

THE Spiritual Magazine.

AUGUST, 1870.

IS ANY EXTERNAL FORM OF "CHRISTIAN UNION" POSSIBLE?

THE Œcumenical Council, the Pan-Anglican Synod, the Evangelical Alliance, the Free Christian Churches, the Free Christian Union, the English Church Union, the Society for the Re-union of the Eastern and Western Churches, the intended conference of Christians in New York, the "Church of the Future," and the proposal of a "New Catholic Church," and of a "Theistic Society," no less than the general and growing alienation of men of science and culture, and of the great body of the intelligent working classes from all existing churches,* show how deep and wide spread and continually increasing is the dissatisfaction with ecclesiastical organizations and arrangements.

There must be some great underlying truth, however dimly perceived or imperfectly apprehended, which impels so many good and able men to these persistent, though certainly hitherto abortive, efforts. This truth, however, I conceive must lie in the direction of an inward, invisible, spiritual union—a union of heart—of generous sympathies and efforts springing from the depths of a Divine Christ-like love, which like His, shall know no distinction of Jew or Gentile—not to be shut up within the narrow banks of any church or creed, but a river of life flowing into the broad and deep ocean of our common humanity. But this is not the kind of Christian Union generally contemplated which aims only at visible, external, ecclesiastical unity—a mechanical rather than a vital union; a common agreement in subscription to verbal formularies, in allegiance or at least submission to some visible authority, a uniformity of opinion in

* It was recently stated in the House of Lords, by the Earl of Shaftesbury, that only two per cent. of the working men of London attend any place of worship.

matters of religious faith, and in rites, ceremonies and modes of worship. Is such a Union as this possible? Well, the experiment has often and long been tried, and with every advantage of power and prestige, but with no very brilliant success. So far as there has been any show of unity, it has been gained by the simple process of expelling all variety, of stamping out all independent and free thought.

Must not such a union be a spurious one, and even if it be attainable, is it worth buying at such a price, or, indeed, at any price? If practicable, is it desirable? Is it what God intended for us? Is it in harmony with what we know of the Divine operations? Would the landscape be improved if only one kind of tree were allowed to grow, and all its varieties cut and trimmed, and forced into the same size and shape? What should we think of a gardener who should propose at great labour, and as the result of all his efforts, to get rid of the differences of colour, so as to bring about a floral unity? Are not the varieties in human life and character as much a direct result of the impress of the Divine hand as the varieties of trees and flowers? And is not variety in religious opinion and modes of worship the reflection and necessary result of these varying types of intellect and character? Jesus Christ affirmed great principles of Eternal Truth, but he instituted no creed, and even no church. Even in that most beautiful and comprehensive prayer which He gave to His disciples, it was not the verbal form on which he insisted, only "After this manner pray ye." Are we likely to transcend the wisdom of the Master? Should we not rather shrink from laying down creeds and forms which He and His immediate followers abstained from imposing. Is God likely to be better pleased with a mechanical external unity, with uniform stereotyped forms of expression, than with the living spiritual unity of a common reverence and affection, and the free spontaneous utterances of love and truth in which His children may express their filial devotion and their daily needs. Let us thank God if under the inspiring and indwelling influences of the spirit of Christ we are growing more and more into a true vital unity with Him, and with each other. This is the only all-embracing Christian Union which can be true, and permanent, possible or desirable, for which we should ever pray, and watch, and work—for unless we have the spirit of Christ, whatever orthodoxy we may hold, we are none of His. Is not this what we mean when we pray daily—"Thy kingdom come." For how can the Divine kingdom ever come save in the human soul? The kingdom of God cometh not by observation; it cannot be voted by councils, or set up by passing resolutions at public meetings. If it be primarily within us—if our spirits are baptized in the Divine spirit, and breathe the spiritual atmo-

sphere of the Divine affections, then, and only in so far can we lead a Divine life, and realize that righteousness and joy, and inward peace, and Heavenly charity which constitute that kingdom of Heaven on earth, which is the true Christian Union. Let this be the constant unceasing aim of all Christian men of every creed and church; and let them also stand fast in that liberty in which Christ hath made them free, and not suffer themselves to be entangled in the yoke of bondage to outward forms or ecclesiastical authority.

In 1862, it was suggested by some, as the best means of celebrating the disunion of Christians then 200 years ago, that an attempt should be made to cement a union between Churchmen and the several sects, by the formation of a church which should be based on such wide foundations, that the principal separated bodies should be able once again to worship together. If such a church were possible, it could only be so through a widely-diffused charity, and toleration, and by a strong determination towards a common object, on the part of all to be so joined together. Is there evidence of such charity and toleration to be found amongst us? Is not all common object difficult to trace, or if not difficult what is such common object? Is the object an external union, or an internal union, because if it be the latter perhaps by searching we might find that we have it already, whereas if it be the former, it has never been attained as yet, and is still as far off as ever? Perhaps the principal fact we can refer to in answer to such a question, is the formation and action of the "Evangelical Alliance," which was known to us mainly by its triennial spasmodic gatherings as those at Berlin, and in 1861 at Geneva, where Christians of various names met together for two or three weeks, in tolerable harmony. Even at the great Geneva Christian gathering the clergy of the Established Church were all purposely absent from the administration of the sacrament on the last day of the meeting, because they could not eat and drink at the Lord's table with the members of the dissenting bodies. Complaints were made that of all the sections of Christendom represented at Geneva, the English were the most dogmatic and the most difficult. But the opinions of this evangelical party, even if adopted by much larger numbers, would only result in the formation of another sect or party in Christendom, assuming that prevalent ideas amongst themselves would allow them to unite in that or any other external form. It may be truly and sorrowfully said that at their meetings hitherto there has been more effort necessary to prevent an open rupture, than even hope to attain to any more intimate union of a permanent kind.

Before sectarianism can be got rid of, and there is as much

inside the church of England as out of it, it may be feared that the present unsatisfactory relations between the churches and the laity must become even worse than they now are, and that a still larger number than at present must find themselves "Christians unattached." Whilst the churches have been fighting together, and tightening their doctrines, the laity has been and is rapidly falling away into a sort of "broad church" of its own, from which it looks down with a languid interest on the squabbles of the sects. A large class also has drifted out of all churches, and has fallen into scientific naturalism, but it is still powerless, even if it would, to get away from many of the truths of Christianity, which, thank God, so deeply permeate all knowledge, and literature, and thought, that even those who the most deride the existence of a Christian church, are themselves frequently Christian in all but the name. With the most unbelieving, it is not at this day possible entirely to unchristianize themselves so far as concerns their knowledge and intuitions of the necessities of a virtuous life. Were this not so, the churches would have more to answer for than we would put upon them, for they have had the management for eighteen centuries of external religious beliefs, and have brought them to their present state of jangling and disagreement. Thank God, it has not been given to them to deal with the essentials of Christianity and religious life. It is to them that after all must be attributed the present state of Christendom, and that so many of their people have felt themselves compelled to emigrate from them into foreign and far distant realms of thought, to worship on soils which appeared to them more free and kindly. If many of them have in their wanderings found themselves in tropical heats, or shivering amid polar snows, during the long sunless winters of their souls, we will not entirely blame them for having left the old country of their birth in search of what they did not find. These are perhaps, like our hardy colonists, but the pioneers of a more refined civilization, and obliged by the force of circumstances to dig and delve among crude forms of thought, in order that others may afterwards cultivate the soil, and make it fitted for the use of man of another age. After all it is not the bitter pangs of parting from the ancient shores that we should celebrate. It is not that our sheep, either from having bad shepherds or from their own waywardness have left the fold, that should be a joy to us, but it should rather be that we have found a way to bring them back, and make ourselves ready to receive and welcome them.

Though fully alive to the incalculable benefits in one point of view which resulted from the great secession of 1662, we may hardly think that the bicentenary of it furnished cause for making a festival, if it be true as we believe, that there was then and is

still going on a secession even more important in numbers, from the churches that remain. When the causes of this exodus are ascertained, and means taken to remove them, then it will be fitting that we prepare for a greater festival than has yet been seen. Though we may not state either what these causes are, or the remedy for them, yet perhaps something of both may be suggested by shortly referring to some of the many futile efforts which have already been made towards the union of Christians. It is an instructive story, and may be found collated in one of the Oxford Essays for 1857.

Of course to bring about any external union hitherto conceived to be possible, there must be some scheme or plan by which the body when united is to be governed, and the difficulty is that each church or section of a church has already got one of these for itself, to which, as it holds as a matter of conscience in its entirety, it wishes to bring all the others. Its general idea, therefore, has been to take the others into its communion, not that it should either go into another's, or modify its own dogmas in any material degree. As a matter of fact and of history this has been so entirely the case, that no reformer has yet arisen to promote union and bring more truth and catholicity into religion, but he has either ended in total failure, or in creating a new sect, and has thus unwittingly added to the disunion. Many good men, with their hearts full of love, have set about the reconciliation of Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anglicans, not only with each other, but in some instances also with Rome itself. These have all adopted the idea of "fundamentals" or "essentials." George Calixt on the Lutheran side, adopted as his basis the Apostles' Creed, together with the interpretation put upon it by the three first centuries, but his principal opposition came from his own church, which was far too strong for him. So likewise was it too strong for a liberal and very distinguished Lutheran of the last century, the learned Matthew Pfaff, who published at Halle, in 1723, "*Collectio Scriptorum Irenicorum ad unionem inter Protestantem facientem.*"

On the side of the Anglican church the only very remarkable attempt at the comprehension of foreign churches, proceeding likewise upon the principle of fundamentals, was that of Archbishop Wake, who so far as he could act on behalf of the English Church, recognised as churches the Lutheran and the Reformed Communions of the Continent, because he esteemed them to be one with the Anglican in essentials. He was also prepared to interchange some communion with the Gallican church, but the once hoped-for occasion passed away. His leading idea, however, was the bringing these others into one with the Anglican form, and strange to say he could not bring himself to

extend the same charity to the dissenting bodies of his own country which he showed to the foreign communions, though differing so little from them in communion or doctrine.

Francis Blackburne, Rector of Richmond and Archdeacon of Cleveland, passed through some stormy scenes between 1750 and 1785. His principle was that "Seeing the word of God is owned to be an adequate rule, amply sufficient for eternal salvation, and our only safe guide to it, we ought surely to be content with this rule, and leave every doctrine in exactly the same degree of precision under which it is there originally delivered." On a petition presented to Parliament in 1772, Burke thus disposed of Blackburne's cherished hopes. "The subscription to Scripture is the most astounding idea ever heard, and will amount to just nothing at all. Gentlemen so acute have not, that I have heard, ever thought of answering a plain obvious question. What is the Scripture to which they are content to subscribe? The Bible is a vast collection of treatises; a man who holds the divine authority of one may consider the other as merely human. What is his canon? The Jewish, St. Jerome's, that of the Thirty-nine Articles, or Luther's? There are some who reject the Canticles, others six of the Epistles. The Apocalypse has even been suspected as heretical, and was doubted of for many ages, and by many great men. The Scripture is not one summary of doctrine regularly digested, in which a man could not mistake his way; it is a most venerable, but most multifarious collection of the records of the divine economy; a collection of an infinite variety of cosmogony, theology, history, prophecy, psalmody, morality, apologue, allegory, legislation, ethics, carried through different books by different authors, at different ages, for different ends and purposes. It is necessary to sort out what is intended for example, what only as narrative, what to be understood literally, what figuratively, where one precept is to be controlled and modified by another, what is used directly, and what only as an argument *ad hominem*, what is temporary, and what of perpetual obligation, what appropriated to one state, and to one set of men, and what the general duty of all Christians." Poor Francis Blackburne! this was enough to take his breath away. We do not know what he thought of it, but Burke might have been told that the English Church in the plenitude of its wisdom had actually presumed to settle every one of these questions in addition to all its other dogmas, so that at all events if the other dogmas could have been cut off, Blackburne would have done some service. Neither Burke nor Blackburne foresaw this day, in which the same questions are discussed in *Essays and Reviews* with all the probabilities of a further large secession from the church of centrifugal Christians.

We will go back to the Continent to Jean de Serres, Pastor at Orange, who died in 1598, by whom a persistent effort was made. His maxim was that all Christians, Roman Catholics as well as others, had always as a matter of fact retained the essentials of the gospel and salvability. Upon this the Lutherans and the Reformed called him a prevaricator, and he had no success.

John Dury, a Scotchman, spent a large portion of his long life, with little success, in endeavouring to re-unite the Lutherans and the Reformed. His method was that of mutual charity. He would not interfere with the several confessions, which might he thought retain their local and historical value; but the essentials of Christianity he found in the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments. Dury died in 1680. His principles were adopted with similar want of success by John Matthiæ, Bishop of Strengnes in Sweden, Preceptor to Queen Christina, who became so odious in consequence, that he was driven from his bishopric.

In France, Milletiere endeavoured to effect a reconciliation between the Calvinists and the Roman Catholics, and in 1637, in a Synod at Alençon, his writings were condemned. A few years later he was excommunicated by the Calvinists, and entered the Romish faith in 1645.

Both the Lutherans and the Reformed were in their turns equally violent. The ministers of the reformed Cantons of Switzerland were as anxious for the capital punishment of Servetus as Calvin. Melancthon would not venture to discuss the question of the personality of the Devil with David George, who had some claim to his friendly treatment, but threatened to hand him over to the magistrates of Wittenberg if he did not abscond. The magistrates in those times were as intolerant as their ministers, and those of Bâle treated the remains of poor David George in the same way that the Roman Catholics afterwards treated those of another great pacificator, De Dominis, Archbishop of Spalato, who had sought in his lifetime to bring about a union of the more regularly constituted churches in the way of a federal episcopacy. As they scattered his ashes, after digging up and burning his dead body, they wrote of him that "he wretchedly betook himself to the English altars, that thence the swine might the more securely gruntle against the Pope and Catholics."

It must be owned that these were not happy times for the union of Christians. In 1670 D'Huisseau, a pastor and professor at Saumur, endeavoured to re-unite the Eastern and Western Churches, Greeks and Romans, Catholics and Protestants, without even excepting the Socinians, and he, like Blackburne, thought

to do this by "the Word of God," adding to it as its acknowledged summary, the Apostles' Creed, as an abridgement of the Gospel. The only essentials derived from these sources and necessary to salvation, appeared to him to be the existence of God, the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and his return in glory to judge the quick and dead. He proposed practically to proceed by a general assembly of deputies from all churches, and he wished to facilitate agreement by avoiding old ecclesiastical terms, such as trinity, person, hypostatic union, consubstantiation, and the like. He also considered forms of worship and of ecclesiastical constitution to be things indifferent, so that one might be Episcopalian in England, Presbyterian in Scotland, Lutheran in Sweden, Roman in Italy. Brave, wise D'Huisseau, how did he fare in this noble effort? His work was at once condemned by the Synod at Anjou, and he was deposed from his pastorate and his professorship. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes he came to England where he was restored by his compatriots to the exercise of his ministerial functions.

Jurieu, who had been his great antagonist, endeavoured to carry out a plan of reconciliation, but so as to exclude the Roman Catholics on one side and the Socinians on the other. He too, with his lesser charity, was in his turn severely handled.

Then came the great Turretin of Geneva fired with this noble aim. He regarded the differences amongst Christians as well expressed in the following fable. "A physician visits an hospital, and examines the cases of the several patients; he prescribes the remedies proper for them, and promises to return on the morrow. But they immediately on his departure, instead of simply following his injunctions, fall to discussing the lineaments of his countenance, the tones of his voice, the peculiarities of his mien and gestures, the fashion of his dress, the form and substance even of the phials in which their medicines are transmitted. From converse to dispute, from dispute they come to blows. To whom might be applied this counsel? Wretches! first suffer yourselves to be healed, then settle your quarrels." Although this most aptly describes the fact of the case, he could not get "the wretches" to accept his "fundamentals" either as medicine or as food.

Turretin was the friend of our Bishop Burnet, and was introduced by him to the first persons of this country, and amongst them to Newton. He maintained a correspondence with persons of all communions, and even in the Roman Catholic Church. The project which he had for a union of those churches which differ from the Roman led also to his particular intimacy with Archbishop Wake, and his views were encouraged by the Court of London and by Frederick I. of Prussia. This king originated

the term "Evangelical," as applicable to the Lutheran and Reformed communions, and took some steps to effect a fusion of the confessions in his own kingdom. It is said of Burnet and Wake that the English Church has since that time had no prelates who were, like them, able and inclined to maintain a friendly correspondence with the Protestant Churches abroad generally.

Turretin's fundamental articles of faith are not clearly defined, and he appears rather to have very wisely avoided stating them with accuracy, but he lays down principles for distinguishing fundamentals, some of which are "That we are not obliged to the knowledge and belief of anything which hath not been clearly made known to us, (*revelata*,) or for the belief of which we have not received from our Maker the requisite faculties. That fundamentals are not identical to all men, but vary according to varying measures of revelation, and men's varying circumstances and endowments. God can only be the judge of what must necessarily be believed in order to salvation, as He alone is the bestower of it." These methods of arriving at fundamentals are excellent indeed, but it is difficult to see how with them, Turretin could have arrived at the conclusions, that "no certain number of fundamentals can be assigned, and that no communion can take place between those who differ in fundamentals." Perhaps it is owing to the vagueness of his statements, not less than to his felicitous tact, that he not only escaped persecution himself, but that he succeeded in giving liberty to the ministry of his own communion, in favour of whom the obligation upon candidates for ordination to subscribe to the Helvetic Confession was abolished in 1735, and has never been re-imposed. As for his main project, it was repelled by the Lutheran Church and shared the fate of all the similar prior attempts at reconciliation.

Even now, while this sheet is passing through the press, we learn with extreme regret that the *Free Christian Union*,—the latest and most catholic in spirit of all the efforts yet instituted for the promotion of union among all Christians,—has had to be abandoned as a total failure. The Free Christian Union was formed in June, 1867, on the avowed basis that—"the terms of pious union among men should be as broad as those of communion with God;" and its object "not to form a new sect; but to recognize and realize in external worship and organisation, the brotherhood of 'all who profess and call themselves Christians!'" and to promote "co-operation in Christian work and worship without compromising the claims of the individual conscience."

The report of the proceedings of Convocation on the 5th July, 1870, contains a curious instance in illustration of these difficulties of external union, difficulties invented and persisted

in by a body formed for the alleged purpose of promoting union. The "English Church Union" on that day presented a petition complaining of the Holy Communion being administered to the revisers of the Bible, to Church of England divines, mingled without distinction with members of the Established and Free Church of Scotland, and with Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans and Unitarians. The Nonconformist gentlemen are told that the petitioners hail their presence with satisfaction, "*as it is a pledge that they are less unwilling than might be feared, to abandon the prejudices and errors of their fathers,*" whilst the Socinians are welcomed into union and the Holy Communion, by being told that it shows "*they are not wholly averse to the true knowledge of Him, who is the way, the Truth, and the Life,*" but still the administration to them is declared to be "*a dishonour to our Lord and Saviour of the gravest and most emphatic character.*" This is the latest effort at Church Union which has occurred. Does it not show that human nature has not changed since the days when the dead bodies of David George, and the Archbishop of Spalato were dug up and burned, and their ashes scattered to the winds? "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another."

We have now given some of the most striking instances of these futile efforts of past days after a union which should not seem at first sight to have been so impossible of achievement. We may trace as a main cause of failure of each, the dogmatic certainty of synods and conferences of priests, in all their own tenets, and a conscientious impossibility of surrendering one of them, accompanied with a total blindness as to the first essential of the Christian life, which is charity or love, and a very great ignorance of what religion really is and means. Churchianity is mistaken for Christianity, the essentials of which are common to all souls, and as to which there is already union sufficient for all, if they would follow its dictates. There appears to have been a searching after disagreements rather than a search for points on which both sides could agree. Had D'Huisseau's proposal been fairly looked into, it would have been found that all the churches of Christendom could agree upon probably three-fourths of all questions, and that what were left might more fairly divide Christians into congregations than into churches of an antagonistic and fulminating order. It is certain that if the same isolating, exclusive, and dogmatic conduct were pursued by individuals, or by families, or by countries towards each other, as have distinguished the history of the churches and sections of churches, society would be impossible and humanity would be entirely disintegrated. Supposing each individual to have a long list of essentials or fundamentals which he would insist upon and do

battle for with all comers, the world would be a scene of strife and wrangling which would make it a hell. If each nation were to insist upon every other nation speaking its own language, adopting its own costume and manners, and having all its own laws and opinions, wars never ceasing would be the result. But as with nations so with individuals and with families, it has been found an irrepressible fact, that their differences, when lovingly considered, only make the world the larger and the wiser. Institutions, and manners, and language, and thought differ in every country, in every family, and in every man, and in every age, and by the free interchange of opinions, and knowledges, each has been constantly developing into a higher life and usefulness. Some are able to meet others with a greater intimacy, in proportion as there is a greater approximation of opinions and views, but they do not wage war against those with whom they have less agreement, whilst for those mad fanatics who have the persecuting spirit, we have armies to protect us as nations, and police to preserve our individual rights of freedom.

Why should it be so different in that one, greatest, best, most loving gift, which we call religion? Can it be that what it was necessary for our incarnate Lord to bring to us both as doctrine and as life, is to be converted into a sword of division, instead of a means of bringing us together, and that all the great essentials and agreements of Christendom are to be lost and ignored whenever a Churchman meets a Roman Catholic, or a Baptist, or a follower of Wesley, or an Independent. Between several of these there is scarcely a material difference to be found, and why should they not rather begin with their points of infinite agreement, that they might see how much they have in common. It was lately thought a great stretch for a Church of England minister to pray and preach on alternate Sunday evening services at Exeter Hall with ministers of the dissenting bodies, and that the latter in using the Church of England Litany should pray for the Divine illumination "upon all bishops, priests, and deacons, *and ministers of religion.*" As we have seen at the last Geneva Conference the Church of England ministers wilfully absented themselves from the holy communion because it was not administered by one of themselves. There is much to be done before an outward union can even be begun under such circumstances.

The Church of Rome is a difficulty from its anathematising constitution and assumed infallibility, and not from its essential Christian doctrines; but if the rest of Christendom were to act together in love rather than in hate, it would not be without its effect upon a body holding so much holy truth, and answering to so many needs of so large a portion of the human race. If we think there is a wide unlikeness between St. Peter and the

Pope, we still might avoid quarrelling about it with those who hold the contrary.

A curious anecdote is given by Tabaraud, that in the year 1781, a society of twelve persons, six Protestants and six Roman Catholics, engaged themselves at Frankfort on the Maine in the project of devising means for the re-union of Christendom. The Roman Catholics presented as their basis the Creed of Pius IV., with the omission of the anathema, *for fear of shocking prejudices in the early stages of the discussion*. But the Protestants were not able to agree upon a creed even among themselves, and so the attempt came to nothing, as it must have done, at all events when the anathema was produced as part of the Roman doctrine.

We have heard of another case occurring in the last century between two gentlemen who had been sworn friends at college together. Separated in after years, one became a devout Roman Catholic, the other an ardent adherent of the mother church. They opened a correspondence on the subject, each endeavouring to set before the other the merits of his own faith. The result was that both were converted, and changed places—the Protestant became a Romanist, and the Romanist a Protestant. This singular case shows, in our opinion, some narrowness on both sides, for had each been broad enough to have seen the essential truths of the other, without abandoning his own, they might have met half way, or rather on the common ground of a higher catholicism. This appears to be the common mistake made by individuals as well as by sects and churches. Truth is to be found in all churches and in all men, and what small minds deem conflicting theories are often but the complementary arcs of one whole circle of truth.

The Calvinist sees the grand reality of Divine Sovereignty, and this so fills his mind as to shut out all recognition of the corresponding reality of human freedom. The Arminian on the other hand is sure of man's free agency, and hence infers that Calvin was altogether in the wrong. If both were broad enough to take in at once the two sides of the subject, they would see that these truths are but complementary of each other, like the positive and negative movements of electricity, and the centripetal and centrifugal forces that balance the universe. So of the other long-disputed questions of the sects, as to the trinity and unity of God, the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ, and the depravity of man. There is a higher ground of unity where all these seeming contradictions are seen to harmonise. But minds of a narrow cast come together and gather round some one view of truth, which in fact is but half a truth, and this so engrosses the eye that others equally true are ignored or denied; their sympathies are withdrawn from those who differ with them; there is no openness of mind to the view of others; no effort to see things

from other points of vision, and feelings of antagonism, jealousy, and mutual hatred are the result, which is then embodied and embalmed under the name of a Church. It was said by a good man that there are no Anglicans, or Romanists, or Methodists, or Baptists, or others of sects in Heaven, but that they are only Christians there.

But narrowness of this kind may not be altogether blameable or avoidable. It may be born in us. Our clayey tenement may be so cramped, or the texture of our mental fibre so inelastic, that breadth and comprehensiveness are impossible to us whilst we inhabit the body. Let those who are more favoured be tolerant of such. But too much of it unquestionably springs from the lack of a generous interest in, and an all-embracing love toward the human brotherhood. We despise our differing brothers, and care not for their goods or for their truths. Were we loving and reverent to all, as we like to have others respectful to us, then we should be open to bear one another's opinions.

We are deeply of opinion that there can hardly be a less wise course than separating from the old religion, because there are some few points of disagreement. Supposing for instance that all those ministers, and all those laymen who have left the church had remained within it, what an immensely greater power they would have had of showing their own little lights to better advantage than by the coarse mode of secession. Because we have a little more light than our neighbours is that a reason for leaving them? Better to stop among them and help them on their way, and show by our lives that ours is a better light. Besides, it gives both them and us a better opportunity of ascertaining by time and experience whether it be really better or not,—for on looking back through the wire-drawn creeds, with the advantage of our present knowledge, it may fairly be doubted whether some of the new lights might not have been well dispensed with, especially at the cost of the schism and hate which they have caused. Of all the hates in this world, the theological hatred is proverbially the strongest, and it all proceeds from self-hood, from the certainty that each of us is demonstrably right, and all the others demonstrably in the wrong. It would be a great improvement if we could believe that we are even only probably right, and the others only probably wrong, and defer our secessions, and our hates till we had better reason to convert the probability into a certainty. Dean Swift said, "Examine a reasonably honest man, of either side, upon those opinions which both parties daily buffet themselves about, and he shall hardly find one material point in difference between them."

How exquisitely painful is the exclamation of Madame Bourignon, when a child, to her parents who had been reading

to her the lives of the early disciples, "Where are the Christians? Let us go to the country where the Christians live." Poor child! She did not know that she was living among the only specimens of them who were extant.

If it should be found that for the present as for the future, it is impossible to do away with the external differences in the forms of churches and sects, and that all cannot yet worship together in one congregation, let us hope that the different sections may be able to look upon one another with more Christian and loving eyes, to recognise agreements rather than differences, and even to help one another notwithstanding these differences in the holy work which each is carrying on. There is work for all against the common enemy, and it may be necessary in these days of individual and somewhat rebellious thought and freedom, that the sharp lines of sects should stimulate them to action, but let it be remembered that it shows a low state of truth, and a still lower state of charity, when one assumes an entire superiority over another. To speak of toleration even, is intolerant. It used to be said of our early predecessors, "See how these Christians love;" but how soon this was changed for the observation, "These Christians are no better than wild beasts when they are disputing about their doctrines!" They had not then had time to form external churches and sects, but were full of the spirit of the Master. It will be well for us when men see that all these honest differences are inextinguishable, and are only the special channels towards truth, best adapted to those who hold them, and they should therefore be recognised as modes of truth by all Christians. All forms of religion thus become good, and real religion, which is a thing of the heart, independent of the form of it, has room and full scope in promoting the usefulness of each.

These quarrellings have come because religion has been confused with external forms with which it has little to do. "Religion is before and beyond, and deeper than all churches. It makes churches; itself, only, God-made, in the constitution of human nature. Religion is not Priestcraft, it is not Ecclesiasticism, it is not Ritualism, it is not the acceptance of other people's beliefs, it is not opinion, history is not religion, morality simply is not religion, though it is comprehended by religion. Religion is God-likeness. It is a life that has been lived, and and that it should be our aim to live also. That religion is best for us which best reveals to us the character of God, which finds us at our greatest depths, which meets most fully our souls' needs, which *proves itself* to be the truest, and therefore the best. As the Divine Word is infinite, so truth must be folded up within truth, and vast successions of knowledges reveal

themselves as we penetrate into its harmonious unbounded realm."

In a word, religion is spiritual, and the forms of it are natural or man-made. It seems sad want of knowledge that each church or sect should add what it likes to religion, mix it altogether, and then with sadder lack of charity, quarrel about the whole with all the other self-called churches, as if they had no broad ground of common agreement. It is useless to hope for external Christian unity based on any such ideas, or containing such elements, and in the manifold constitution of men, no such unity is possible, nor if it were possible, would it even be desirable to bring all forms and differences down to one dead level. What is possible however, let us hope, is that there may be diffused amongst us a truer apprehension of human nature, and a larger charity, and a broader love, which shall enable us to recognize in each other our common Christianity, and that we are all servants of one Master. Also it is possible, and is happily largely carried out, that Christians can unite in works of charity and benevolence, and this will always be an expanding ground of union and love, and render external differences of less and less importance.

The Holy City lieth four-square, and has twelve gates, on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. "And I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it, and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof." Why are there all these gates, but that all may enter in? Why is there no temple there, but that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its only and abiding Temple in whom all may worship?

SOME PASSAGES FROM THE WRITINGS OF DICKENS.

SINCE the sudden and unexpected death of Mr. Dickens journalists have been busy with sketches, anecdotes, and eulogies of the great novelist. Dean Stanley preached the funeral sermon at Westminster Abbey, where his mortal remains are fitly placed, and it is announced that a full biography of him by Mr. Forster is in preparation. The history of a successful literary man, like Dickens, generally flows pretty smoothly on, with but few striking incidents to arrest attention; and its chief and permanent interest

must lie not in its anecdotage and gossip, but in the portrayal of the inner life of its subject, in the presentation of those influences and events which have most deeply impressed him and contributed most largely to the formation of his character; or which indicate those deeper currents of thought and feeling which underlie the quiet and gentle stream of the external history. In the construction of his stories Mr. Dickens always showed a strong *penchant* for the introduction of ghostly incidents and machinery. Was this wholly for artistic effect, or was any deeper influence at work? It is to be hoped that his biographer will not suppress any facts, however trivial they may seem, which may possibly throw light on this question. It is greatly to be regretted that Mr. Dickens never seems to have thoroughly and seriously investigated the subject of Spiritualism. As a humourist, he was naturally struck with the ludicrous aspects which some of its incidents and phases present to superficial observation, and which in a popular periodical can so readily be turned to account with the ignorant and thoughtless; but of late years Mr. Dickens treated the subject in a better spirit, abstained from the ridicule and banter with which he had formerly assailed it, and welcomed into *All the Year Round* stories—including some well-authenticated narratives, tending to confirm the belief that from the spirit-world "a visitant at intervals appears," feeling an interest in and holding converse with those he has left behind.

It is known that Mr. Dickens was not only a believer in mesmerism (well acquainted with the late Rev. Chauncey Hare Townshend, author of the most philosophical work that has perhaps appeared on that subject, and who left £1,000 to Mr. Dickens as his literary executor), but himself possessed considerable mesmeric power. We know of a lady afflicted with blindness who attributes her now recovering sight to the persistent magnetising of Mr. Dickens. M. Fechter, the tragedian, was one of his mesmeric patients. Mesmerism is the open door to Spiritualism, and it is scarcely possible for Mr. Dickens to have known and practised it, and to have been on intimate terms with one, at least, of its most eminent professors, without getting a little deeper insight into the marvels of clairvoyance and other spiritual mysteries, than he would obtain from newspaper stories and idle gossip about "table-turning." The testimony too, of some well-informed friends as to facts in Spiritualism which came under their personal observation, could not have been without some effect upon him.

The circumstance referred to in our last number by Mr. Coleman of Mr. Dickens filling in the correct date in the narrative of spiritual occurrences supplied by Mr. Heaphy, the

artist, and of which date Mr. Dickens was uninformed;—a circumstance he confessed himself “profoundly unable to explain,”—would seem to be not the only curious psychological experience of which he had to make the same confession. Here is an instance which he gives in his *Letters from Italy*. It occurred on his first sight of Ferrara:—

On the fore-ground was a group of silent peasant-girls leaning over the parapet of a little bridge, looking now up at the sky, now down into the water; in the distance a deep bell; the shadow of approaching night on everything. If I had been murdered there on some former life I could not have seemed to remember the place more thoroughly, or with more emphatic chilling of the blood; and the real remembrance of it acquired in that minute is so strengthened by the imaginary recollection, that I hardly think I could forget it.

In the writings of Dickens it is not the pure, the gentle, the loving that are most incredulous of spirits. Jenny Wren sees the good ministering angels in long bright shining rows, and does not question that they are what she sees them to be; it is Scrooge—the hardened, unregenerate, griping old Sadducee—that suggests to the ghost of Jacob Marley, “You may be a bit of undigested beef, or a blot of mustard, or an underdone potato.” It was especially the melo-dramatic incidents associated with ghostly appearances—clanking chains, blue fire, and the smell of brimstone—incidents invented by playwrights and writers of sensational fiction, but which have no place in authentic narratives, that Dickens satirized. The story of “The Signalman,” in the Christmas number of *All the Year Round* for 1867, is one of many illustrations that might be cited in which the subject is treated by him in a more serious spirit. It could not well be otherwise, for he was not without ghostly experiences himself. Like many Spiritualists, he found the early morning to be his “most ghostly time;” and in the Christmas number of *All the Year Round* for 1859, even while chaffing Spiritualists on the pretentious triviality of some of the spirit-messages received, and while discrediting ghostly agencies generally, in the midst of his little Christmas jokes he inserts the following reflections and statements of personal experiences:—

No period within the four-and-twenty hours of day and night is so solemn to me as the early morning. In the summer time I often rise very early, and repair to my room to do a day's work before breakfast, and I am always on those occasions deeply impressed by the stillness and solitude around me. Besides that there is something awful in the being surrounded by familiar faces asleep—in the knowledge that those who are dearest to us and to whom we are dearest, are profoundly unconscious of us, in an impassive state anticipative of that mysterious condition to which we are all tending—the stopped life, the broken threads of yesterday, the deserted seat, the closed book, the unfinished but abandoned occupation, all are images of Death. The tranquillity of the hour is the tranquillity of Death. The colour and the chill have the same association. Even a certain air that familiar household objects take upon them when they first emerge from the shadows of the night into the morning, of being newer, and as

they used to be long ago, has its counterpart in the subsidence of the worn face of maturity or age, in death, into the old youthful look. Moreover, *I once saw the apparition of my father at this hour.* He was alive and well, and nothing ever came of it, but I saw him in the daylight sitting with his back towards me, on a seat that stood beside my bed. His head was resting on his hand, and whether he was slumbering or grieving, I could not discern. Amazed to see him there, I sat up, moved my position, leaned out of bed, and watched him. As he did not move, I spoke to him more than once. As he did not move then, I became alarmed and laid my hand upon his shoulders, as I thought—and there was no such thing. For all these reasons, and for others less easily and briefly statable, I find the early morning to be my most ghostly time.*

Here is another remarkable experience of Mr. Dickens, recorded by him in the Christmas number of *Household Words* for 1855. It is as follows:—

I had lost a very near and dear friend by death. Every night since, at home or away from home, I had dreamed of that friend, sometimes as still living, sometimes as returning from the world of shadows to comfort me; always as being beautiful, placid, and happy; never in association with any approach to fear or distress. It was at a lonely inn in a wide moorland place that I halted to pass the night. When I looked from my bedroom window over the waste of snow on which the moon was shining, I sat down by my fire to write a letter. I had always, until that hour, kept it within my own breast that I dreamed every night of the dear lost one; but in the letter that I wrote I recorded the circumstance, and added that I felt much interested in proving whether the subject of my dream would still be faithful to me, travel-tired, and in that remote place. No. I lost the beloved figure of my vision in parting with the secret. My sleep has never looked upon it since, in 16 years, but once. I was in Italy, and awoke, (or seemed to awake), the well-remembered voice distinctly in my ears, conversing with it. I entreated it, as it rose above my bed and soared up to the vaulted roof of the old room, to answer me a question I had asked, touching the future life. My hands were still outstretched towards it as it vanished, when I heard a bell ringing by the garden wall, and a voice, in the deep stillness of the night, calling on all good Christians to pray for the souls of the dead, it being All Souls' Eve.

Do not facts like these seem to indicate that Mr. Dickens was what is now called an "impressionable medium;" and the circumstance publicly stated by him that he was never deceived as to the character of those with whom he came into personal relation, as well as the ease and spontaneity with which he generally wrote, for his writing seemed "to come of itself," as he expressed it in allusion to the subject a few days before his fatal attack of apoplexy, may certainly be regarded as favouring this conclusion.

In the last novel which Mr. Dickens ever completed, and in the last paragraph of its last page, he wrote words which now have for us a special interest. I need scarcely remind the reader that Mr. Dickens was a traveller on the South-Eastern Railway on the 9th of June, 1865, when the accident occurred at

* Apparitions of the living, as well as of the dead, are among the recorded experiences of Spiritualists, and they sometimes occur under circumstances which do not admit of their being explained away as illusions, however difficult it may be to explain them, a task which we shall not now attempt. Mrs. Hardinge gives several well authenticated instances, and Judge Edmonds has devoted a tract to the subject which will well repay perusal.

Stapleton which so nearly proved fatal to him. The following, therefore, is a transcript of his personal experience:—

“ On Friday, *the ninth of June*, in the present year (1865), Mr. and Mrs. Boffin (in their manuscript dress of receiving Mr. and Mrs. Lammle at breakfast) were on the South-Eastern Railway with me in a terribly destructive accident. When I had done what I could to help others, I climbed back into my carriage—nearly turned over a viaduct, and caught aslant upon the turn—to extricate the worthy couple. They were much soiled, but otherwise unhurt. The same happy result attended Miss Bella Wilfer on her wedding day, and Mr. Riderhood inspecting Bradley Headstone’s red neckerchief as he lay asleep. I remember with devout thankfulness that I can never be much nearer parting company with my readers for ever than I was then, until there shall be written against my life the two words with which I have this day closed this book—THE END.”

It is now strange to observe that just five years later, on the very same day of the very same month the end came.

The last number published under his superintendence of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* has a short paragraph which, like the foregoing, now reads as though it were a presentiment. It is from a description of a stonecutter’s yard:—

“ The two journeymen have left their two great saws sticking in their blocks of stone; and two skeleton journeymen out of the Dance of Death might be grinning in the shadow of their sheltering sentry-boxes, about to slash away at cutting out the gravestones of the next two people destined to die at Cloisterham. Likely enough the two think little of that now, being alive and perhaps merry. Curious to make a guess at the two—or say, at one of the two!”

Of his farewell address to the public, on the occasion of his last public reading, even a journal so obtuse to all spiritual things as the *Daily Telegraph*, could remark:—“ It is strange that his leave-taking should have been within the present year, and that in it he should have spoken these words: ‘ From these garish lights I vanish now for evermore, with a heartfelt, grateful, respectful and affectionate farewell.’ ”

Nor is the view that Dickens was a subject of spiritual impressions in any way derogatory to his genius. All men are open to spiritual influx, and the greatest minds in largest measure and in its higher degrees, according to their several genius;—an influx not interfering, but blending and co-operating with the free exercise of all natural gifts. But without speculating on this point, or considering what may have been Mr. Dickens’s personal experiences or belief in regard to man’s relations to the spiritual world, if, indeed, he had any definite or settled

belief upon the subject, it may be confidently affirmed that no one familiar with his writings can fail to discover in them many passages which fully accord with the higher teachings and philosophy of Spiritualism. His description of the death of Little Paul Dombey and of Little Nell are among the best known and most popular instances of this working of his mind in its higher moods. From the latter we cite a few paragraphs:—

Where were the traces of her early cares, her sufferings, and fatigues? All gone. Sorrow was dead indeed in her, but peace and perfect happiness were born; imaged in her tranquil beauty and profound repose.

And still her former self lay there, unaltered in this change. Yes. The old fireside had smiled upon that same sweet face; It had passed, like a dream, through haunts of misery and care; at the door of the poor schoolmaster on the summer evening, before the furnace fire upon the cold wet night, at the still bedside of the dying boy, there had been the same mild lovely look. So shall we know the angels in their majesty, after death. . . .

"It is not," said the schoolmaster, as he bent down to kiss her on the cheek, and gave his tears free vent, "it is not on earth that Heaven's justice ends, Think what earth is, compared with the world to which her young spirit has winged its early flight; and say, if one deliberate wish expressed in solemn terms above this bed could call her back to life, which of us would utter it!" . . .

The service done, the mourners stood apart, and the villagers closed round to look into the grave before the pavement-stone should be replaced. One called to mind how he had seen her sitting on that very spot, and how her book had fallen on her lap, and she was gazing with a pensive face upon the sky. Another, told how he had wondered much that one so delicate as she, should be so bold; how she had never feared to enter the church alone at night, but had loved to linger there when all was quiet, and even to climb the tower stair, with no more light than that of the moon rays stealing through the loopholes in the thick old wall. A whisper went about among the oldest, that she had seen and talked with angels; and when they called to mind how she had looked, and spoken, and her early death, some thought it might be so, indeed. Thus, coming to the grave in little knots, and glancing down and giving place to others, and falling of in whispering groups of three or four, the church was cleared in time, of all but the sexton and the mourning friends.

They saw the vault covered and the stone fixed down. Then when the dusk of evening had come on, and not a sound disturbed the sacred stillness of the place—when the bright moon poured in her light on tomb and monument, on pillar, wall, and arch, and most of all (it seemed to them) upon her quiet grave—in that calm time, when outward things and inward thoughts teem with assurances of immortality, and worldly hopes and fears are humbled in the dust before them—then, with tranquil and submissive hearts they turned away, and left the child with God.

Oh! it is hard to take to heart the lesson that such deaths will teach, but let no man reject it, for it is one that all must learn, and is a mighty, universal Truth. When Death strikes down the innocent and young, for every fragile form from which he lets the panting spirit free, a hundred virtues rise, in shapes of mercy, charity, and love, to walk the world, and bless it. Of every tear that sorrowing mortals shed on such green graves, some good is born, some gentler nature comes. In the Destroyer's steps there spring up bright creations that defy his power, and his dark path becomes a way of light to Heaven.

Here is a little gem from *Dombey and Son*:—

"She died," said Polly, "and was never seen again, for she was buried in the ground where the trees grow."

"The cold ground?" said the child, shuddering again.

"No, the warm ground," returned Polly, "where the ugly little seeds are turned into beautiful flowers, and where people turn into angels, and fly away to Heaven."

In *Our Mutual Friend* Mr. Dickens has given us one of the most beautiful of his child creations in Jenny Wren, the little doll's dressmaker, "poor broken-down invalid," "whose back is bad, and whose legs are queer," but whole, erect, and strong in spirit, charming us with her innocent wisdom, her quaint expressions and inspirations; and to whom, as if in compensation for her physical sufferings, Heaven in its all-bountiful compassion, has left the gates ajar, that angel-children in long, bright, shining rows, might visit her with their sweet pity and playful humour, bringing delicious ease and rest. Here is a conversation in which she relates her experiences and memories:—

"Talking of ideas, my Lizzie"—they were sitting side by side as they had sat at first—"I wonder how it happens that when I am at work, work, working here, all alone in the summer-time, I smell flowers."

"As a common-place individual, I should say," Eugene suggested languidly, for he was growing weary of the person of the house, "that you smell flowers, because you *do* smell flowers."

"No, I don't," said the little creature, resting one arm upon the elbow of her chair, resting her chin upon that hand, and looking vacantly before her; "this is not a flowery neighbourhood. It's anything but that. And yet, as I sit at work, I smell miles of flowers. I smell roses, till I think I see the rose leaves lying in heaps and baskets on the floor. I smell fallen leaves, till I put down my hand—so—and expect to make them rattle. I smell the white and the pink may in the hedges, and all sorts of flowers that I never was among. For I have seen very few flowers indeed, in my life."

"Pleasant fancies to have, Jenny dear," said her friend, with a glance towards Eugene as if she would have asked him whether they were *given* to the child in *compensation* for her losses.

"So I think, Lizzie, when they come to me. And the birds I hear! Oh!" cried the little creature, holding out her hand and looking upwards, "how they sing!"

There was something in the face and action for the moment quite inspired and beautiful. Then the chin dropped musingly upon the hands again.

"I dare say my birds sing better than other birds, and my flowers smell better than other flowers. For when I was a little child," in a tone as though it were ages ago, "the children that I used to see early in the morning were very different from any others that I ever saw. They were not like me; they were not chilled, anxious, ragged, or beaten; they were never in pain. They were not like the children of the neighbours; they never made me tremble all over by setting up shrill noises, they never mocked me. Such numbers of them too! All in white dresses, and with something shining on the borders, and on their heads, that I have never been able to imitate with any work though I know it so well. They used to come down in long, bright slanting rows, and say altogether, 'Who is this in pain? Who is this in pain?' When I told them who it was, they answered, 'Come and play with us!' When I said, 'I never play! I can't play,' they swept about and took me up and made me light. Then it was all delicious ease and rest till they laid me down. Whenever they came back, I used to know they were coming before I saw the long, bright, shining rows, by hearing them ask altogether, a long way off, 'Who is this in pain? Who is this in pain?' And I used to cry out, 'Oh! my blessed children, it's poor me. Have pity on me, take me up and make me light!'"

By degrees, as she progressed in this remembrance, the hand was raised, the late ecstatic look returned, and she became quite beautiful. Having so paused for a moment, silent, with a listening smile upon her face, she looked round and recalled herself.

And this is related not as the fancies of a child in the delirium

of fever, but as past remembrances and present experiences, as real to her as the hard work-day world with which she is so painfully familiar,—realities of which she talks coherently, and more rationally than her “common-place” interlocutor. And in the experience of Spiritualists it is all true—the bird-music, the sweet fragrance of flowers from the Summer-land—the long, bright shining rows of kind blessed ministering spirits,—the ecstatic look, rendering quite beautiful even the most homely face;—we are familiar with them all, they are transcripts from life.* And does Mr. Dickens mean all this as clap-trap, and is he one of those who build wiser than they know; or is this a manifestation of the other side of his dual nature—the inner man speaking from behind the mask which so often conceals us from others, and even from ourselves, and recognising the realities of the inner-world?

It would not be difficult to fill many pages with extracts from the various writings of Mr. Dickens, all tending to prove that while rejecting the common-place and grotesque manifestations of Spiritualism which came before him, he was not unwilling to entertain the subject in its higher aspects, and that he often unconsciously gave utterance to truths which are familiar to those who are acquainted with the teachings of Christian Spiritualism. I quote but one more passage in proof of this assertion. It occurs in the concluding paragraph of the touching story of the Poor Traveller in the Christmas number of *Household Words*, for 1854. It runs thus:—

“Spirit of my departed friend,” said he, “is it through thee these better thoughts are rising in my mind? Is it thou who hast thrown me, all the way I have been drawn to meet this man, the blessings of the altered time? Is it thou who has sent thy stricken mother to me to stay my angry hand? Is it from

* Take the following as an example. It is from the Diary of Mr. A. C. Swinton, of 5, Cambridge Road, The Junction, Kilburn, W., and is published in *Human Nature* for July, 1870. The Diary is for the present year.

“*March 29th.*—When in my bed chamber (at midnight) heard *birds singing* from the time I retired to rest till I fell asleep—raised myself in bed, and placed myself in several positions to test the accuracy of my senses, but the sweet singing continued just the same, though no bird is kept near us. Mrs. Knight, of 8, Cambridge Road, has heard similar singing in her own house, caused by our spirit-friends. Mrs. Shaw states that a delightful *perfume* pervaded her bedroom during the preceding night.”

“*April 15th* Shortly after this the *delicious scents of various flowers* were strongly diffused in the room and enjoyed by the whole circle. A. C. S. was informed that the scent became more apparent to us by the dissolving of the spirit-flowers in the atmosphere of the room.”

“*April 17th* Lights and the *forms of spirit friends* were seen in the darkened room.”

See also the letter of Mr. William Carpenter (the well-known author and journalist), in the *Spiritual Magazine*, Vol. IV., page 47, and Mrs. Crossland's *Light in the Valley*, pp. 201-203.

thee the whisper comes that this man did his duty as thou didst—and as I did through thy guidance, which has wholly saved me, here on earth—and that he did no more?" He sat down with his head buried in his hands, and when he rose up, made the second strong resolution of his life. That neither to the French officer, nor to the mother of his departed friend, nor to any soul while either of the two was living, would he breathe what only he knew. And when he touched that French officer's glass with his own, that day at dinner, he secretly forgave him in the name of the Divine Forgiver of injuries.

From this it will be seen that Mr. Dickens had familiarized himself with the idea so precious to Spiritualists, that the friends we have loved and lost on earth, may be permitted, from their spirit-home, to influence us for good at times when our minds are open to receive such influences. The death-bed scenes of Dickens are full of tender compassion, sweet philosophy, and the highest spiritual teaching. The "Child's Dream of a Star," written in an early number of *Household Words*, by the same loving hand that recorded the death of Little Nell, should be read by all who are able to refer to it. The idea of passing away from this world into a higher state of existence where, to use his own words, "the mists and obscurities of the ignorant present should be cleared up," was no new idea to him. He is said laughingly to have remarked to one of his intimate friends, that Death should never come and catch Charles Dickens unprepared. Let us hope that this was no idle boast, but that when, in the midst of the unfinished labours of a life spent in doing good, in loving mankind and working for them for four-and-thirty years, the Death Angel summoned him, he was ready to obey the call, "Come up hither!"—ready for the time he had anticipated when there should be written against his life the two words.—THE END.*

A re-perusal of the writings of Mr. Dickens would enable me to present many passages equally pertinent to my purpose with the foregoing; I have given those only which came most readily

* We give the conclusion of Mr. Dickens's Will, which is just published. It will be seen that in common with Spiritualists generally, he protests against the "revolting absurdity" of what is called "wearing mourning."

"I emphatically direct that I be buried in an inexpensive, unostentatious, and strictly private manner, that no public announcement be made of the time or place of my burial, that at the utmost not more than three plain mourning coaches be employed, and that those who attend my funeral wear no scarf, cloak, black bow, long hatband, or other such revolting absurdity. I direct that my name be inscribed in plain English letters on my tomb without the addition of 'Mr.' or 'Esquire.' I conjure my friends on no account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial, or testimonial whatever. I rest my claims to the remembrance of my country upon my published works, and to the remembrance of my friends upon their experience of me; in addition thereto I commit my soul to the mercy of God through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I exhort my dear children humbly to try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its broad spirit and to put no faith in any man's narrow construction of its letter here or there."

to mind, and will add only a short extract from one of his earlier writings, which, though it may be familiar to the reader, I cannot forbear to cite in this connection:—

It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would seem almost as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may these patient angels hover around us, watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered and so soon forgotten.

T. S.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE WAR.

AT one of the Conferences in Gower Street, in speaking of the character of spirit-teachings, Mr. D. D. Home made an observation, which at the present time may be worth recalling. He said, "I have been with those who can make war or preserve peace, and I know that the spirits through me have used what influence they had against war and in favour of peace." Alas! that this influence, like every influence exerted for the same end, should have proved so unsuccessful; that in this nineteenth century of a religion whose mission was "peace on earth," in the very heart of Christendom the two foremost nations on the Continent of Europe should be breathing against each other only threatenings and slaughter; that, while the kindly fruits of the earth are ripening for man's use, man himself should be preparing to lay waste the corn and wine and trample down the ample harvest which all-bounteous Heaven has provided; that "the eldest son of the Church"—the "Most Christian and Catholic Emperor," disregarding all considerations of religion and humanity, rejecting mediation, and following only too faithfully the traditions of his family, "having waited for four years, and fully completed his armament, is now ready to begin" for political and dynastic ends, and with all the appliances of modern science—a war the horrors of which no imagination can adequately paint, and the end of which no human foresight can determine. When, a little more than two years ago, the spirits, through a well-known medium, affirmed in London that before 1871 the Continent of Europe would be wrapped in all the horrors of war, the thing seemed so monstrous and incredible that probably none who heard the prophecy believed in its fulfilment. We cannot affirm with

Wordsworth that "Carnage is God's daughter," believing it to have a very different parentage, but we know that "God moves in a mysterious way," that "He maketh even the wrath of man to praise Him," that He is ever "out of evil still educing good;" and so we can trust that even out of this great evil and wickedness good may be educed.

RESCUED BY A CLAIRVOYANT.

The New Orleans *Daily Picayune* of June 3rd, gives the following incident:—

A few days since was related in this column the story of a young girl lying grievously ill and almost dying on Baronne Street. She had deserted her family and friends for a young man who abandoned her to strangers, betrayed her affections and embittered her life. There is something romantic connected with the discovery of her condition. Mrs. Ferris, a Spiritualist, residing at No. 194, Baronne Street, related to her friends that in her moments of trance she had frequently seen a sick girl, whose pitiable situation excited her compassion. The room in which she stayed, its furniture, the exact likeness of the inmate and the appearance of the house, were all described by the Spiritualist. So forcible an impression did it make upon her mind, that she called in several of her lady acquaintances, and stated to them that the evening before, this sick girl appeared to her in an attitude so beseeching that her sympathies were excited beyond restraint. Looking at her and her surroundings attentively, she perceived that the woman having her in charge was actually making grave clothes while yet the patient lived; that she had prepared a bath in which, even before life was extinct, she was to be immersed preparatory for the tomb. Interested at this information, the ladies determined to visit the house and make inquiries. The residence was so accurately described by the medium that it was impossible to miss it, and on arriving there, they enquired if a sick lady occupied one of the rooms of the house. They were answered in the affirmative, and being shown to the apartment, found that the information of Mrs. Ferris was in every point correct. The girl was there, sick, wretched, and apparently dying, and in the same room was the nurse, engaged in making her shroud. Of course, such a condition of things could not be tolerated. They at once informed the police, and steps were immediately taken to have the girl conveyed to the Charity Hospital where she now is. The pitiful story of her flight and ruin, detailed in a previous issue, was learned from her own lips. The kind treatment she is now receiving and the attention of capable physicians are gradually restoring her life, and little doubt now remains that she will eventually recover.

Whatever may be said of mediums in the abstract, Mrs. Ferris has illustrated in this instance a kindly Christian charity which has rescued a human being from death, and built up in her heart a longing for a purer life, which if it do no more, will cherish at least this single virtue.

JAPANESE MEDIUMS.

Mr. A. B. Mitford in an article entitled, "A Ride through Yedo," in the May number of the *Fortnightly Review* writes:—

"The class of diviners called Ichiko, profess to give tidings of the dead or of those who have gone to distant countries. The Ichiko exactly corresponds to the spirit-medium of the West. The trade is followed by women, of from 15 to 16, to some 50

years of age, who walk about the streets carrying on their backs a divining box about a foot square ; they have no shop or stall, but wander about and are invited into their customers' houses. The ceremony of divination is very simple—a porcelain bowl filled with water is placed upon a tray, and the customer having written the name of the person with whom he wishes to hold communion on a long slip of paper rolls it into a spill, which he dips into the water and thrice sprinkles the Ichiko, or medium. She, resting her elbow upon her divining box and leaning her head upon her hand, mutters prayers and incantations until she has summoned the soul of the dead or absent person, which takes possession of her and answers questions through her mouth. The prophecies which the Ichiko utters during her trance are held in high esteem by the superstitious and vulgar."

REV. O. PRESCOTT HILLER.

Mr. Hiller, Minister of the New Jerusalem Church, Cross Street, Hatton Garden, died on the 11th May, in his 56th year. Like most Swedenborgians he was a vehement opponent of Spiritualism, holding with ludicrous inconsistency that what was right for Swedenborg was wrong for everybody else. Strange to say in his latter years, he became an involuntary medium, and a variety of remarkable manifestations occurred in his presence. Indeed some of his friends ventured to predict that he might live to rival T. L. Harris—to him an especial *bête noire*. It may not be generally known that the Rev. Samuel Noble, one of Mr. Hiller's predecessors in Cross Street, was also subject to unsolicited attentions from the other world. Apart from his unfortunate sectarianism, Mr. Hiller was singularly estimable—simple as a child, fearless in matters of conscience, and tender-hearted exceedingly. The church in Cross Street now owned by the Swedenborgians is the place where Edward Irving first became famous.

THE PHENOMENON OF MUSIC.

The *Present Age* gives the following narrative from "a correspondent occupying a superior social position. 'Since the loss of a beloved parent I have almost daily heard music not to be accounted for in any other way than through the agency of the unseen. Sometimes like wind instruments, sometimes like voices singing and the words distinctly heard, but only to myself. They are usually heard at sunset and through the evening, often in early morning. No instruments of music are

in the room, and usually favourite airs of my father are heard. An original melody was heard more than once, and which I may possibly publish, having arranged it as a song. Two of the airs I attribute to my mother, who died when I was quite a child, but who taught them to me. One I attribute to an uncle, who had a beautiful high tenor voice; and the rest to my father, who was passionately fond of those airs. Some of them are very old and little known out of our own family, having descended from an ancestor who was very musical. Thought reading is quite evident, the music being changed constantly according to desire.'"

THE HERMITS.*

Mr. Kingsley's book on "The Hermits" is one of "The Sunday Library" series, and is good reading of its kind, whether for Sunday or working-day. The opening chapters on Saints Antony, Paul, Hilarion, Simeon Stylites, and other Hermits, are mainly or entirely translations of biographies by Athanasius, Jerome, Theodoret, Antony, and others. Mr. Kingsley warns his readers "against one modern mistake,"—"the theory, namely, that these biographies were written as religious romances, edifying but not historical; to be admired but not believed." He tells us, that "the lives of these, and most other saints (certainly those in this volume), were written by men who believed the stories themselves, after such inquiry into the facts as they deemed necessary; who knew that others would believe them; and who intended that they should do so: and the stories were believed accordingly, and taken as matter of fact for the most practical purposes by the whole of Christendom." And yet these biographies are full of stories affirming every kind of prodigy, miracle, and marvel: and are so full of such stories as to turn the biographies into the thinnest rags if they are taken out of them. Mr. Kingsley deals with the problem in a section, occurring oddly enough, in the middle of the book. We say "*deals with*" the problem: but this is too dignified a phrase for the fact. After telling us that these biographies are of almost priceless value, taking the trouble to translate them for us into good English, and saying that they were written to be believed, he coolly says, in effect, that they are a parcel of lies and are by no means to be believed: and in casting about for something pleasant to say about the Hermits and their biographers, all he can do is, to say that the Hermits were good men, and that their biographers meant well and did not mean to tell lies. The book contains 335 pages: the

* *The Hermits*. By the Rev. CHARLES KINGSLEY. London: MACMILLAN & Co.

section on "Prodigies" covers 20, and is about as unsatisfactory as anything could be. The only rational explanation offered of some of the "Prodigies" (and this can only refer to some of them) is, that the Hermits so reduced their strength and deranged their nervous system by their "training," that they became the victims of delirium and insanity. For the rest, Mr. Kingsley lays down a very comical canon as to evidence. He says, "There is as much evidence in favour of these hermits' miracles and visions, as there is, with most men, of the existence of China:" then, he adds, "But the truth is, that evidence, in most matters of importance, is worth very little!" He believes that people (except "a very few") do not see what they see, but only what they think they ought to see or would like to see. He goes on to say that "in all evidence, the fewer witnesses, the more truth, because the evidence of ten men is worth more than that of a hundred together; and the evidence of a thousand men together is worth still less." And this is the nonsense which Mr. Kingsley offers to explain the "prodigies" of the Hermit age and the marvels of "spirit-rapping." Why does he not add—that it will also explain the raising of Lazarus, the feeding of the five thousand, and other "facts," which Mr. Kingsley knows are very devoutly believed in, in spite of the suspicious number of witnesses! To these miracles of the New Testament, Mr. Kingsley refers, as it were by chance, towards the end of the book, devoting just a page and a half to this most important question! and all he can say is—"Look at the two styles of writing:—the style of the Evangelists and the style of Reginald." Just as though a question of "style" could settle the value of testimony! But if the style of Reginald is tawdry, what does Mr. Kingsley say about the style of Athanasius, who wrote the life of Saint Anthony? That he praises at the beginning of the book, but seems to forget the fact at the end.

We do not wish to shock either Mr. Kingsley or any who are of his way of thinking; but simply to test his theory of the value of evidence, we ask this question—Wherein lies the special value of the evidence for the ascension of Christ? It is said that eleven men, (of whom we know next to nothing), once saw Christ ascend into the clouds. A similar number of men (of whom we know a great deal) say that they have several times seen Mr. Home ascend up to the ceiling. Mr. Kingsley says:—Men "make each other believe" these "prodigies." Granted: but wherein lies the special value of the testimony received at second-hand from Peter, Andrew, James, John, and others, over the testimony of Lord Dunraven, Viscount Adare, S. C. Hall, Wm. Howitt, and others? This question, of course, would shock many good people; and the only answer given would be the very absurd one,—

"What blasphemy, to compare Jesus Christ with Mr. Home!" We beg to submit that we do nothing of the kind. We are asking a question about the value of evidence, and we offer Mr. Kingsley the use of these pages if he will favour us with an answer. We believe that his section on "prodigies" is pure nonsense, and that its assertions tell as much against the Bible "prodigies" as against any others. Mr. Kingsley categorically denies the "prodigies" of the biographies of the Hermits, and says in effect, that modern believers in "Spiritualism" are simply excited fools. We do not deny it; but we respectfully ask Mr. Kingsley to tell us whether *any* evidence is of use to prove anything in this world, and wherein consists the special value of the evidence in favour of Bible "prodigies." We are quite ready to believe in any number of "prodigies," if they can be proved. Our difficulty is not to know when to believe but when to stop.—*The Truthseeker*.

THE ONE GREAT MIRACLE OF HISTORY.

"The longer I live the more I settle down to the conviction that *the* one great miracle of history is, that a system of ethics so far in advance as was the Christian System, not only of the semi-barbarism of Jewish life 1800 years ago, but of what we term the civilization of our own day, should have taken root, and lived, and spread, where every opinion seemed adverse and every influence hostile."—ROBERT DALE OWEN: *Letter to the Hon. Horace Greely*, "*The Tribune*," March 12, 1860.

A REMARKABLE TEST.

The following remarkable test is given in the *Banner of Light* on the authority of Mr. Harvey E. Stoddard, of East Calais, Vermont:—

"On the 9th of Nov., 1857, T. P. Wheeler, a young man of about 20 years, I think, shot himself. Perley Ainsworth, his most intimate friend, was by his side in a few minutes, but he was senseless. Within a few years Ainsworth has become a medium, and about one year since, while in a circle, was controlled by what claimed to be the spirit of Wheeler, who said he could not say much to him then, but would tell him something of interest at some subsequent time.

"On the 29th of May, 1869, while in a circle, Ainsworth was again entranced by Wheeler, who said, 'I have now come as I told you I would. The night before I shot myself, I wrote a letter to you, which I put into a phial and buried in the ground where you found my body. Now I wish you to take some friends

with you in the morning for witnesses, and go there and dig it up, and keep it, and don't be afraid.'

"The next morning Ainsworth took seven good witnesses with him, and went and dug and found the bottle as had been promised. It is to be born in mind that eleven years had elapsed, and the ground was covered with a heavy growth of briar bushes. This bottle was corked tight, and put in the ground cork end down, and in it they found a letter from which we make the following extracts:—

“‘East Calais, Nov. 8, 1857.

“‘Well Parley I have thought it all over and have made up my mind that I have lived as long as I wish to live here on earth: I have thought it all over and I cant see any thing that looks bright to me here. I have wanted to see you all day long but I could not bear to tell you my mind. I thought I would write a few words to you eaven if I never have a chance to give them to you I have thought over for most a year now but I nevrer made up my mind till last knight . . . So Parley do not wish me to stay. . . You and mother are all the friends I feel I have got. . . I have given up seeing you. I shall carry these lines in my pocket and put them where they will be safe, so farewell.

“‘T. P. WHEELER.’”

It is added that Ainsworth the medium in this case, is well known as a man of truth, with a character above reproach.

WHERE IS THE REPORT OF THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY?

This is the question which many people are asking, but to which no one seems prepared to give a satisfactory reply. Has this Report, which was to settle the question of Spiritualism, only unsettled the Dialectical Society—causing, as we learn, some of its principal officers and members to secede from it on finding that the investigations of the Committee pointed in a different way to what they anticipated, and to which they had committed themselves?

People ask—Have the Committee come to no opinion on the subject, or have they too many opinions? If they can come to no conclusion, would it not be better to simply publish the facts they have witnessed, and the evidence they have taken (giving witnesses the opportunity to correct their evidence that they may not be mis-reported, as they were in the newspapers), and leaving the public to form its own conclusions.

It was announced some months ago that the Committee had given in its Report (including the reports of the sub-committees) to the Society. Why then is it not published? What is the

Society about? "Why are the wheels of its chariot so long in coming?" People in many quarters are looking for this long promised Report; and we take the liberty to remind the Dialectical Society of that fact, for, "peradventure, it sleepeth, and must be awakened."

SPIRITUALISM AND MEN OF SCIENCE.

Mr. Cromwell F. Varley, in a letter to the editor of the *Spiritualist*, writes:—

If you happen to know of any intelligent persons who, after a careful examination of spiritual phenomena, have failed to be convinced of the fact that these phenomena are connected in some way with departed spirits, I should be much obliged if you would give me their names and addresses, that I may ascertain why they have arrived at their conclusions.

I do not know a single instance. But I *do* know of numbers who, though thoroughly convinced, have not courage to speak out, and thereby incur the ridicule of those hosts who blindly follow popular prejudice.

The editor of the *Spiritualist* in a foot note remarks on this:

All the philosophically educated people known to us, who have investigated Spiritualism, have become believers without an exception, and in the list are included some members of the Institution of Civil Engineers, of the Royal and other learned Societies, and editors of standard scientific journals. Many such investigators are so situated that they say they cannot, for the sake of their wives and families, risk their professional reputation by speaking out as they wish to do.

And in reference to a passage in Mr. Crookes' article on "Spiritualism viewed by the Light of Modern Science," he observes:—

We do not "complain of the hostile attitude of science." If the majority of scientific men choose to deny that certain natural phenomena take place, that is their business and not ours. Mr. Crookes over-estimates the importance of scientific men; they have no power to stop the spreading of accurate knowledge of this subject among the public; and as such knowledge is diffused, respect for some of the "scientific men" who have written letters on Spiritualism without investigating it, falls to the lowest ebb. When one or other of them "speaks with authority," after little or no investigation, be it remembered that his right to take this tone has never been admitted. Courtesy and aid are given to those who sufficiently love truth to ask for facilities to see the phenomena, but this is done to oblige them, and not because they are recognised as the great authorities which they often assume themselves to be. Scientific men may take what "attitudes" they like, and Spiritualists will look on with much amusement at their posture-making. The *facts* of Spiritualism are plenty strong enough to make them in a year or two leave off "attitudinizing," and to look out pretty briskly after their own reputations, in place of gymnastic performances. These remarks do not apply to the *few* philosophers in the scientific world who thoroughly investigate a temporarily unpopular subject first, and express opinions about it afterwards. Should any scientific societies write and ask for facilities for the investigation of Spiritualism, very likely our leading men will take the subject into favourable consideration, and perhaps grant the boon, though doing so would involve much inconvenience and trouble. With all its faults, the scientific world is more free from bigotry and intolerance than many other sections of society, and we do not think it will be very long before it undertakes a serious and fair investigation of Spiritualism, such as some of its leading members are now making privately.

FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE ETERNAL.

"I must confess, as the experience of my own soul, that the expectation of loving my friends in heaven principally kindles my love to them on earth. If I thought that I should never know, and consequently never love them after this life, I should number them with temporal things, and love them as such; but I now delightfully converse with my pious friends in a firm persuasion that I shall converse with them for ever; and I take comfort in those that are dead or absent, believing that I shall shortly meet them in heaven, and love them with a heavenly love."—*Richard Baxter*.

THE "SEERESS OF PREVORST" AND SPIRIT-WRITING.

In the German edition of the "Seeress of Prevorst," by Dr. Justinus Kerner, there is a specimen of the writing of the spirit-world into which Frederica Hauffe (the *Seherinn von Prevorst*) was admitted, and which she wrote while in her trance state. This plate was shown by the late Rev. Dr. Eliakim Phelps to his son, while in one of his singular states of suffering, when he took the book and cried out in astonishment, "Who wrote those characters? They are the symbols of great thoughts—thoughts that I have no words to express." His father asked him "if he could not give him some idea of these symbols? After thinking, his son replied, "No; they transcend all our ideas."—*George Wood*.

THE WELSH FASTING GIRL.

The father and mother have both been found guilty of manslaughter, in not having provided food for the poor girl during the watching of the nurses. It is certain that they did not provide food, but the verdict of the jury and the sentence of the judge assume as a fact that the previous alleged fasting was a fraud, because it is impossible for human beings to live long without food. No proof was even attempted that the girl had been fed during any part of the two years, but judge and jury, and counsel on both sides, with the exception of Mr. Michael, all quietly assumed that she must have been fed regularly during all that time, or that she would have died before. On this part of the case the poor parents were as good as convicted before they were put on their trial, by the charge of the judge to the grand jury. The judge made no scruple in telling the grand jury to find a true bill, on the ground that she must have been

fed, and that no one could live without food, and that when she was watched she of course died. So that the real point of the case was decided by the judge before the trial, and even Evan Jacob's counsel, Mr. Bowen, did not put the case higher than that she must have been fed, but that she was a night feeder, and might have got food without the father's knowledge.

So the jury had little else to do but to find a verdict which leaves all the interest of the question unsettled, and consigns the poor parents to gaol and hard labour for twelve and six months, because they had a child afflicted with cataleptic hysteria, who could not eat. Mr. Giffard, Q.C., well represented the Government and the public voice when he declared that if 40,000 doctors affirmed the possibility of living long without food, his own common sense would enable him to disbelieve them. The alleged fraud is left further from proof than ever, and all the probabilities are in favour of the poor parents' entire honesty.

MR. DISRAELI ON A FUTURE LIFE.

In his new novel, Mr. Disraeli makes "Lothair," the hero, indulge in the following reflections:—"Life would be perfect, if it would only last, but it will not last; and what then? He could not reconcile interest in this life with the conviction of another and an eternal one. It seemed to him that, with such a conviction, man could only have one thought and one occupation—the future, and preparation for it. With such a conviction, what they called reality appeared to him more vain and nebulous than the scenes and sights of sleep. And he had that conviction; at least he had it once. Had he it now? Yes; he had it now, but modified, perhaps, in detail. He was not so confident as he was a few months ago that he could be ushered by a Jesuit from his death-bed to the society of St. Michael and all the angels. There might be long processes of initiation—intermediate states of higher probation and refinement. There might be a horrible and apathetic pause. When millions of ages appeared to be necessary to mature the crust of a rather insignificant planet, it might be presumption in man to assume that his soul, though immortal, was to reach its final destination, regardless of all the influences of space and time. And the philosophers and distinguished men of science, with whom of late he had frequently enjoyed the opportunity of becoming acquainted, what were their views? They differed among themselves: did any of them agree with him? How they accounted for everything except the only point on which man requires revelation! Chance, necessity, atomic theories, nebular hypotheses, development,

evolution, the origin of the worlds, human ancestry—here were high topics on none of which was there lack of argument; and, in a certain sense, of evidence; and what then?"

DR. NEWTON.

DR. NEWTON AT DR. BURNS' CHAPEL.

WE make the following extract from a letter describing what the writer observed at Dr. Burns' Chapel. Who could think that the accounts which appeared in the newspapers were of the same occurrences as the writer here describes? It is lamentable to think of the absolute dishonesty of the Press in thus pandering to the prejudices of the day.

June 29th.—I went yesterday to see Dr. Newton exercising his wonderful gift of healing, Dr. Burns having most kindly allowed him to use his chapel for that purpose. We reached the chapel early and found a few people waiting outside. In a short time the door was opened and we went in with the others. There were many people inside, lookers on, and many waiting to be healed. We went into a pew that was near the pulpit, where Dr. Newton was standing, and with him was Dr. Burns in his black gown. Mr. Ridley was also there. The poor unfortunate people were of all ages, old grey-headed men and women, young people and children, and some babies in arms; and as they passed along to the Doctor we had every opportunity of seeing what sufferers they were—some were lame, some deaf, some blind, some were more or less paralyzed, and I am sure that with few exceptions they were all relieved. One poor woman, who, Dr. Burns said (and I suppose he may be believed although Dr. Newton is not), had been bed-ridden for four years, was very quickly made to walk, and after she had rested for a short time, I saw her get up and walk down the aisle, merely supporting herself a little by placing her hands on the sides of the pews as she passed along. A poor man was with her, and to see his honest expression of delight and astonishment, and then tears filling his eyes as he watched her, was most affecting. Several children whose feet and legs were done up in bandages, &c., were wonderfully restored, and they walked away without either irons or bandages. One man took a child, blind, and with its eyes turned back—the moment Dr. Newton saw it, he knew it was a case that he could do nothing with, and so he told the man, who immediately broke

out into the most violent abuse of the Doctor. I think he must have gone for that purpose; at any rate his behaviour was most shameful, and ultimately he had to be turned out of the chapel. Of course this created great confusion amongst us all, but the good Doctor stood perfectly calm with the most loving expression on his face. He was a picture of a grand old apostle ready to die for his belief. The contrast between the two was wonderful—one white with rage, screaming out, “Impostor, blasphemer, swindler”—the other so calm, saying “I am sorry for that poor man, I love that poor brother.” I felt afraid that such a scene and influence would interfere with the good work, but I don’t think it did, for after a few words from Dr. Burns everything went on as it had done before the interruption. We remained till 12 o’clock, and I need not say how very much pleased I was, and how certain I was that Dr. Newton had a most marvellous gift, equal to many other great healers of whom I have read. His manner is most calm and comforting, so tender with the little children—he is the embodiment of love and benevolence.

To-day I went again, and at twenty minutes past the time, I found myself standing in a broiling sun outside the chapel—in the midst of the “lame, the halt and the blind,” and also amongst a fearfully low set of men. I felt rather nervous, but somehow or other I could not go away, so I stood among some poor respectable women, and we talked, and watched the crowd trying to push into the chapel every time the door was opened. There were no policemen present, and I could see that it was with the greatest difficulty that Dr. Burns could prevent his chapel being taken by storm. It was the men who behaved so badly, the women were very serious and quite ready to believe. One woman said to me that if Christ were to go into such a crowd, He would not be believed in; another said if it were known what we were talking about we should be torn to pieces. I told them what I had seen the day before, and interested them very much—one of them, however, saying that the papers said he was a swindler, and I told her the papers dare not speak the truth, neither did they understand the subject. By this time a few decent men had arrived, one of whom thought he knew everything, but I thought he knew nothing. He said that Dr. Newton was a Yankee swindler, and that he could not cure; that people were much worse after he had pretended to make them better; that the poor woman whose case I mentioned to you was an impostor; and that Dr. Newton and Dr. Burns had got up the case, and that the way he treated females was scandalous and disgusting, and a great deal more to the same purpose. I stood and listened till I could bear it no longer, for

had I heard much more I must have spoken, so I moved away and left him and his falsehoods. Then came a man distributing papers. I took two, as I did not know whether they were favourable or not; but as the first words I saw were "Great Imposition," I threw them down and I had the satisfaction of seeing others torn up and thrown away. All this time the poor people were passing into the chapel with great difficulty, and as I was becoming very much fatigued with standing so long, and seeing the utter impossibility of getting inside, I walked round to the front where the crowd was much greater but more orderly. I stood there a little time, and saw many of the healed as they passed along, and some who had not derived any benefit. One man, whose little child was walking and who could not walk when she was taken there, met with some hearty abuse for allowing her to put her feet down, but he looked quite satisfied that his child was better, and was indifferent to their taunts and abuse.

I have not told you anything of the Doctor's mode of cure, as I suppose you know it already. E. W.

DR. NEWTON IN THE PROVINCES.—THE PRESS.

Dr. Newton has lately spent part of his time in making short visits into the provinces, where, as in London, his success in free public healing has been very great, and where he has been treated with more public respect. The provincial Press has not been so rampant and outrageous in its falsehoods concerning him as the London Press. In the provinces the facts come more within the observations of the general public, and the truth in regard to them can be more readily ascertained, which is a salutary check. In the metropolis this is not so easy, and the public are too busy and too indifferent to take much pains in investigating for themselves, and so the Press becomes reckless from the impunity with which it exercises its irresponsible power, and in all matters relating to Spiritualism, partly from ignorance and partly from wilfulness, it has acquired the habit of uttering falsehood till the virulent poison has, as it were, become infectious in the blood, and it "can tell lies would make Quevedos stare," and drive ignorant bigots to acts of menace, if not of violence, and prevent the afflicted poor from having opportunities of being freely healed. This, too, in the name of "common sense" and "religion," and the "enlightenment of the nineteenth century!"

This desperate disease in the heart of the Press requires even a more potent healer than Dr. Newton to effect its cure.

HOW FAR ARE DR. NEWTON'S CURES PERMANENT?

To obtain further data as to the authenticity and permanency of the cures reported to be effected by Dr. Newton, the editor of the *Spiritualist* addressed a circular to seventy-two of the patients living in or near London, inquiring as to the truth and permanency of their alleged cure. Six of these circulars were returned through the Dead-Letter Office, the address being either wrong or insufficient; and in two cases a wrong name was given to the patient. Out of the remaining 64, only 14 replies were received; of these 12 affirm the relief or cure to be permanent, one asserts that it is not so, and one simply answers "not cured;" but as in the latter case the report said she was only relieved, not cured, the answer adds nothing to our information. It may seem strange that less than one-fourth of those addressed should have returned a reply, especially if their permanent cure had been really effected. Perhaps the dread of publicity and of the suspicion and ridicule they might incur may partly explain this. Anyhow, it is quite consonant with our experience of human nature that it should be so. The Divine Healer asked—"Were there not ten lepers cleansed, but where are the nine?" Only one out of ten returned to give glory to God, for their cure from so foul and terrible a disease as leprosy; and doubtless he was jeered at and denounced as an "accomplice of the impostor," by the representatives of the *Daily Telegraph*, *Echo*, and *Saturday Review*, of that day.

The following are the cases of permanent relief referred to:—

George Richards, 58, Earl Street, East Lisson Grove, farrier. Respecting this case we have received the following letter:—"8, Upper Capland Street, Grove Road, St. John's Wood. Sir,—On behalf of Mr. G. Richards, of 58, Earl Street, Edgware Road, in reply to your note of the 15th inst., I beg to say it was entirely my persuasion that induced him to see Dr. Newton, and I am glad to state that the relief he derived from the treatment by that gentleman is permanent, and the cure effected is of a very remarkable nature. It was a case of paralysis, he having been afflicted by the same for three years, during which time he could not close his hand, and very frequently the pains in his hand and arm were such that to rest was quite impossible. He can now close his hand, and has experienced no pain whatever since his treatment by Dr. Newton. He has been under five medical gentlemen, to one of whom he has shown his case since cured by Dr. Newton. He was very much astonished, and also acknowledged his belief in the cure. Mr. Richards wished me not to mention any names of the medical gentleman in this reply, as he is satisfied they did their best, and he earnestly requests me to assure you that he shall ever feel grateful to Dr. Newton for the benefit he has derived by his visit to this country.—I am, on behalf of Mr. G. Richards, very truly yours.—JOHN TOMLIN."

Ellen Short, Chestnut Walk, Walthamstow, Essex. "Contracted paralysis," for eight months. Permanently relieved, but not cured.

Edwin Cowper, 388, Edgware Road. Lame, and obliged to use crutches for five years. The power given by Dr. Newton to walk without crutches still continues, but leg still weak. Has received benefit also from Mrs. Olive's healing mediumship.

Henry Williams, 25, Warburton Street, Mare Street, Hackney. "I can see better than I could."

W. Elliott, 103, Haggerstone Road, N.E. Deafness of one ear for forty years. Can still hear with the cured ear nearly as well as with the other.

Jabez Thurgood, 7, Nelson Buildings, Remington Street, City Road, wholesale butter dealer. Not completely cured of blindness of one eye, as stated, but can see better with it.

H. D. Jencken, barrister-at-law, Kilmorey House, Penge. We have received the following letter:—Sir,—In reply to your circular respecting the cure effected upon me by Dr. Newton, I have but to re-state what I have already publicly said—namely, that owing to the injuries I had received in Spain, the vision of the left eye had become impaired. I consulted with my brother, Dr. Jencken, who appeared to think that I was suffering from a pseudo astigmatism, a form of disease very difficult to cure; the symptoms commencing, as was the case with me, with double vision and coloured field of view. The cure effected by Dr. Newton was very rapid, and after he had mesmerised me a second time, the eye entirely recovered its power of sight.—Obediently yours, H. D. JENCKEN.—27 June, 1870."

H. Wooderson, "King's Arms," Hampton Court. Eczema. Cure permanent.

Mr. Browning, Great Yarmouth Villas, College Avenue, Hackney. Cancer, stiff-knee, and other ailments. Not out of bed for two months, and after treatment by Dr. Newton, had his pains removed, and could take a daily airing in the garden for a fortnight. Is now bad again, but very considerably better than before he saw Dr. Newton. The cancer is decreasing.

George Huckle, 18, Great James Street, Bedford Row, builder, the Conservative who was indignant at the abuse of Dr. Newton in *The Standard* newspaper, writes:—"June 21st, 1870. Sir,—In answer to your note of June 15th, I am happy to say that I have not had a pain in my hip-joint since I was under Dr. Newton. There's still a weakness in the leg, arising, I think, from the leaders in my leg being drawn up, and the leg is and has been only about two-thirds the size of the left leg. As I told you, I have had the disease in it for five years, and it was still getting worse. I am thankful that I went to Dr. Newton. I have been under medical treatment by my family doctor, and I have been to St. Bartholomew's, King's College, and Royal Free Hospitals, and never got any relief from the pain.—Wishing Dr. Newton every success in his good work, I am, yours respectfully.—G. HUCKLE."

Sarah Cole, 25, Warburton Road, London Fields. Nearly blind of both eyes, and could only just see to dress her children. The cure is permanent and complete; she can now thread needles and read newspapers. The doctors had previously told her that her complaint was "constitutional." She had been treated at the Ophthalmic Hospital in Moorfields, and by Dr. Simmonds, of Hackney, but received no benefit. For ten months before seeing Dr. Newton her eyes had been growing worse; they were very much inflamed, and throbbed with pain incessantly. Wore a sunshade when she went to Dr. Newton, because she could not bear the light. Dr. Newton cured her *instantaneously*, and in walking home she had no pain, no inflammation, no dimness, no sunshade. Her cure is obvious to all who know her. She says—"This I *know*, before I went to Dr. Newton I was nearly blind, but now I see." Her husband also attests the truth of these statements, and has sent us his signature appended thereunto.

John Palmer, 285, Gray's Inn Road, refreshment-house keeper, writes—"285, Gray's Inn Road. Sir,—In answer to your desire to hear from me with relation to my experience of Dr. Newton's treatment for deafness, I beg to say my hearing is considerably improved in consequence of visiting Dr. Newton. As a proof I tried several times previously to visiting Dr. Newton to hear the ticking of my watch, but could not do so; but to my great surprise, and no less satisfaction, ever since the Doctor has treated me, I have been able to do so. In conclusion, I would say my deafness is of twenty-five years' standing, and I was a good deal sceptical as to getting any relief, and in all honesty I will say though not cured, I am a good deal better, for which I am obligated to Dr. Newton.—Yours, most sincerely.—JOHN PALMER."

“SPIRITUALISM VIEWED BY THE LIGHT OF
MODERN SCIENCE, BY WM. CROOKES, F.R.S.”

MR. CROOKES has published an interesting paper in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* with the above title ; but it would be better if he had said, “viewed by the light of William Crookes, F.R.S.,” because there are several points in it which we should be unwilling to put upon modern science as represented at this day. To a great extent no doubt Mr. Crookes is correct, but we hope modern science does not go altogether in one way, even on the subject of Spiritualism.

The earlier part of his article is the best, for in it Mr. Crookes manfully pledges his name and deserved reputation in the scientific world to this, namely, “that certain physical phenomena, such as the movement of material substances, and the production of sounds, resembling electric discharges, occur under circumstances in which they cannot be explained by any physical law at present known, is a fact of which I am as certain as I am of the most elementary fact in chemistry. My whole scientific education has been one long lesson in exactness of observation, and I wish it to be distinctly understood that this firm conviction is the result of most careful investigation.” So far this is bold and true, and nothing can be better. The next is equally good when he says that “I cannot at present hazard even the most vague hypothesis as to the cause of the phenomena.”

Mr. Crookes also very properly complains of Faraday for having committed himself by saying, “Before we proceed to consider any question involving physical principles, we should set out with clear ideas of the naturally possible and impossible.” Mr. Crookes justly observes that “this appears like reasoning in a circle. We are to investigate nothing till we know it to be possible, whilst we cannot say what is impossible, outside pure mathematics, till we know everything.”

But here our unqualified praises must terminate, for having boldly stated his facts, and that he cannot hazard even the most vague hypothesis as to their cause, and complained so truly of Faraday’s inconsistency, he proceeds throughout the remainder of the article to do exactly what he complains of in Faraday. One would think that, as he confesses that he has not the most vague idea of the cause of the phenomena, he would be most careful not to prejudge the cause or the power, or the mode or the extent by or to which they are possible. On the contrary, he lays down the rule, not only that no observations are of much use to the student of science unless they are truthful, but that they must be under test conditions, which he afterwards proceeds to lay down. This last is what we complain of, because

it begs the whole question, and interposes conditions of his own to the occurrence of phenomena as to the cause of which he has not, as he admits, the most vague idea. Here is his modest example, which contains all Faraday's error in an aggravated form:—

“The Spiritualist tells of bodies weighing 50 or 100 lbs. being lifted in the air without the intervention of any known force; but the scientific chemist is accustomed to use a balance which will render sensible a weight so small, that it would take 10,000 of them to weigh one grain. He is, therefore, justified in asking that a power professing to be guided by intelligence, which will toss a heavy body to the ceiling, shall also cause his delicately poised balance to move under test conditions.”

Mr. Crookes certainly assumes too much in this. How does he know that some quality or part, not more than a millionth of one of his test conditions, may not be the disturbing element to make the whole impossible, or supposing, as he puts it, that the power being guided by intelligence, this intelligence should just say to itself, “Well no, I think I won't do it in that way, or at this time;” or suppose that the balance ought to have been made of platinum instead of brass, or of plumbago instead of steel, or of a metal composed of all four, with one hundred and fifty other articles all mixed up together and boiled in a child's caul with half a dozen rats' tails? All this of course is possible in a case of which we have predicated that we cannot hazard even the most vague hypothesis. Or take another of Mr. Crookes' requirements of test conditions:—

“The Spiritualist tells of tapping sounds produced in different parts of a room. The scientific experimenter is entitled to ask that these taps shall be produced on the stretched membrane of his phonautograph.” We don't happen to know anything about a phonautograph, but the name of it is not a pretty one, and suppose that the raps should say they would rap on anything else, but not on that. Again—“The Spiritualist tells of rooms and houses being shaken, even to injury, by super-human power. The man of science *merely* (!) asks for a pendulum to be set vibrating when it is in a glass case and supported by solid masonry”—suppose that the glass as being a non-conductor should stop the whole conditions, or that the index were of some material that opposed an insuperable bar; or suppose, in fact, that as we know nothing of the cause, or of any one of the conditions, that we have one too few, or twenty-five too many, how then?

All these difficulties, come of “modern science” imposing conditions of its own to influence unknown causes or to produce unknown effects, and we should strongly recommend it and its professors to quietly and patiently observe and register facts, and as many conditions or fancied conditions as they can detect,

or think they can detect, and to wait, if necessary for fifty years for whatever result may be found to cover the most of them. The wiser part of the believers is content to act in this way, so far as they do not find the ground firm under them, and a less scientific attitude should not be taken up by modern science.

Mr. Crookes is the editor of the *Chemical News*, and also, we understand, one of the editors of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, in which his article appears, and he was formerly editor of the *British Journal of Photography*. He is recognised as one of the most accurate observers possessed by the Royal Society, and it was he who discovered the new metal, "thallium," by the aid of spectrum analysis. It required therefore the exercise of some honesty and courage to risk his present high scientific reputation by his uncompromising assertion of the occurrence of facts which we have been told on high scientific authority cannot possibly happen. We should have been glad had he told his scientific brethren a little more of the facts which have already come under his knowledge, and which all observers must know,—such, for instance, as that the sounds and motions to which he testifies spell intelligent messages, as demonstrated by observation, entirely apart from any theory or hypothesis. Probably this, and much else of value, he reserves for a fuller statement after he has given the subject a more extended investigation.

In reference to his article there has been addressed to Mr. Crookes the following—

LETTER FROM MR. C. F. VARLEY, C.E.

"Fleetwood House, Beckenham, Kent,
"July 11, 1870.

"My dear Sir,—I am much obliged to you for your article, 'Spiritualism Viewed by the Light of Modern Science,' in which you appeal to those of your 'readers who may possess the key to these strange phenomena' to assist you. I see that on page 317 you admit freely and fully the *physical phenomena of Spiritualism*.

"It is now more than 12 years since I first became acquainted with spiritual phenomena, and for a long time I endeavoured to ascertain something definite about the laws governing the production of the physical manifestations, but up to this time my evidence is almost entirely negative. In the absence of positive evidence, negative is useful, in limiting the ground over which one has to search, in a measure, in the dark.

"I have scarcely ever been able to induce mediums, through whom the physical phenomena occur, to consent to sit for accurate investigation. In 1867, Miss Kate Fox, the well-known American medium, agreed to sit with me in New York during a series of

investigations into the relations between the known physical forces and the spiritual. Miss Fox, you are doubtless aware, is the medium through whom the modern spiritual manifestations were first produced in the United States, and through her mediumship the most striking physical phenomena I have ever heard of were witnessed by my friends Dr. Gray, a leading physician in New York, and by Mr. C. Livermore, the banker, both of them shrewd, clear-headed men.

"During my investigations, Mr. Livermore and Mr. and Mrs. Townsend sat with us; Mr. Townsend is a New York solicitor, at whose house the meetings of the circle were held. A Grove's battery of four cells, a helix eighteen inches in diameter, electromagnets, and other descriptions of apparatus were procured by me. The plan of action was as follows:—I was to go through a series of experiments, and the intelligences or 'spirits'—as they are usually, and I think properly called—were to narrate what they saw, and if possible to explain the analogies existing between the forces I was dealing with, and those which they employ. We sat eight or nine times for this purpose, but although great efforts seemed to be made by the spirits present to convey to my mind what they saw, it was unintelligible to me. The only positive results obtained were the following:—As we sat in the dark, and the manifestations were sometimes violent, I had taken the precaution to place the battery and keys on a side table, and led the wires from the 'keys' or commutators, to the apparatus on the tables round which we sat, so that I could, in the dark, perform the various experiments I had arranged to try. Whenever, by accident, my hands came in contact with one of the wires, without my being aware which wire it was, I put these questions:—'Is a current flowing through it?' and if they said 'Yes,' I asked, 'In which direction does it flow through my hand?' This experiment was repeated, if my memory serves me rightly, not less than ten times. Each time, directly after being informed of the direction of the current, a light was struck, and in every instance I found we had been correctly advised, if we assume that the current flows from the positive to the negative pole.

"The experiments with the helix were of two kinds:—First, 'What action had the electrified helix upon me when placed over my head?' Secondly, 'When a piece of iron, or a compass needle, was placed inside it, could the spirits effect the magnetic action of the helix upon the iron or compass?' Repeatedly during the investigations, and while we were in the dark, I seized the opportunity of placing the magnetized helix over my head, and immediately, on each occasion, the spirits requested me not to do it, as it hurt me; nevertheless, I could feel no

pain, or sensible action, myself. As no one but myself was aware that I intended to, or was placing, this helix over my head, it is perfectly clear that the fact was made known by some means inexplicable as yet by orthodox science.

"The result of my investigations in this direction lead me to infer that there are probably other powers accompanying electric and magnetic streams, which other powers are seen by the spirits, and are by them mistaken for the forces which we call electricity and magnetism. This is an hypothesis not hastily arrived at. Whenever a current flowed through the helix, the spirits declared that they *did* augment and diminish the power of the magnetic field at will. My apparatus showed no such variation of power. They persisted in the correctness of their statement night after night, and time after time. I insisted, on the contrary, that no action visible to me was produced. One evening, when carefully repeating the experiments (my apparatus was not very sensitive) the idea occurred to me to replace the little compass needle with a small quartz crystal. The spirits described the crystal as a fine magnet, and declared that they altered its magnetism at will.

"Mrs. Varley can often see similar light issuing alike from steel magnets, rock crystals, and human beings, though in the latter case the luminosity varies in intensity. Putting all these things together, I think the spirits see around magnets this light (which Baron Reichenbach has named Od force) and not the magnetic rays themselves.

"About the existence of the 'flames of Od' from magnets, crystals, and human beings, I have had abundant and conclusive evidence from experiments with Mrs. Varley.

"I have used the word 'spirits,' well-knowing that the world at large does not believe that we may have warranty for assuming that our friends are able to communicate with us, after the dissolution of the material body. My authority for asserting that the spirits of kindred beings *do* visit us, is—1. I have on several occasions distinctly seen them. 2. On several occasions things known only to myself and to the deceased person purporting to communicate with me, have been correctly stated, while the medium was unaware of any of the circumstances. 3. On several occasions things known only to our two selves, and which I had entirely forgotten, have been recalled to my mind by the communicating spirit, therefore this could not be a case of mere thought-reading. 4. On some occasions, when these communications have been made to me, I have put my questions mentally, while the medium—a private lady in independent circumstances—has written out the answers, she being quite unconscious of the meaning of the communications.

5. The time and nature of coming events, unanticipated and unknown both to myself and the medium, have, on more than one occasion, been accurately made known to me several days in advance. As my invisible informants told the truth regarding the coming events, and also stated that they were spirits, and as no mortals in the room had any knowledge of some of the facts they communicated, I see no reason to disbelieve them. Mrs. Varley very frequently sees and recognises spirits; especially is this the case when she is entranced. She is a very good trance medium, but I have little power over the occurrence of these trances; there is consequently nearly as much difficulty in investigating through her mediumship, as there is in investigating that extraordinary, unexplained natural phenomenon—ball-lightning—which occurs in times and places unexpected, and beyond human control.

“My early religious education was received from that very narrow-minded sect, the Sandimaniacs; their teachings wholly failed to satisfy my anxiety about the future.* It was while endeavouring to get some information regarding the relations between man and the Deity, from some spirits who were evidently more advanced than myself, that I received, unexpectedly, a communication upon another subject which had puzzled me much, namely, ‘Why have not the more intelligent spirits given us some scientific information in advance of any yet possessed by man?’ As I think the explanation to be sound and logical, I mention it here, not asking you to accept it, but to prepare you when the same question occurs to your own mind.

“They told me that I myself had often experienced how imperfect words were as a means of communicating new ideas; that spirits in advance of the great intelligences upon earth do not use words in communicating with each other, because they have the power of instantly communicating the actual idea as it exists in their own thought, to the other spirit: that when they telegraph to mortals, even through clairvoyant and trance-mediums, who form by far the best channel for messages of high intelligence, they put the thought into the mind of the medium,

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

for that mind to translate into words, through the mechanism of the brain and mouth; consequently what we usually get is a bad interpretation of a subject which the translator does not comprehend.

"The physical manifestations, wonderful and useful though they be, are generally believed by experienced Spiritualists, to be chiefly produced by spirits of a less advanced nature than the average men of civilised countries; of the general truth of this I entertain no doubt.

"I have failed at present to find a medium acquainted with science, and, therefore, capable of translating into intelligible language ideas of a scientific nature. This is not to be wondered at, when we remember that there are 30,000,000 of British subjects, while there are probably not more than 100 known mediums in the whole kingdom, and very few of these are well developed; this gives us one publicly known medium to every 300,000 persons. Out of the 30,000,000, I do not suppose there are as many as 1,000 well acquainted with natural philosophy, and accustomed to reason thereon. If, then, but one in 30,000 is a scientific investigator, while there is only one medium to 300,000 persons, we can only expect one scientific medium for each 10 generations. Even if we assumed that there are 10,000 clear-headed natural philosophers in Great Britain, that would still only give us one good scientific medium to a generation. When it is further considered that the majority of our mediums are females, who, from the mis-education of English ladies, are rarely accustomed to accurate investigation, it is still less to be wondered at that so little advance has been made in the scientific branch of the subject.

"I am highly gratified to find that you have commenced a series of investigations into this interesting subject. I can promise you that it will repay you for your trouble, and I will willingly afford you any help in my power.

"There are many other points I should like to communicate, but which I must defer to another occasion.

"I do not know a single instance in either the old or new world in which any clear-headed man, who has carefully examined the phenomena, has failed to become a convert to the spiritual hypothesis. The abuse and ridicule we have to encounter come only from those who have never had the courage or the decency to make an investigation before denouncing that about which they are entirely ignorant. In this latter respect the world seems to have made absolutely no progress during the last 1870 years.

"I am, my dear Sir, very truly yours,

"William Crookes, Esq."

"CROMWELL F. VARLEY.

Correspondence.

THE SENSE OF IDENTITY.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—The writer on the "Difficulties of Materialism" seems to refer to the "theory of illusions" as if the human mind was not full of illusions, the illusion of the freedom or undetermined nature of the will being one of them, and no one has so strongly and so constantly insisted upon this, and so clearly exemplified it as Mrs. Hardinge herself in those eloquent appeals that one is never wearied of listening to. Is not the sense of light and of sound as externally existing all illusion?—or that the sun moves? and is it not equally an illusion that the body though it gets older is yet the same body? Why, there on my thumb is the very scar from a cut received when I was a child of twelve years of age! "Theory of illusion," indeed!—the existence of illusion is positive fact, and that it is so is certainly not an illusion.

Now, as far as I know, I am the only one, being a materialist, who has explained this permanent sense of identity, notwithstanding the perpetual change going on in the substance of the body. The question has been invariably shirked. The statement was made in my letters to Miss Martineau written twenty years ago, and has been repeated lately in the *National Reformer* in reply to the challenge of an idealist who had been arguing there for the non-existence of the body. The illusion is not only in regard to man's body as well as the mind, but in regard to the horse and other creatures, and even as respects trees and plants—that is the living portions of them. The old horse that won the Derby a dozen years ago is not the same, but it will think itself so if it has the sense of self at all as its master thinks of it. "Theory of illusion!"—why, does not Bacon tell us, at the very outset in his *New Organ* that until we are aware of the illusions of the mind, and its tendency to error, we shall not be able to interpret. Now, Sir, all I wish to point out is the foolish statement of the writer of the above named article, who asks triumphantly—"Ah! but this does not explain why the new molecule, because it inherits its ancestor's residence, should innocently imagine itself to be he. Such a defence is its own condemnation." No doubt, if such had been the statement or its logical consequence—but it is nothing of the sort, for here it is supposed that each molecule possesses a sense of personality in itself; but were such the case we should be a wonderful compound indeed; but who ever supposed any such nonsense as that each molecule was a self-conscious personality whether in regard to man or horse. The man and mind are the effect of the whole organism, stomach, lungs, heart, liver, brain, &c.; and mind is the function of the brain in connection with the nerves of sense, and the impressions they receive from outer things, and together depending on the other functions of the various organs of the body, and the fresh molecules that are absorbed are at once leavened with the character of the organ to which they join company—take up by contagion the same tendency to a particular disease, or of age, and its memories or rather the physical correlations to such memories, or any other of the thousands of specialities in any case in question, and thus maintaining a sameness, notwithstanding the constant change of substance, somewhat as a river seems always to be the same river; but a question of the new molecules that feed the frame is much as the fresh fuel we put in the fire assumes the character of the burning condition and so maintaining the sameness of the general results, and the same argument applies to the individualities and specialties of animals and trees as to man himself, and instead of the permanence of the sense of identity being a difficulty under such a slow and imperceptible process it would seem inconceivable how the sense of identity either as regards a body or its functions could be lost, but we have been told that that could not result from the whole, which is in none of its parts.

Why, every compound in nature contradicts such a false and absurd notion. Difficulties no doubt there are, but they are not those pointed out, but what pertain to all natural action and development whatsoever. But what absurd

statements will not men resort to to bolster up a theory, or to bring shame to an opponent; but from Spiritualism one looks for something more spiritual, for pure and unpolluted intelligence as well as absolute candour and fairness. The allusions to the matter in question will be found in my letters to Miss Martineau pp. 132, 183, 267, 276.

61, Upper Gloucester Place, N.W.

HENRY G. ATKINSON.

To enter into a full discussion of the question raised by Mr. Atkinson would be likely to involve a long metaphysical controversy for which we have neither room nor inclination. We have not his volume at hand to refer to the passages to which he so courteously invites our attention, and this must be our excuse if we do not rightly or fully apprehend him. In reference to the foregoing letter, we can only briefly remark that its main assumption—that our consciousness of identity is in and of the body, especially the brain, and that the new molecules as they enter into its composition are somehow at once mysteriously leavened with the same illusive consciousness, is an unproved, and as we believe, unprovable hypothesis. His attempt to buttress it by illustrations from inanimate nature, is only a glaring instance of false analogy, and a mistaking of the point to be proved, which is,—not to account for the identity in form and appearance of the human body, notwithstanding the unceasing changes in its structure,—but to account for our consciousness of identity on any materialistic hypothesis. A tree or a river retain the same form and appearance although their substance changes; and on this account, and as they occupy the same locality, we speak of them as the same tree or river; but we suppose that even Mr. Atkinson will hardly contend that the tree or river has any consciousness of identity. If Mr. Atkinson will carefully study the law of discrete degrees laid down by Swedenborg, it will, perhaps, help him to a better understanding of this part of the question.

“The human mind is full of illusions,” says Mr. Atkinson; but out of its fulness of illusions he is pleased to select these certainties, namely, “that the man and mind are the effect of the whole organism,” and, “that mind is the function of the brain in connection with the nerves of sense.” Now we, as Spiritualists, maintain that what Mr. Atkinson, in the supremacy of his pleasure, takes for certainties are peculiarly illusions, and illusions of a very gross and common kind. We hold that the brain and body are only the physical vesture of a spiritual brain and body wherein man, with all his mysterious sense of individuality and mental identity, survives as man when death has made an end of his material organisation. If our experience as Spiritualists has not taught us so much it has taught us little; and Mrs. Hardinge, we are apt to think, would have little satisfaction in Mr. Atkinson’s compliments if her eloquent appeals left her hearers in his condition. Socrates expressed the truth, as we see it,

vivaciously, when Crito asked, "How and where shall we bury you?" "Bury me in any way you please," answered the wise man, "if you can catch me to bury. Crito obstinately thinks, my friends, I am that which he shall shortly behold dead. Say rather, Crito—say if you love me, where shall I bury your body? And I will answer you, Bury it in any manner and in any place you please."

Obituary.

ANNA CORA MOWATT RITCHIE passed into the higher life, on Thursday, 21st July, at Twickenham. Mrs. Ritchie will be better known to our readers as Mrs. Mowatt, an American lady, who first appeared in London as an actress, in 1850. Her husband, Mr. Mowatt, died in 1851, and in 1853 she married Mr. Ritchie, of Virginia, the then editor of the *Richmond Enquirer*, and she retired from the stage. Her public life was a series of brilliant successes, and her private life was as pure and blameless as it could be. When young she became a Swedenborgian, and many members of her family joined in the same belief. Previously to her marriage with Mr. Ritchie she met Mr. D. D. Home, then but a lad, and her father's house, thenceforth, for a long time became, as it were, his home. The past four years Mr. Home's son has been living with her, and no tender mother could have lavished more love on him than she has done. Her illness has been long and painful, but she has borne it with a patience beyond expression; her only thoughts being for the comfort of her friends, and to spare them all idea of her sufferings. Mrs. Ritchie was, in every sense of the term, a most accomplished woman—of truly gentle and refined nature, with a comprehensive mind of more than ordinary power. As an authoress she is better known in America than with us, and was for many years the correspondent of several newspapers there. She was an intelligent and discriminating believer in Spiritualism, and looked forward to the great change on which she has now entered with a firm and unswerving faith.

We have also to record the departure to the other world of Miss JULIANA FAWCET, daughter of Captain Fawcet, R.N., the medium writer of *An Angel's Message*, and other works, the last of which—*The Divinum Humanum in Creation*, was noticed in our January number. Miss Fawcet was a most estimable lady, and a devoted Spiritualist.