, I thought that a few well-authenticated particulars concerning a matter to which you have given such prominent notice might be interesting to your readers, particularly as the writer of the paragraph alluded to is slightly mis-informed respecting the matter; and also that the story might be taken out of the region of "private circulation."

Some few weeks since, my attention was called by some members of our (Spiritualist) Society to the fact that a house in Frankfort street was the scene of mysterious disturbances, and that it had been so for years. Prior to my being informed of this, a company of my friends had visited the house, and in accordance with the usual methods of communication with the spirit world had commenced to investigate the matter; on the next occasion I accompanied the party and took a leading part in the proceedings.

The initiatory step in establishing communication with disembodied intelligences is by the instrumentality of a table, around which the investigators sit with their hands resting upon the top, and the "circle" being thus formed, the table becomes the medium of communication between the sitters and the spirits. It is a fundamental principle of Spiritualism that this communication may be realized by every family in every home.

On this occasion our party consisted of myself and two friends (one of them being a trance medium), and three members of the family, who watched the proceedings with much interest and wonder, being totally unacquainted with Spiritualism. The "sitting" took place in a small, low, unoccupied room, in the topmost story of the house, where, as has been observed, the disturbances had taken place at intervals for several years. The lady of the house informs me that she has lived in the house some four years, and that during the whole of that time the room had been more or less disturbed, and that no one had been able to occupy the apartment very long at a time. Furniture would be shifted, and the locked door persistently opened without visible hands. A member of our society informs me that her sister, who lived there for a time, was compelled for these reasons to leave the place; although she had always locked the door on going out, it was repeatedly found wide open on her return. The landlady again informs me that although she had persistently refused to believe the reports that had reached her from the tenants concerning the disturbance in that apartment, she had been recently convinced of the "haunting" by the testimony of a little girl, daughter of the tenant, who declared that a woman dressed in white had appeared to her: the little girl had been so impressed and frightened thereby that she refused to enter the room again. The room was thereupon abandoned by those tenants, and when visited by the Spiritualists it had remained unoccupied four months. During this interval, and up to the time of our investigation—including the days following the first and second visits of our party—the landlady states that the large cupboard

in the room had been repeatedly shifted and the door persistently opened in spite of its being always left locked.

Having then formed our circle, we commenced with singing and prayer; then, at our request, the medium—Mr. P.—was entranced by his spirit friends, and these latter, using the vocal organ of their instrument, described the surroundings, and gave us their advice. They stated that there was no doubt of there being a spirit in the room, but that the magnetic or spiritual atmosphere in which the disembodied being was enveloped was so dense that nothing could be clearly defined, and recommended us to invite the earth-bound spirit to communicate with the circle by the table. In response to my request, the invisible intelligence lifted the table, and having established the usual signals—three tilts for yes, and two for no—a conversation was carried on with this invisible being for nearly an hour. Every question was responded to by the spirits, though the replies were somewhat ambiguous, evasive, and contradictory. However, the information communicated was (waiving his humorous suggestions) substantially as stated by the writer of your "Western Notes," viz., that it purported to be the spirit of a woman who had committed suicide, and was earth-bound, i.e., was in darkness and prostration, being unable to rise from her material surroundings, or to do anything beyond annoying and disturbing people in the body.

The investigation was followed up by our friends, the result being—according to the testimony of the spirit friends and the unhappy spirit herself—the enlightenment and deliverance of the latter from darkness and bondage. This is a striking contrast to the statement of the writer of the paragraph, that the spirit, after "wrestling and wrestling with the mediums, was finally vanquished!" Spiritualists do not seek to "vanquish" any spirit, but to do good to all spirits; and we simply believe that in this case we had, like our Master, been on a mission of mercy to "a spirit in prison." At a subsequent sitting the spirit gave her name as Esther Dugdale; and, as a proof of her liberation, we were informed by the spirit friends, through the medium, that they would bring her to one of our circles, and that she should control the medium and give an account of herself. This has been done in my presence. I mean she has spoken through the medium, Mr. P., and has promised, when opportunity offers, to give her past history. She claims to be full of remorse for wrong-doing; and expresses regret for the annoyance and trouble caused, and joy in being brought from darkness to light.

I fully expect that the above narrative will meet with incredulous, and even scornful, readers; but that is a matter of perfect indifference to us; Spiritualists have grown accustomed to that. At any rate, the disturbances have entirely ceased. The landlady informed me yesterday that the house had been for three weeks occupied by an elderly female and her child, and that nothing whatever had been heard during that time.

Moreover, the proprietor of the house, whose name I could give, gratefully recognises the service rendered by our party, though he did not, as your writer pleasantly suggests, "apply to us for an order of ejectment." That gentleman, however, I am informed, has another house at Stoke similarly disturbed, and is awaiting our convenience to deal with it, himself desiring to accompany us.

I would like to say that should any of your readers know of haunted houses, if they will communicate with us, we will come promptly to their assistance; we shall be happy to hold "briefs" for any number of such "cases," and we require no fee. I would conclude by saying that all the "orthodox" parsons and ministers are helpless in these matters: they can only be dealt with by Spiritualists.—I am, sir, respectfully yours,

CHARLES WARE.

Plymouth, March 23rd, 1882.

—"Western Daily Mercury."

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Sunday, April 2nd, at 7 p.m. prompt, Mr. MacDonnell's reply to Col. Ingersoll's lecture: "The Ghosts."

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Last Sunday, Dr. T. L. Nichols lectured at this Hall to a large and highly appreciative audience; subject, "Evidences of Immortality." The lecture was preceded by the reading of an interesting communion through the mediumship of Mr. Wortley.

Next Sunday, Mr. Goss will occupy the platform, subject, "The True Spiritual Religion, with a review of the intellectual progress of mankind." Commence at 7 o'clock.

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W. LANG, Sec. West London Spiritual Evidence Society

LEICESTER—SILVER STREET, LECTURE HALL.

On Sunday evening last, Mr. Bent gave a trance address, the spirit-guides taking for their text, from the 5th Chapter of St. Matthew, "Let your Light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

On Easter Tuesday there will a Tea Meeting held in the above Hall. Tickets, sixpence each.

££, Cranbourne Street, Leicester.

R. WIGHTMAN, Sec.

LIVERPOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

On Sunday evening last, at the Concert Hall, Lord Nelson Street, the controls of Mr. J. C. Wright delivered a most interesting address. Mr. Joseph Shepherd occupied the chair. He strongly protested against any attempt being made to run Spiritualism into orthodox lines. It did not belong to Christianity. If the parsons fell in with it, it would become a worthless thing. He hoped that the controls of their medium would continue to demand a free-thought platform open to all.

The audience chose the following subject, "Atheism—what is it, and how will it affect Christianity." At the close of the address, the gentleman who proposed the subject, moved a vote of thanks to the lecturer, which was carried unanimously. In response the control gave a poem on "Longfellow," a subject called out by a man at the back of the Hall, which met with a very hearty reception. There was a large audience.

The addresses of Mrs. E. W. Wallace are highly spoken of here, and hopes are entertained that she will make a good platform medium; she occupied our platform on March 19th.

Our Free Debating Society is still occupied with the discussion of the subject, "Is Spiritualism true." We had again a large gathering, and the debate lacks nothing but a more effective opposition; probably it will be wound up on Sunday next. Mr. Shepherd, the old Free-Thought veteran, manages the meetings well, as Chairman.

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" 23.—Rev. JOHN W. HORSLEY, Chaplain of Her Majesty's Prison, Clerkenwell, on "Prisons and Prisoners."

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