

THE
Spiritual Magazine.

MAY, 1867.

THE *TRUTHSEEKER* AND THE *INQUIRER* ON
SPIRITUALISM.—"CONCERNING THINGS
SPIRITUAL."

THE *Truthseeker* is an able monthly "review of literature and events relating to the development of religious life and liberty in the Christian Church." It is, as from its title it should be, independent, honest, and courageous; not confining its quest for truth to the old ruts and beaten paths out of which so many, confounding tradition with truth, are afraid to venture, it pursues the search even where, according to modern philosophy, it ought *not* to be, and, perhaps on that account, where it is most likely to be found. At all events, if it should be so, it will not be the first time that truth has been welcomed by the "fools" of philosophy and the "heretics" of the church, when philosophers and pharisees have, in their conceit and self-righteousness, shut the door against her.

On more than one occasion the *Truthseeker* in its articles and reviews has discussed in an earnest and candid temper the question of Spiritualism, and has claimed for it a fair hearing—a course so contrary to that pursued by our contemporaries in general, and by the "religious press" in particular, as to be worthy of special notice. The last number, under the head "Spiritualism," has an article based on two works, one,—*The Confessions of a Truthseeker*,* (by Thomas Brevior,) being one of the earliest works on modern Spiritualism published in this country; the other,—*Human Immortality, and kindred topics, viewed in connection with Modern Spiritualism and its Philosophy*; by William Snitton,† one of the latest treatises on the subject.

After quoting some of the facts of physical manifestation by

* To be had of F. PITMAN & Co., Paternoster Row, price 2s.

† Published by J. BURNS, Camberwell, price 6d.

spirits as narrated by Mr. Brevior from his personal observation, with the prefatory remark that he "gives a plain, straightforward, and so far as we can judge, honest account of his personal investigations into the facts of spirit intercourse," the reviewer continues:—

"Nonsense," says the sober minded reader. But *how* "nonsense"? Is the witness before us a liar? But he is only saying what several millions of intelligent people are saying to-day. Is he self-deceived? But how is that possible in such obvious matters of fact? *Why* "nonsense?" If spirits are near us, and if they are "ministering" spirits, and are permitted to communicate with us at all, and if they desire it, why should they not, under certain conditions, be permitted to *indicate* their presence and their reality? And if it be thought a degradation that immortal spirits should be thus employed, it may be sufficient to say, that they condescend to us in doing that which alone can make it *certain to us* that they are near. As one spirit is reported to have said, when asked why he manifested his presence thus,—*"I have no other way."* But we are told that in some cases there *are* other ways. "Spirit-rapping" and "table-turning" are not all. Blindfold, and utterly unconscious of what is coming, "mediums" write messages, &c., with astonishing rapidity, giving answers to questions indicating and proving that an intelligent being, other than the "medium," is at work. Others again are "entranced," giving in that state, by vocal sounds, the answers required or the messages desired. Others again speak by pure impression. So that manifestations are being multiplied for all classes of mind. They who dislike or do not need the physical manifestations may seek and cultivate something else; and they who require to walk by sight may do so: but let no one first ask for "*solid* proofs" and then scoff at them and call them "nonsense" when they come. It may seem "strange" to us, that these things can be so; but not on *that* account will a wise man treat the subject with contempt. It may seem "too good to be true" to be told that the departed are indeed near us, and that under certain conditions they can prove it to us; but not on *that* account will a religious man put the great enquiry away. It may be that so few of us know anything of it, or have received any indication of it, because we have not sought—because we have not believed. But *now* tens of thousands are coming with open minds and waiting hearts, to these great investigations, and thousands and tens of thousands, with the author of the book before us, can say of this discovery—"It has removed from my mind many doubts, and solved many enigmas, which before were, to me, inexplicable. It has been to me light in darkness, hope in despondency, consolation under bereavement," and, we may add, "life from the dead." The whole subject is, of course, surrounded as yet with mystery, and much waits to be made clear; but it is surely our duty and our right to investigate facts; and, with regard to the form these "manifestations" take, it will be our wisdom to call nothing "common or unclean."

In the course of the article, the *Inquirer* is quoted as having not only expressed its "profound disbelief of the phenomena in question," but as having classed all Spiritualists as "infatuated believers, for whom it has nothing but pity." The *Inquirer* is the leading organ of English Unitarians, and a very few months before it had referred to the death of Dr. Pierpont, in America, describing him as one who was especially distinguished for good sense, acuteness, and sound judgment. Now, inasmuch as Dr. Pierpont had been to the day of his death an ardent, though not an "infatuated" believer in the facts of spirit-communion, the writer in the *Truthseeker* took occasion to notice this, and to put the two quotations from the *Inquirer* side by

side; and shewed by copious extracts from Dr. Pierpont's address to the Spiritual Convention over which he presided, (his last public act) how he spoke of his faith. Whereupon a contributor, under the signature of "Nemo," came to the defence of the *Inquirer*, accompanying his defence with a general assault upon the position held by Spiritualists. The following is the reply of the writer in the *Truthseeker*, and from it may be gathered the general tenor of the article to which it refers. The reply is given, *in extenso*, from the *Inquirer* of Saturday, April 6th.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—Will you allow me to make a few observations with reference to the article by "Nemo" on my notice of certain books on "Spiritualism" in the *Truthseeker*? He seems rather to miss the point of my reference to Dr. Pierpont. I quoted the *Inquirer*, which had classed all "Spiritualists" as "infatuated believers;" and I think it was really to the point to quote from a former number a description of Dr. Pierpont (a devoted "Spiritualist"), which showed that at least *one* "infatuated believer" was possessed of some safeguards against infatuation, in that he was "a venerable and accomplished man," with "a magnificent brain, ripe scholarship, a good knowledge of law, a strong fervent love of right and justice, and the right side of the question," having a distinct and singular reputation for shrewdness, good sense, and a keen appreciation of the value of evidence. I still think that reference was very much to the point in the matter of "infatuated believers." I do not seek to enter into a discussion of the whole question; but the subject is of sufficient importance to warrant me asking your indulgence while I notice a few of the points raised by "Nemo." Personally, I am not what is called a "believer" in the usual sense of that word. I am a truthseeker, and I have seen enough to make it imperative upon me that I should investigate; enough also to lead me to the conclusion that if "spiritual influences" are not at work in connection with what I have seen and heard, I, for one, am completely "at sea."

"Nemo" thinks it absurd and degrading that immortal beings should employ themselves in moving furniture about a room; and he thinks it no advance that spirits should "leave the body and take to tables." But this is a most grotesque and absurd representation of the case. If he would inquire he would learn two things: 1st, that these physical manifestations are condescensions to our earthly needs; and 2nd, that advanced Spiritualists have as little to do with, and care as little for, these outward phenomena as "Nemo" himself. It is only a fantastic jest to speak of spirits leaving the body to tenant tables, or to say that spirits "employ" themselves in this way. What they do, they say they do because we need and ask for "solid proofs," and because at present no other proofs are so likely to win attention and carry conviction. It is our fault that we *require* these "solid proofs," not theirs that they *give* them. But what is there so absurd, after all, in the moving of a table? The absurdity may be in our conceit or pride. But, in any case, we ought to consider that great ends make trivial things great, and that acts are worthy or unworthy according to the result desired. I do not say it is a very high condition of mind that requires these physical phenomena, but I do say that nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of every thousand *need* them, if they are to be convinced at all. Objectors, then, should go right to the point, and show one of two things: either that unseen beings are not near us at all, or that, being near, they cannot indicate their presence. But, in the first case, we should cut ourselves adrift from some of the dearest and holiest beliefs and hopes of Christendom, and from nearly the whole of the New Testament; and, in the second case, we should find it difficult to show the absurdity or to prove the impossibility of a spirit *out* of the body doing, *under certain conditions*, what a spirit *in* the body can do.

That absurd "messages," and blunders, and contradictions are frequently given, I am quite ready to believe; but I know that "communications" of a far higher order are being received, and I know also that we are advancing rapidly in this direction. It becomes us to be patient. We are only learning the alphabet at present; what we shall receive or perceive presently we know not; but this we know, that the two greatest of modern sciences, astronomy and chemistry, with their circle of glorious facts and the wealth of their results, were preceded by the absurdities, the bunglings, and the bewilderments of astrology and alchemy. It may be that we are approaching a new science, and that we are now stumbling over the first few steps of the way; and it seems to me that it is better to stumble in the honest investigation of facts than to stand scornfully straight on the beaten track. And certainly, the absurdities of Spiritualism are not more absurd than the absurdities of astrology and alchemy; and we may well be forgiven for tolerating them if they lead us on to as wealthy and as wide a field. It will not do to say, "Oh, but they will not;" let us wait, and search, and see. It may be that in another hundred years men will have discovered something of the *law* that governs this fact of spirit-communion (for, if it be true, it *has* law beneath it, as *all* God's facts have); and then, getting beyond our preliminary fogs and these voices on the threshold, men will hold beautiful and helpful intercourse with those who are lost to sight, but whom the piety of the Church has never ceased to regard as in some sense near. When that comes to pass, two things will happen:—men will not fear death, neither will they be in bondage to many things as they are now.

"Nemo" has drawn a picture which he meant for banter, but which affected me with anything but feelings of mirth. He described a communicating spirit as "a disembodied ghost, flying from place to place in '*all weathers*,'" &c., and he seemed to think that a good answer to those who say that unseen beings are ever near us. Heaven help us! What a long way some of us have yet to go. I suppose "Nemo" believes that spirits *leave* the world "in all weathers." Could he get a jest out of *that*? Yet where is the difference? Here is one man who believes that a beloved friend has visited him for a moment to speak a word of comfort and kindness to him; and because it snows, "Nemo" laughs at him for thinking that "a disembodied ghost" could stand that. But would he laugh at another man who *at that same hour* stood by the bedside of his little child or dear friend, and believed that the unseen spirit had gone forth that bitter night? What if those who go and those who come are alike unconscious that it is cold and ignorant that it is dark?

"Nemo" says he has studied the literature of Spiritualism; but I think he is under some mistake, or he could never have said that "the doctrines set forth in that literature are all of the most materialistic character." That some Spiritualist books are tedious, crude, and unsatisfactory I admit, and this is only to be expected at present; but the above statement is so completely opposed to the facts of the case that I really question whether "Nemo" has read anything beyond newspaper notices. But perhaps he would call it "materialistic" if I asserted that the spirit-world was a real world and that spiritual beings were real beings; not "disembodied ghosts," but beings many degrees *less shadowy* than we are. If so, then I admit Spiritualist literature is materialistic; but I envy no one his faith who still thinks of a spirit as a poor shivering shade or something less, and of the spirit-world as an attenuated vapour, unreal, ghastly, spectral.

As I have said, it is a question of facts; and, of all people in the world, inquirers and truthseekers are not the people to be in a hurry to disregard or despise these. We profess to be ready to receive all light and all truth whence-soever and howsoever it may come, and surely we can afford to look a little longer at what so many earnest men say they have "seen and heard." For "Nemo" himself tells us he is amazed and distressed that so many "persons of wide and varied culture, and shrewd in all business matters" should have become "infatuated believers." But this very fact (which is a fact not only in England, but in America, France, Germany, and Russia) coupled with another important fact, that in every age, in some form or another, spirit-communion has been believed in, should "give us pause." The opponents of Spiritualism love to talk of "science" and "law." But upon what is science built, and what leads to

the clear discovery of law, but *facts*? And what ought to make us so sparing of condemnation or scorn (when facts are in question) as acquaintance with science and law? And upon what does the scientific inquirer so much depend as the thing his eye can see? And who so little likely as he to fancy that he has exhausted all sciences and discovered all laws, and that he has gone to the core of things, when, as yet, he is only feeling about the rind? Science and law! It is to the men who are loyal to these that we earnestly appeal, since we are only testifying to what our eyes have seen, and because we know that if they are true to their principles and methods, they will look often before they laugh once.

But "Nemo" would rather put it all down to "witchcraft" than to the influence of unseen beings. What does he mean? What *is* witchcraft? If it is nothing how can he attribute anything to it as the cause of it? This is a curious point. He says, "the old-fashioned superstition has more to say for itself than the newer superstition." But what if they are one and the same "superstition?" It never smokes but there is fire; and perhaps, after all, the element of fact in "witchcraft" was the lowest phase of spirit-communion. What if modern Spiritualism is another step? And that it is an immense step *in advance* every one who really knows anything of what is going on will at once admit. And what if, with the help of refined and particular inquirers, like "Nemo," we are on the point of taking another step onward in the road that will get brighter and broader as we go on, and make possible for those who come after us a spirit-communion which shall only help, and heal, and bless?

"Nemo" objects to my statement that "intelligence" is manifested as well as power by the movement of ponderable bodies, &c., and he says that the answers got in this way are "often false and highly ridiculous." So I have heard; but I have yet to learn that falsehood and absurdity do *not* indicate intelligence. But with regard to the "tricks of the spirits," or their absurdities, or even their "malice," it may be well for us all to see that a world which turns daily into the spirit-world some thousands of tricky, absurd, and malicious beings, has not much right to complain or much cause to be amazed that such spirits are there. Our business is to improve this world that the next may be improved; and, in the meantime, we may be comforted by the thought that like will attract like, and that if we are pure and true and gentle and earnest we shall have around us spirits who are like ourselves. And as for the grotesque and silly fear that if we go on investigating in this direction "all the horrors of hell may be let loose on the world," all I, for one, can say is, that my trust in the good Father is sufficient for this peril also; and I feel sure that Heaven is stronger than Hell, whatever these words may mean, and that our holy desires, our pure affections, our gentle thoughts, and our humble prayers, will be our safeguard here and everywhere. So far as I have gone, I have only seen and heard that which is elevating and beautiful and helpful to a large faith and a quiet joy; and I confess that I now earnestly hope it is true.

But "Nemo" altogether repudiates "spiritual influences," and says that "there is not the slightest warrant" for the conclusion that unseen beings are concerned with the phenomena in question. Here, again, I think we have an indication of the fact that he is acquainted with these phenomena only from newspaper reports or rumour. What *would* satisfy him that "spiritual influences" were at work? If, sitting with a few personal friends in his own house, he saw a massive telescopic dining-table, a good load for four men, deliberately lifted to the roof, with not a hand touching it, and then, after being violently shaken at his request, slowly let down again as gently as a snow-flake; and if this were followed by sharp, clear sounds upon it, giving distinct and rapid answers to questions; and if this again were followed by the agitation of his wife's or sister's hand, ending in writing, swift, decisive, and clear, giving answers to questions containing names, and dates and other particulars, known perhaps to no one present, but afterwards found to be correct; and stating that all this was done for our sakes, to prove to us, in the only way that would be likely to convince us, that unseen beings were near, and that the time had come when they wished us to know it, that we might be led on to a pure enjoyment of spirit-communion, would this satisfy him? Would this connect the despised table-moving with "spiritual influences?" And yet *all this, and much more, is true*; and I can

imagine nothing more unscientific than to shut the eyes and say "*It cannot be.*" We can only reply, "*It is.*"

But "Nemo" says that the whole thing "upsets our highest and purest notions of the spiritual life, and makes our immortality a curse rather than a blessing." This is another proof, to my mind, that he is really unacquainted with the facts. If anything is upset it is our poor old "notions" that Heaven is a great place filled with selfish beings who, lost in mere enjoyment, have forgotten all about their struggling brethren still on earth. He must be a strange being who would think it a "curse" to be promoted to the office of a "ministering spirit"—to take his place amongst the "great cloud of witnesses" who "surround" us. But if it is the moving of ponderable substances that is the offence, then let us make haste to find out, to believe in, and to enable unseen beings to take some other way.

I will only say, in conclusion, that I know scarcely anything of "mediums." What I chiefly know and rely upon has taken place at my own fireside; and I can only say that, though I am prepared to find that for a long time earnest investigators will have to submit to be pitied, ridiculed, or bemoaned, I hope to be found amongst those who, when facts come home to them, are courageous enough and honest enough to face them. For it is not for us to say what ought to be, or what cannot be; it is for us simply to find out the truth; and, if it is necessary, we must readjust our ideas, beliefs and "notions" to agree with *the thing that is*; and, so far from complaining that sceptics plague us, I welcome those who compel us to make good our affirmations and look well after our facts.

THE WRITER OF THE REVIEW IN THE
"TRUTHSEEKER."

We regard the foregoing letter as one of the most valuable contributions which controversy on this question has called forth, and are glad to perceive that a lively correspondence on the subject is still being carried on in the columns of the *Inquirer*. May it prove another "modern instance" of the "wise saw," that "the agitation of thought is the beginning of wisdom."

It may be desirable to occasionally "see ourselves as others see us," and to see our faith and its related facts as others see them; let us, then, cast a glance on what is said "concerning things spiritual" by a critic on the otherside of the Atlantic, and who is evidently not well disposed towards the movement of modern Spiritualism. Under the above title he presents us in *The Nation*, (a respectable New York weekly newspaper, corresponding to our *Spectator*) with an article which aims to give a general idea of its claims and proofs in the "vernacular idiom." While not free from mis-statements (which well-informed readers can easily correct), we commend to the attention of journalists on both sides the Atlantic its presentation of the facts, which, indeed, are now too notorious to be denied by any who have taken the pains to thoroughly inquire into them. It says:—

After having been scoffed at, spit upon, and theoretically annihilated for the last hundred years, ghosts are again beginning to look up in the world. The newspapers teem with accounts of the marvellous doings of the uneasy inhabitants of the unseen world, and every private circle has its tale of wonder and horror which never finds its way to the press. The air is fairly heavy with the burden of restless spirits, who go wandering to and fro over the earth and walking up and down in it; at the dead of night their footfalls strike on wakeful ears all over the land, and to believing eyes they show themselves at times in visible forms. Vague reports of their appearance in some locality creep into the

public prints, to be followed by innumerable items of circumstantial statement, and these again reinforced by bundles of affidavits Among all the phenomena of the present century, there is hardly one more remarkable than the rapid growth of the belief in the possibility and existence of a constant intercourse between the material and immaterial worlds, and the fact that this belief does not prevail so much among the ignorant, but is confined rather to the educated classes. Under the name of Spiritualism it has spread to an extent which would seem incredible were that sublimated mysticism anything more than a natural reaction from the intense materialism of an age which practically believes in nothing that cannot be seen or felt or demonstrated. And truly a faith which, if the claims of its adherents be correct, numbers its proselytes by millions; which can point among them to many men certainly highly cultivated and commonly esteemed clear-headed; which boasts of a literature of its own, already almost infinite in quantity, though infinitesimal in value; (?) such a faith deserves consideration for what it has done, if not for what it is. At any rate, clear ideas should be held as to the nature of its claims and proofs It is the aim of this article to give a general idea of these claims and proofs, translating only the vague and misty language in which they are ordinarily couched into the vernacular idiom Spiritualism relies almost entirely upon a direct, constant, and intimate communication with disembodied spirits. It presents, in favour of such a communication, an array of evidence which, whether true or false, has been sufficiently striking to challenge the attention of the curious, sufficiently plausible to shake at times the doubts of the most incredulous, and sufficiently convincing to gain the assent of many men of education and capacity. Indeed, it is a singular fact that nearly all who have begun the practical investigation of the subject, no matter how sceptical they were at the outset, have ended in becoming ardent believers in the new faith and advocates of it. Many, perhaps all, of the marvellous stories told may be untrue; but, under the circumstances, it is hard to say that they are in themselves absurd And it is to be remembered that while there is nothing save the infrequency of direct supernatural agency to contradict such a belief there is much both in history and revelation to strengthen it. It is an illusion, if it be entirely an illusion, which the traditions of all nations have favoured, and in which the wisest and greatest men of all ages have shared. It has formed the groundwork of the most striking portion of the legendary lore of modern Europe. There has been no time in which it has died out utterly; it is not until a comparatively late period that it has even died out in the minds of men of commanding ability. Every one knows that no longer ago than the preceding century Johnson went on a ghost-hunt to Cock-lane; and Addison, who lived in an age inclined to be sceptical in all matters spiritual, and himself no way given to credulity, in an essay ridiculing the vulgar horror of ghosts, took pains to add that he thought a person terrified with the imagination of spectres much more reasonable than one who, contrary to the reports of all historians, sacred and profane, ancient and modern, and to the traditions of all nations, thinks the appearance of spirits fabulous and the belief in it groundless.

Our critic proceeds to rate Spiritualism very hardly, though it would be deservedly were his assumption true that Spiritualism is put forward as a system to supersede Christianity;—a view, which though it may unhappily find seeming countenance in the writings and speeches of some Spiritualists, is about as true as it would be to say that Spiritualism is a system designed to supersede gravitation. The article concludes:—

Still, mothers are losing their children by death; fond fathers unwillingly give up the only son of their name to the grave; each day how many die, some of whom are long and some of whom are always bitterly mourned by the survivors—mourned with “blind longing and passionate pain.” And this being so, it is in vain to look for a speedy ending to a belief that offers the living one more opportunity to speak with the beloved dead.

We quite agree with the writer in his last remark: it is not only vain but foolish to expect or even to desire the cessation of a belief so consonant to human nature and experience, so consolatory in its influence, and so true; for, to repeat a remark of his, which we hope will not be forgotten:—“*Indeed, it is a singular fact, that nearly all who have begun the practical investigation of the subject, no matter how sceptical they were at the outset, have ended in becoming ardent believers in the new faith and advocates of it.*”

T. S.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF DR. JUSTINUS KERNER.

(Author of “*The Seeress of Prevorst, &c., &c.*”)

PART III.

THE LAST DAYS OF JUSTINUS KERNER.

DURING the several last years of Kerner’s life, he suffered not alone from blindness, but also from a general nervous prostration and discomfort—probably resulting from the loss of much vital fluid during the years in which he mesmerized the crowds of patients who resorted to his house for magnetic treatment. This nervous suffering gradually reduced his strength, and rendered him—accustomed to take a considerable amount of out-door exercise—unable to walk, or even to stand for any length of time. Thus, during the course of the last summer of his life, he was frequently not able to spend more than a very few hours of each day in his gardens. With the beginning of the winter, which confined him to his room, he was troubled with an incessant sleeplessness which robbing him of his rest at night, and rendering his days devoid of comfort, became a severe torment to him. Thus he longed ever more and more for the arrival of his departure into the new life. Amidst all his physical sufferings, his strong vital power continued to manifest itself in mental activity, and in the lively interest, always evinced by him, toward intellectual matters, whether of literature, science or art, and which rendered intercourse with his friends, far and near, one of the daily necessities of his life. Thus, even during his hours of most severe suffering, he delighted to receive his friends, and a day seldom passed without his dictation of several letters. During the last few months of his existence, an even stronger impression of his approaching departure expressed itself in his correspondence.

About the middle of January, 1862, Kerner, through losing hold for a moment of the friendly arm which guided him, met in his

room with a severe fall. Within a few days, however, the effects of the accident passing away, he appeared to have regained his usual state of health, and hopes were entertained that he might safely pass through the remainder of the winter. He appeared so well, that his daughter, Maria, was enabled in February to hasten to Cannstadt to nurse her sister-in-law, Theobald's wife, who was then dangerously ill, and who indeed was not destined long to survive her beloved father-in-law. Upon the 5th of February, when Kerner's daughter returned home, she found her father in one of his most cheerful moods. He had invited all his Weinsberg friends to come that evening to him to partake of certain Munich-beer, which had shortly before arrived as a present from Prince Adelbert, of Bavaria. The day closed amidst lively conversation. Thus terminated Kerner's forty years of hospitality in Weinsberg.

On Monday, the 10th of February, the aged poet-physician was seized with severe influenza—which associated with continuous fever, assumed a dangerous character, and caused his son Theobald to be summoned. By the time that he arrived on Monday, the unfavourable symptoms had, however, decreased so decidedly, that Dr. Theobald was enabled to return to Cannstadt. The following day he again visited his father, and on Wednesday, as satisfactory symptoms of amendment had shewn themselves, set off home to his sick wife.

It is probable, however, that Justinus Kerner, who had always lived in such close connexion with the Spiritual World, was aware of the proximity of the great change awaiting him. Already, on Tuesday evening the 18th, he had been heard quietly repeating to himself a stanza of the poet Holtiss, which may be translated as follows:—

Strengthen Thou me through Thy dear wounds, O God!
Thou, who as man, this dreary earth hast trod,
When near my death-bed, solemnly shall glide,
Life's crowning hour, with Judgment at her side.

On Thursday the 20th, in the afternoon, the attack of influenza returned with such violence, that in all haste, his son was twice telegraphed for. He was, however, unable to reach Weinsberg before early on Friday morning.

There were assembled around the poet's death-bed, his son Theobald, his eldest daughter, Maria, with her two sons, her youngest daughter, and her eldest daughter's husband. Kerner's second daughter, Emma, being taken ill, had been removed by her husband previously to Kerner's passing away. One of the mournful group in the chamber of death was a sister of Rickele.

The aged poet was heard in a low voice to utter the words, "I am dying," and calmly folded his hands. About noon the

struggle of death set in. At first he appeared to suffer much; especially through the difficulty which he experienced in making himself understood. One after another he summoned his beloved ones to him by name, and alternately took their hands. As day declined he became even calmer, and his last words were, "Lord, Thy work is accomplished!" then, "Good night! Good night! may you all sleep well."

During the first hours of the night a gentle breathing was still perceptible. At about half-past eleven this entirely ceased, and the noble heart of the Poet of Weinsberg was at rest for ever.

The tidings of Justinus Kerner's decease quickly spread. On Sunday, 23rd of February, 1862, throughout the neighbourhood, and at Heilbronn and elsewhere, people prepared on all sides, far and near, to pay him the last honours with deep love and respect. Early upon the Sunday morning a black flag floated from the ruins of the Weibertreu, announcing to the inhabitants of the Sulm-Valley that the town of Weinsberg had lost its most note-worthy citizen. A deputation from the corporation of the town waited upon the family with an expression of condolence; and the musical societies of Weinsberg and Heilbronn desired to accompany to the grave the corpse of one who had enriched his country with so many beautiful songs, and honour him by singing around his grave. But Kerner, who revered only the soul, and not the perishable body,—who had always been averse to funeral parade,—and who, as he has shewn in his "Picture Book," had always taken pleasure in the simplicity of his father's funeral, already, on the 27th of March, 1850, had arranged the plan of his interment, which we here give in his own words:—

"My body shall be buried in all stillness, without song or parade, even as my father's body was buried. My body shall alone be attended by my son and his wife, by a clergyman, and a friend. There shall no oration be held, nor yet shall there be any singing at the grave." To these directions, in 1857, Kerner also added, that a flat stone should be placed between his wife's grave and his own, upon which should be inscribed, "Frederika Kerner and her Justinus, 1854—18—". No other words should be added, not even "Here lies."

Kerner's family endeavoured religiously to carry out the wishes of their beloved father. Consequently, no invitations to the funeral were issued. The ceremony of interment was to take place upon the Monday morning at nine o'clock. It was impossible, however, to prevent persons following the corpse. Each individual who went, thought, apparently, that he might appear as the "one friend." First of all there were the early college friends of Justinus, Uhland and Mayer, and then the sons of his "faithful Alexander," the Counts Eberhard and

Alexander of Württemberg, General von Baur from Ludwigsburg, Kerner's nephew-in-law, the husband of General Karl Kerner's only daughter, &c., &c. Thus many friends stood that morning around the coffin in which the corpse of Justinus Kerner lay. According to his last wish, the venerable poet reposed upon a house-coat which had been made for him in former years by his beloved "Rickele." His body was wrapt in the long folds of the brown monk-like robe worn by him during the last years of his life, and in which his revered form is still in memory and in his picture familiar to his friends. His noble countenance, in its marble placidity, surrounded by its dark locks, appeared as the face of one transfigured.

Citizens of Weinsberg bore his coffin, richly covered with garlands of flowers and of laurel, made by the ladies' society and the musical societies of Weinsberg and Heilbronn and Stuttgart, and all who followed the coffin walked. Thus proceeded the procession—such a procession as Weinsberg will not readily see again—along the High-street, and out of the lower town into the grave-yard, lying in the middle of the valley, and opposite the Weibertreu. From the Weibertreu, and from the gates of the grave yard, floated black banners. The procession wound its way across the grave-yard towards its south-eastern corner, where is situated the burial place of the Kerner family, an open space shaded by several trees. Here was the spot chosen by Justinus himself, and here was his mortal husk interred between the remains of his beloved wife and of a little grandchild.

There stood around the grave of Kerner his own family, his son with his two children, the widowed daughter with her three children, his son-in-law, his nephew-in-law, and the husband of his eldest grand-daughter, Pastor Bauer, of Sonnenstein. It was a deeply affecting moment when this gentleman, having exchanged a pastoral greeting with all present, announced the last wishes of the deceased, and all the great company stood bare-headed around the grave, and, in fulfilment of the departed poet's desire, silently repeated the Lord's prayer. Then, the clergyman having spoken the words of benediction over the sinking coffin, a gentleman of Weinsberg stepped forth, and, in the name of all his fellow-citizens, spoke a farewell. One of the corporation returned thanks in the name of the town for all the services which the departed had rendered, and cast a laurel-wreath upon the coffin. Lastly, the crape-covered banner of the Weinsberg Musical Society was lowered and waved over the open grave, each person present flinging earth upon the coffin. All the ceremony now being ended, the bells of the church began to toll for the service of the day, for it was the festival of St. Matthew.

Upon the newly covered-in grave was placed a laurel garland, received from the Swabian Musical Society, of which Kerner had been a member.

It is now marked by the simple inscription :—

“ FREDERIKA KERNER AND HER JUSTINUS.”

Fully to complete the portrait of our poet we must introduce, as its background, a sketch of his picturesque and original home and home-life, together with the groups of friends* who were in crowds attracted, throughout a long series of years, towards

KERNER'S HOUSE.

Few are the homes of poets possessed of a more marked individuality than is the house of Justinus Kerner at the foot of the “ Weibertreu.”

We have already mentioned that this house was built by the poet upon a piece of ground presented to him by the Corporation of Weinsberg. According to time-honoured custom, there was a grand celebration of the laying of the first stone. By the hand of his little son Theobald, aged five years, the poet caused a parchment document to be placed beneath the stone, the contents of which ran as follows :—

“ This house was built, through the blessing of God by Justinus Kerner, the physician who sang songs, and by his wife Frederika, in the year 1828, at a time when the sun shone down upon hill and dale with heat seldom known ; but when Europe's Rulers, turning away from heaven, stood cold and watched the infernal murder of Hellas.”

By the autumn, this little house, consisting of but one story above the ground floor, was ready to be inhabited. The remaining portion of land, which as we have before observed was a portion of the old town moat, was laid out by Kerner as a garden : it extended as far as the wall of the town. In 1827, behind the original domicile was erected the so-called “ Swiss House.” Subsequently the poet purchased from the Corporation the old tower, formerly a prison ; but at that time offered for sale as building material—and which formed the corner of the town wall. Kerner fitted up a quaint room in this tower, and henceforth regarded it as the chief ornament of his little territory. In time also he procured a still larger garden opposite to his house. Originally the land had been a disused graveyard. Out of the little “ Dead-house,” Kerner formed a quaint

* Amongst the frequent visitors to Dr. Kerner, was Captain Medwin, the friend of Byron and Shelley. In the possession of this gentleman is a very interesting volume—a “ Kerner Album,” in which sketches, poems and reliques of the poet-physician, collected by him upon these visits, have been tastefully arranged.

abode for the living, furnishing it in a simple rustic manner; and in this strange abode various of his most honoured guests were subsequently lodged.

Kerner's house-proper stands at the commencement of the road which leads to the castle. It fronts to the east, looking over an open space; on the south and west it is surrounded by its garden; on the north it is open to the public pleasure-ground, which extends from this point along the northern wall of the town as far as the church at the opposite end. The ground-floor of the house—beneath which extends a light, vaulted, and capacious cellar the entire length and breadth of the dwelling—has, to the left, the entrance-hall; to the right, a door into the stables and outbuildings. Between these two is a single room, which was the apartment once occupied by the Seeress of Prevorst. The upper story contains the abode of the poet, the four modest apartments of which are adorned with interesting works of art, and souvenirs of his various friends. In the middle room, the visitor's attention is first arrested by a half-length portrait (life-size) of Justinus himself, with his jews'-harp in one hand. It is by an Italian artist, Ottavio d'Albruzzi, who came to Weinsberg in 1851, and who died in 1855 at Nice. Beside the portrait, is seen a modelled relievo-likeness of the poet, by the painter, Edward Herdte, of Stuttgart, and which renders the ideal expression of Kerner's features more truthfully than any other of the numerous portraits taken at various periods of his life, and regarding which, Kerner was wont to make himself merry, giving some humorous title to each likeness, indicative to his mind of its peculiar expression—as for instance, “the robber,” “the soap-boiler,” “the pumpkin head,” &c., &c. Another plaster-medallion shews us the intellectual features of Alexander of Würtemberg. Equally interesting are Breslau's bust and statuette, and the likeness of the Seeress. As a worthy companion to Kerner's portrait, we find attracting the observer, with an almost magnetic power, an extraordinary picture of “The Poet Lenau in a Storm upon a desolate Heath,” painted by Karl Ruhl, of Vienna. To the south lies a great chamber called “Mary's Room,” from its chief ornament, a large mediæval group, in alabaster, of the Madonna and Child. This singular work of art had once stood in a place of pilgrimage, a church near Gaildorf, but subsequently lay broken for a long time in the Record Office, Obersantheim, until Kerner fortunately becoming its possessor, had it repaired by a sculptor of Frankfort, and brought to his own house.

To the north lies the room in which Kerner used to sleep, and in which he expired. Out of this room opened his study. As we have already observed, the limits of this small house were

considerably extended by the addition to the back. The Swiss house, supported upon pillars, formed beneath, a species of covered court, whilst it contained above, in its principal story, a charming, many-windowed, sunny reception room, surrounded on three sides by an open gallery; in the middle of which, as its sole adornment, hung a wooden crucifix, whilst along the broad cornice ran the pious motto—

“In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world——”

In the half-circular gable of the Swiss house, which has a balcony, is a curiously constructed little coffin-shaped chamber.

At the back of the house-garden rises the old Watch Tower, hung with a luxuriant growth of ivy. The lower room of the tower is made use of for various domestic purposes. Above is a vaulted apartment, in which, during the Peasants' War, Count von Helfinstein was imprisoned. At present its three arched windows are fitted with ancient painted glass, which casts a glowing light upon all within. Two curious wooden statues of a monk and a nun, from the cloisters at Heilbronn, stand there in grim solemnity, whilst an ancient figure in stone of a court-fool, or of a dwarf, guards the entrance.

Above, on the leads of the tower, a wooden canopy has been placed, supported by posts, at the feet of which young acacia trees have sprung up. From this spot a charming prospect across the Weinsberg Valley bursts upon the view, overlooked to the west and close at hand by the ruins of the Weibertreu upon its round hill-top, to the east on the distant horizon by the castle ruins of Waldenburg and Marienfels. For a length of time upon the leads of the tower there used to stand a telescope, turned in the direction of the elevated church-yard of Löwenstein, through which could be seen the gilt cross glittering upon the grave of the Seeress of Prevorst, erected there by Count Maldeghem and Professor Eschenmayer.

Opposite to Kerner's house, in the large garden, nearly two acres in extent, stands the so-called “Alexander House,” the age of which is marked by the date of 1610 placed above its entrance. Its upper story contains a sitting-room and two smaller chambers. In this little home is preserved the table made by Kerner when a boy, and to which we have referred.

Thus, in imagination, having visited the dwelling of the Weinsberg Poet, we will now take a retrospective glance at the long line of guests, who between the years 1822 and 1862, have sojourned for longer or shorter periods beneath these hospitable roofs.

Amongst these must be first named Kerner's Swabian poet—friends of his early youth,—Uhland, Schwabe, Mayer, &c.

In the autumn of 1827, the author of *Grecian Poems*; Wilhelm Müller, arrived in Weinsberg, and Kerner himself relates in a note to his poem, written to celebrate the visit of this guest, that he had the Grecian colours, white and blue, displayed from the tower in order to do him honour. It seems, however, that Wilhelm Müller looking forth from his window on the morrow, was no longer greeted by the flag of white and blue, but by an ominous black cross upon a white ground! The white and blue had been painted for the occasion over the black cross, but during the storm and rain of the night the bright Grecian colours had vanished! Wilhelm Müller dying within a few days of his visit to Kerner's home, this circumstance of the black cross was regarded by Justinus as having been a prognostic of his guest's impending death.

Shortly after the death of the Seeress, one of Kerner's most distinguished and beloved friends made his first appearance at Weinsberg, where his place as a poet at the "round table" of poets must not be forgotten—and this was the handsome and chivalrous Count Alexander von Würtemberg. A bond of intimate friendship united this member of the princely house with the poet-physician and his wife, by whom he was always received as a member of the family circle. Every year the Count appears to have visited his friends for a longer or shorter period, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for weeks together. Upon such visits he was lodged in the little house in the large garden, which thus received its name, "Alexander's House." Kerner's affection for the Count has expressed itself in various poems.

Two years later, another noble poet presented himself at Weinsberg. In the summer of 1831, the son of an Hungarian nobleman, Nikolaus Hiembisch, of Strellenau, introduced himself to Gustav Schwab, at Stuttgart, in order, like many another aspiring young writer, to be ushered by him into literature. Speedily, under the name of Lenau, his fame spread throughout Germany. Schwab made his young friend first acquainted with Uhland and Mayer, then introduced him to Kerner, with whom he became very intimate, and in whose house he spent the happiest days of the last stormy thirteen years of his life.

It was in "Alexander's House" that Lenau, in 1833, prepared for his American journey, a circumstance which led Kerner to assert that it was from beneath his roof that Lenau had embarked for America. Immediately upon Lenau's return from "that perfectly strange land," as he termed it—"that land with its burnt-out human beings, in their burnt-out forests—the true land of the sunset—the very west of humanity," he once

more presented himself, and poured forth to his friend Kerner, in sarcastic words, his dislike to America and the Americans.

Lenau generally, however, used to inhabit the tower. There, in the early spring of 1834, he composed a considerable portion of his *Faust*. A brotherly friendship existed between Lenau and Count Alexander, and occasionally they would visit Kerner together. As if he foresaw that a dark fate awaited this remarkable young poet, Kerner entertained a peculiarly tender regard for him. Indeed, it appears as though Kerner, possessed of the eye of the seer, had once beheld in very truth, the spirits combating for the possession of Lenau's soul, as Lenau himself has described in his *Faust*, *Savonarola* and the *Albigenses*.

The most brilliant period of Weinsberg hospitality closes in 1844, when within two months Count Alexander suddenly died in Wildbad, and the night of Lenau's mental affliction fell upon him at Stuttgart, a night destined to continue six years, until death at length arrived to lead the unhappy poet's soul into everlasting day. And again, in the same year, within two months, died another of Kerner's cherished poet-friends and frequent guests, Gustav Schwab.

It would be impossible to enumerate the crowds of visitors who, both before and after this period, thronged to Weinsberg, high and low, princes and men of the people, military and learned men, diplomatists and poets, and also many ladies—all being received with hospitable welcome. From 1839, and during the following fifteen years, Kerner was accustomed each day to enter the names of his visitors, with occasional remarks, in his pocket-book. Polish refugees were guests who received much honour at the hands of the poet. He had sympathized deeply with the struggle of Greece for independence, nor were his sympathies less strongly called forth by the struggle of Poland. During the winter of 1831-32, for weeks together, he entertained fugitives from Poland, who in great numbers passed through Weinsberg.

In the following spring the Generalissimo of the Polish army, Rubinski, visited Kerner, whose Seeress of Prevorst had in former years deeply interested him. Rubinski lodged in Alexander's house, and in it Kerner suspended, as a memorial of the presence of this distinguished guest, the laurel-crown, which the inhabitants of Weinsberg presented to the General, but which he, as being vanquished, had declined to receive.

A royal fugitive also once reposed in Kerner's house, the dethroned Gustav IV., of Sweden, who—under the name of Gustavson, was wandering in poverty through Germany in 1826, his knapsack upon his back—entered the poet-physician's hospitable house, and there found a temporary resting place.

Strauss, in one of his friendly papers when making the *amende honorable* to Kerner for his severe criticism upon the *Seeress of Prevorst*, gives the following agreeable description of life beneath Kerner's roof.

“ A more beautiful or refined hospitality it would be difficult to encounter in any dwelling. Amongst the numerous strangers who each year visit Kerner's home, there is not one whose peculiarities are not recognized and to whom especial attention is not paid. Is any friend of the poet staying in Weinsberg, Kerner is never satisfied—be it possible to accommodate him in the house—until he has broken bread and slept beneath his roof. The invitation is seconded also in such a hearty and graceful manner by the poet's wife, that it is difficult to withstand it. The fear of being intrusive and burdensome, is lightened to the guest by the recognition of his presence in no way disturbing, or changing the daily household routine; he perceives that all things pursue their simple, ordinary course. . . . No wonder is it that here persons tormented by evil spirits seek for aid and healing! The good spirit must infallibly drive away the evil demons. An Angel of Peace appears to brood over this household. A sense of order, of quiet gaiety and benevolence is seen to beam from all countenances, is felt in all that is beheld and heard. . . . Kerner must be seen in his own home before a proper idea of him can be either formed or imparted.”

Emma Meindorf, one of Kerner's literary lady-friends and occasional guests, in her *Villegiatura in Weinsberg*,” observes, “ Kerner is an appearance, which in its pure originality, we cannot sufficiently seek to preserve. . . . Possibly there may arise such poor, desolate times, that it will be difficult for mankind to believe that such a man really ever existed, and he will be regarded as a myth. He belongs to those beings who, their life's labours set aside, one ought to be grateful to, because they are, as it were, an assurance to our faith. Should any one fear that the German poetic nature should depart from earth without a trace, let him only knock at the door of the little house at the foot of the ‘ Weibertreu ! ’ ”

Until within a few years of his death, Kerner was accustomed to act as guide to his friends throughout his house and gardens and to the Weibertreu. He not unfrequently would take his friends with him upon his professional drives, in order to shew the beauties of the neighbourhood to them, or perhaps to introduce them to some remarkable person. Did you not chance to encounter any interesting guests in the house, there were many objects to remind you of their frequent presence. For instance, there was the drinking glass, presented by Lenau to his host, upon his departure to America, in 1832, which had been

celebrated in verse, and which Kerner was accustomed daily to use until his death, thirty years afterwards. Then, there were the poet's correspondence with his friends, of which most probably you were granted many a pleasant glimpse. This correspondence, from 1805 to 1825, was contained in a row of black volumes, whilst the correspondence, extending over the later years of Kerner's life, formed a complete library, which was stored up in the tower chamber.

A charming recreation in Kerner's house, was his performance upon the jew's-harp, which possessed a magic charm impossible to convey in words. The tones drawn forth by the poet from his simple instrument resembled those from an Æolian harp. Kerner was endowed with a high musical genius, although he was no educated musician. Alternately using two jew's-harps, he was accustomed to improvise wonderful melodies. Especially did he love to surprise his friends in the twilight with this unusual musical gift of his. This simple instrument was a source of great delight and solace to Kerner, and it was with deep regret that towards the close of his career, he was, through the increasing weakness of age, forced to abandon the use of his "little bit of iron," as he used affectionately to call his jew's-harp.*

A scarcely less peculiar accomplishment unfolded itself in Kerner during the years of his increasing blindness, and which he playfully called *Klecksographen*, which may be translated as *Blotto-graphs*; these were the fantastic duplicate shapes produced in the folds of papers from ink blots. This amusement became a source of poetical inspiration to him, he creating out of them whimsical forms, all manner of figures from the spirit-world, and giving to each a poetic description of a grave or humorous term, according to the bent of his genius. A number of these *Klecksographen* were collected together by Kerner, and arranged in a scrap-book by him in 1857. The poetical descriptions illustrative of the designs being from his own hand, together with a preface describing their origin; thus, the whole was prepared for publication. The difficulty of re-producing the *Klecksographen*, however, obliged the idea of their presentation to the public to be abandoned. An illustrated paper, *Über Land und Meer*, in its number for May, 25th, 1862, has given a paragraph from Theobald Kerner relating to the *Klecksographen*, together with several specimens engraved on wood. Amongst these is a subject, frequently repeated by Kerner or his friends, the repre-

* It has been suggested by Captain Medwin to the writer of this article, that probably the word should be *jaw's-harp*, not *jew's-harp*—a harp to be placed between the *jaws*.

sentation of a butterfly, accompanied by the following little verse:—

Aus Dintenflecken ganz gering,
Entstand der schöne Schmetterling.
Zu solcher Wandlung ich empfehle
Gott meine fleckenvolle Seele.

Which may be thus freely rendered—

From blots of ink, ere they were dry,
Arose this lovely butterfly;
To God do I commend my mind
For transformation of like kind.

Increasing blindness in the latest period of his life, deprived Kerner of his enjoyment in his *Klecksographen*.

Various were the humorous scenes and incidents blending themselves with the graver and more poetical interests of the Poet's daily life. A trifling circumstance must not be omitted as a touch in the picture, and this is, that for a considerable period, the Sexton of Weinsberg acted as the doctor's coachman. Kerner was as fully alive to the humorous in his daily life, as in his writings. Once when his children were quite young—as a joke—he fastened them up in a barred box, at the Weibertreu, which usually contained the Æolian harp, at that particular moment removed for repair. The parents withdrew quietly, and left the visitors ascending to the ruins, to discover with astonishment the three odd birds in their cage.

In one of Kerner's gardens stood an arm-chair made of oak, in which each poet-guest of celebrity was requested to seat himself, after which his name was carved by Theobald upon the arm. On a certain occasion a German student read his poems aloud to Kerner, and exclaimed, "And I? Am not I a poet?" Kerner quietly returned, "Oh, certainly! But why has that chair near to you been making such odd movements all the time that you have been reading, as though it wanted to run away?"

When Kerner, Count Alexander, and Lenau were once seated together, reading aloud to each other their latest poems, the man-servant who had been waiting at table, entered with a piece of coarse paper in his hand, and somewhat bashfully remarked, that as they all were reading their verses he had brought his also, which were addressed "To the Doctor's Faithful Horse in the Yellow Chaise!"

Upon another occasion Kerner, taking a walk with his friends in the neighbourhood, met a peasant-woman, who requested some medicine from the Doctor for her sick husband. Kerner, having no writing materials with him, called to an inhabitant of Weinsberg whom he saw passing by, and wrote with a piece

of chalk, which the latter chanced to have in his pocket, a prescription in large letters upon his back. Whereupon the Weinsberg inhabitant, carefully watched by the anxious wife, proceeded to the apothecary's shop in the town; the apothecary as he read the singular prescription remarking that he had never seen the Doctor write so well before.

One day a travelling journeyman passed Kerner's house, and observing a carriage standing before the door, a table in the garden spread for dinner, and a going in and out of the guests, not unnaturally imagined that the house was an inn. He ascended the steps therefore, entered the Swiss room, made himself quite at home, and called out, "Landlady, something to drink here!" Frau Kerner waited immediately upon him, and when he was about to pay his "reckoning" he learned with astonishment there was *nothing to pay!* On the contrary, he received an alms bestowed upon him towards his further wanderings.

And thus moved on the beautiful idyllic life of Justinus Kerner, in the harmonious accord of mind, heart, and humour, until, with the death of his beloved wife, grief became the keynote of the music of his latter days. Under a portrait of him taken in his later days are, accordingly, written from one of his own poems:—

Fort, fort sint meine Rosen;
Fort ist mein schöner Traum!

"Gone are my roses; gone is my beautiful dream!" But his beautiful dream has now changed to the beautiful reality!

The "Good Spirit," the "Angel of Peace," as Strauss called it, which worked so many miracles in Kerner's house, and which so magically attracted all hearts was LOVE; the love towards all men which the poet had sown throughout his life as seed-corn, and which as the grain of love from all men, he was enabled to garner in. Michael Castle, a phrenologist, in his analysis of the poet-physician's character, has indicated this peculiar development, when he observes that Justinus Kerner "was endowed with one of the highest moral and intellectual natures, and that therefore he always relied upon the progress of mankind, or in other words believed and felt that man by his nature was a better and more sublime being than he in reality shews himself to be." Indeed, Kerner only beheld the good side of men, and possessed the rare gift of setting free within each soul its noblest nature. Thus considering men better than the world considered them, they in very truth felt themselves *to be nobler beings*, and *were so* in his presence. Therefore, in the eyes of many persons, Kerner's house became a church in which a High Priest of Faith and Love consecrated each one unconsciously to themselves upon entering beneath its roof.

Unquestionably one of the greatest blessings bestowed by Justinus Kerner upon his friends and humanity at large was the realization of an ideally beautiful human life.

A. M. H. W.

PASSING EVENTS.—THE SPREAD OF
SPIRITUALISM.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

MISS NICHOLL, THE NEW MEDIUM.

THE lady alluded to in Mrs. Sims' interesting communication in the February number of this journal, is a Miss Nicholl, the daughter of a well known sculptor, residing in the neighbourhood of London. It will be remembered, that some very remarkable manifestations were recorded as having been witnessed by Mrs. Sims, through the mediumship of this young lady, and at a *séance* at the house of Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, there were a quantity of natural flowers brought by the invisibles and laid upon the table, around which the party of seven persons were seated. The facts, and the conditions under which this unusual manifestation took place, were described by Mr. Wallace, and attested by the names and addresses of all who were present.

Since then I have had the pleasure of making Miss Nicholl's acquaintance, at the house of Mr. John Tawse, of 24, Arundel Gardens, Bayswater.

Miss Nicholl is an unusually tall, and powerfully made woman, without a trace of the signs of mediumship about her, though, as her father tells me, she is of an excitable and nervous temperament. It appears that, like all who possess the gift, it has been with her, though not understood, from her earliest recollection.

The "hallucinations" to which she was subject in her childhood, when she said she saw strange appearances, that figures passed through the rooms of their house, and that doors opened and shut as she approached them, were treated as delusions, to cure her of which, the family doctor ordered her head to be shaved and blistered, and in this way she and her friends have remained in ignorance of the true character of her condition until within a few months past, when her mediumship was discovered by Mrs. Sims, and the events followed as described by that lady.

On the occasion of my meeting Miss Nicholl, there were seven persons present:—Mr. and Mrs. Tawse, and a lady friend of theirs, Mr. Nicholl, the medium's father, a medical friend of

mine, and myself. We sat round a table in the drawing-room, and at once obtained the usual rapping sounds; we were told by the invisibles that we should have a remarkable manifestation if we would exclude all light.

To this Miss Nicholl strongly objected, and we lost most of the evening in endeavouring to obtain the necessary conditions, short of total darkness.

At length Miss Nicholl yielded, and having made the room quite dark, we took hold of each others' hands, and had hardly composed ourselves when the medium cried out that a hand was grasping her neck; and, becoming painfully agitated, I at once struck a light, when we found a number of natural flowers spread upon the table before us. There was a bright damask rose with a profusion of green leaves, the petals being secured by a fine wire artistically entwined around them, as if a skilful florist had arranged it, to prevent the leaves from falling; two azaleas, a white hyacinth, some maiden hair fern, &c. The stems of the flowers appeared to have been broken, not cut off. There were no flowers of any kind in the house previously, and Mr. Tawse was not aware of any conservatory in the neighbourhood from which they could have been taken. I jocularly suggested that Miss Nicholl had perhaps brought them in her pocket, when Mrs. Tawse said she could answer for that, for it so happened that her children had been playing with Miss Nicholl, and had, more than once during the afternoon, filled and emptied her pocket with their toys, and Miss Nicholl good-naturedly at once turned the contents of her pocket for our complete satisfaction upon the table, and there was not the slightest trace of a flower or leaf to be seen, as there must have been from the fragile azaleas, the leaves of which fell off as we handled them. It is satisfactory, therefore, to be enabled to say that the flowers were not concealed in the only place they could have been; and, though a good many wise people who were not present will doubtless be able to explain the mysterious production of these flowers, none of the party present could, otherwise than by spiritual agency. All were quite satisfied that the wonderful fact was not the result of trick nor collusion of any kind.* After this we had some minor manifestations not worth recording, but

* A manifestation of a similar character is recorded in the *Banner*, of the 2nd February. It occurred at the residence of Mrs. Merwin, 8th Street, New York, about the same time as at Mr. Wallace's in January last. A circle being formed of a few friends, it is stated that "there came into their midst a flood of flowers . . . those present began to inhale the perfume of flowers! These delicate aromal essences pervading and flooding the atmosphere for a few moments were followed by a whole shower of flowers falling upon and about those in the circle. They counted seventeen violets, with tuberoses, rose buds, and heliotropes, fresh and fragrant as from gardens in June."

we should doubtless have had some other extraordinary exhibition of spirit power had the medium been able to command herself; she was, however, so extremely agitated, and so earnestly begged that the light should not be put out again, that we deemed it best to break up the sitting. Since that evening, at a private *séance*, and in the presence of an entirely different party, ninety-six flowers of various kinds, all fresh as if they had been that moment gathered, were strewn over the table. This statement I have from the gentleman, a prominent City man, at whose house the *séance* was held.

The production of these flowers under the conditions named, adds another link to this class of spiritual phenomena. The explanation given by the spirit of Dr. Franklin, and legibly written on a card, was communicated to me some time since by Mr. L——, of New York. (*see* Vol. ii., p. 493.)

On several occasions, cards, paper, and once a large sheet of cardboard and a box of crayons, were taken away on one evening and returned the next; the cards were covered with writing, and a cleverly executed drawing was found upon the cardboard.

On one of the cards the following was written:—

“We conceal the cards in the sphere of the medium, and make them invisible to the naked eye as other atmospherical substances are. You have yet to learn that the atmosphere has great power, and does great wonders for the creation of men. We conceal the cards in the shadow of our spiritual atmosphere, and then we surround them with an electrical covering, which withdraws them from the sight. Let Dr. Franklin explain.—ESTELLE.”

On another card:—*

“Let me explain the disappearance of the cards; we first spiritualise them so that you cannot see them, then we retain them between the two spheres, the natural and spiritual. In this way we can often make material objects so spiritual, that the naked eye cannot behold them. We use elements of the atmosphere for our channel, the elements of the atmosphere are the channels through which we manifest. Paper is most easily made invisible. Be not doubtful when things appear vague and incomprehensible.—B. F.”

Miss Nicholl, it appears from her own statement to me, knows absolutely nothing of Spiritualism. She has never read a book upon the subject; she is unacquainted with the Davenport controversy, and did not even know that there is such a distinguished

* I have in my possession a number of the original cards written by the spirit of Mr. L——’s wife, Estelle, and by the spirit of Benjamin Franklin.

unraveller of psychological mysteries as Mr. Edmund Yates, the "Flaneur" of the *Star*, nor indeed was she aware of the host of other clever fellows who can imitate her "tricks," and satisfy the credulous multitude that she is a "clever impostor," that she "biologises her audience," and makes them believe they see flowers when no flowers in fact are there.

Happily, however, Miss Nicholl does not intend to trust herself to the tender mercies of such persons; she is determined not to make a profession of Spiritualism, nor to give a public exhibition of her powers; she will avoid sitting with promiscuous parties, and until she has more experience, and is able to overcome the nervous agitation from which she suffers, I have advised her to give up these sittings altogether. She has, it is said, great magnetic power, and to this branch of the subject she has wisely decided to devote her time.

To qualify herself, she is giving a few months' service to the Mesmeric Infirmary, under the tuition of Mr. Fradelle, and when she has obtained the necessary knowledge of treating disease, she will make mesmerism her profession. I have no doubt, from her robust constitution and genial disposition, she will be very successful as a magnetic healer, and that she will find a large field of usefulness for the exercise of such powers as she may possess in this way.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF A LADY.

A LADY has recently related to me the history of her conversion to Spiritualism, with the usual injunction that her name must not appear in print, lest it should offend the prejudices of her relatives, who do not sympathise with her convictions. She is an educated woman of a religious turn of mind, and attached to the Church of England. As a girl she was a dreamer, and was accustomed to relate to her friends, with great circumstantiality, the visions she saw, which were sometimes of prophetic character, and were often realized.

Many years ago, whilst nursing an infant child of hers, it suddenly put its arms round her neck in a fondling manner, forcing her, by its unexpected action, to look upwards, when there seemed to her for the moment, that she was looking into open space, upon a heavenly vision, where her child was being borne away into the far distance of an angelic scene. At that instant the child relaxed its hold upon her neck, and she was horrified to find its lifeless body prostrate in her arms. Unprepared for such an event by any previous warning, the shock rendered the mother insensible, in which state she remained for a period unknown to herself, as her friends ever afterwards avoided all mention of the subject.

Recalling now many incidents of her life, she recognises that she must always have been a medium, though she knew nothing of Spiritualism until about five or six years ago, when she and her husband became acquainted with a clergyman who was a Spiritualist, and was accustomed to sit every evening with two members of his household, one of whom was a medium; of this however the lady and her husband knew nothing. On the first day of their acquaintance the clergyman invited them to visit his church; after inspecting it they continued to walk up and down the broad pathway of the churchyard, until it was dusk. During the walk, the lady fancied that she heard a footstep and the rustling of a silk dress close by her side; she looked around from time to time much disturbed, but seeing no one, she supposed it was only her imagination and she said nothing. She and her husband spent the next evening with the clergyman, and soon after entering the house, she again heard the same rustling of a silk dress, and saw a figure gliding through the room; and she was then induced to speak of the circumstance, and of the incident which had arrested her attention during their walk in the churchyard. A significant glance passed between the clergyman and his sister-in-law, who resided with him, and the lady was asked to describe the appearance of this imaginary person; she said she had not seen the face, but the figure was that of a tall slender woman, very like the figure and appearance of the clergyman's sister-in-law.

She was then told that the clergyman had some time previously lost his wife, who bore a strong resemblance to her sister, and whose tomb they had passed in the churchyard, and they said they had reason to believe that she had seen the spirit of the clergyman's wife, for on the previous evening they had received, at their usual *séance*, this message.—“I accompanied you in your walk this evening.” This interesting incident made a deep impression upon the lady and her husband, and, from her own past experience, made them open to receive with respect the clergyman's spiritual convictions. He lent them books to read, the first of which greatly interested her; she said, “I do not recollect the title of the book, but it contained some very interesting accounts of the spirit appearance of a wife to her husband in America.” I then told her that, strangely enough, that history was written by myself; it was the story of Estelle, which is no doubt familiar to most readers of this journal, to which it was first contributed by me, after my return from America. From that period this lady and her husband took great interest in the subject, though they were unable, and perhaps unwilling, to proclaim themselves believers. About a year ago, however, this lady's husband died. He was, as she says, most happily

resigned, and on the last day of his earthly existence, they talked alone of the coming change, and she earnestly entreated him, if it were possible, that he would return and tell her if Spiritualism was a truth, and if it was right to encourage and pursue the subject. She assures me that she never mentioned a word of this last conversation to any one. Her married daughter was the only one near her at the time, and as she and her brother were much opposed to Spiritualism, there was every reason for avoiding all mention of the last conversation with her husband. That night the daughter slept with her mother; the latter was wakeful, and whilst, as she declares, she was fully awake, she saw the figure of her husband, dressed in his ordinary habiliments, standing by the bedside, and with a calm smile peculiar to him, he uttered these words:—"Mary, I *am* very happy." The daughter, to all appearance, had slept soundly, and the first words she spoke upon awaking were, "Mother, I have had such a pleasant dream; I saw my father standing by our bedside, bending over us, smiling, and looking so happy."

About a month after these events the clergyman's sister-in-law called to see the widowed lady, and in the course of conversation, the latter, after telling her friend how calmly her husband had passed away, said,—“and do you know I have actually seen him, he spoke to me and assured me he was happy.” “I am very glad,” her friend replied, “that you have mentioned this, or otherwise I should not have ventured to tell you that we have received a message from him for you. At a recent sitting his spirit purported to be present, and gave us this message:—“Tell my dear wife that Spiritualism is true! I am very happy.”

The corroboration thus obtained was a source of sincere joy to the widow; she has now become a confirmed Spiritualist, and finds, as she says, her greatest happiness is to cultivate the acquaintance of all those who can sympathise with her thoughts and feelings upon this subject.

One further incident which this lady mentioned, is worth recording, as I do not remember to have heard of a similar case. She, like some others whom I have known, perceives at times a strong fragrance of fresh flowers around her, when there are no flowers nor artificial perfumes present of any kind to account for it. I have myself been present when spirit perfumes have suddenly pervaded the room, and have been inhaled by *all* the party. On one occasion the medium asked me for my handkerchief, and holding it in her hands for a moment, returned it to me strongly impregnated with the scent of roses.

But the peculiarity in the instance spoken of by this lady is that, at one of her visits to the clergyman's house, she asked

those present if they did not smell a strong perfume of verbena, but none of them did, whilst she averred that it was very palpable to her. They were waiting the presence of *the* medium of this household, to form a circle; as soon as the medium entered the room, and they had taken their seats at the table, *she* exclaimed, "What a beautiful fragrance there is of verbena, do you smell it?" but still none of the party could detect the scent so palpable to *the two!* It would be interesting to know whether similar incidents have been met with, *i. e.*, whether the senses of two or more mediums have been acted upon at *the same moment* by an influence which the senses of others present could not detect.

THE REV. T. L. HARRIS.

Mr. Harris does not intend, I am told, to preach in England! He thinks enough has already been done here in that way by him and others. Acting as he does at all times under spiritual guidance and special revelations, ordinary men, or those who have not yet come to follow him as an unerring guide, and to acknowledge him as the apostle of their religious faith, cannot judge his actions by their light, or they might feel surprise that he should not at least have made his presence, and the real object of his visit to Europe, known to those with whom he had been in intimate relations during the long period of his former sojourn in London.

I am not one of those persons. I am not so to speak a Harrisite, but I am one of a large number who regularly attended his lectures, and listened with great pleasure and some profit to the remarkable discourses delivered by him at the Marylebone Institution, and I should have thought that now, with the field greatly enlarged, and with many more enquirers after spiritual truths, that he would have improved the opportunity of spreading his doctrines. He once said that, "The pulpit is the theatre where the man of interior illumination shall be placed, as a medium for utterance of the highest inspirations of truth which he is capable of receiving."

This, however, it appears is not Mr. Harris's present mission. He has another which is said to be to him of paramount importance. It has been revealed to him that the New Christian Church is to start from and be developed in the East, from whence all religions have arisen, and to spread from thence over the Western world. Japan is the chosen spot, and Mr. Harris has been directed to visit England for the express object of indoctrinating the minds of a number of Japanese missionaries

who are now with him, and who are engaged in translating Mr. Harris's books into their native language.

This is a very interesting fact, and will explain why no more labour should be wasted at present in preaching to the sluggards of this portion of the globe, but it implies at the same time that the community of Wassaic is in advance of the times, and that Mr. Harris has only now discovered that he commenced his mission at the wrong end of the world.

A good deal of curiosity is felt to know something more of the Wassaic settlers, their habits of life, their religious views, their severe discipline; even to the dissevering of natural ties, as I have heard it said. How far Mr. Harris requires obedience to his special revelations from his immediate followers—how much of his former teachings are to be retained, and how much to be discarded I am not informed. "It is incorporated," he once said, "in every instinct of our manhood, in every pulse of conscience, in the very muscle and fibre of the moral will—'be free.' If an angel, clothed in the very glory of high heaven, were to appear to me, I could not admit him to be my ruler, to the giving up of my manhood. I give up my judgment to no man—to no spirit." Such sentiments command respect from most thoughtful Spiritualists. Is there any reason that we should now put them aside? This is the information we want and I hope may receive from Mr. Harris before he leaves this country.

It is not a little curious, and may not be generally known, that Mr. Harris holds a prominent position in the commercial world. He is president of a bank, established in Dutchess County, which is said to be flourishing, and which the Government inspector in a recent official report declared was conducted in a very business-like and satisfactory manner.

MISS CURRIER, THE MUSICAL MEDIUM.

I gave in the March number of this Magazine (page 109) an interesting account, written by Dr. Willis, of the curious musical manifestations which he witnessed at the residence of Mr. Currier, at Haverhill, Massachusetts, through the mediumship of his daughter, Miss Mary E. Currier, a young lady about 17 years of age. I have just received a letter from Mr. Currier, in which he gives me a short history of his family's experiences in Spiritualism, and the discovery of his daughter's mediumship. Mr. Currier has also sent me a photograph of the young lady, who bears a strong resemblance in figure and features to the Princess of Wales.

In November, 1865, Mr. Currier, his wife and daughter, without any previous experience of their own, together with four

friends formed a circle, for the purpose of making a thorough investigation of the subject for themselves. They accordingly resolved to sit one evening in each week for twelve months, and though it was not expected, they nevertheless obtained manifestations of more or less interest to them from the very commencement. For two months the manifestations were chiefly limited to table moving. The table at times performing some strange freaks, turning over with its legs uppermost; it more than once suddenly started up and rose to the ceiling, and thus elevated, it traversed the room with such rapidity that they could not keep pace with it. On these occasions Miss Currier usually sat at the piano away from the rest of the circle. Her performances upon the piano seemed to suggest to the spirits the thought of getting up an instrumental concert in which they would take part, and Miss Currier should lead them. The spirits, many as it would appear in number, selected their own instruments, and the members of the circle were directed to provide a violin, guitar, two drums, tambourine, accordion, trumpet, and not less than eighteen hand-bells of varied tones.

Up to that time, the third month from the commencement, they were not aware who was the real medium for the musical manifestations. They thought that Mrs. Kate Robinson, one of the circle, was most likely, as she was the only one of the party previously recognised as a medium.

The instruments as directed by the spirits having been provided, the circle met, the light as usual being extinguished. They took their places standing round the table, and in a few minutes they were requested to restore the light, when to their astonishment, they found Mrs. Robinson had been carried away, and placed noiselessly at full length upon the piano, and another lady had been lifted up and was standing upon the table, both being entranced. The spirits then through the lips of Mrs. Robinson addressed Miss Currier in verse, nominating her as the one through whom they would manifest their musical powers, and for the purpose of obtaining complete control over her, and until she was fully developed, they directed her to sit for thirty minutes *every* evening, with her father and mother only. These directions were strictly followed, Miss Currier taking her seat at the piano, with her parents about five feet distant from her. The instant she struck a note the instruments and bells chimed in and played harmoniously, and in perfect time to the end of the performances. Having by these rehearsals become, as it would appear sufficiently perfect, other persons were permitted to join the circle, and Dr. Willis, who formed one of a numerous company, has graphically described the occurrences of one evening when he was present. Mr. Currier says, that on several

occasions very remarkable proofs have been given of the entire independence and superior power of the controlling influences, as for instance, when the medium had commenced to play some light waltz her hand would be taken from the piano and fastened in her lap, and then the piano would be played upon by the invisibles,* with a force which she was not capable of exercising, and pieces of music were performed which she herself could not play.

Mr. Currier adds that his daughter has recently developed as a trance-speaking medium, and that her powers seem to increase in strength, though she is in very delicate health.

Total darkness was a necessary condition to a complete musical performance, but the medium has seen the instruments removed from the piano, enveloped in a hazy light, though no hand has been visible to her; and Dr. Willis, it will be recollected, saw the tambourine and bells in motion, and dexterously manipulated.

THE LATE MR. ROBERT BELL.

The well-known dramatist, novelist, and Spiritualist, Mr. Robert Bell, died on the 13th April last.

It was he who wrote one of the most graphic narratives which has ever been penned upon the subject of spiritual phenomena, describing the incidents of a *séance* held at the residence of the Right Honorable Mrs.——, with Mr. Home as the medium, and which the late Mr. Thackeray, then editor of the *Cornhill Magazine*, ventured to publish in the eighth number of that journal (August, 1860), entitled *Stranger than Fiction*.

Mr. Thackeray, in a note, spoke of the writer "as a friend of twenty-five years' standing, for whose good faith and honourable character he would vouch." Thackeray was himself a believer in Spiritualism, and with good reason. He had, I am told, evidence of its reality in his own family which made belief irresistible. Mr. Bell's narrative created great commotion in the literary world, and Mr. Thackeray was violently assailed for permitting such "incredible" and "impossible" nonsense to appear in his popular miscellany.

It is true that the writer was a man of good faith and honourable character, who simply described what he and several others who were present had *seen* in a lady's drawing-room. His assailants, however, knew that it was a "great imposture,"

* In the *Life and Letters of Lady Arabella Stuart*, this passage occurs in one of her letters, dated 1609:—"But now from doctrine to miracles! I assure you, within these few days, I saw a pair of virginals make good music without help of any hand."

accomplished by "secret machinery adroitly arranged," by the use of "lazy tongs," and "a balloon," upon which Mr. Home safely floated round the room; and such is the credulity of the multitude, that they believed in this "incredible" and "nonsensical" explanation, and many subscribers withdrew their patronage from the *Cornhill Magazine*! Mr. Thackeray and Mr. Bell thereafter kept their knowledge of spiritual subjects to themselves; but Mr. Bell had become too firm a convert to be indifferent to the spread of the great truth, and it was he who quietly got together the committee which met in Mr. Boucicault's drawing-room to investigate the claims of the Davenports, and that committee, composed of twenty-four leading men in science and literature, it will be recollected, declared, upon the suggestion of Lord Bury, that "*there was no trickery in any form, no confederates nor machinery, and certainly the phenomena which had taken place in their presence were not the product of legerdemain.*" And yet, it will also be recollected, that the *Flaneur* and the editor of the *Star*, with too many of their followers, rejoiced at the brutality of the mobs which smashed the Davenports' cabinets. Let us hope that the spirit of our departed friend may be permitted to return to enlighten the darkness and error of his former associates.

Notices of Books.

FORCE *v.* SPIRITUALISM.*

THE author of this book has earned for himself a certain status in the philosophical world. He is a fearless and an independent thinker, an honest seeker after truth, an omnivorous reader, who assimilates and brings under contribution the thoughts of others in large measure to the support of his own favorite dogmas. A treatise from such a man, upon any subject, must needs contain much that is worthy of attention, whether his opinion be finally accepted, or not. Accordingly the work before us, in spite of much imperfection, possesses undoubted claims to our respect; and though we shall dwell more particularly, indeed almost exclusively, on its shortcomings, let it not be supposed that we are

* *On Force, its Mental and Moral Correlates; and on that which is supposed to underlie all Phenomena: with Speculations on Spiritualism, and other Abnormal Conditions of Mind.* By CHARLES BRAY, Author of the *Philosophy of Necessity; the Education of the Feelings, &c.* London: LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, and DYER.

insensible to its merits. The design of the work is meritorious: an attempt to see how far the latest doctrines of physical science can be legitimately pushed into the domain of metaphysics, and whether the worlds of mind and matter cannot be fairly brought under one law. The attempt has at least the merit of directing attention into a little-trodden region of scientific research; and possibly succeeding explorers will profit by the defects and errors of the present adventurer, and enrich the world by undreamt-of discoveries.

Let us present the argument of the work in the author's own words:—

ARGUMENT.

There is but one Reality in the universe, which Physical Philosophers call "Force;" and Metaphysicians "Noumenon." It is the "Substance" of Spinoza, and the "Being" of Hegel.

Everything around us results from the mode of action or motion, or correlation of this one force, the different Forms of which we call Phenomena.

The difference in the mode of action depends upon the difference in the Structure it passes through; such Structure consisting of concentrated Force, or centres of Force, and has been called Matter. "Every form is force visible; a form of rest is a balance of forces; a form undergoing change is the predominance of one over others."—*Huxley*.

Heat, Light, Magnetism, Electricity, Attraction, Repulsion, Chemical Affinity, Life, Mind or Sentience, are modes of action or manifestations of Force, and die or cease to exist, when the force passes into other forms.

Cause and Effect is this sequence or correlation; and each cause and effect is a new Life and a new Death: each new form being a new creation, which dies and passes away, never to return, for "nothing repeats itself, because nothing can be placed again in the same condition: the past being irrevocable."—*W. B. Grove*. "There is no death in the concrete, what passes away passes away into its own self—only the passing away passes away."—*Hegel*.

Force passing through a portion of the structure of the brain creates the "World" of our intellectual consciousness, with the "ego," or sense of personal identity; passing through other portions of the brain the world of our likes and antipathies—called the Moral world: Good and Evil being purely subjective.

The character and direction of Volition depends upon the Persistent Force and the structure through which it passes. Every existing state, both bodily and mental, has grown out of the preceding, and all its Forces have been used up in present phenomena. Thus, "everything that exists depends upon the past, prepares the future, and is related to the whole."—*Oersted*.

As no force acts singly, but is always combined with other forces or modes of action to produce some given purpose or particular result, we infer that Force is not blind but intelligent. As Force is intelligent and One, it would be more properly called Being—possessing personality; and that Being we have called God. "He is the universal Being of which all things are the manifestations."—*Spinoza*.

All power is Will power,—the will of God. "Causation is the will, Creation the act of God."—*W. B. Grove*. The will which originally required a distinct *conscious* volition has passed, in the ages, into the unconscious or automatic, constituting the fixed laws and order of nature.

Vital Force exists in excess in some constitutions, and may be transferred to other living organisms, often constituting a curative agent.

Brain Force, the result of cerebration, also exists in excess in some nervous

constitutions; it then forms a sphere or atmosphere around individuals by which one brain is brought into direct communication with others and mind becomes a unity. Individual will-power can act through this medium beyond the range of individual body. In this way may be explained the Mysteries of Magic and Witchcraft, the Phenomena of Mesmerism, of so-called Spiritualism, and the Curative Power of individuals.

A thesis this, grand in outline assuredly, however faultily expressed. But how are its details filled in, its various propositions unfolded and maintained?

We feel bound to say, in a very unsatisfactory manner. The positions taken, are none of them developed with anything like precision and completeness; and incongruities and contradictions abound to such a degree, that, but for the argument above quoted, which at least shows his *design*, one would have been at a loss to know which of two or more opinions the author really rests in, or whether he rests in any.

The first chapter is on Force in general; and therein Mr. Bray reduces everything to force—"The assumption that the force which acts upon us, and of which only, therefore, we know anything, belongs to something else which we call matter, is gratuitous, unwarrantable, and altogether unnecessary." (p. 1) . . . "In chemistry we find only circles or centres of force—the ultimate atoms which this force is supposed to surround, are an uncalled-for and altogether unnecessary invention. When I speak of body, therefore, or substance, I mean these circles of force in a more or less intense or condensed condition. . . . But when we speak of either matter or force, we speak only of the external cause of our sensations, and these tell us nothing of the real nature or essence of either; why not, then, continue to use the term matter as heretofore? We answer, because the more general term, force, may include—and does really include—both what has hitherto been called matter and spirit also. We are told that 'force viewed separately from matter is nothing.' I think it more correct to say that matter viewed separately from force is nothing, because we know that force passes into or changes into mind, as heat into light, and we thus include both sides of creation—matter and spirit." (p. 3.)

Leaving Mr. Bray to reconcile his assertion that it is of "force" alone "we know anything," with his subsequent affirmation that of it we really know nothing, but know only its effects upon and within ourselves, we crave a few remarks upon the other questions involved in these passages. We may concur in his generalization as to force, but not in discarding the terms matter and spirit, which, as convenient terms for specific effects, if nothing more, have so entered into our language and ordinary modes of thought, and are, besides, so essential for the

definition of opposite conceptions, that the attempt to get rid of them only brings confusion, or necessitates the invention of a new and needless nomenclature. Much of the apparent confusion in Mr. Bray's metaphysics, which we have alluded to, is probably traceable to this very unwise attempt. Not distinctly keeping before his mind that this "one Reality," whether called "Force," "Being," or "God," is "the *essence* of the Universe," the "primary and absolute conditional of knowledge," itself unknowable and incomprehensible, Mr. Bray appears to us to forget that this "one Reality" cannot properly be spoken of as the correlate of anything, except as of a whole to parts, and then Infinity to finities; for is not this the unfathomable source of all correlate forces—the Being of all beings—of whose exhaustless power, grandeur, beauty, wisdom, all nature is but the partial expression? In our view, it is scientifically inaccurate, not to say also morally irreverent, to speak of this Being as the "correlate" of anything into which, as the idea supposes, it might be transformed and lost. Of subordinate forces within this Omnipresent Power—the physical, vital, and mental forces—such language is perfectly appropriate; but to apply the same terms to the Infinite Cause, of which all existence (outcome) is but the finite apparition, seems to us wholly inadmissible, and productive only of confusion.

Accordingly, when Mr. Bray comes (chapter iii.) to speak "UPON THAT WHICH UNDERLIES ALL PHENOMENA," we find him using the following extraordinary sentence:—"But, as we have seen, it is most probable that the force, or manifestations, or *accidents*" [his own italics], or laws, are all that really exists." (p. 47.) The grammar in this quotation, which relates a singular nominative to a plural verb, we notice no farther than to say that this is not an uncommon fault of the author, and to suggest the consideration to himself whether it is not of a piece with the looseness and inaccuracy of his metaphysics in general; but what can be made of the *thought* which sets forth "force" and its "manifestations" as equally probable *alternatives*? All that exists is the one "or" the other. So that in Mr. Bray's conception, the manifestations of force are separable from force itself—their cause—and may be "all that really exists." That there may be no mistake on the subject, he distinctly asserts, in capital letters, as the final educt of his reasoning, p. 48, "THERE IS NOTHING UNDERLYING PHENOMENA;" and then, to crown the whole, he adds, by way of further exposition, "PHENOMENA ARE CORRELATES OF FORCE, AND FORCE IS ALL." Was ever confusion worse confounded? That "accidents" and "laws" should be presented, in the same breath with force and its manifestations, as not less possible *alternatives* of all existence,

only adds to our dismay, and illustrates a condition of mind to us totally incomprehensible. No wonder that an irreverent critic, himself a logical thinker, and one who is intolerant of intellectual confusion, should madly cry out, "How can you grapple with a thing which is half a polypus, half a puddle, and altogether a muddle?"

Mr. Bray is fond of playing off quips upon the metaphysicians, whose method of investigation he delights to ridicule, likening it to the "Irishman's direction for making a cannon—take a round hole and pour metal round it." But possibly had he a little more respect for these despised thinkers, and did he pursue their rigorous method of examining his own thoughts—

It wad frae mony a blunder free him
An' foolish notion ;

and would surely save him from entertaining and putting forth such irreconcilable ideas as those we have indicated, and some others that, in setting forth his arguments, we shall have to expose.

On page 48, Mr. Bray quotes with approval Hume's dictum, "We have no perfect idea of anything but a perception. A substance is entirely different from a perception; we have therefore no idea of a substance." Mr. Bray, apparently, does not see the fallacy in this argument, in the substitution of "no idea" for "perfect idea;" and that if we have "*no* idea of a substance," we have no justification for the predicate, that a substance differs from a perception. But this by the way. Hume's argument is for the existence of ideas only, and against the notion that they inhere in anything, whether material or spiritual. "We have no idea of substance," says he, and Mr. Bray agrees with him: yet, in the very next sentence we have Mr. Bray saying, "It would appear, then, that 'mind and matter are only phenomenal modifications of the same common *substance*,' viz., of force." "Substance" is denied in one breath, and affirmed in another.

Again, notwithstanding that Mr. Bray has previously argued away the real existence of external things, and resolved them into subjective impressions, or perceptions, we have him in page 47, saying, "Our faculties make us acquainted with qualities of attributes *without* ourselves;" and this is the ground of our assumption, "that these must be qualities or attributes or *something*," which we have called "matter." Further, "we have feelings and ideas, and we equally assume that they must belong to something, and we call it mind." But this is all a mistake; "there is in reality nothing to which the mental and physical attributes belong, they exist *per se!*" And by way of further enlightening us as to *how* they exist, he adds, "as force and its

correlates." This is his great doctrine—his discovery; new names for old things, or rather old imaginings; this and nothing more—only inconsistently carried out. "When we speak of qualities," he continues, "we indicate only how we are affected by force external; vital force is the correlate of this physical force; and ideas and feelings are the correlates of vital force, *not existing in anything, but each idea or feeling existing separately*; notwithstanding which, he immediately proceeds to speak of "*our perceptions*," *our ideas and feelings*, &c. He admits we have the faculty of memory, and can remember these said perceptions, ideas and feelings; that we have a sense of personality and identity, and necessarily exercise the same in every act and thought implying our substantive individuality; but yet all the emotions and affections we undergo—our perceptions, thoughts, feelings—inhere in nothing; each, when it does exist, "*exists per se*;" and "when it ceases to exist as an idea or feeling, it merely takes some other form, and is still persistent."

What Mr. Bray's exact idea is, in the last clause of this sentence, it is difficult to say; but from another part of his essay we should infer that in his opinion, ideas, and feelings, though ceasing to exist as such, "persist" in a form of diffused mentality, which constitutes the "force" with which mediums and others unconsciously deal in "what are called spiritual manifestations." We will come to this presently, in dealing with his speculations on Spiritualism, which occupy the latter half of his volume, and the discussion of which is the main object of our reviewing the work in this magazine. But we wish to make a few preliminary remarks upon Mr. Bray's relation to the problem of immortality, and upon his notion just ventilated as to human impersonality or unsubstantiality, and the "*existence per se*" of our ideas and feelings.

Mr. Bray appears to be just scientific enough to apprehend the difficulties in the problem of human immortality, but not scientific enough to resolve them. He cannot conceive of human existence being continued beyond the present life. To him the final truth is, that

We are such stuff as dreams are made of,
And our little life is rounded by a sleep;

that the "condensed force" denominated our body is all; that when the brains are out the man is no more. Though multitudes of facts demonstrate that the percipient principle allied with our body is really distinct from it, and continues to exist when our organization has become the prey of chemical laws, he cannot see them. Some of us are fain to believe that the modern spirit manifestations are specially adapted to the wants of this class of

mind—the very evidence required “in mercy sent.” Alas! the minds of some men are so dominated by preconceived ideas that they cannot even appreciate the evidence when presented. To them the human being is still only like the bubble on the deep,—

Or like the snow flake on the river,
A moment seen, then gone for ever!

Their inability to see the specialities of the facts before them reminds us of the case of an old friend who had some years before lost his eyesight, but whose hearing was distinguished for remarkable acuteness. An old watch, with a pretty strong “tick,” stood upon the mantel piece in the parlour, close by where he sat; but he had allowed it to run down, and it had long remained silent. One day, however, his daughter, unknown to him, wound up the watch, and, finding it useful, kept it going without mentioning the circumstance. We called some time afterwards, and while sitting in the fireside circle, remarked upon the old watch doing duty again. “Oh no,” said he, “I don’t think it worth while.” “But it is going *now*,” we answered. “Is it?” said he, listening,—“So it is!” And his daughter said, “Yes, father, I set it agoing again the other day, and have kept it up ever since.” It had been going for days not far from his ear, but he had never heard it! “A capital illustration,” we remarked, “of the influence of preconceived ideas; the vibration of the watch-tick played upon your auditory nerve just as perfectly when you did not observe it as it does *now* when you do.” The case is valuable in both forms, negative and positive. In delicate phenomena the conception that a thing is not there, which, nevertheless is, often prevents its observation; while the idea that it is, enables one to perceive the reality. Of course we know that this principle has another side, and makes things appear to be present which are not; and usually this is the side which critics are ready to cast in the teeth of the Spiritualist, unwitting of the former operation of it in themselves. It is all a question of verification, and being cognizant of the range of the principle, we shall be less likely to err on either side. We believe the incompetency of many of the critics of the spirit manifestations to judge of their real character arises from their negligence of this; and just as our call upon the attention of the blind man enabled him to hear the watch-tick, so may we hope the present, or some other arrestment of the attention of Mr. Bray, may enable him to appreciate specialities in the facts of Spiritualism which hitherto he has ignored.

But we delay too long remarking upon his curious notion, that ideas and feelings have “existence *per se*,” while the being who excogitates, entertains and suffers them, is “nothing.” We

are conscious of ourselves as distinct personalities, capable of entertaining and voluntarily recalling thoughts, of suffering sensations and emotions, of remembering their character, and even of mentally renewing emotions of the same nature, when distant both in time and space from the objects and events which originally excited them—yet “we” are literally “nothing;” our ideas and feelings are all; and they are only manifestations of force which “persist” for a time, and then pass into other forms! The astonishing thing is, that separate acts of consciousness, or rather, actions and passions of which we are conscious—fractions, so to speak of our mental life—are endowed with a kind of personality, however transitory, and “existence *per se*,” until they take “some other form;” but we ourselves, the conscious theatres of these phantasmagori—the voluntary and involuntary agents and subjects of these fleeting effects—are “nothing!” Was ever *reductio ad absurdum* more complete?

Surely Mr. Bray must see how inconsistent, even with his own theory, such a position is; and that such a hypothesis gives no adequate account of the phenomena of his own nature. Is not every human being, to give him his own technology, at least a “centre of force,” distinct from and yet related to all other centres of force in the universe, and to the universal force, of which it may be regarded as an individuation? Does he not admit that, as such, in its normal condition, it persists in this phenomenal world, with its feeling of identity intact, for three score and ten years, and that when it has “shuffled off this mortal coil,” he has at any rate *no proof* that its conscious identity is lost, although its bodily presence has receded from his view, and only persists in other forms? Does he not see that merely as a “centre of force,” it is so constituted as to be susceptible to the influence of other similar and other different “centres,” and capable of influencing them; and that so long as it “persists” in its identity it is a “something” which is, and does, and suffers; and is conscious of being, and doing, and suffering, and of so continuing; and that on the very principle of his Essay, which accords a transitory life and individuality to even its affections and intellections, it is ridiculous to deny existence *per se*, and individuality to it?

The real question now for determination is, how long does this conscious identity—this acknowledged “centre of force—” continue? And this brings us to Mr. Bray’s “speculations on Spiritualism,” and as he consistently and pleasantly adds, “*other abnormal conditions of mind*,” which occupy the larger portion of his book.

The words now quoted are the title of chapter iv. They indicate, in brief, Mr. Bray’s conception of Spiritualism, *viz.*,

that it is simply an "abnormal condition of mind." We do not stop to criticise the expression or to dwell on its corollary, that Spiritualists are, as a matter of course—well, Mr. Bray does not mean it unpolitely, but it need not be concealed, and we do not shrink from the "abnormal" imputation—mad! Perhaps he will yet be constrained to acknowledge that we are "not mad; but speak the words of truth and soberness."

The "other" abnormal conditions to which Mr. Bray refers, are those of somnambulism, clairvoyance, trance, preternatural excitement of special organs of the brain, as wonder, causality, &c., and such states as those of Zschokke, Socrates, Swedenborg, &c., which Mr. Bray discusses briefly, and if not profoundly or with anything like fulness of knowledge, yet fairly; and he has a very interesting section on the correlation of the vital and mental forces, in which he holds that by far the larger portion of force that enters the human system in the form of food is unaccounted for by the chemist and physiologist, and that this surplus most probably passes off in nervous and cerebral action. In addition to the force derivable from the food there is also force derivable from air, light, heat, electricity, &c. He quotes this sentence from Herbert Spencer:—"Those modes of the unknowable which we call heat, light, chemical affinity, &c., are alike transformable into each other, and into those modes of the unknowable which we distinguish as sensation, emotion, thought: these, in their turn, being directly or indirectly re-transformable into the original shapes." He then exclaims, "Exactly, 're-transformable'—but when, where, and how?" And pursuing the enquiry, he says, "What becomes of every thought as it is turned out of its form or mould in the brain? We know [we should rather say suppose] it is the exact equivalent of the physical force expended in producing it, &c. . . Many facts now point to an atmosphere or reservoir of thought; the result of cerebration, into which the thought and feeling generated by the brain is continuously passing. The brains and nervous systems of the whole of sensitive existence are increasing and intensifying this mental atmosphere. The question is, does force exist more commonly as physical force or as mental? Does thought passing from us become free thought, or does it join some odyllic or other medium? And does each separate thought retain its identity, that is, the form impressed upon it by our organization; or does it change its form, lose its consciousness, and thus no longer be thought and feeling?" p. 79.

Here is the distinct attribution of "consciousness" to the thought or feeling itself; and not only so, but it is so put as to imply that this is essential to such mental effects *being* thought and feeling. Not the person who thinks or feels, or not only

that person, but the thoughts and feelings themselves also possess consciousness! Where does Mr. Bray find proof or authority for such a doctrine?

What a curious instance this affords of the extravagance into which a theorist may be led by the exigency in which he feels himself to provide means for explaining facts which could not otherwise be got over! Mr. Bray is ready enough to impute to the Spiritualists this weakness. They, he says, "have a theory to support, for the good, as they suppose, of mankind; we must not be surprised, therefore, if the facts require a little forcing to fit that theory, and if the theorists often think they see what they so strongly wish to see." The "forcing" of the facts, we suspect, will be found altogether on the other side. However, we are not constrained to deny the influence of pre-conceived ideas; only we insist that the principle cuts both ways, and Mr. Bray need not be surprised, if "the measure he meets withal shall be meted to him again."

But what, now, is his theory? Here it is, briefly stated in his own words:—

To the transference of nervous force, and even mental states with it, from one body to another, and to the union of individual mind with the mental atmosphere, are owing, I think it will be found, all the varied phenomena of somnambulism, mesmerism, and clairvoyance, and of what is called Spiritualism." p. 82.

Alluding to this and his previous exposition of certain mental states, he inquires "But is the above hypothesis, and the normal and abnormal condition of mind described, sufficient to account for the phenomena of Spiritualism?" And he answers, "Of such phenomena as are genuine, I think they are."

So then, all the phenomena which can be brought within the limits of his hypothesis are, or may be, "genuine;" but all which cannot—what of them? Why, from all consideration of them our author leaves himself this convenient door of escape—they are not "genuine!" We are not dealing merely with an inference now; we are also stating a fact. Mr. Bray has *had* such facts placed before him, and this *was* his mode of treating them. It was, of course, in entire accordance with the position taken by him as above quoted. After this, the value of his work as an explanation of Spiritualism may be inferred.

Not only is there this *dernier ressort* always left open by Mr. Bray, but he is either ignorant of, or forgets, and thence quietly ignores, facts which he was bound to resolve in accordance with his theory. Nevertheless, he is not consciously unfair, quite the reverse; he *means* to be just, and we believe it is simply the inadequacy of his knowledge, and the special influence of "dominant ideas," causing him to assimilate mainly such facts as agree with his preconceptions, and to slight—or really *not to see*—

others equally authentic, but inconsistent therewith, to which is to be referred the peculiar defects of his discussions and attempted explanations of the phenomena. See how fairly he states the proposition to himself. "We have to account for physical force and intelligence supposed to be not that (*sic*) of any human beings present." But listen now to his explanation:—

With respect to physical force, gravitation and nervous force, or "unconscious cerebration," are correlates, that is, transformable, like heat and electricity, into each other, and, like heat and electricity, although quantitatively the same, they are qualitatively different, that is, they differ in their mode of action, and when a table becomes charged with the nervous force it seems to dispossess or change the character of gravitation, and it [*i. e.* gravitation], acts *less* as a downward attraction. The rising and moving of tables and other articles of furniture exactly accords in the mode of action with this loss of gravitation or weight. (p. 99.)

Was ever an attempted explanation of facts more utterly inadequate? Was ever assumption more gratuitous and extravagant than that "*unconscious cerebration*" neutralizes gravitation? Mr. Bray forgets that tables, &c., are not merely made light, as he would call it, but likewise made heavy—heavier than ordinary, so much so, indeed, as to resist the united force of those present to lift them; that they are again raised in spite of the united efforts of the visible agents, mediums and non-mediums, to keep them down; that they are canted over to an angle of 45°, with lamps, books, &c., on their top, and yet that none of these things fall off. How does his hypothesis account for these facts? And by what experiments has Mr. Bray proved that the rising and moving of tables "exactly" accords with this supposed loss of gravitation? His assumed unconscious nervous force has to "dispossess or change the character of gravitation," not only so as to make it "act *less*," but also so as to make it act *more* "as a downward attraction." But, not only that; of the things equally permeated by the nervous force some being made light and others heavy, it must accomplish both feats at the same instant! And, still more, it has to affect things which, by their own gravitation, would fall, so as to fix them to inclined and slippery surfaces, which is inexplicable by the supposition of either diminishing or increasing their weight; and in addition to all this, it has to overcome momentum as well as gravitation. Mr. Bray may get rid of these trifling difficulties by the easy method he has left open of denying the facts; but his candour, when fairly addressed, will, we think, constrain him to acknowledge that he cannot fairly select a part of one series of facts, which his hypothesis may faintly and by hard "forcing" reach, and leave unnoticed the rest, which he cannot pretend it even approaches. In the Rev. Adin Ballou's work on Spirit Manifestations, pre-

sented by the writer of this review to Mr. Bray some thirteen years ago, ample testimony is given to the genuineness of the physical facts now indicated. Mr. Ballou himself, than whom a more cool, able, discriminative and upright witness could not be produced, states, in chapter iv., his own personal experience of such facts, from which, as bearing on this part of the discussion, we select only two sentences:—

I have seen tables and light stands, of various size, moved about in the most astonishing manner, by what purported to be the same invisible agency, with only the gentle and passive resting of the hands or finger-ends of the medium on one of their edges. Also, many distinct movings of such objects, by request, without the touch of the mediums at all.

Again, in the Appendix of the same edition of this work, the testimony of Judge Edmonds, one of the ablest lawyers in the United States, and originally one of the most sceptical of men—by native constitution of mind, indeed, a very Thomas—is given; from which the following sentences are commended to Mr. Bray's attention:—

I have known a pine table with four legs, lifted bodily up from the floor, in the centre of a circle of six or eight persons, turned upside down and laid upon its top at our feet, then lifted over our heads, and put leaning against the back of the sofa on which we sat. I have known that same table to be tilted up on two legs, its top at an angle with the floor of forty-five degrees, when it neither fell over of itself, nor could any person present put it back on its four legs. I have seen a mahogany table, having only a centre leg, and with a lamp burning upon it, lifted from the floor at least a foot, in spite of efforts of those present, and shaken backwards and forwards as one would shake a goblet in his hand, and the lamp retain its place, though its glass pendants rang again. I have seen the same table tipped up with the lamp upon it, so far that the lamp must have fallen off unless retained there by something else than its own gravity; yet it fell not, moved not. . . . I have known a mahogany chair thrown on its side, and moved swiftly back and forth on the floor, no one touching it, through a room where there were at least a dozen people sitting, yet no one was touched, and it was repeatedly stopped within a few inches of me, when it was coming with a violence, which, if not arrested, must have broken my legs. (p. 132).

With such facts as these before him, was not Mr. Bray bound to apply his hypotheses to accounting for more than the kind of "rising and moving" of articles implied in his statement?

But how does he deal with the second part of his question, *viz.*, the intelligence indicated? "When intelligence appears," says he, in continuation of his remarks on physical force above quoted, "and this nervous force or 'cerebration' acts more or less consciously under the power of the will, we are told in the history of *Mary Jane* that the physical force ceases; as in the *animal* body it is changed in its form of manifestation." Why he accepts this statement of the author of *Mary Jane* as a universal characteristic, and not as simply applicable to that special case, or to the circumstances thereof there described, we cannot say, unless it be that the exigency of his hypothesis demands it. For, assuredly, nothing is more certain than that

in many of the facts, as in those of independent writing for instance, and drawing and painting and the playing of musical instruments, intelligence is demonstrated by physical movements. The same is surely the case in the facts above quoted from Adin Ballou and Judge Edmonds. But Mr. Bray contentedly ignores all this, and passes on for several pages, discussing "rappings" only, and his favourite correlation of the vital and mental forces, much of which is very good, but altogether beside the question he had to determine, and inapplicable to the facts he was bound to explain.

All this, however, is only introductory to his grand section on "Intelligence," from which, in justice to him, we must quote the fuller expression of his ideas on this subject:—

My own opinion is that there is an emanation from all brains, the result of both conscious and unconscious cerebration, forming, not spirits, but a mental or spiritual atmosphere, by means of which peculiar constitutions, mediums and others, are put *en rapport* with other brains or minds, so as to become conscious of whatever is going on there." (p. 103.)

As regards the nature of the Intelligence, it appears to depend entirely upon the character of the brain from which it emanates, and upon the knowledge possessed by the mind with which the medium or other member of the circle may at the time be *en rapport*. (p. 105.)

After quoting various passages from Mrs. De Morgan's work, *From Matter to Spirit*, stating some of her reasons for assuming that the manifestations are the works of intelligent unseen beings, two of which are, that the communications are often *quite new to every person present*, and that the invisibles *assert themselves to be spirits*, Mr. Bray answers—

May not, then, this force be an emanation from all brains, the medium increasing its density, so as to allow others present to come into communion with it, and the intelligence "new to every person present," that of some brain in the distance acting through this source upon the mind of the medium or others of the circle? (p. 107).

Mr. Bray is contented with such suggestions, without discussing their adequacy. How he can put them forth without applying them to the specialities of the facts they are suggested to explain, with which, to the fully-informed mind, they are so incongruous, is a marvel to us. Not a supposition which he hazards by way of explanation, but has been presented before, and in some cases argued with a particularity of knowledge and an intellectual grasp and cogency incomparably beyond anything to be found in his volume. After the failure of Dr. Rogers to account for the phenomena upon such hypotheses, Mr. Bray has small chance of making the explanation to any logical thinker more acceptable. But the extraordinary thing is, that, though all that is worthy of consideration in Mr. Bray's suppositions and arguments has been anticipated and refuted in Mr. Ballou's work, a copy of

which, as we have said, Mr. Bray has had in his possession these thirteen years, not one word is said in answer to these counter-arguments, and the existence of Mr. Ballou's treatise is not so much as mentioned. We can only account for this conduct on the part of so candid an opponent as Mr. Bray, by the notion that he must have cast aside that work long ago into some obscure corner of his library, and forgotten all about it. If he will now turn it up, however, and refer to chapters vii. and viii., he will find every one of his arguments, objections, and suppositions worthy of notice, discussed and demolished. We use the qualification "worthy of notice," because the only novelties Mr. Bray brings into the discussion are either remarks on the correlation of the physical, vital, and mental forces which may or may not be true, but which have no pertinency to the questions at issue, or extravagant and gratuitous suggestions, such as the persistent separate existence and consciousness of ideas and feelings already alluded to, which Mr. Bray himself, with that characteristic and peculiar impartiality which constrains him to affirm contradictory propositions, subsequently sets aside. In reference to one of Mr. Bray's adopted ideas, Mr. Ballou, says :—

So then there is an exquisitely subtle element communicable from one soul to another, under appropriate conditions, and thereby the two souls come into *rapport*, as the French call it, or soul-communication. The process whereby this is effected is called mesmerising, magnetizing or psychologizing. Its results are mesmeric and psychological phenomena of every grade and variety, from the lowest somnambulism, to the highest clairvoyance. Again, I ask, does the objector believe in *all this* as demonstrable between human spirits in the flesh? Yes. Very well; so do I. . . . I have laid down, as a part of my doctrine, that these mesmeric, clairvoyant, and psychological phenomena sometimes proceed from spirits in the flesh, and sometimes from departed spirits; always, however, in accordance with spiritual laws, common, more or less to the whole universe of souls. I have also taken the position that phenomena caused by souls *in the body* sometimes mix with those caused by *departed souls*, and that thus the *lower* are liable to be mistaken for the higher. Here I am but one step ahead of the objector in my credulity. *He* believes in marvels, utterly incredible to himself a few years ago, caused by mesmerism, clairvoyance, and psychological influence, exerted by soul on soul in the flesh. Having been strained up by irresistible evidence to this height of faith, he now obstinately denies that departed spirits ever mesmerise, magnetise, or spiritise susceptible persons in the body; that they ever exert psychologic influences over them to render them media; that they ever cause *any* of the phenomena purporting to be spirit manifestations. Why? Because mesmerism, clairvoyance, and psychological influence take place between soul and soul in the body, and these *may possibly* account for all higher phenomena of the same nature. Most lame and impotent conclusions! Some of the phenomena in question may be thus accounted for, but not the more important and peculiarly distinctive manifestations. . . . Departed spirits have a higher mesmeric, magnetic, or psychologic power than have mortals of a corresponding grade. Facts have proved this in many remarkable cases. It will yet be demonstrated to the conviction of all candid investigators. (p. 38.)

Mr. Bray's idea of the medium "increasing the density" of the "mental or spiritual atmosphere, so as to allow others present to come into *communion* with it," as if it were an intelligent agent,

is one of his original conceptions. But its simplicity is immediately marred by the farther notion that the manifested intelligence, "new to every person present,"—as, for example, the writing by means of an ordinary slate and pencil of the following pregnant query, "And is this world of strife to end in dust at last?"—an act which was done by the invisible agent in our presence, under circumstances precluding the possibility of trick, and without the intervention of any conscious aid from any one in our company—is the work of "some brain in the distance acting upon the mind of the medium or others in the circle." Mr. Bray does not explain whether the distant brain operates consciously or unconsciously, nor what the novel powers are which it possesses beyond these of the brains present, and which in this case startled them with an unexpected thought, and embodied its intelligence in the writing on the slate; nor does he say what can be its motive for asserting itself to be neither "in the distance," nor a "brain" at all, but a disembodied human being. Why it should make such pretences, and be capable of exerting such powers, are equally inexplicable.

But it is characteristic of Mr. Bray that he does not look at half the facts he undertakes to explain. The assumption of disembodied human personality by the invisible agents was stated in the very sentences he quoted from Mrs. De Morgan, but he pays not the slightest attention to it. It is needless to say that he takes no cognizance whatever of the more extraordinary, but no less thoroughly authenticated, facts of a different kind; as, for instance, the temporary embodiment of some of the spirits themselves, so as to be not only visible, but likewise tangible—notably, the appearances of Dr. Franklin and Mrs. L——, together with the lights, flowers, &c., described so minutely and carefully by Mr. L——, and vouched for by Dr. John F. Gray, himself a witness to some of these manifestations. Such facts were open to Mr. Bray in the volumes of this magazine, as well as in the separate publication by Mr. Coleman, long before the production of his book; and those of direct writing were explicitly stated (in the work already mentioned as having been so long in Mr. Bray's possession) by Mr. Ballou to have occurred frequently in his own presence and under circumstances, carefully described, precluding deception; see *Modern Spirit Manifestations*, p. 20. Mr. Bray must surely, on further investigation, admit that, in view of the facts demanding solution, his "speculations" whether regarded in relation to their probability or to their adequacy, are alike unsatisfactory, and are scarcely worthy of his reputation.

THE SWEDENBORGIAN SECT.

THE history of the Swedenborgian sect; both in Britain and the United States, from its beginning till now, as faithfully related by Mr. White, is in itself an example and a warning. As the old Moslem said, while pointing out to his son a Parisian dandy walking through the streets of Constantinople,—“If you forget Allah and the Prophet, you may come to look like that;” so we may point to the “New Jerusalem,” as attempted to be established by man on earth, as a warning against Churches founded on a mere assent to doctrinal statements however true, rather than on a life of faith and love. The feeling which leads men to separate from other Christians on account of superior knowledge is inimical to true progress. Swedenborg’s doctrines were indeed heavenly doctrines in him, because he received them from heaven; but they are very earthly doctrines to a man who receives them merely from Swedenborg. The doctrine of the Divine Humanity is the leading doctrine of the New Church, but it is just as true now as when the Lord delivered it to Peter, that the man is blessed only who receives that truth not from flesh and blood but from the Lord of Heaven. The Spiritual Sense of the Word is very living and fruitful when opened up by the Holy Spirit in the mind of the devout reader of the Scriptures, but the *Arcana Cœlestia* is not the Key of David. Its best use is to lead its reader to seek that key from Him from whom Swedenborg received it.—“*Recipient*” (*Review of White’s Life of Swedenborg*).

Correspondence.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES.

To the Editor of the “Spiritual Magazine.”

SIR,—I have thought that it would be interesting to many of your readers to give some account of my experience, more especially since I saw the “Anecdote of the Mother of George Canning,” in the December number of the *Spiritual Magazine*.

Permit me to state briefly a few facts of my experience before I heard of Spiritualism. I went home one night very late, when quite a youth, when all had gone to bed. I sat down and began to unlace my boots, intending to go up-stairs without disturbing any one, when I heard a voice call me several times by name. This voice belonged to no living being in the house. I was too terrified to answer it, and was still more frightened when I heard the step of feet coming down the stairs. Trembling, I laid my head on the table and there remained, fearing to speak or to make any noise, and there I found myself at daylight in the morning.

One morning while watching the light at day-break, and meditating on it,

I heard a noise as of rushing waters, and, turning my head in the direction of the sound, I saw a fearful creature flying, the motions of its wings making the noise I heard; at the same time the idea that this was Apollyon came into my mind, and I was greatly terrified and knew not what to do until I heard a voice say, "Arise and pray." I arose and knelt upon the bed and prayed the Lord's Prayer, when at once all fear left me, and I heard in the distance happy voices of a choir as if in undulatory motion, singing the praises of Him whom I was worshipping; they came nearer, until they appeared to be in my bedroom, and in the same manner the voices retired. I have never been able to understand whether this was a dream, or waking vision, but it remains with me as real and vivid as any occurrence in my life.

One night lying in bed and thinking seriously of heaven and its realities, a young man appeared at the bed-foot wearing a purple robe; he waved his hand and disappeared three distinct times; then appeared a middle-aged woman in long white robes, her hair white as wool, and on her countenance a smile, who in like manner waved her hand and disappeared. The room on their appearance was illuminated so that I could see them distinctly. I lay calmly looking on, wondering what could be the meaning of these things. I may say that from this time the fear of death was removed, and a feeling of heavenly peace flowed into my soul, reconciling me to all the dispensations of my Heavenly Father.

The night that my mother died, I being 100 miles from home, and not having an idea of her being ill—indeed she died very suddenly.—I suddenly awoke from sound sleep, and was conscious of some one else being in the room; presently I heard my mother's voice calling me by name, and, strange as it may appear, she told me she was dead. My mother's spirit has since communicated to me that she did come then and apprise me of her departure from this world.

For many months, from this time, I was conscious of the constant presence of invisible beings, and sometimes I felt much annoyed by it. I believe now that they wanted to communicate with me. However, I had not courage enough to speak to them, and becoming more and more immersed in the present life, this state passed away, except that I would occasionally hear a voice, reminding me of promises or good resolutions I had made, and that I ought to have been performing them. The above incidents occurred to me some twelve years before I knew of what is called Spiritualism.

It is now nearly ten years since I became acquainted with spiritual manifestations. It was in my own house, through the mediumship of my wife, that we first had the "tips," then the "raps;" then followed the writing with the *planchette*; then my mother and other spirits prevailed upon my wife to allow them the use of her hand to write with, which has continued now for some years. In regard to manifestations by the table, I may say that we have not required to put our hands on the table, or touch it for many years past; and that I have been repeatedly lifted while sitting on a large telescope table, weighing not less than two hundred weight, as scores of persons can testify.

Some two years and a half since, a dear friend of ours, by trade a builder, left this world: about six months after his death, he began to manifest his presence to us; he came playing or beating out on the table a popular tune, which, when in this world, he would frequently sing. He was, in fact, a very merry jocular man, always singing popular airs to temperance songs, and was fond of making verses upon passing incidents, and in his intercourse with us as a spirit these idiosyncrasies were strikingly manifested.

On one occasion we heard a noise like a saw when he was communicating with us; we said to him, "What are you doing now, Mr. B —?" His answer was, "Oh! only superintending a saw-pit." From this time we have had all the sounds or noises that one hears from a carpenter's shop in the using of the different implements of his trade; for instance, a saw at work, and the sound it makes when it comes to a knot in the wood; the saw sharpened; the plane, and the sound it makes when it meets with resistance in the wood; we hear the plane set, and the shavings knocked out; the gimlet, and the hammer driving the nails. On several occasions we have heard the sounds of massive chains, as though large blocks of wood were being chained up for the saw-pit; and yet there has been no metallic substance about the table. Many more instances of the power

of spirits over matter might be given; but one or two more must suffice. I have seen Mrs. E. lifted from her chair, and placed in it again; I have seen her dress inflated like a balloon and gradually collapsed again; handkerchiefs have been pulled out of our hands, plates held in our hands have been rapped upon. On one occasion, sitting at a mahogany dining table, the spirits were making a great noise as though they were trying to lift it, when on a sudden one of the middle divisions of the table, about a foot in diameter, rose up at an angle, and something darted from the apex to the astonishment of the five persons who were present; when the table instantly resumed its former position.

Whatever may be said of such manifestations, (and I could give hundreds of them), many have heartily thanked us for giving them the opportunity of witnessing them, as evidence of the reality of spirit existence, and of the power of spirits to communicate with those who are still left in the natural world.

It has been our privilege to have the visits of our spirit friends many times when my wife and I have been alone. Before T. L. Harris came to England we read his works with much interest. While reading them the spirits rapped on the table, chairs and floor, and also assisted us to understand difficult passages. Our experience was similar when we read Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell;" when we have been reading the Scriptures, they have joined us without solicitation, and given us beautiful explanations.

But perhaps the most delightful part of our experience has been in the visitations of my spirit mother during the last ten years; she has given us a sign whereby we shall know when she is present; she has come to counsel and to caution us against dangers, to encourage us under difficulties, to explain mysteries, to choose portions of Scripture for us to read; and to help us to understand them, and to pray with us. We had returned from the public worship of the Lord one evening and begun to read some religious books, when I heard some raps, which, getting louder, arrested my wife's attention as well as my own; we asked if the spirit had any communication to make—the reply was, "Yes, your mother wishes to spend the evening with you." I said, we should be happy of her company. The spirit then left us, and presently my mother came and stayed with us for more than two hours, talked about domestic matters, commented upon the likenesses of the children, visited my son, who was 50 miles away from London, and told us exactly his state of health, which a letter from him afterwards confirmed: told us how she was employed, and who the spirit was that she sent to make us acquainted that she wished to come. She said she should like to stay to family prayer; she chose our chapter to read, and continued rapping all the time, very loud raps when she wished to draw our attention to any particular passage; this continued while we engaged in prayer, and when any petition was presented, which she wished us to realize the fulfilment of, there was much louder rapping; and when about to leave us, she said—"Dear T—, and M—A—, good-bye, and God bless you both."

This is a brief summary of some of our varied experiences with those who have already passed into the eternal world.

Islington.

T. E.

"Sacramento, March 8th, 1867.

A correspondent, who dates as above, writes us:—

"DEAR SIR,—We have lectures from Miss Laura Cuppy. We hire a hall, which is fifty by sixty feet, and seats about five hundred and fifty persons. It has been crowded for the past five Sundays with interested listeners; the collections have averaged fifty dollars every Sunday. She is a very pleasant speaker—not so talented as Emma Hardinge, but her words reach the hearts of the people, and she is doing a good work. We have a Children's Progressive Lyceum of one hundred and sixty average attendance of children. I have had the honour of serving as superintendent for sixteen months past. We have somewhat modified the plan of A. J. Davis, but the principle is the same. In San Francisco they have had regular lectures ever since Miss Hardinge was out here, and a Lyceum for children. I wish that Spiritualists' Sunday schools could be established in England.

Yours, &c.,

"H. BOWMAN."