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THE ANTI-SUPERNATURALISM OF THE
PRESENT AGE.

By the Reverend WILLIAM MOUNTFORD.

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MIRACLES, or many things in the Bible which commonly are so denominated, may be exceptions to what are called the laws of nature, as at present understood by the best student; but, as witnessed by a seraph, they may have been but the effect of laws more in number than we know of, and some of which acted marvellously, by being in connection with a mind as peculiarly organized as a prophet's is, at a moment of faith in the head of the universe, as almighty and good. Some other miracles may have been momentary effects from this cause,—“There is a spiritual body.” Every mortal is both body and spirit; or, as it would be better to say, he is and has what St. Paul means when he says, “There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” By death, the natural body is loosened from the spiritual body, and drops and begins to decay, like an old cloak; while the spiritual body has its senses slowly open to the world, in which it finds itself. But, even while cased in flesh, it is possible that some of the faculties of the spiritual body, either by accident or by the grace of God, may be so quickened as to act independently of the flesh. The eye, with which I am to see hereafter, might be opened for a moment, so that I should get a glimpse of spiritual marvels; and that opening of my eye would be a miracle, like what happened when the prophet Elisha, with his servant was beleaguered by the army of Syrians. “And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes, that he may

see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." And in the same manner might the dormant ear also of my spiritual body be momentarily quickened, so as to catch just a word or two, a sound, an alarm, a message, from the spiritual world; which indeed is intimately near, and also infinitely far off. And this would be a miracle, like what Paul experienced at his conversion. Also, if by some chance, through some inward predisposition, a man should catch a breath from the air of that world, where the Great First Cause is first felt, where spirits are made messengers, and where ministration looks like flaming fire, the effect on him would be a miracle like what the last words of David tell of,—“The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” These illustrations may be enough for hinting, that there is a philosophy of religion, in which faith and science are to be reconciled, and in which the natural and the supernatural may be of one accord. But let now one other illustration be taken. It is conceivable, what in many ages has been generally believed, under the best philosophy of the time, that between us and God, neighbours of ours almost, far below the region of seraphs, not nearly as high up as where angels, with their archangels, congregate, and indeed near upon and sometimes fairly withinside of the realm of nature, are beings who could, for momentary effect, and as though from a long distance, play upon the laws of nature, so as to work what Hugh Farmer and Baden Powell would even call miracles, as being in their estimation acts suspending the laws of nature. Philosophy had very close blinders on, when it decided with Farmer, that for the elevation of a man in the air, without human assistance, there must be a suspension of the laws of nature. A law of nature suspended for that! It was no more necessary for that, than it is for a man's lifting his hand in the air. Something additional to the laws of nature, as catalogued by philosophers, may have been necessary,—some occult law it may be, in unusual strength, or perhaps an agent from a foreign world. But a suspension of the law of gravitation, it certainly is not necessary to suppose. As Jesus with the law of Moses, so miracles with the laws of nature, do not destroy, but fulfil.

Also, in view of an argument, it is always to be remembered that the phrase “laws of nature” is a figure of speech, good enough for ordinary purposes, but liable to be deceptive at a critical point. Law is what has been written for the purpose of being read; and also it is what has been written for the purpose of being read, on the supposition of there being a joint

understanding between the writer and the reader. That is law; and it is because of that sense of the word "law," that the phrase "laws of nature" is used against miracles. But now has ever the God of nature been pledged to any text-book of natural philosophy, so that Science, or any son of hers, should be able to say, "Because of this book of mine I know all about God, as to what either he will do or he can allow in this earth?"

Also, it is of the nature of "law," in its primitive meaning, that it should need and from time to time should admit of adaptation, or of amendment by interpretation. But that exactly is what is forgotten when the majesty of the word "law" is adduced in a controversy on the subject of miracles. And thus it is that against the possibility of miracles, a phrase of fallible origin is urged as an infallible argument.

Laws of nature working together, and yet distinguishable from one another, like powers harnessed in machinery,—of the ongoing of nature, this may be a good definition for most purposes; but when by this definition it is proposed to falsify the truthfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ, as to his miracles, then, in the sense intended and for the purpose in view, let it never be forgotten that really there are no laws of nature, and never were any. Men talk of forces centripetal and centrifugal, and as though one might have been enacted first, and then the other: but the truth probably is, that the two are but diverse manifestations of a common cause; or, rather, that the two are one, while seeming diverse. Also this common cause seems to man like two different forces or laws, only because of the peculiar and limited manner in which he apprehends. What poor creatures really men are, as they look about them, with no very wide or keen gaze, as even telescopes and microscopes might remind them! For with far better instruments than have ever yet been made, and with better eyes than children have ever yet been born with, what marvels might not men see, to their amazement! And yet these men, or some of them, dwellers, too, in a little earth surrounded by infinity; born also in time as they know they are, yet having also some sense of eternity; these men of a day, and creatures of God,—Feuerbach, the German, and Strauss, a German too, and Renan of France, and Buckle, who was English, with others like-minded, too numerous to count—these all have proclaimed aloud, that, because of what they know, there cannot have been anywhere, at any time, anything but what they might have expected, and precisely that there never has been a miracle. But for all that, and in spite of their logic, "the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that

they are vain." This sentiment a Psalmist uttered once among the Hebrews, and long afterwards it was quoted by Paul in a letter to Corinth; but it was never more pertinent than it is to-day. Arago said that outside of mathematics the word "impossible" for anything was rash. Perhaps he said it out of what may be called the common-sense of science; which common-sense, however, is as rare in connection with science as with anything else. Or it may be that he said it, because of his having studied the case of Angelique Cottin, a girl who was attended by some curious phenomena. But any way, he was very unlike Faraday and some others. "Possible and impossible pronounced upon by the last edition published of the laws of nature!" This is what is continually being proclaimed by one man and another. It would make people all laugh or else pity, but for the spirit of the age; for, indeed, we are all of us much inclined to the same thing. But no matter for these philosophers and their followers, as to who they are or where,—the wise men. For certainly somewhere there is wisdom higher than their wisdom, and from the height of which this self-complacency must be something very curious to witness. But, above and beyond all, there is the truth of the text that "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

Laws of Nature arrayed against miracles! For an argument in that direction, there are no such things as laws of nature. Or if the phrase "laws of nature" should be allowed to stand on being made right by accompanying explanation, it would be found then to be the same thing as the spirit of God, which, like "the wind, bloweth where it listeth," and not merely for human creatures on their way from the cradle to the grave, but for worlds, also, while slowly growing into form, and while lengthening out, with change and time, the fulfilment of their respective purposes. It is that spirit, which is the transient life of the butterfly, and the inspiration which "giveth man understanding;" that spirit, which holds the earth to its time and place, and which yet also strives with men through the conscience; that spirit, which is the life of all lives, from the worm to the seraph, and of which the Spirit of Nature, as it is called, is but one of many manifestations.

On arriving at the point of view which we have now reached, there have been persons who have felt the atmosphere about them grow more favorable to faith, and who have exclaimed, "Now I hear them more plainly—those witnesses of old, chosen beforehand. Now I am less at variance with some of the possibilities of faith. Now some things which were hard to be understood are easier. O holy prophets and apostles! forgive me in these

times when the pathway of thought goes winding about, if I have sometimes, with turning head, heard you but indistinctly, and fancied that the fault was all with you."

But there are others, to whom all this would be quite unintelligible, and who simply iterate and reiterate words outside of the circle of which they cannot see. And now for them, also, let us see if there be anything more to be said, which may avail. It is an eclipse of faith for us all at present: and things which were simple enough formerly, in the broad daylight, now look strangely; and what once would have been comparatively of little significance, may now be a great help.

And now let us hear again exactly what Strauss would say. And he says, very emphatically, "There is no right conception of what history is, apart from a conviction that the chain of endless causation can never be broken, and that a miracle is an impossibility." But how then has it been with almost every historian, of every age, before David Hume? How was it with Josephus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plutarch, Tacitus, Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Pausanias the Topographer, and their company all? According to that little formula by Strauss, they would all be disqualified. Surely, surely, by attempting to prove too much, Professor David F. Strauss has disproved his own position. He is famous for his work on the four Gospels, in which he laboriously eliminated every miracle from the life of Jesus. It was after the publication of this work, that there was offered to him the Professorship of Theology in the University of Zurich, and which he would have accepted, but for an insurrection of the people of the city. The end of the matter was a letter in which he stated his opinions, and in reference to which it may be said, that he perhaps had more faith even in denying than possibly some others had even in the heat of dogmatizing, and that not improbably Jesus Christ would sooner accept even his unbelief than the unmitigated virtues of some of his opponents. But still, in his attempt to go to Zurich as Professor of Theology, he was in the curious position of proposing to lecture on Christianity without believing in a single miracle; and of attempting it, too, by the help of historians, not one of whom, as he thought, had any right conception of history. Alas, alas! but so it is, that every step forward costs one hundred failures first; and it is with tears and misery on the road to knowledge, that the flints of difficulty are worn smooth for the multitude behind.

There has lately been published a volume entitled *Christ the Spirit*. It is the serious work of a devout mind struggling

with theological difficulty. Says the author, E. A. Hitchcock, in regard to the Scriptures, "If, therefore, we accept these miracles as historical realities, we must refuse the idea of law, and must admit that there is no truth in the doctrine which affirms an order in the course of nature." Perhaps the force of this opinion may have been anticipated, and even perhaps prevented, by some previous remarks. Also it is said, that, if those miracles are to be believed in, there is no such thing possible as science. But that would not appear to have been the judgment of Newton, the man of all men best fitted to judge. And further it is added, that, if those miracles are to be believed in, then reasonably Grecian mythology must be believed. Grecian mythology might, for that reason, claim to be examined; but not necessarily claim, therefore, to be believed. And also it is not theology, but sciolism, which would wish to argue Christianity in ignorance of the philosophy and religion of Greece. Light, and still more and more light, let us have, wherever we may be, and even though it should fall on our Bibles, through some crevice in the wall of a Grecian temple.

And now who offers himself next as a witness on this subject? It is Henry T. Buckle, who would tell us, out of his *History of Free Thought*, that there is little reason to hope for the enlargement of the ground of the evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion; that the materials already exist from which thoughtful students must make up their minds finally on the questions at issue; that already men are taking up their places, in hostile array, on subjects where no further evidence can be offered, and where there is little reason to hope for the alteration of the state of parties to the end of time; that, as regards Christianity, there never has been an age so hostile to it as the present, and never an age, either, so much actuated by it. Nothing more to be expected on the greatest possible subject of thought! Why, what advanced times we live in! and without our knowing of it, some of us. The field is cleared by scientific method, and there is no chance of anything to the end of time! This may be true for a near-sighted thinker, but hardly for any one else. Are there, then, experts who can look through the universe as though it were machinery? Electricity, magnetism, and odic force, with which man has affinities, and by which indeed, apparently, he has all manner of possible connections,—have these all been thoroughly explored? And is it so absolutely nothing, as not to be worthy of mention,—the chance of there being a master for the great Machine, with a will of his own; the possibility of there being a Father in heaven with children on this earth? "Man proposes, but God

disposes." That is a French proverb, and every now and then there is a wonderful point to it.

And now next, let what Baden Powell would say be considered. Savillian Professor of Geometry at Oxford, and a clergyman,—he is of opinion that it would be a great good done, if Christianity could be relieved of its responsibility for miracles. Prophecy, however, and some other spiritual marvels, he thinks may rationally be connected with Christianity. This, however, Renan would not agree to ; for he holds that miracles are no more possible or credible for the souls than for the bodies of men. However, Baden Powell is certain that the order of nature is the first thing, and everything for belief ; and then he argues, very properly, for patience with untoward facts, as likely some time or other, to get subordinated. He has heard, however, of apparently marvellous occurrences, "such as implied a subversion of gravitation, or of the constitution of matter ; descriptions inconceivable to those impressed with the truth of the great first principle of all induction,—the invariable constancy of the order of nature." But, then, as about a thing with which he could have no patience, nor his system either, he cries out that he has "heard it positively affirmed by veracious, educated, and well informed persons, in perfect good faith, that a solid mahogany table has been seen to rise from the ground and its surface to move in waves." For that, of course, was a thing for which, in his philosophy, there was no hope of a place, any more than for the miracles which he wished Christianity could be freed from. Order of nature ! always only the order of nature—as though there were no such thing conceivable as the order of the universe. And yet, by way of analogy with his special studies, it would seem as though he might have been impressed with it. For problems which are utterly insoluble by arithmetic, and which are outside of its range, are the objects and beauties of algebra, which is a diviner arithmetic, with wonder-working laws.

And now, on this subject of the order of nature, has Baden Powell ever been answered ? A table rising in the air, if such a thing might be, would be a sufficient answer for his style of scepticism, according to his own words, apparently. But, apart from that, has any answer been made, by which to justify a belief in the miracles of Christianity, against the Oxford professor with his grand argument against it ? And now, in the sequence of thought, appears James A. Froude, also of Oxford, and late Fellow of Exeter College. And in a recent publication, in a passage which specially refers to the volume of *Essays and Reviews*, of all the authors of which Baden Powell was the most notable, J. A. Froude says, that

against that style of thought there has nothing been adduced, but "the professional commonplaces of the members of a close guild, men holding high office in the Church, or expecting to hold high office there." Professional commonplaces! Many others besides Froude have found them such, and have thought them to be insufficient answers for the new scepticism. But now, like Baden Powell, J. A. Froude, by implication at least, distinctly acknowledges that the miracles of the Scriptures would be credible if some of the phenomena of Spiritualism should be realities. To these things his attention had been drawn; and to his knowledge, he says, they have been vouched for by persons who would be good witnesses on a criminal trial. But yet he says, "Our experience of the regularity of Nature on one side is so uniform, and our experience of the capacities of human folly on the other is so large, that, when people tell us these wonderful stories, most of us are content to smile: we do not care so much as to turn out of our way to examine them, The Bible is equally a record of miracles." The Bible! But, indeed, of what use is it to mind anything which he may say about the miracles of the Bible, when, according to his own showing he would not even go out of his way to see whether they might not be true? For things which to his mind—whether rightly or wrongly is no matter—things which to his mind were of a piece with the miracles of the Bible, he would not even turn out of his way to examine. But against a belief in miracles, he urges not only that they are impossible, but that "The miracles of St. Teresa and of St. Francis of Assisi are as well established as those of the New Testament." And now, even if this should be so, what then? Are we for that to forego our belief in the miracles of the Bible? No: quite otherwise. And, if there be anything to be learned from Assisi, so much the better.

Next in order of time, with an argument upon this subject, appears Dr. Louis Buchner, with his volume on *Force and Matter*. Says this author, "We should only waste words in our endeavour to prove the natural impossibility of a miracle. No educated, much less a scientific person, who is convinced of the immutable order of things, can now-a-days believe in miracles. We find it rather wonderful that so clear and acute a thinker as Ludwig Feuerbach should have expended so much logic in refuting the Christian miracles. What founder of any religion did not deem it necessary, in order to introduce himself to the world, to perform miracles? The miracle-seeker sees them daily and hourly. Do not the table-spirits belong to the order of miracles? All such miracles are equal in the eye of science: they are the result of a diseased fancy." These are the words

of a man very clear in his mind ; though his mind is not of the same order with Plato's, certainly. "Do not the table-spirits belong to the order of miracles?" Dr. Buchner himself would seem to think so, by the way in which he asks the question. Baden Powell too, no doubt, would have agreed with him ; and so also would Froude, the historian. But Buchner has one other word for us. "Even to this day, there is no deficiency of miracles and powerful spirits among savage and ignorant tribes." Are we, then, to be frightened from believing in miracles, because, if there are any at all, there are some also among savages? Just as well might Dr. Buchner expect a Christian to be ashamed of the sun because the red Indian hunts in the light of it. "Miracles and powerful spirits among savage and ignorant tribes!" Well, the better we know about that thing, the wiser we shall be, and the better it will be for our theology ; and it is not everybody who is afraid of learning.

Baden Powell, James A. Froude, Dr. Buchner, and with these might be joined one or two other leaders in the argument against the credibility of miracles,—these would all apparently be ready to test the reality of the miracles of the Bible by the phenomena of Spiritualism, or perhaps more definitely by the reality of the raps, which are called spirit-rappings. In some sense, they may even be said to dare the experiment ; and by many high authorities of the Catholic Church, from early down to more modern times, it would have been deemed a simple and very cheap way of settling such a controversy,—not because the thing exactly which is called spirit-rapping had ever been known to them, but because of its being of a piece with many possibilities which the Catholic Church has always maintained, and faith in which has been a large part of that Church's vitality. The early Fathers of the Church did not think it to be derogatory to their charge as Christian chiefs even, to shew Pagans how to draw an inference from their own Pagan prodigies ; and it would not have seemed a discredit to philosophy, but a sacred duty and a chance to catch at, if to Henry More and Richard Baxter the opportunity had been offered of arguing from spirit-raps to the truth of the Scriptures, as is abundantly evident from their many works respectively. It would have been an argument, to the nature of which Ralph Cudworth would have assented, and for which at once he would have found a place in the "Intellectual System of the Universe." And Jeremy Taylor, with eyes glancing from high to low, and from unearthly depths to prophetic heights, and with a power of vision for following the strange lines of similitude which permeate creation, and which make it continually in one quarter or another glitter and flash with the light of unexpected analogies ; Jeremy

Taylor—but indeed, as sanctions for the purpose in view, it is superfluous to name names beyond Cudworth and More and Baxter, for probably with them would have assented nearly all the great men, who were eminent in theology, in the days when theology itself was eminent. But now, before attending to an incident of yesterday, let Kenelm H. Digby tell us of what Marsilio Ficino said to Lorenzo de Medici on the subject of the Christian religion: “I certainly think, that, to us undeserving, certain miraculous signs have been divinely given. But all things are not shown to all: many also are not written down, or, if written, are not credited, in consequence of some wicked and detestable men imitating miracles. I have heard of some miracles in our own time, and in our City of Florence, which are to be believed. Do not be surprised, my Lorenzo, that Marsilius Ficinus, studious of philosophy, should introduce miracles; for the things of which we write are true, and it is the duty of a philosopher to confirm everything by its own proper kind of argument.”

A short time since in London, one evening, a gentleman enumerated jocularly what he thought were Yankee notions, and he named spirit-rappings. The speaker was a distinguished man of science, and religiously a man after the manner of Baden Powell, with a truly Christian heart, but on the subject of miracles having perhaps the eyes of his understanding somewhat “dazed with excess of light” from the sun of science. Suddenly he was accosted by a stranger present, who said, “I am a denizen of that New World; and it is said that in some places there, with walking briskly over the floor at certain times, a man emits sparks from his fingers, with which even gas can be lighted. What would you say to that?” It was replied, “Nonsense! it is impossible.” Then said the American, “It was because I expected that answer, that I asked you the question. In a scientific circle, I once knew twenty-eight persons out of thirty assent to that same opinion which you have now expressed; but there is not one of them to-day that would. In New York certainly, and in Boston, and perhaps all over America on a frosty night, in a house warmed by such means as they have there in the better class of houses, a person can hardly walk briskly over the carpet and approach his finger at the knuckles quickly to any metallic object, but it will give off a blue detonating spark. And now, by experience as common almost as that of those electric sparks, I tell you that what are called spirit-rappings are true; or, rather, that those rappings are real which are called spiritual. And now I will ask you in all honesty and fair dealing to answer me as you would in your place in the Royal Society. Supposing that you

heard on a table raps, the origin of which you could not possibly connect with cheating, nor yet with science, as it is understood to-day; and supposing, too, that these raps evinced as much intelligence as a boy of five years old,—what now would you think?" Said the man of science, thoughtfully, and after a long pause, "I should say, that, to my present belief, it was the greatest thing which had happened since the creation of the world." To this the American rejoined, "Those raps are of far less peculiarity as to significance than you think. But, like many other persons in pursuit of a special business, you have got lodged in a mere corner of the broad field of knowledge, and where you are capable of being astonished by what would be no absolute novelty to the Esquimaux or to the Maoris of New Zealand."

What is called "rappings" is the most common of all the Spiritualistic manifestations, and for the purpose for which the thing is referred to in the preceding anecdote, it would no doubt have been agreed to by Baden Powell and his fellow-philosophers, as being a sufficient test. But also for that thing precisely which he mentions of the rising of the table from the floor, there is abundant evidence, and some of which is of the very best kind. Buchner says, that because of the laws of nature "there exist no supersensual and supernatural things and capacities, and they never can exist;" and so he denies at once table-spirits and all other spirits and also the possibility of Revelation: but luckily he does also, with other things, deny that any one can read an opaque sealed letter, or guess the thoughts of another. For besides being mesmeric experiences, these things are spiritual phenomena connected with the rappings, of the certainty of which whole armies of witnesses could testify.

That these rappings do really exist, and that they are as real as gravitation, or as thunder and lightning, may now be fairly and properly assumed; since about them it is no longer a question of the value of testimony. For persons open to evidence on the subject, one hundredth part of the testimony which now exists would be enough; and, for those who cannot believe the present evidence on the matter, a thousand times more evidence ought to be insufficient, and probably would be. Whatever it may be, whether good or bad, the thing is real. Multitudes may have had no opportunity of personally knowing about it; and many persons may think, very properly, that they would themselves be none the wiser for meddling with it: but still it may now reasonably be assumed as a fact. As a matter of evidence, the thing is not as it was 20 years ago, when it was first known of by rumours from Rochester; nor as

it was 10 years ago ; nor even as it was five years since. And science and people who believe by its permission, may as well accept the fact to-day, as wait 50 years. For if those rappings should stop to-morrow, as suddenly as they began, which not improbably some day they will ; yet certainly in the next century, they would be believed in as having been real, because of the testimony and literature and wide belief existing to-day on the subject.

But perhaps it may be said that mere unaccountable rappings, even though somewhat intelligent, are no great matter. And they are not any great thing for a child learning the alphabet, it is true ; but they become of infinite importance, when, by dominant science, they are pronounced to be impossible. A scientific impossibility proved to be true, is a wonderful thing ; and so wonderful that under no magnifying glass can it be made to seem too wonderful. But still more ; it is a wonderful thing with all manner of wonders behind it, possibly.

And it may be asked whether it is good or devilish. For our argument, that does not matter. And besides, that question implies what has not been at all assumed, that the rappings are connected with the spiritual world. But, with a view to the next question, let it be allowed that they are so connected. And now perhaps it is asked whether they are Christian or Mohammedan ; and the answer is, that they are both, just as talking is. They are a way of conversing with spirits, who may be good or bad, wise or silly, and in connection with which, a man may have some such experience as though in his native town, after a long absence, he should go into a crowded hall, and from a gallery, in the dark, talk with voices down below.

But an argument on Spiritualism started from "the rappings" would be about the same as though, because of having learned the first letter of the alphabet, a man should think to read Hebrew, and want to argue the value of the Mazoretic points, or the nature of prophecy, or the comparative antiquity respectively of the various parts of the Book of Genesis. Spiritualism, as it is called, is a field as broad nearly as the presence of the human race, and as long almost as the ages themselves have been. It illustrates the pneumatology of the Scripture ; it is a key to the innermost rooms of the temples of Greece ; and it avails for the better understanding of Plato. It solves enigmas as to Mahomet, and it accounts for the career of Joan d'Arc. It is the light, by which in these days to read intelligently the history of Salem witchcraft, the Journal of George Fox, and the account of Edward Irving and the Unknown

Tongues. It is enriched with the reading of the Talmud, and not confused; and it answers for information, when it is tried on the religion of almost any primitive tribe, which has been reported upon, even the very latest.

Spiritualism is of many grades; and it may be connected with every sect in Christendom, and with every sect that follows Mahomet, with Buddhism, and with Brahminism. It is the silliness of silly people to-day, multitudes of them; and it is the wisdom of wise men, not a few. Spiritualism, as intercourse with spirits, has its dangers, and in ancient times was helplessly prone to idolatry; and it was on this account, probably that it was guarded, limited, and directed for the Jews by severe legislation. But like the circumnavigation of the globe by which, with sailing straight on, man goes out on one side of the world, and returns on the other; so what was the peril of the ancient Jews religiously seems now to stand opposed to that idolatry of science, by which the laws of nature are pleaded against the miracles of God.

A strange land is that, of which glimpses are got through Spiritualism; a border-land between this world and the next; a region whence spiritual causes can start material effects; and wherein the laws of Nature are in some decree pliant to spiritual agents; and along the line of which, with strange consequences, spirit and matter interoscuate through their respective laws; a region where it is suddenly bright, unearthly light, and then as suddenly darkness, and wherein easily a man gets bewildered and befooled; a realm where flits the will-o'-the-wisp, and where fog-banks roll; where often truth looks like illusion, and where, too, illusions are often taken for truth; a field where light is reflected and refracted in a hundred ways, and so as to confuse sometimes like darkness itself; a land whence voices call, sweet and saintly perhaps, but liable in a moment to be cut short like telegraphic wires, and to be continued perhaps by impostors; a region of marvel, with gazing at which many persons have found themselves actuated as though by enchantment; a realm in creation, which sceptics may ridicule, and which some good Christians may ignorantly deny, but in connection with which exist pathways of thought, and across which are distinctly discernible objects, which theology ought to know of.

There is a proverb, that "any stick is good enough to beat a dog with." And the first stick out of the thicket of Spiritualism silences the argument short and sharp, and as incessant as the barking of a dog, which has been kept up so long in Germany, especially, about the order of Nature.

By the rappings which come upon a table in the presence of

a medium, the laws of nature call out against the philosophy of Baden Powell; and they protest against the notion of Buckle, as to there being nothing new to be expected; and they deride the contemptuous self-complacency of Froude; and they explode the dreary vantage-ground whence Buchner would deny the immortality of the soul.

And now, perhaps, some one will wonder whether the writer thinks that his argument is a cure for scepticism. For every variety of scepticism he certainly does not think that it can be. There is scepticism, which is a part of good sense. And of scepticism as a mental disease, there are degrees, just as there are varioloid, small pox, and confluent small pox. There is a mild scepticism, which is simply the spirit of the age, and there is a scepticism which is the result of undue constitutional tendency combined with the temper of the times; and of the same thing, viewed as a disorder, there is an extreme degree, which may be called confluent scepticism, and which mostly is incurable. It is more common in Paris than in this neighbourhood. It is the state of a person with whom every thing runs to doubt. It is a mental state, in which a man might see a miracle, only to wonder whether it could be done again; and who would not believe either though one rose from the dead; and who, if he saw nine men out of ten raised from the dead, would only doubt nine times the more, as to whether the remaining tenth man could possibly be raised. This is confluent scepticism; and it is what converts even remedies themselves into disease.

There have certainly, however, been intellectual Christians, who had been caught at their studies by the spirit of scepticism and been manacled by the logic of science, who had been unable to get themselves exorcised or liberated by the greatest divines of Protestantism, who yet have felt themselves freed by the first sound of those unaccountable rappings, and able to enter "into the temple walking and leaping, and praising God;" being enabled to pray and trust and hope, by having learned that the order of nature is not everything, and that their souls may perhaps be free of it, and free for something higher. And these persons have continued in the same state of joy and freedom and holy hope, comparatively careless as to whether the rappings had been spiritual or demoniac; being only too happy with simply believing them to be something supernatural, — something towards a proof, that perhaps the heavens are not brass against us, and that the order of Nature does not close about our souls like a living tomb.

That the writer thereof should ever have had this to say, of his own knowledge, would have seemed to him in those days, when his faith was according to Mill's *Analysis of the Human*

Mind, to be just as unlikely as his becoming a dancing dervish; or a silent, barefooted Trappist; or a turbaned hadji, squatting on the ground, and intent on the Koran, all day long, at Mecca; or a missionary to the ten lost tribes of Israel; or a Roman prelate, pleading with cardinals against the devil's advocate, and for the canonization of monks and nuns. But the world is wide, and the world of thought is wider still. And wider and wider still it grows, and at an ever-growing pace, in these days, when, with many running to and fro, knowledge is increased; when every ancient history is being drawn forth, to be perused afresh by every light which can be got to bear upon it; when every savage tribe is being respectfully solicited for its traditions; when the monasteries of Mount Sinai and along the frontier of Christendom are yielding up their ancient parchments to enthusiastic scholars; when the King of Siam suddenly stands forth, an eminent astronomer, as the shadow of a great eclipse comes along to cross his kingdom; when, too, the old foundations of Jerusalem are being carefully explored by an English commission; and when, also, the Great Pyramid is being questioned, stone by stone, as to those singular secrets of which it is believed to be the depository.

How much of what is knowledge to-day will be ignorance to-morrow! And how certainly truths, which in this age are taken for errors, will subserve the pioneers of thought in the age to come! But in this world, where light leads up to a wall of darkness, and where darkness yields indeed, but only recedes, scarcely could man dare to advise with man, but that certainly all things human must be rounded by the infinite mercy of God.

THE NATURE AND PROPERTIES OF FLUIDS.

Translated from the French of ALLAN KARDEC, by RICHARD BEAMISH, F.R.S., &c.

OF the many interesting questions to which Spiritualism has given rise, that relating to the operation of FLUIDS is one which seems to possess a very high degree of interest.

In the translation from *Le Ciel et l'Enfer*, of M. Allan Kardec, in the September number of the *Spiritual Magazine*, reference was made to the magnetic fluid, which is said to form the *périsprit*, or fluid body of spirit, and which plays so important a part in the "*Dark Passage*." This naturally leads to a consideration of the nature and properties of fluids generally:

a subject discussed by M. Kardec, with his usual ability, in his recent work, *La Genèse*.*

The following is a translation of the chapter on fluids:—

“1.—Science has afforded us the key to miracles,† which have their origin in the elements of matter; whether by offering an explanation of their nature, or by demonstrating the impossibility of their existence, in accordance with the laws which regulate material agency; but science fails to answer when we ask for an explanation of phenomena in which the spiritual element preponderates. Such phenomena present, above all others, the characters of the marvellous. For the key to miracles coming under that category, we must look to the laws which regulate spiritual life.

“2.—The cosmical, or universal fluid, is a primitive elementary matter, the modifications and transformations of which constitute the innumerable variety of the bodies of nature.‡ It is presented to us under two distinct conditions; that of etherization, or imponderability, which may be considered as the primitive normal state, and that of materialization, or ponderability, which involves the condition of uninterrupted sequence.

“The intermediate state is the gradual transformation of the fluid into tangible matter, and which must be taken to represent the mean between two states, each of which presents special phenomena. To the first belongs the invisible; to the second the visible world.

“The one class being specially connected with spiritual existence, presents spiritual, or psychical phenomena. The other, being the object of scientific investigation, properly so called, is considered natural. As spiritual and corporeal life are in constant contact, the two orders of phenomena present themselves simultaneously. Man, at the time of incarnation, can have perception only of those psychical conditions, which are directly connected with corporeal existence. These escape the material senses, and can only be perceived in the spiritual state.

“3.—In the state of etherisation, the cosmical fluid is not uniform: without ceasing to be ether, it is subject to modifica-

* *La Genèse, les Miracles et les Prédications selon le Spiritisme.* Par ALLAN KARDEC. Paris. 1868.

† Miracle (*Mirari*): something extraordinary or surprising. The definition given by the academy is, a “Divine act, contrary to the known laws of nature, or the established constitution and course of things.” Presuming the knowledge of the course of things to be established.

‡ The existence of a peculiar elementary matter is now pretty generally admitted by the scientific world, and is confirmed by communications from the spirit-world.

tions, as varied in kind, and more numerous in character, than are the tangible forms of matter. These modifications constitute distinct fluids, which, although proceeding from the same source, are endowed with special properties, which give rise to the particular phenomena of the invisible world. Everything being relative, these fluids have for spirits, which are themselves fluidic, an appearance as material as that of tangible objects to the incarnated, and are for them what substances of the terrestrial world are for us. These fluids are elaborated and combined, in order to produce the desired effects; just as material substances are employed by man, though by processes widely different. But there, as here, it is only the most enlightened spirits, who can comprehend the *modus operandi* of the constituent elements of their world. They who are ignorant of the principles which govern the evolutions of the invisible world, are incapable of explaining the phenomena which they witness, and in which they take part almost mechanically. Similar to those who ignorant of terrestrial phenomena, are unable to explain the causes of light or electricity, to say why they see or hear.

“4.—The fluid elements of the spirit-world elude our senses and our instruments of analysis, which are applicable to tangible matter only; there are, however, those which belong to a middle state, so far different from ours, that we can only judge of them by comparisons as imperfect as those by which a blind man seeks to form a theory of colours; still, as amongst those fluids, some are intimately connected with corporeal life, and belong in a measure to mid-earth, we may, in default of a direct knowledge of causes, observe the effects of such fluids, and acquire, with a certain amount of precision, a conception of their nature. This knowledge is important, because it furnishes the key to a multitude of phenomena, which are totally inexplicable by the laws which govern matter.

“5.—Of the absolute purity of the central source of the universal fluid, it is impossible to convey an idea. If we conceive it concentrated in a point, then that which is immediately opposed to it, will be its transformation into tangible matter. Between those extremes innumerable transformations are found, which approach one another in infinite variety. The fluids immediately contiguous to matter, and consequently the least pure, form what may be termed the terrestrial spiritual atmosphere. Within this, various degrees of purity are found; and it is here that the incarnate and dis-incarnate spirits of earth draw the elements of existence. These fluids, however subtle and impalpable they may be to us, are, as compared with the ethereal fluids of superior regions, gross and impure. It is the

same at the surface of all worlds. The difference being due to the constituent properties of each. The less life is material, the less the affinity of the spiritual fluid for matter, properly so called.

“The expression, *spiritual fluid*, is not rigorously exact, for that fluid is still matter, more or less refined. There is nothing really spiritual but the soul, or principle of intelligence. It is as a term of comparison that the designation is adopted. It may be defined, in short, as the matter (substance) of the spiritual world.

“6.—If we reflect for a moment, we become aware how little we really know of the constituent elements of tangible matter. The density of matter is only in relation to our senses. This may be understood by the facility with which matter is traversed by electric, and especially by spiritual fluids, as well as by spirits themselves, to which it presents no greater obstacle than do transparent bodies to the passage of light.

“Tangible matter, having for its primary element the cosmical ethereal fluid, should, when resolved, return to the state of etherisation; similar to the manner in which the diamond, the hardest of all bodies, can be volatilized into impalpable gas. In reality, the solidification of matter is simply a transitory state of the universal fluid; which, when conditions of cohesion cease to exist, may return to its primitive condition.

“Who can say whether the state of tangibility of matter be not capable of acquiring a sort of etherisation, which may impress it with peculiar properties? Certain phenomena, which appear to be authenticated, tend to that conclusion. At present, however, we possess only glimmerings of the invisible world. To the future, no doubt, is reserved the knowledge of those laws, which will enable us clearly to comprehend what is now involved in mystery.

“7.—The *périsprit*, or the fluid body of spirit, is one of the most important products of the cosmical fluid; it is a condensation of the fluid around the centre of intelligence, or the soul. We have seen that the carnal body has also its principle in the same fluid, transformed and condensed into tangible matter. In the *périsprit*, the molecular transformation operates differently, for the fluid preserves its imponderability and ethereal qualities. The *périsprital* body and the carnal body have their source in the same primitive element. Both are material, though under different conditions.

“8.—Spirits draw their *périsprit* from the atmosphere by which they are surrounded. In other words, the envelope is formed of the fluids in which they exist; it therefore follows that

the constituent elements of the *périsprit* will vary according to the particular world.

“Jupiter, being more advanced in its condition than the earth, corporeal life should be less material there than here; and, consequently, the *périsprital* envelope of its inhabitants would possess infinitely greater purity. For as our carnal bodies could not exist in the atmosphere of that world, so our spirits could not assimilate with the *périsprit* of theirs.

“On quitting the earth, the spirit disengages itself from its fluid envelope, and receives another adapted to the world for which it is destined.

“9.—The nature of the fluid envelope is always *en rapport*, with the decree of moral advancement of the spirit. Inferior spirits cannot change it at will, and cannot, therefore, transport themselves from one world to another. The fluid envelope, however ethereal and imponderable, is, if we may so express it, too heavy in relation to the spiritual world to permit of their being dis severed, or emancipated from their surroundings. In this category we must place those the *périsprit* of whom is so gross as to be confounded with their carnal bodies, and who, for that reason, believe themselves to be still the denizens of earth. These spirits, the number of which is very great, remain bound to this world, and are under the conviction that they must still continue to be engaged in their mundane occupations; others are somewhat more dematerialized, though not sufficient to elevate themselves above the terrestrial atmosphere. . . .

“10.—The strata of spirit-fluids, which surround the earth, may be compared to the different strata of the atmosphere, which, as they recede from the surface, become more and more rarefied. These fluids are not homogeneous. They are a *mélange*, or commixture of molecules of different qualities, amongst which are found those elementary molecules which form the base of all fluids; and their effect is in proportion to the amount of pure particles which they contain. They may be compared to a mixture of rectified spirit and water, or other liquid, in different proportions; the specific gravity of the spirit being increased by the mixture, while its force and inflammability is diminished.

“Spirits destined to live in this medium, draw from it their *périsprit*; and it depends on their own condition how the selection of its particles will be made. Hence this important result, that the intimate constitution of the *périsprit* is not identical amongst all the incarnate or dis-incarnate spirits which people the earth, and the atmosphere which surrounds it. Not so with the carnal bodies, which have been shown to be formed of the same elements, whatever may be the superiority or inferiority of their spirits. Another important consideration is, that the *péri-*

sprital envelope becomes modified, in accordance with the moral progress of each spirit.

“ 11.—The medium in which life is sustained, has always relation to the nature of the things which exist in it: water for fish, air for terrestrial creatures, spirit-fluid, or ether, for spiritual beings. Even on earth, the ethereal fluid is to the wants of the spirit, what the atmosphere is to the corporeal frame. As fish cannot exist in air, nor terrestrial animals in an atmosphere too much rarefied,—so inferior spirits are unable to find support in the purity and brightness of higher or more ethereal fluids. They do not die, because the spirit never dies, but an instinctive impulse prompts them to avoid the trial, as animals shun strong fire or dazzling light. Hence it is why spirits cannot leave the medium appropriate to their natures; to change the medium, they must first change their moral condition, and disengage themselves from those material instincts which retain them in a material medium; in a word, they must purify themselves, and undergo a moral transformation, before they can identify themselves with a purer medium, which ultimately becomes for them a necessity. As the eye which has been long accustomed to darkness, must be insensibly habituated to the light of day and the brilliancy of sunshine.

“ 12.—Thus, in the universe, all things are linked together; all are bound together; all are subject to the great and harmonious law of unity, from the most dense materiality to the purest spirituality; as a vase from whence issues a heavy perfume, which, as it ascends and expands, becomes more and more rarefied and attenuated, until at length it loses itself in space. Divine power shines through all parts of this glorious whole.

“ 13.—The spiritual fluid, which constitutes one of the conditions of the cosmical fluid, is then the atmosphere of spiritual beings; the element from whence those beings derive the materials on which they operate; the medium in which special phenomena take place, perceptible to the sight and hearing of spirit, but which elude our carnal senses, which can be impressed only by tangible matter. It is in effect the vehicle of thought, as air is the vehicle of sound.

“ 14.—Spirits act on the spiritual fluids by the force of thought and will; not by manipulating them as men manipulate gas. These fluids are to spirits what the hand is to man. By thought, spirits impress on them such and such directions; they collect, combine, or disperse them. They produce an *ensemble* from them, upon which they impress determined forms and colours; they change their properties as a chemist changes that of gas, or other bodies, by combinations, according to certain laws.

These fluids form the laboratory of spiritual life. Sometimes these transformations are the result of intention; often they are produced by unconscious thought. It is sufficient that the spirit desires to have the desire realized. It is thus, for example, that a spirit presents itself to the view of the incarnated, endowed with spiritual perception, under the form which it bore while in the flesh—costume, infirmities, scars, amputated members, &c. A decapitated spirit has, in fact, been known to present itself to a medium. It is not to be supposed that these appearances are preserved: certainly not; for as spirit, it is neither lame, maimed, one-eyed, nor headless; but the thoughts being carried back to the time when the body presented such and such an appearance, its *périsprit* instantly invests itself with that appearance, and as instantly quits it. . . .

“By an analogous process, the thought of the spirit creates, fluidically, the objects which it had been in the habit of using. The miser handles his gold, the soldier his arms, a smoker his pipe, the labourer his plough and oxen, the old woman her distaff, and so on. These fluid representations are as real to the spirit, as the material objects which they represent are to the incarnate; but as they are the creations of thought only, so are they also as fugitive.*

“15.—A knowledge of the action of spirits, on the spiritual fluids is of the utmost importance to the incarnate. From the moment that these fluids become the vehicle of thought, that thought can modify their properties, it is evident that they may be impregnated with good or bad qualities, modified by the purity or impurity of the sentiments. Evil thoughts corrupt the spiritual fluids, as noxious miasmas vitiate the air we respire. While then the fluids which surround, or which are projected by evil spirits, become thus polluted, those which are influenced by good spirits, possess a degree of purity proportioned to the moral condition of the spirit. It is not possible to enumerate or classify good and bad fluids; nor to specify their respective qualities, seeing that the diversities are as great as the thoughts.

“16.—If then the surrounding fluids are modified by the projection of the thoughts of the spirit, the *périsprital* envelope of the spirit, which is a constituent part of its being, and which

* In the *Livre des Mediums*, chap. viii, M. Kardec has given his authority for this theory of spirit-action, and which, he says, affords the explanation of a fact well known in magnetism, but which has hitherto remained inexplicable, *viz.*, the change effected in the properties of water by the will of the magnetizer, often with the assistance of another spirit, by the aid of the magnetic fluid, and the substance drawn from cosmical matter, or the universal element. If a modification of the properties of water can be effected, an analogous phenomenon can be equally produced in the fluids of organism. The faculty of healing by the imposition of hands—a faculty possessed by many—may be thus explained.

receives directly, and in a permanent form, the impression of its thoughts, ought yet more strongly to bear the impress of its good or bad qualities. * * * *

“ 17.—Man being an incarnate spirit, possesses many of the attributes of spiritual life; often exhibited during sleep, and sometimes in the waking state. The spirit, in becoming incarnate, preserves in its *périsprit* the qualities proper to it, and which we know are not circumscribed by the body, but radiate all round, enveloping it with a fluid atmosphere. The *périsprit* by virtue of its intimate union with the body, performs a principal part in the organism. By its expansion, it is enabled to place itself *en rapport* with free or disincarnated spirits.

“ 18.—As spirit fluids act on the *périsprit*, so the *périsprit* in its turn re-acts on the material organism, with which it is in molecular contact. If the efflux be of a good kind, the body experiences salutary and agreeable impressions; but if it be bad, the impressions are unhealthy and painful. If the bad impressions become permanent and strong, they produce physical disease; certain maladies, have in fact, no other cause. The medium in which evil spirits abound is impregnated with baneful fluids which may be absorbed through all the pores of the *périsprit*, as pestilent miasma is absorbed by the pores of the body.

“ 19.—It is the same in an assembly of incarnate spirits, which becomes a centre from whence radiate thoughts the most diverse. Thoughts act on the fluids, as sound acts upon the air; the fluids transmit the thoughts as air propagates sound. Waves and rays of thought cross each other without becoming confounded. As from a chorus there may proceed discordant as well as harmonious sounds, so from thoughts may there be propagated harmonious and discordant impressions. If the assembly be harmonious, the impressions are felt to be agreeable; if discordant, they are painful—whether formulated in words or not. * * * *

“ Hence, we may understand why it is that a sympathetic union, animated by benevolent and superior thoughts, affords such entire gratification. In the salubrious and moral atmosphere which prevails, the mind expands, and existence becomes at once elevated and ennobled; and also how it is, when sympathy is wanting, and when malevolent thoughts disturb the spirit, such an undefinable irritation and *malaise* is experienced; just as a current of foul air brings offence to the olfactory nerves.

“ 20.—Thus Spiritualism, and Spiritualism only, is competent to explain how it is that thoughts produce a sort of physical effect, which again re-act on the moral faculties; and that the human mind instinctively seeks that society which, in its

sympathy and homogeneity, affords the best aid in the renovation of its moral powers.* As wholesome aliment repairs the waste of the body, so does such society, in a measure, restore the loss of fluid, caused by the daily radiation of thought. When it is said that a physician relieves, and sometimes cures his patients, by kind and tender words, the expression is absolutely true; for benign thoughts carry with them those salutary and healthful fluids, which act quite as much on the physical organism as on the moral faculties.

“21.—It is urged that bad men may be avoided; but to be freed from the influence of the multitude of malevolent spirits, which are in constant though in unseen action around us, is impossible; and yet the means are very simple. In the will, with support of earnest prayer, ample protection will be found.

“Those fluids, which are similar in their nature readily attract one another; while those which are dissimilar as readily repel each other. The amalgamation of good and bad fluids is as incompatible as is the union of oil and water.

* The following illustrative anecdote was related to the translator by a gentleman, a distinguished lawyer of Pesth, with whom he became intimately acquainted in 1842, at Gräfenberg, in Austrian Silesia.

About a year before, the Baroness A—— had become a resident in Pesth. She was a person of striking personal attractions and accomplishments. Her house was the resort of the highest circles, and she dispensed her hospitality with a munificent hand. Her benevolence was manifested in liberal subscriptions to the charitable institutions of the city, and in ministering to the individual sufferings of the poor. In short, her name was on every tongue, and blessings followed her steps.

Connected with the leading families of Pesth, there was a lady and her husband, M. and Madame B——, whose society the Baroness A—— much desired to cultivate. This lady was, however, of so peculiar a nature, and so sensitive to the proximity of evil in every form, that she was compelled to retire altogether from general society. At the approach of impurity, she would impulsively extend her arms and fingers, crying out at the same time, “Leave me—leave me!”

Her husband was frequently the honoured guest of the Baroness A——. His friends often rallied him upon what they could only look upon as affectation, or something worse, on the part of his wife. On one occasion, the Baroness had issued invitations for a more than usually brilliant assembly, and she pressed M. B—— so strongly to permit her to make the acquaintance of his amiable wife, that he was unable to decline. Madame B——, with painful reluctance, yielded at length to the solicitations of her husband. The evening arrived; the names of M. and Madame B—— were scarcely announced, when the Baroness hastened to meet and welcome her long-wished-for guests; to the consternation of all, poor Madame B—— instantly extended her hands towards the Baroness, and in more than usually painful accents, cried “Leave me—leave me!” and fell upon the floor in a swoon.

M. B—— was overwhelmed with dismay. His friends made him the subject of mockery and derision; as it was now clear, apparently to all, that to attach evil to one who was known as the benefactress of the poor, and the associate of the best and wisest of the city, was simply absurd. Time passed, and when this remarkable anecdote was related to me, by my lawyer friend, he had received a pressing summons to proceed to Berlin, to defend the noble lady against charges involving the deepest crime.

“To restore vitiated air to a wholesome condition, the nucleus of the miasma must be destroyed, and pure air allowed a free passage; so, to prevent the intrusion of malignant fluids, benign influences must be evoked; and each possesses in his own *périsprit* a permanent supply of fluid. The remedy is really placed within the power of all. It is only necessary to purify the source, and to give it such qualities as shall repel, and not attract, any hurtful influxes. The *périsprit* is then a *cuirasse*, which must be carefully tempered; for as the qualities of the *périsprit* determine the character of the mind, it is of the last importance that the *périsprit* should be fully prepared and strengthened. The imperfections of the mind open the passage to the admission of evil.

“Flies congregate around the centre of corruption, destroy the focus of attraction, and the insects disappear. In like manner, bad spirits are attracted by the impurities of the *périsprit*: remove the impurity, and there is nothing more to fear.

“Truly good spirits, whether incarnate or disincarnate, have nothing to apprehend from the influence of evil.”

THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

THE following letter was addressed to the committee by Mr. Howitt, in answer to an application by the Secretary for information and advice:—

“The Orchard, Esher,
“February 26th, 1869.

“Dear Sir,—On my return from a fortnight’s absence, I find on my table a letter from you on behalf of the Dialectical Society, wishing for information on the subject of Spiritualism in reference to an investigation into its phenomena, proposed to be made by the Society. This statement will explain the cause of my silence. I reply to you now at once.

“I am by no means sanguine of any good result from the inquiries of such committees. Englishmen, otherwise well advanced in the intelligence of the time, are, as it regards Spiritualism, 20 years behind the literary and scientific publics of France, Germany, Switzerland and the United States of America. Scores of societies and millions of individuals have entered upon and passed actively through the investigations which you are now commencing, 10, 15 and 20 years ago. However, ‘Better late than never.’ Like the ‘Seven Sleepers’ and Rip Van Winkle, some few of our English men of science

and literature are at length waking up to find the world of intelligence abroad gone far ahead of them. Though late, it is still laudable. Perhaps when the Dialectical Society has determined the present point, it will set on foot a similar enquiry into the correctness of the theory of the Copernican system, of that of the circulation of the blood, of the principle of gravitation, and of the identity of lightning and electricity; for Spiritualism, having now received the assent of about 20 millions of people in all countries, after personal examination, stands obviously on the same basis of fact that they do. Pray do not, however, imagine me disposed to be satirical. I am simply asserting what appears to me a most prominent and unavoidable truth.

“ You ask me to give you any suggestions which I may think calculated to assist you in your enquiry. Most willingly; but I am afraid that it will be much easier for me to suggest than for you to adopt my chief suggestion, which is, to divest your minds of all prejudice on the subject. The tendency of both philosophy and general education for more than a century has been, whilst endeavouring to suppress all prejudice, to create a load of prejudice against everything spiritual. Science, philosophy, general opinion, have assumed, more and more, a material character, and in no country more than in this. I would say to you as judges say to juries—‘ Gentlemen, divest your minds of all mere hearsay; fix them only on the evidence.’ It is not easy; but till you have done this, you can make no real progress in your present enquiry. You may as well expect the delicate flowers of your conservatories to flourish in a night’s frost out of doors. To produce correct results you must establish the necessary conditions. Now, if you follow the example of Messrs. Faraday and Tyndal, and insist on dictating conditions on a subject of which you are ignorant, failure is inevitable.

“ You must come to the subject with candour, and be willing to study the laws and characteristics of the matter under consideration. It is from obedience or disobedience to this principle that enquiries instituted by societies, or small companies of persons with minds open to the truth, have succeeded or failed. The results of such enquiries are, that whilst societies and committees have retired generally from the investigation without obtaining positive facts; and therefore, believing that no such existed, private companies and individuals have obtained the most unquestionable spiritual phenomena, to the amount of twenty millions of believers. From time to time, accordingly, we have heard that Spiritualism has been demonstrated undeniably to be a myth and a delusion; that it was dead and gone. That the Davenports and other mediums have been proved impostors and utterly put down; the truth being all the time that the

Davenports remained as genuine mediums as before, and that Spiritualism has gone forward advancing and expanding its field of action, without the least regard to the failures, the falsehoods, the misrepresentations, and the malice of men.

“Your second wish expressed is, that I would ‘endeavour to throw some light on the connection apparently existing between Spiritualism and Animal Magnetism; or would refer you to any books other than Reichenbach, Gregory, Feuchtersleben, Ennemoser, Lee, Ashburner, myself,’ &c.

“In referring you to a few of the leading works on the subject, and especially to those more particularly dealing with the connection between Spiritualism and Magnetism, I may excuse myself entering on my own views on this subject, which would extend too far the limits of this letter.

“From the first fact to which I have alluded,—that of the very late period at which English men of letters have entered on this enquiry compared with those of other countries—there exists an extensive Spiritual literature in both America, France, Switzerland and Germany. I can, for your present purpose, indicate only a very few of these works, and those exclusively by scientific and learned writers.

“Amongst American works on Spiritualism, you should read carefully the introduction by Judge Edmonds to *Spiritualism by Judge Edmonds and G. T. Dexter*, where you have the experiences of an able lawyer testing evidence as he would do in a court of justice.

“Next, the investigations of Professor Hare, in which, as a great electrician, he details his severe and long-continued scrutiny into the nature of these phenomena; both he and Judge Edmonds having undertaken these enquiries in the full persuasion that they should expose and put an end to the pretensions of Spiritualism.

“I do not refer you here to the numerous works of A. J. Davis; which, though most remarkable in another point of view, are not so necessary for your purpose.

“The *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, a carefully and clearly reasoned work, might be of service to you.

“Of German works:—

“*Die Seerin von Prevorst von Justinus Kerner, M.D.*

“*Die Zwei Bessessener.*

“*Die Somnambülen Tische. Zur Geschichte und Erklärungen dieser Erscheinungen.*

“Dr. Kerner was a man of profound science, and distinguished by his works in different departments. His *Seeress of Prevorst*, who was his patient, has been translated by Mrs. Crowe. The

remarkable phenomena recorded in this work are especially valuable, as they have been so fully and widely confirmed by the experiences of Spiritualists of all countries since.

“Next in importance to these are the enquiries of Herr D. Hornung, the late Secretary of the Berlin Magnetic Association.

“1.—*Neue Geheimnisse des Tages durch Geistes-Magnetismus.* Leipsic, 1857.

“2.—*Neueste Erfahrungen aus dem Geistesleben.* Leipsic, 1858.

“3.—*Heinrich Heine, der Unsterbliche.*

Also a brief continuation of his enquiries.

“These works contain the steady and persevering researches and experiments of Herr Hornung and a select body of friends through a course of years. Hornung commenced the enquiry as a practical magnetist, and continued it with unwearied assiduity, tracing the phenomena through all their phases, and availing himself of the experiences of scientific men in all parts of Germany, in Switzerland, France, and Italy.

“The works of Görres, one of the most learned journalists and historians of Germany, especially his *Christliche Mystik*, abound with extraordinary facts, but would require a long time to peruse them.

“In French:—

“*The Pneumatologie of the Marquis de Mirville.*

“*Extracts de la Pneumatologie, etc.*

“*Tables Tournantes; du Surnaturel en Général et des Esprits, of Comte de Gasparin.* 1854.

“*Tables Tournantes de Comte de Szapary.* 1854.

“*The works of Baron Dupotet and of Puysegur.*

“*Pneumatologie Positive et Experimentale, par le Baron de Guldenstubbé.*

“The works of M. Segouin, who, through magnetism, was convinced of the truth of Spiritualism.

“*Cahagnet's Arcanes de la Vie Future Dévoilé; and his Encyclopédie Magnetique et Spirituelle.* 4 tom.

“But, perhaps, most important of all as regards your enquiry, is the correspondence of the two celebrated professors of magnetism, M.M. Deleuze and Billot, who, in prosecuting their magnetic researches were, each unknown to the other, surprised by the presence of spiritual phenomena of the most decided and varied kind. Glimpses of an *arrière pensée* in their published works led to an explanation between them, which was published in two volumes, in Paris, in 1836.

“I may add the *Journal de l'Ame*, of Dr. Roessinger of Geneva, and his *Fragment sur l'Electricité Universelle.*

“In Italian:—

“*Consoni's Varieta Elettro-magnetico et relativa Spiegazione.*”

“These works by men chiefly of scientific eminence are more than can be mastered in a short time. They are only a sample; the rest are legion; spiritual literature comprising many hundreds of volumes: for, as I have said, your society is entering on a field as new which has been traversed and reaped many years ago. And, after all, though evidently disembodied spirits come into contact with embodied spirits through the agency of magnetism and electricity, there is probably an inner cognate force operating in the process, which, like the principle of life, lies too deep for discovery by any human power.

“With my best wishes for the successful prosecution of your proposed labour.

“I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

“WILLIAM HOWITT.

“George Wheatley Bennett, Esq.”

Mr. Howitt requests the editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* to allow him this opportunity of recommending to the Dialectical Society the profoundly learned work of Dr. Doherty, *Organic Philosophy*, which he most unaccountably overlooked in writing to Mr. Bennett. This work, of which two volumes are only yet published, *Epicosmology* and *Ontology*, are the work of a life of unwearied research and thought. The system of Dr. Doherty, in Mr. Howitt's opinion, is the only philosophical one of the present age, based on the TRUTH, namely, that all life and every species of force exist *ab origine* in the invisible world, and are thence developed into the visible one. If this be so, the almost universal body of our scientific men and philosophers are dealing merely with the outside of things and putting the cart ludicrously before the horse: a matter for the Dialectical and other Societies to think a little upon.

MR. NEWTON CROSLAND AND THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

“London, 9th March, 1869.

To the Editor of the “Spiritual Magazine,”

“Sir,—In accordance with a suggestion which appeared in your last number, I have been applied to by the London Dialectical Society for any evidence I can offer respecting ‘Spiritualism.’

“I shall feel much obliged if you can find room for my reply, as I wish to set myself right with many people who are under the impression that I have ‘deserted the cause.’

“Your obedient Servant,

“NEWTON CROSLAND.”

“ London, 6th March, 1869.

“ Dear Sir,—I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th inst.

“ All that I and my wife know of the facts of Spiritualism is contained in my Essay on ‘ Apparitions ’ and my wife’s book, entitled ‘ Light in the Valley.’

“ By being too early in the field in my advocacy of the cause of Spiritualism, I lost several hundreds per annum. The consequence is that I am now obliged to work hard, and I have no time or leisure to devote to teaching others a subject which I consider profound, complicated, instructive, fascinating, and ennobling.

“ The facts of Spiritualism are to me as certain and indisputable as those of the multiplication table. To be asked now-a-days whether I believe in the spiritual phenomena is about as playfully irritating as to be questioned respecting the grounds of my opinion that 12 times 12 make 144.

“ One caution however I must give,—and that is, that the subject cannot be grappled with and mastered without the most careful, elaborate and anxious study.

“ It took me 18 months’ patient investigation to learn the simple elements of the subject. The religious philosophy, which underlies and is suggested by the outer phenomena, is of the choicest and most sterling value.

“ It does therefore amuse me when I hear clever people talk of ‘ arriving at conclusions ’ after a few hours’ examination. Let us therefore take care what path we choose in our progress of investigation. It ought to guide us to a world of light and beauty, but we may more easily drift into a quagmire of dangerous nonsense.

“ As far as my comfort and convenience are concerned I would rather you asked me to go through a course of mathematics with you than a course of spiritualistic study.

“ The former would be light in comparison with the latter.

“ I remain, dear Sir, yours truly,

“ NEWTON CROSLAND.

“ G. W. Bennett, Esqre.”

THE DAVENPORTS.—We hear that these gentlemen are again in prison in America for showing their manifestations without a conjurors’ license, and this in the land under the shadow of the eagle, which is always screeching out for liberty. It seems strange that such a thing could happen, if there were really so many millions of believers there as we frequently hear asserted.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

LECTURES AND CONFERENCES.

SPIRITUALISM in this country has hitherto been asserted chiefly by the press; the platform, however, is now beginning to assert a wider influence among us on this subject than it has done—both in London and the provinces. The Manchester mind has lately been powerfully awakened by Mrs. Emma Hardinge. In addition to the four lectures on Spiritualism that had been announced for delivery by her at the Free Trade Hall, a fifth, by request, was delivered in the same place on a Sunday evening, when the Hall was crowded. A lecture was also given by her at the neighbouring town of Hyde. These lectures have received highly eulogistic notices from the local press, and we understand that a fund has been formed for their publication.

At Norwood, the earnest indefatigable Mr. John Jones has been carrying on a war against all comers in the *Norwood News*. This culminated in the delivery of a course of lectures; the first by Mr. D. D. Home, on "Spiritualism and its Phenomena;" the second, by Mrs. Emma Hardinge, on "The Uses of Spiritualism;" and the third, by Mr. John Jones, on "The Phenomena of Spiritualism and its Witnesses." Notwithstanding that a small knot of rowdy respectables came to disturb the lectures and insult the speakers, the lectures were received by the audience with attention and evident interest.

The East London Association of Spiritualists has continued the weekly lectures, at the Stepney Temperance Hall. Mr. J. Burns has lectured on "Spiritualism: its Facts and Phenomena," and "Spiritualism: its Philosophy and Religious Teachings." Mr. J. M. Spear has presented "A Bible Reading of Spiritualism." Mr. Thomas Shorter, "An Answer to the Question, 'What are the Uses of Spiritualism?'" with answers to questions and replies to objections from the audience." Various other lectures and addresses have also been given by members and friends of the Association, and though not large, the audiences have been orderly and attentive.

The London Weekly Conferences at Lawson's Rooms, have been occupied during the past month with considering "The Psychological and Physical Differences between Clairvoyance and Spiritualism," opened by Mr. H. J. Jencken; "The Relations between Mesmerism, Electro-Biology, and Spiritualism," introduced by Mr. Reynolds; and "What are the Uses of Spiritualism?" brought forward by Mr. Thomas Shorter.

MR. CROMWELL F. VARLEY'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

At one of the Conferences on Spiritualism at Lawson's Rooms, Gower Street, London, the subject of the evening was "Spiritual Light." In the course of a very able address, bearing on the scientific aspects of Spiritualism, Mr. C. F. Varley, the eminent Electrician, gave in illustration the following personal experience. A writer in the *Eastern Express*, March 6th, relates the anecdote as being also told to himself and other friends. He says—"I will try and give his account in his own words." Having heard the narrative from Mr. Varley's lips, we can confirm the accuracy of the report. Mr. Varley said:—

"At one period during the construction of the Atlantic Telegraph Cable it had to be subjected to some very delicate tests, and I had become so wearied from the incessant attention given, that sleep at night was of the first importance to me. One day I was more wearied than usual, and to insure sleep made my room totally dark before retiring. After I had been in bed some time Mrs. Varley awoke me, telling me she had been much disturbed by a noise as if some one were in the room. I at once rose and lit the gas, but found no one. At Mrs. Varley's request, I left the gas faintly burning, and returning to bed was soon again asleep; but my sleep was short, for Mrs. Varley again awoke me, and said, 'There is some one in the room, you must turn the gas full on.' I did so, and searched the room, but found no one. I returned to bed somewhat anxious, but soon slept again from sheer exhaustion, this time to be myself awakened by the noise. I jumped up, and looking between the curtains at the foot of the bed, I there saw a man, who held up his hand as if to assure me. I then noticed that the man was not opaque, for I could see the wall through him. I turned to my wife and said, 'Can you not see that figure at the bottom of the bed?' She said, 'No! where?' I replied, 'It is between the foot curtains.' She made no answer, and I, looking at her, saw her to be going into a trance, so I waited to see what next. Soon she spoke, being in a trance; but I found it was not her voice, nor herself who was speaking, and I was addressed nearly as follows:—'Mr. Varley, I am very glad I am able to make myself visible to you. I was afraid at one time I could not have done so, and I am much more pleased that I can communicate to you. I am ——, brother of your friend, who is now at Birmingham. He is very anxious about a matter in which he fears he will fail (this brother was prosecuting some tests many miles away from where I was at that time). Tell him he will

not fail in it; he is going the right way to work in it, and all will be as he wishes. You may also tell him, for his identification of me, that I am he who made myself visible to him last night, but could not communicate. Tell him also, in order that he may have confidence in my statement, that I am his brother C——, who went to school at ——, in France, and was killed there (stabbed in the breast) by a schoolfellow. Then my body was brought over to England to be buried; and my mother, who went for it, placed some blotting paper over the wound, and between it and the shirt in which my body was wrapped, in order that the blood which might ooze out should not stain the shirt, and thus call attention to the manner of my death.' He also gave me his age, place of interment, and many other details, that I might have certain proof of his identity. He then left, and we slept the remainder of the night without further interruption. In the morning I wrote to my friend, telling him of the appearance and communication of the night; and in the course of post had a reply confirming all the particulars, and adding that his brother had twice appeared to him—the second time the night before he wrote the letter I was then reading—at which second appearance he was able to communicate to him personally, and he then told him he had appeared to me, and also the communication he had given me; so that before he received my letter, telling him of the occurrences before mentioned, he himself knew of them from the mouth of his brother. It is necessary to add that I did not know my friend had a brother who had met his death in such a manner, nor did I know any of the family matters connected with it until I had the communication from his brother's spirit."

MANIFESTATIONS THROUGH MR. HOME.

Mr. Home had passed into the trance state so often witnessed; rising from his seat, he laid hold of an arm-chair, which he held at arm's length, and was then lifted about three feet clear off the ground; travelling thus suspended in space, he placed the chair next Lord A——, and made a circuit round those in the room, being lowered and raised as he passed each of us. One of those present measured the elevation, and passed his leg and arm underneath Mr. Home's feet. The elevation lasted from four to five minutes. On resuming his seat, Mr. Home addressed Captain ——, communicating news to him of which the departed alone could have been cognisant.

The spirit form that had been seen reclining on the sofa now stepped up to Mr. Home and mesmerised him; a hand was then seen luminously visible over his head, about 18 inches in a vertical

line from his head. The trance state of Mr. Home now assumed a different character; gently rising he spoke a few words to those present, and then opening the door proceeded into the corridor; a voice then said—"He will go out of this window and come in at that window." The only one who heard the voice was the Hon. —, and a cold shudder seized upon him as he contemplated the possibility of this occurring, a feat which the great height of the third floor windows in Ashley Place rendered more than ordinarily perilous. The others present, however, having closely questioned him as to what he had heard, he at first replied, "I dare not tell you;" when, to the amazement of all, a voice said, "You must tell; tell directly." The Hon. — then said, "Yes; yes, terrible to say, he will go out at that window and come in at this; do not be frightened, be quiet." Mr. Home now re-entered the room, and opening the drawing room window, was pushed out demi-horizontally into space, and carried from one window of the drawing room to the farthest window of the adjoining room. This feat being performed at a height of about 60 feet from the ground, naturally caused a shudder in all present. The body of Mr. Home, when it appeared at the window of the adjoining room, was shunted into the room feet foremost—the window being only 18 inches open. As soon as he had recovered his footing he laughed and said, "I wonder what a policeman would have said had he seen me go round and round like a teetotum!" The scene was, however, too terrible—too strange, to elicit a smile; cold beads of perspiration stood on every brow, while a feeling pervaded all as if some great danger had passed; the nerves of those present had been kept in a state of tension that refused to respond to a joke. A change now passed over Mr. Home, one often observable during the trance states, indicative, no doubt, of some other power operating on his system. Lord — had in the meantime stepped up to the open window in the adjoining room to close it—the cold air, as it came pouring in, chilling the room; when, to his surprise, he only found the window 18 to 24 inches open. This puzzled him, for how could Mr. Home have passed outside through a window only 18 to 24 inches open! Mr. Home, however, soon set his doubts at rest; stepping up to Lord —, he said, "No, no; I did not close the window; I passed thus into the air outside." An invisible power then supported Mr. Home all but horizontally in space, and thrust his body into space through the open window, head foremost, bringing him back again feet foremost into the room, shunted not unlike a shutter into a basement below. The circle round the table having re-formed, a cold current of air passed over those present, like the rushing of winds. This repeated itself several times. The cold blast of air, or electric

fluid, or call it what you may, was accompanied by a loud whistle like a gust of wind on the mountain top, or through the leaves of the forest in late autumn; the sound was deep, sonorous, and powerful in the extreme, and a shudder kept passing over those present, who all heard and felt it. This rushing sound lasted quite ten minutes, in broken intervals of one or two minutes. All present were much surprised; and the interest became intensified by the unknown tongues in which Mr. Home now conversed. Passing from one language to another in rapid succession, he spoke for ten minutes in unknown languages.

A spirit form now became distinctly visible; it stood next to the Hon. —, clad, as seen on former occasions, in a long robe with a girdle, the feet scarcely touching the ground, the outline of the face only clear, and the tones of the voice, though sufficiently distinct to be understood, whispered rather than spoken. Other voices were now heard, and large globes of phosphorescent lights passed slowly through the room.—
Human Nature for February.

EXTENSION AND CONTRACTION OF THE HAND—MISS BERTOLACCI
—FLOWERS UNINJURED BY FIRE—TONGUES OF FIRE.

Mr. H. D. Jencken, in the March number of *Human Nature*, continues his interesting account of the spirit manifestations through the mediumship of Mr. D. D. Home, as personally witnessed and carefully examined by himself and other competent investigators. He narrates another instance of the elongation of Mr. Home's body, and gives the measurements (carefully made at the time) of the elongation of each part of the body. The most unique and striking portion of the phenomenon in this instance was the elongation and shortening of the hand, of which a sketch is given from a tracing made at the time, showing (1) the extreme extension; (2) the normal size; and (3) the extreme contraction of Mr. Home's hand. Mr. Jencken says:—

As the weight of the testimony depends much upon the accuracy of the tracing taken, I will describe my method in making the outline. I caused Mr. Home to place his hand firmly on a sheet of paper, and then carefully traced an outline of the hand. At the wrist joint I placed a pencil against the "trapezium," a small bone at the end of the phalange of the thumb. The hand gradually widened and elongated about an inch, then contracted and shortened about an inch. At each stage I made a tracing of the hand, causing the pencil point to be firmly kept at the wrist. The fact of the elongating and contracting of the hand I unmistakably established, and, be the cause what it may, the fact remains; and in giving the result of my measurements, and the method adopted to satisfy myself that I had not been self-deceived, I am, I believe, rendering the first positive measurement of the extension and contraction of a human organism.

The phenomenon of elongation I am aware has been questioned, and I do not quarrel with those who maintain their doubt, despite all that may be affirmed. In

my own experience I have gone through the same phases of doubt, and uttered disbelief of what I was seeing. The first time I witnessed an elongation, although I measured the extension at the waist, I would not, could not, credit my senses; but having witnessed this fact some ten or twelve times, and that in the presence of fifty witnesses, from first to last, who have been present at these *séances* where those elongations occurred, all doubts have been removed; and that the capacity to extend is not confined to Mr. Home, was shown some months ago at Mr. Hall's, where, at a *séance* held at his house, both Mr. Home and Miss Bertolacci became elongated. The stretching out and contracting of the limbs, hands, fingers, above described, I have only witnessed on this one occasion, and I was much pleased to have a steady Oxonian to aid me in making the measurements above detailed.

Mr. Jencken also relates the following incident of this *séance*:—

Mr. Home (in trance), now took a violet and a few leaves, and, kneeling down at the hearth, stirred the fire with his hand. He then showed us the flower, and, seizing it with the fire-tongs, placed it in the fire. I distinctly saw the leaves burn away, and, on withdrawing the fire-tongs, only the stem was left. Twice he repeated this burning of the flower, then, handing the fire-tongs to Miss —, he stepped on one side, and we saw the flower being replaced between the nippers of the fire-tongs. I asked whether they had re-formed the flower, to which he replied, "No; the flower has never been burnt, only shielded, protected from the fire; the freshness of the flower has, however, been destroyed." He then handed me the violet and leaves, which Miss P — took, and I believe has preserved. Mr. Home then showed his hands, which felt harsher and harder than in their normal state.

Mr. Jencken adds that at a recent *séance* with Mr. Home, tongues of fire formed in an irregular circle round Mr. Home's head, flickering in fits and starts, from one to three inches long.

A STRANGE SYMPATHY.

Prochaska, the eminent physiologist, used to mention in one of his lectures how, travelling in Bavaria, he put up at a small inn at Tetschen Brod, where, being weather-bound, he passed his days in writing. Not liking the meagre accommodation of a little village inn, he begged that at least they would provide him with a comfortable arm chair. After some delay a large, high backed, old leathern throne was placed in his room, with many injunctions to treat it carefully. He welcomed the annexation with delight, and at once proceeded to avail himself of its comfort. Scarcely, however, had he been seated in it half an hour, when he was seized with a violent pain in the back of the neck, which extended gradually down the spine. These pains left him after he went to bed, and returned when he resumed his place in the chair next morning. Sometimes they came spasmodically, and forced him to cry out; sometimes they began slightly, and increased in severity, gradually engaging one nervous centre after another, and causing intense suffering. But all the symptoms would slowly subside on removal from the chair, instantaneously returning when he went back to it. There was

scarcely a form of neuralgia he did not experience. The facial nerves were constantly the seat of suffering, and his sciatic agonies were terrible. He examined the chair carefully and thoroughly. He ripped open the leather covering, and he investigated the hair stuffing beneath. He tested the varnish on the wood, and, in fact, left nothing undone that might throw light on the curious influence of evil this antique piece of furniture possessed, but to no purpose. Nothing came of all his perquisition, and he was driven to seek if the history of the chair could afford any explanation of these phenomena: To his amazement he learned that his landlady had borrowed the chair from a doctor in the village. He had used it for years in his study, and in it some hundreds of patients had undergone the various operations of surgery. The well-worn arms, showing where agonised hands had grasped convulsively the patched leather, attested the violence which had attended these struggles. "I bought the vicious old seat, and had it hacked up before my eyes, and the fragments thrown into the Elbe," said the Professor, "but the lesson it taught me I have never forgotten."—*Saint Paul's Magazine.*

SPECTRUM ANALYSIS—TURNING THE TABLES!

A correspondent writes to us as follows:—

"I was somewhat surprised to find the following paragraph in a report of the proceedings of the Old Change Microscopical Society:—

In a dark room upstairs there were some interesting experiments carried on under the guidance of Mr. W. Ladd, and accompanied with explanations by Mr. Geo. Griffith, of Harrow, showing first the general principles of spectrum analysis, and next giving the spectra of some among the most interesting of the stars including that of the star in the constellation Hercules, which was by means of the spectrum analysis discovered three years ago to be a world on fire; and that of the star Sirius, which, by a delicate application of the same tests, was found to be receding from the earth at the rate of twenty-nine miles per second. The spectra of different metals, especially of copper and zinc, were most successfully shown, and were singularly beautiful.

"After all the objections raised by the *savans* to the dark *séances* of Spiritualists, it is somewhat too much for them to expect us to believe what takes place in their dark rooms upstairs. If (according to their own argument) spectrum analysis be a reality, why cannot it be gone into in the daylight, instead of in this hole-and-corner fashion? If Sirius be a respectable star, or the constellation Hercules no humbug, let them come out into the daylight, and we will believe in them. Don't talk to us of 'conditions;' why should stars demand 'conditions' any more than spirits? Zinc and copper spectra beautiful indeed! Let us see them by daylight and then we will confess it. O Pepper,

Tyndall, *et hoc genus omne!* We fear you are a very 'Microscopical' Society indeed. If you are the *savans*, I am proud to sign myself "IGNORAMUS."

WHERE IS MR. LAWRENCE W. OLIPHANT.

Ever and anon in Catholic countries some person of distinction disappears, and inquiry is met with the answer that he or she has gone to seek peace in monastic seclusion. We are not accustomed to such dramatic effects in England, and therefore are the more startled at their occurrence. When Amelia Opie left the gay world and reappeared in the garb of a Quakeress, the event was the sensation of a season. So we suppose society will be similarly affected when the fate of Mr. Lawrence Oliphant is known. Mr. Oliphant was a world-wide traveller, and related his adventures in several excellent books, and was a highly valued contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*; he served Lord Elgin as secretary in his famous embassy to China; subsequently he went to Japan, where he was dangerously wounded in an attack by the natives on the British Legation; he returned to England, and was elected M.P. for the Stirling district in 1865. Mr. Oliphant is said to have originated, and for some time edited the *Owl* newspaper; the title of which the Hon. Mrs. Norton got the credit of suggesting, as a reversal of Mr. Oliphant's initials, L. W. O. Young (he was born in 1829), distinguished, accomplished, on terms of intimacy with the Prince of Wales, and in the highest circles, any position in life seemed possible for him, and his friends and constituents reckoned with confidence on a brilliant political career. But he had fallen under a strange influence. About 1860 there came to England from New York a preacher named Thomas Lake Harris, with claims to intimacy with the spiritual world surpassing those of Swedenborg himself. Gradually Mr. Oliphant became convinced of the veracity of Harris, and of the importance of his revelations, and in proof of his sincerity, he resigned his seat in Parliament, renounced all his worldly prospects, enrolled himself in the "Brotherhood of the New Life," and learnt the craft of tailoring. Of the community so-called we know little, save that it recognises in T. L. Harris the Vicar of Christ, and that every member thereof submits to this will with unflinching obedience. The Brotherhood are settled on a large estate named Brocton on the New York bank of Lake Erie, and occupy themselves in agricultural labour, chiefly vine culture, and doing everything for themselves, keep no servants. Mr. Oliphant's mother, Lady Oliphant, we believe, preceded her son in the community, which includes not a few from the upper classes of English and American Society.—*The North Londoner*.

The Rev. W. Mountford writes as follows:—"Last Sunday, I went in the afternoon to hear a trance-speaker, Cora V. Daniels, in the Music Hall, Boston. There were about 2,000 persons present—I should say, fully that number, judging from the appearance of the hall, which accommodates 2,500; and though few people have a wider acquaintance than I have, yet I doubt, in all that assembly, whether there was more than one person whom I ever meet or see in any other than Spiritualistic connections. It is amusing—almost amazing, and instructive to think of—that there should be such a deep extensive earnestness co-existent with apathetic incredulity. It illustrates the manner in which the early Christians assembled and persevered, and grew in numbers and power; while Pagan literature was babbling on and apart in serene unconsciousness, preparing that puzzle for after days, of how philosophers and statesmen could have thought at all, and apparently never have thought of Christianity or the Christians.

A HEARTY LETTER.

We have much pleasure in inserting the following letter in our praise, from a working man. Such a testimony is most grateful to us, and tends to antidote the apathy of our more wealthy friends, who take advantage of our labours for years, and give no answer to our appeals for a little help to prevent pecuniary loss. This poor man, as he cannot give money, gives us a testimonial from his heart which we highly prize:—

"March 8th, 1869.

"Dear Sir,—Though a stranger to you I make free on the present occasion to state the pleasure, and I trust, profit, I have received in the reading of that most truthful and well-written article on *Miracles*, by the Rev. William Mountford. I do not ever remember to have read anything like it before, in no work that my eye had rested upon, nor even in the *Spiritual Magazine*, of which, I have been a constant reader from its beginning, with interest and advantage in many ways. If more of such clever and valuable writing was seen in works of the kind one would be led to think that the religious public would only be too glad to patronize such, and much of the ignorance and prejudice now so painfully witnessed in all directions, would, I verily believe, be removed. I have read it over twice and am wishful to peruse it again when I can find *time*, for not much of *that* falls to my lot, being but a working man of very humble means, constantly engaged from morning until often midnight, in, at times, laborious and dirty work. The chance I had afforded to me lately of doing as I have said, was owing to being laid by on a

bed of sickness these last three weeks; and as I was gradually recovering, I was only too happy to make good use of my time thus allowed me. I had got so low, and near the mouth of the grave, that my friends had serious doubts of my recovery; but by the good hand of my Heavenly Father, blessing the means used and by the kind attention of my esteemed friend, Dr. D—, under whose care and friendly advice I was satisfied to repose, I am getting on nicely; and what was greatly in my favour, being for nearly a quarter of a century a *staunch teetotaler*, I generally recover rapidly.

“About three years back, I had a paralytic attack, on which occasion I was as helpless as an infant, and it nearly landed me on the spirit-land. It was brought on for the most part by exhaustive labour and toil of mind and body; so you see, kind sir, I have much cause for gratitude for the kind Providence over-ruling my destiny, therefore, I trust I am spared for further usefulness, though now advancing on to 65 years in the battle of life. I cannot help saying that I am more concerned to see such glorious deep and sublime subjects and principles in the *Spiritual Magazine* than the accounts of the phenomena; wonderful though they be, and founded upon facts irrefutable, because there is not much ground for dispute and unbelief in such utterances. May the Great Father of Spirits hasten the day, when the scales may drop from the eyes of our professing friends the wide world over, and so we all live according to the pattern of Our Lord and Master, the *Man Christ*—whose footsteps we shall do well to follow. I was very much interested in Mr. Young’s account of his cure, it is manly and straightforward, becoming a person of his profession; may the time soon come when we may have the privilege of seeing many a *Dr. Newton* in this country. In these days of sham and puffery there are wanting sterling and unmistakable evidences of the finger of God, in the cure of the maladies of poor frail mortality according to His will and pleasure. I presume, sir, on your kind forbearance in my freedom on the present occasion, but I am anxious to add my testimony, perhaps with others, by way of encouraging you on in your labour of love and much self-denial and responsibility. Trusting the *Spiritual Magazine* will greatly flourish and prosper, I subscribe myself,

“Your humble Servant,
“W. B—.”

FROM A. J. DAVIS.

We have received from Mr. Davis a very kind and fraternal letter, from which we make the following extracts:—

“The *Spiritual Magazine* is a welcome visitor at our

home. The February number contains your notice of 'Recent Works,' &c. For every word I thank you most sincerely, and my conviction is that your plain distinctions and critical reflections will accomplish good in a large circle of readers. I do not realize any personal (or rather external) relationship to any works bearing my name, and yet there is *internally* a deep and delightful sense of sympathy between their teachings and my own existence. Perhaps you will be confused by this confusion of words. Well, I shall not complain, for in fact I am often not a little confused myself. . . . Spiritualism in this country continues to expand: the interest is more general, less concealed, and decidedly more intelligent. The South is just entering upon its spiritual education. Mediums are coming forth every week, with powers adapted to the materialistic wants of the public. And yet, when we think of the earth's millions, how *very slow* seems the work of Spiritualization."

Human Nature for March contains a most able article by Dr. F. Chance, on "Spiritualism and Science," in answer to some theories propounded by Mr. H. G. Atkinson, of whom Douglas Jerrold said, "There is no God, and Atkinson is his Prophet." We strongly commend this article to our readers. The following is from a note by Dr. Chance:—

If I move a pen or a table, it is (according to the spiritual theory) my spirit, which, through the agency of my brain, spinal cord, nerves and muscles, causes the pen or the table to move; and, again, if a pen or a table moves without any visible agency, it is still (according to the spiritual theory) a spirit which causes the motion, though the means by which it does so are not apparent.

I am aware, of course, that even the ultimate molecules of matter (if there are such things) are supposed to be separated by air or some impalpable ether, and so not to touch one another, but, surely, even if this be so (of which there is no proof), this air or this ether is itself only matter, so that even then matter would absolutely touch matter. But that two objects may be as close one to another as the ultimate atoms of the same substance are, is well shown by what not unfrequently occurs in plate-glass manufactories, where, if two highly-polished plates of glass are carelessly placed one upon the other, it is frequently impossible to force them asunder without leaving large flakes of the one upon the surface of the other into which they have been, as it were, incorporated. If our hands were uniformly and evenly in contact with any object we laid hold of, we should, on the same principle, or the principle of the sucker (that is in consequence of the absolute exclusion of air), with difficulty be able to pull them away again; but the skin of our hands is fortunately constructed on the ridge and furrow plan, so that, while the one half of the surface of the skin, which is occupied by the innumerable, prominent papillæ composing the ridges, is (no doubt) actually in contact with the object laid hold of, or (in common parlance) touched, the other half of the surface of the skin, which is occupied by the equally numerous depressions and furrows, that intervene between and separate the individual papillæ and the ridges, is kept from actual contact by the air which remains in the depressions and furrows, and thus the sucker-principle is effectually prevented from coming into operation. Mr. Atkinson is, therefore, I believe, wrong in saying the hand does not touch the object, for, if what I say is correct, about half of the under surface of the hand as nearly as possible, or actually, touches the object, whilst about half does not touch the object, and is separated

from it by the air (contained in the depressions and furrows), which allows of the ready removal of the hand.

Mr. Atkinson has no right to *assume* that *force* can emanate from a person's brain into space; he ought to *prove* it. According to the ordinary notion, the force which we apply by means of our muscles, is, I will not say "created" with Mr. Atkinson, but excited or evoked in the muscles themselves in obedience to a stimulus (that is, a very much smaller quantity of force) communicated to them from the brain or spinal cord. Mr. Atkinson seems to maintain that the whole of the force comes from the brain or spinal cord. If so, then the brain or spinal cord might perhaps, possibly, give forth force-emanations into the surrounding air. But, till I have Mr. Atkinson's proof—which he promises us—I must adhere to the ordinary doctrine.

HAUNTINGS.

A clergyman of the South of England writes to us:—"We have had some uncalled-for phenomena here. In the autumn the servant came to my study, two or three times, and said I had rung, which I had not. She went away looking surprised. Soon after I went from home for a few days, and when I returned, my family said that whilst I was away my study bell had frequently rung though no one was in the room. The servants declared that the house was haunted. A niece of mine lately living with her brother, a clergyman, in Suffolk, says that they had rappings all about the house whilst she was there.

"One night last November, the bell wires in my study began to rattle and there were raps about the room. As I went to bed, in passing a closet, a volley of raps came from the closet. When I got to my bedroom, my wife, who was already in bed, said there had been extraordinary noises in the closet of the bedroom, which was distant from the closet I had passed on the staircase. Soon after I had got to bed, the spirits began dancing about the room; my wife was frightened, but I laughed saying they were only tricky spirits, and I would ask them if I could do anything for them. My wife begged that I would not, but I did mentally; the noise ceased, and I went to sleep.

"A young officer lately told us that the military officers at Gosport have *séances* amongst themselves, and have *dark séances* and phenomena like the Davenports. An officer lately said at our house, that the house in which his family lived was haunted; that everybody knew it; and that it had the reputation of a haunted house.

"But the most extraordinary and apparently inexplicable thing is what I am now going to state. A young lady, who has a brother in Australia, and who is well known to us, some time ago saw this brother repeatedly in the day time. One day he appeared to her in the garden; and she adjured him to depart. She was quite convinced that he was dead; but the mail, in due course, brought the news that he was not only alive, but in excellent health, in which he continues. That is an authentic story of a

double;—how are these things to be explained? I may add, too, that last November, I and my wife were frequently annoyed by rappings at night. A loud bang would come just as we were dropping to sleep, and would be several times repeated. The *Spiritual Magazine* noticed that in November the accounts of tricky spirits were unusually numerous at that period. Why in November?"

Probably this gentleman's second question is more easily answered than the first. There may be something in the electrical condition of the atmosphere in November—or was in last November—favourable to the manifestations of such spirits. As to the appearance of the forms of living persons, nothing is more certain than that they do present themselves; and nothing less certain than the mode of the occurrence. Sceptics argue that in these cases the apparition is purely subjective—that is, is purely an imagination or mental impression of the person seeing it; and they argue, therefore, that all ghosts are nothing more. Till the double is proved philosophically to be merely a mental impression, nothing whatever is proved either for or against ghosts; but if the magnetists are right that we have a power of projecting our minds, or *imago mentis*, to a distance, and of making it sensible to the person to whom our thoughts are intensely directed, the theory of the actual appearance of spirits is, in truth, confirmed by it; for in both cases the spirit of a person incarnated or dis-incarnated is really and positively presenting itself to, and operating upon the spiritual senses of the person concerned. When a ghost announces the fact of his departure from the body in some distant place at that specific time, quite contrary to any intelligence or belief of the person thus visited, as has been the case times innumerable, the fact is plainly enough no mere imagination of the person thus informed; and to deny the actual apparition of a spirit in such a case, is about as rational as to deny the real presence of the *Times* newspaper, which announces to you some important fact unknown to you, and unexpected by you the moment before.

CONCERNING "SPIRITUALISM."

TESTIMONY OF A CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

[A Letter to a Friend.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Yes, I know perfectly well what that disreputable jade *Rumour* has whispered here and there concerning my relationship to what is called "Spiritualism:" and, to tell you the truth, I find that people who congratulate themselves, in a lofty

and compassionate way, on their freedom from "delusions," are just as hungry, just as pruriently curious, just as greedily credulous, as "Spiritualists" are said to be. To *Rumour's* whispers I have nothing to say. Let her go on till she is tired, I generally find that her children eat one another up in time if they are left to themselves. But it may be useful, or at all events it will gratify you if I state in a few words what I know and believe concerning the subject. And, indeed, a *very* "few words" will suffice.

I am one of those who think that a seeker after truth has no right to choose his facts, or even, in certain circumstances, his subjects;—that he has no right to shut and open his eyes at will, and please himself as to what he will see or not see. Such an one has no business to say—"This is a kind of thing I dislike," or "This is a subject that I had better leave alone," or "This is not dignified and respectable." I hold that the seeker after truth has only one thing to do—and that is, to keep his eyes continually open, and his judgment continually on the alert. Hence, to him, all such cries as "impossible," "absurd," "delusion," "imposture," "childish," and so forth, are positively heretical and abominable. He knows that these have always been the cries of the unscientific and the ignorant, and that, in spite of them, from poor beginnings, faithful men have won rich results.

Certain facts, then, have come under my eyes—facts which I need not describe here; but which were altogether so singular, so astonishing, and yet, apparently, so simple, and certainly so far removed from all contact with impostors or fools, that I had no choice but to say—There must be something in this. There I might end: for that is positively all I have to say:—"There must be something in it"—and that something is *not* delusion or fraud. I am sorry to say that I have neither had the time nor the opportunity to fully investigate the subject: but if evidence can prove anything, *this* is proved—that, in certain circumstances, unseen somethings, exhibiting intelligence and a command of forces, are able to indicate their presence and prove their independence of material conditions. This is the very farthest to which I can go. What or who these unseen forces or persons are I know not. That many things which are done as by or given as from them are absurd, childish, and altogether repugnant to even an ordinary refined mind I know, and I do not wonder that many who have got a glimpse of these things turn away bewildered, sick at heart, and pitying. Nor do I wonder that others believe the prosecution of the enquiry will only lead to disorder, injury, and disappointment. But I put in a plea in arrest of judgment:—Is it not possible that they who are

enquiring in this direction are only groping in the dark amongst preliminary dust and ashes; and that, presently, they will clear away these and come to the palace door? I know not; I hardly hope: I also am only standing afar off, and do not profess to be even amongst those who have got so far as the "preliminary dust and ashes." I only say—Do not let us be in a hurry to condemn those who may be only repeating the process which precedes all discovery, in passing out of darkness into light.

But it is not *all* disappointing, puerile, and unworthy; as some of the brightest and purest souls I have ever known can testify; who, nevertheless, do not desire to unveil to the world the most sacred experiences of their lives. I am not pleading for the truth of Spiritualism: I am only pleading for sobriety and cautiousness in our judgments: I only say—do not too readily join the vulgar outcry against it as an affair of silly table-turning. You might as well say that our awfully earnest human life is an affair of morning calls and silly gossip. I know, indeed, and to my sorrow, what miserable puerilities and absurdities degrade the subject in some directions: but I think an earnest seeker after truth will not be sorry to find that there is something else in it—something that *does* satisfy and not disgust the sensitive, the intelligent, and the good.

For myself, I regret I am unable, for many reasons, to take part in the investigations which I know are being set on foot and pursued by some of the best people I have ever known. I bid them *God-speed*; and, so far from blaming them for bearing with trivialities and confusion, I thank them, as I think every lover of truth ought to do. If nothing comes of their investigations, they will fare no worse than men of science have fared who experiment with dust and ashes for years, without result. But if they can only succeed in firmly establishing the fact of the possibility of any kind of communion with the unseen world, I do not think they will less deserve our blessings than they who established the fact of the possibility of flashing a communication beneath the Atlantic.

I hope I am what I know you are,—a seeker after truth, and you will therefore understand me when I say that I know nothing of *closed* or *improper* questions, that I do not believe we know everything yet, that I call no fact "common or unclean," that I deem nothing "childish" or "unworthy" which may lead to truth; and that I take it to be the sign of truest wisdom when one is free from rash assumptions, hasty condemnations, and scornful pride.—Heartily yours,

Dukinfield, Dec. 10th, 1868.

JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

(From the *Truthseeker*).

Correspondence.

REMARKABLE MANIFESTATIONS AT HEIDELBERG.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

"Dear Sir,—Your readers will be interested in hearing of some remarkable manifestations which took place two days ago, at the house of Mrs. Blackbourne, the well-known Spiritualist from Boston, and were witnessed by some of the first scientific men of Heidelberg. I, myself, had been a constant visitor at Mrs. Blackbourne's house for nearly a year and a half, and had seen more than enough to convince myself of those wonderful spiritual truths, which are, as yet, but dawning on the world, but will inevitably soon bathe mankind in a flood of light. At the same time, I could not conceal from myself that the manifestations with which we had been favoured were not of a nature to convince men whose minds have been narrowed by a life-long course of exclusive scientific study, who are wilfully incredulous, insultingly unsympathetic, and who, as they refuse to join in any lengthened continued investigation, can only be silenced and impressed by ocular palpable demonstrations of the most reliable sort. I had, therefore, abstained after a few unsuccessful efforts, from seeking proselytes among the teachers and students of science. But, ten days ago, Mrs. B—— received the visit of a young niece of hers, Miss Florence Elson, now travelling in Europe for her health; and when I joined the ladies in the evening for our accustomed *séance*, the phenomena we witnessed were of so extraordinary, so novel, so startling a kind, the intensity of our magnetic currents was so heightened, the facilities of spirit-intercourse and action were so increased, that I felt at once assured now or never was the time; and urged upon Mrs. B—— the sacred duty of imparting to our fellow men the wonders of which we were the happy instruments. She consented, and was soon as eager as myself. I immediately paid visits to those of our professors with whom I am acquainted, and without defining the object of my invitation, prevailed upon two of them to meet me at Mrs. B——'s on the evening of the 20th.

The evening came, and my heart beat high with expectation. Professor H——, the most celebrated physiologist of this age; Professor D——, the well-known chemist; Dr. F——, a physician of note, and several others were assembled. When Miss Elson entered the room in a simple dress of white tulle, with a rose in her hair, and all eyes were turned expectantly upon her,

her bearing was so beautiful a mixture of modesty and confidence, that I felt certain her wonderful gifts would not fail her. As she passed through the darkened doorway, I could see the magnetic fluid streaming with a pale blue light from the tips of her slender fingers. She approached the heavy round dining table which had been cleared for the purpose, and placed in the centre of the room, and it immediately began to manifest uneasiness. She laid her hands lightly on its border, withdrew them after about 15 seconds, and the table rocked from side to side, making the most uncouth attempts to follow her as she retreated from it. She repeated the process three times; each time the table seemed to grow more elastic, more agile, more obedient, until at last it followed her about like a dog, executing little jumps whenever she made a rapid turn, and causing the gentlemen to shrink into corners with a nervous agitation which once elicited her melodious, silvery laugh. I saw Professor H—— press his hands repeatedly over his eyes and brow, as if struggling to overcome what doubtless he considered a fantastic dream. The room was well lighted by three lamps with globes of ground glass, placed on brackets round the walls. At last, Miss Elson conducted the table back to its original position, and raising her hands which hitherto had always pointed towards the table, but not touching it, it resumed its former inertness.

Miss Elson was now evidently much exhausted by the loss of fluid—she sank into an easy chair, closed her eyes, and remained rigid as in a trance. I availed myself of this state, which I had witnessed in Miss Elson twice before, to point out to our guests a remarkable characteristic of it. In one corner of the room, there stood a small round table which we generally used when playing draughts, of which Mrs. B—— is very fond. This table I drew to Miss Florence's side, and raising her right arm cautiously, rested it so that it stretched across the table and lay quite straight and stiff. All this was done most rapidly, for I knew that the first moments of exhaustion exhibit the phenomenon most distinctly, and hastened my operations accordingly.

I had hardly concluded when Dr. F—— noted the change I had anticipated even before I had had time to point it out. The arm gradually grew shorter and shorter, still remaining perfectly straight, until the hand which at first hung partly over the edge of the table, was now quite drawn up upon it. I should say this shortening could not have amounted to less than two inches. Miss Elson remained perfectly rigid; her shoulder moved no more than if it had been of marble, and the light gauze covering her arm would have enabled any one to detect at a glance any bending at the elbow. This wonderful shortening

may have lasted three minutes, though as I said, it was most perceptible at first; gradually the arm began to lengthen out again, and before ten minutes had elapsed, it had regained its former beautiful proportions. The spectators were breathless. I took the opportunity to remind them of the well-known occasional elongation of Mr. Home, and to suggest that as this shortening of Miss Elson's limbs is caused by great radiation of magnetic fluid, so the elongation of the above celebrated medium may be caused by a proportionate absorption. After a few minutes more, Miss Elson awoke, and was perfectly unconscious of what we had observed in her trance. Miss Elson now called for pen, ink, and paper, and proposed that one of the gentlemen should write some words or figures down, which she would then decipher at a distance. Accordingly Professor D—— stepped up to the piano, at the other end of the room, turned his back to the company, who were all around Miss Elson, squared his elbows so as to form an additional bulwark against intruding glances (I could not help smiling at all his precautions), and traced something on a slip of paper which he immediately folded and enclosed in an envelope. Miss Elson, on her side, had already taken up a pencil. For a few seconds she seemed uncertain: her pencil hovered over the paper without touching it. On one of the guests remarking this, she said in a low tone, "Be patient; the spirits must have time." Hardly were the words out of her mouth, when the pencil descended and traced as follows:—

" $N a^2 S O^4 + \zeta a q =$ Unterschweffigsaires Natron."

"Wrong!" exclaimed Professor D—— triumphantly, opening his envelope. The spectators compared the two writings in silence for a moment. "Why no," remarked at length Professor H—— in a low tone, the name of the compound is the same—only Miss Elson has written its formula differently, and indeed, written it according to Hoffmann's theory. (Professor Hoffmann, I need hardly remind you, is the celebrated chemist now teaching in Berlin), formerly in London, and perhaps the most prominent expositor of the modern chemical theory of types, of which Miss Elson had therefore unconsciously given us a most beautiful confirmation. Professor D——, who had written his formula according to antiquated notions—

" $N a O. S^2 O^2 + \zeta H O =$ Unterschweffigsaires Natron,"

turned very red, and seemed about to utter some angry remarks, but good breeding restrained him, and he only turned away. Professor H—— could not suppress a smile.

Some wine glasses were finally brought in. Miss Elson selected three of them, filled them with Affenthaler (a favourite red wine), and placed them in the middle of the dining-room

table. She then held her hands over them for some seconds, murmuring what seemed to me a blessing, the words of which none of us could distinguish. Before long, withdrawing her hands, she called the gentlemen to observe that the wine would now be drunk. The glasses indeed began to move; once a faint ring was heard, then the contents gradually fell. You may imagine how the empty glasses were scrutinized. When the first burst of astonishment was over Miss Elson had disappeared.

I left the house in a state of exultation more easily conceived than described. Here, at least, was evidence indisputable, such as no honest man could deny or explain away. Now, surely scientific men would begin to investigate seriously, patiently, and cease to shrug their shoulders over phenomena which they had been pigheaded enough to ignore. Once such a celebrity of Professor H—— was gained, others would not be slow to gain: Spiritualism would gain a hold such as nothing could dislodge.

Alas! I had counted without the blindness, the inveterate prejudice arising from long habit, narrow training, from neglect of the noblest, most exalted faculties of man. These grovelling materialists, who boast of their one-sidedness, and scoff at everything that the scalpel cannot lay bare, consider not that this mutilation of their nature unfits them even for the miserable researches they have so much at heart, and that he can see nothing, who cannot see spirit! When I visited Professor H—— next day, he talked of headache on the preceding evening; of dimmed eyesight; of little fibres swimming in the "*humor vitreus*;" of the peculiar overheated atmosphere, until I left him in despair and disgust. Professor D—— was worse still; he talked of jugglery, legerdemain, and scouted the idea of being convinced of *anything* in a house of which he had not examined the walls with magnifying glasses, and the furniture with knitting needles!

I gave him my blessing (inwardly) and walked away wondering whether indeed I had become crazed, or whether the rest of the world was so! On reaching my rooms, I found a little note from Dr. F—— thanking me politely for the trouble I had taken, but begging me excuse him from further attendance at such *séances*, "*as such phenomena, if real, would overturn the whole fabric of science.*" So you would rather keep your science than possess truth, would you? Oh, fainthearted triflers! A hundred years hence, the world will wonder at your blindness, as much and now as you more wonder at our credulity.

I am, dear Mr. Editor, yours sincerely,

9, Unter Neckarstrasse,
Heidelberg, Feb. 22nd, 1869.

PAUL G. STANLEY.