

THE
Spiritual Magazine.

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THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW YEAR.

TIME rushes swiftly by. It seems but as yesterday that we penned the address to our readers on the commencement of our last volume and our second decade. Since then a year has passed—a year of memorable events. It has been

Big with the fate of Cæsar and of Rome.

It has witnessed the downfall of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope, the collapse of a mighty empire, and swift terrible retribution following unprovoked aggression. On the continent of Europe the earth seems to have rocked to and fro under the tramp of armed hosts, and in place of the sweet angel-song—"Peace on earth, good-will to men,"—we hear only the sharp crack of the needle gun, the heavy boom of artillery, and the groans of dying men. Oh, how far yet are the nations of Christendom from being Christian! Happily the dark war-cloud that for awhile lowered o'er our land we may fairly hope is

In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.

Peace reigns within our borders, save only that the little war of rival sects still rages, though somewhat less fiercely than before, over the old battle-field of education. The aspiration of Wordsworth—

Oh! for the coming of that glorious time,
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth
And best inheritance, this imperial realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
The obligation on her part to teach;

has at length, thank God! been in great measure realized. Something, too, has been done towards the righting of ancient wrongs; and, let us hope, towards a better mutual feeling and closer union among all classes of this great empire.

The movement of Spiritualism has been marked by a more than wonted activity amongst us during the past year. This

has, no doubt, in great measure, been due to the visit and labours of Mr. Peebles, and especially of Dr. Newton, who has to a large extent both in public and in private illustrated one of its most immediate practical uses. In the metropolis, the public lectures, winter *soirées*, and Sunday services; and in the provinces—especially in the north of England and in Scotland,—the numerous societies, circles, and regular well attended lectures and meetings, all attest the interest in Spiritualism which is springing up and extending all around. The increase of our books and periodicals, and the generally improving quality in the literature of Spiritualism, are also welcome indications in the same direction. Thanks to the brave public testimony borne to the facts of Spiritualism by a few eminent and noble men of science—men like Dr. De Morgan the mathematician, Wallace the naturalist, Varley the electrician, and Crookes the chemist, the old attitude of scornful incredulity, denunciation, and refusal to investigate, assumed by Professors of Science, is being changed. The Nicodemuses of Science are timidly feeling their way, enquiring of their wiser brethren “How can these things be?” visiting mediums, and finding, to their great astonishment, that persons have actually been able to make proper use of their eyes and other senses—common sense included—and correctly to report their observations without being either astronomers or entomologists. The evidence given before the Dialectical Society, and the testimony of its Investigating Committee to the facts of Spirit-manifestation, coupled with their evident inability to satisfactorily explain them, is beginning to bear its natural fruit in exciting more respectful attention and enquiry into the whole matter.

Our principles and aims in conducting this Magazine have been too often set forth to need formal re-statement. Our time and labours, and that of our valued contributors, will as heretofore be ungrudgingly and freely given to it; but we must remind our readers that they, no less than ourselves, have a duty to perform. Those who know the truth are bound to aid in its diffusion. In our several ways we can all work together to this end. Without them we are powerless. We must rely on them to continue and extend that support we have hitherto received.

The Old Year, with all its shortcomings, with all the benefits and calamities it has brought to us, and with all that it has done of good and ill, has passed into the still eternity; not without leaving its deep traces on the years that are to follow. The New Year, like a new-born babe, lies before us in virgin innocence. What hopes, fears, joys—what diverse and heavenly and infernal possibilities lie folded up within it we know not: but this we know, that it will be very much what we all help to make it.

We are no blind puppets in the hands of resistless Fate, but free sons of God, whose high privilege it is to be fellow-workers with our "elder brother" in joyfully doing the will of the Father from that filial love by which alone our highest freedom is attained. How we may best employ our powers in accordance with that law of liberty so as to bring Earth consciously nearer Heaven, though it be but in one human soul, making it, in however small a degree, a little more meet for its glorious inheritance of Eternal Life, is a problem which each must for himself determine. For our own part, we know of no way more effectual than that of habitually considering all subjects from the spiritual view of life; regarding as its chief end, not the attainment of outward advantages, but of inward blessedness; not as consisting in that which we possess, but in that which possesses us—in the principles and affections which govern the life and determine our character not for time only, but for eternity. These are our spiritual and immortal treasures, which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thieves break into and steal.

This is the true "Philosophy of Spiritualism"—that highest application of it which includes every other. Certainly, there is in this nothing new: it is as old as Truth. But let us set ourselves resolutely to apply it to life and character, to public duties and social relations; and we shall find that it is ever fresh, ever new, and inexhaustible. Its eye is not dim, nor its natural strength abated; no, nor ever will be.

And now, courteous reader, whether thou art an old friend with whom we have long taken counsel as we have travelled on our way, or a new acquaintance with whom we hope soon to be on terms of closer intimacy—to one and all we say:—

Come hither,
And lay our book, thy heart and head together.

THE SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION OF SPIRITUALISM.

(*An Address delivered at the Beethoven Rooms, 12th December, 1870.*)

By EMMA HARDINGE.

It has been one of the customary subjects of reproach against the Spiritualists that they have presented to the world no scientific method for investigating the phenomena of spirit communion. It is still an open question whether the Spiritualists as a body deserve this reproach, when it is remembered that upon those called spirit media the power has fallen unsought, and that they are rarely persons whose characteristics of mind, education or posi-

tion are such as to render it probable that they should be scientific investigators. Spiritualism appeals to the senses, and hence it demands no test either in the moral, the spiritual, or the intellectual regions of the brain. We do not arraign scientists, but if they claim to be the especial depositories of such intellectual wisdom as the world looks to for information, should we not rather appeal to them, and ask wherefore a set of phenomena that has actually taken captive the senses of millions should have so appealed successfully to the minds of millions of human beings? Such a fact, notwithstanding the disorderly manifestation of going outside the lyceum or the school, should have been sufficient to challenge the attention of the scientist, and to have demanded from him the most earnest and careful scrutiny. Assuming that there is some disability on the part of professed scientists for examining this subject, it is our purpose to present such features of the movement as will enable them to offer to those whose good opinion they would gladly secure, some methods of proceeding with a scientific investigation of Spiritualism.

Our first consideration relates not only to the communion of spirits, but to the nature of the force which is employed by spirits for the production of phenomena. It is obvious that the presence of an exceptional person, called a spirit medium, is requisite; that the conditions under which phenomena are produced vary with atmosphere and temperament, and especially with the mental and physical conditions of the medium; and that those conditions are also affected by the mental or physical temperaments of those who surround the medium. Vague and apparently unsatisfactory as these leading features of the phenomena appear to be, they might have formed a clue from which we could reason back into the causes which make spirit media, which vary their conditions, or which render those who approach them instrumental in promoting or neutralising the phenomena. Here at once is a clue which ought to have been carefully followed out. But we shall take a broader and a deeper position, and show you that in the fundamental principle of things the possibility, nay, the absolute necessity for investigation, belongs to the schoolman, and that until Science adopts such methods as will fathom the mystery of this life and its methods of communion with the life hereafter, she stands midway in her career, arrested, disgraced by a problem that is more easily solved by the humblest spirit medium than by the mightiest scientists of the schools. Our first position, then, for investigation, must be to ascertain what are the relations between mind and matter. The claim is set up in spirit communion that disembodied mind, preserving all the powers and functions that distinguish embodied mind, is the author of certain phenomena. To arrive at any

just conclusion concerning the powers that this disembodied mind exerts, we must first ask what is embodied mind, and how it is related to matter. This brings us back, even from the point where we started into being at all, to matter itself. We find that there are two fields of observation: matter vitalised by mind, as in animated beings, and matter wholly unvitalised by mind. We shall invite your attention to the most rudimental primitive forms of matter known to the observer. It is now well understood, by the latest discoveries of the astronomer, that all the bodies in space emitting light possess a physical constitution which more or less resembles that of this earth. By the decomposition of the rays of light we arrive at the actual conclusion that all the bodies in space possess certain of the physical elements which make up this earth. From this point we follow up our investigations until we find that there are unseen relations between the bodies in space and our planet, for not only is our planet sustained in the midst of thin ether by an unseen force, but we find that all bodies in space are maintained in the grand harmonic march, which, from one eternity to another, the astronomer has been able to trace up, never ending, never beginning, by the same mysterious force—a force which has been vaguely called attraction, counter-attraction, and gravitation. Whatever term we bestow upon it, the noble discoveries of Newton convince us that it is by this force alone that the motion of all bodies in space proceeds, and that distances, equi-distances, and positions of bodies in what we vaguely call space are determined by the same mysterious—but all-potential—force. In view of this force, matter vanishes away, and all of power that we know consists in an invisible, unknown, intangible, impenetrable force.

Passing from the consideration of this magnificent field of observation, always remembering that this force operates in two ways only, by that attraction which draws bodies to a central point, and by that counter-attractive or repulsive force which maintains them in a special orbit, we next point to the fact that within this planet all the essence of forms that make up the planet is held in suspension between these two forces of attraction and repulsion. We find that the metallic veins deposited in the earth, the various minerals which poesy calls “the eternal hills,” the hardest crystal no less than the most rarified gases are everlastingly in motion; that there is no such thing as rest; that even in the slow progress of the formation of mighty crystallised masses, there is an inevitable period of growth, a culminating point of strength, an inevitable decadence, and a final death. From the lowest form of granitic rock up through all the different strata to the fine and mobile earth upon which we tread, through-

out the entire of the vegetable world, the same silent, restless, unseen force is the living instrument that cuts, carves, shapes, calls into being, destroys, and rebuilds forms. It is indeed the essence of things: the tool of that which we call creative wisdom, it is the only power that maintains in its integrity matter itself. This has been acknowledged. We are repeating platitudes and without the scientific phraseology which should make them acceptable. But pause. The position which science has hitherto assumed has been that whilst acknowledging the existence of this unseen all-potential force, whilst correlating all forces until at last we trace them back to this one primeval force, we have reason to believe that this alone is the parent and origin of all forces. Science has not absolutely determined, but has vaguely impressed upon us the belief that this force is an attribute of matter, that matter was never exhibited without it. To point to but one more position in relation to the field of observation in matter. There is living matter and dead matter. It is well known to the metallurgist that there are conditions in which metals lose entirely this concretion or attractive force, that the hardest rocks are decomposing beneath the ebb of this attractive power. That there is a period when earths, no less than plants, when rocks, and even crystals lose this life-essence, and the atoms that we call matter are incapable of re-formation until they are taken up again and assimilated by some other form of matter. But we may not pause upon this portion of our illustration, though we believe that we shall be defended in our assertion by careful scientists when we declare that there are conditions of matter which every atom ultimately arrives at, where the last point of attraction is reached, and repulsion sets in and disintegration follows,—and that is death, the death of physical forms; and in this process of disintegration, there is no recuperation, we repeat, until the atoms have been taken up and re-formed or re-assimilated with some other more vital form of matter. Now, if this be so, it is obvious that this life-essence is not always an attribute of matter—that there is a period when it ceases to be an attribute of matter; that in the mysterious process of death never yet explained, never yet fully defined, or in the condition in which even inert matter exists under the disintegrating action of death, there is no life-principle. It seems a platitude to say so, but remember we are defending our position, that this life-principle is a separate element from matter, that whilst it passes through, vitalises, and becomes the life and essence of matter, it does exist as a distinct element by itself. Thus much for the field of observation which the external or sensuous world affords. Throughout this vast and magnificent mass of machinery, though we gaze upon a car driven by the mighty engine that sits enthroned

amidst ten thousand worlds; though we gaze upon a chariot whose wheels are made up of worlds; though we contemplate a road strewn with star-dust even to the bounds of infinity; though we do all this, we still fail to discover in the midst of this magnificent scheme one single fragment of will. There is no evidence of volition; worlds, suns, systems, earths are nothing but an obedient mass of moving matter, guided, directed by and writing the name of intelligence, but never manifesting its form, never betraying one single atom of that higher and more wonderful element which we call thought. It is only when we enter upon the nature of animated forms that we have an exhibition of this new, third, and grandest of all elements manifest in a single word in that which we call will. Supreme and triumphant as is this element of will, we shall not now invite your attention to it, or give it more than a passing notice, as we find it associated with life; for our purpose is to invite your attention especially to the quality of the power and the possibilities resident in the life principle. From the moment when we enter upon our observation of the very lowest forms of life, even in the gelatinous masses that float in ancient seas, a new element of will begins to be exhibited; but the two other elements are still there—matter as the external mould, and the life-principle still ebbing and flowing, still throbbing and palpitating, still by attraction gathering up the means of building the form, by repulsion throwing off waste matter, and at last, repulsion prevailing over attraction or waste over repair, the final point is reached; attraction ends, disintegration sets in, and that too is death: no more death to the mightiest man than death to this fabric; the two perish alike; as soon as disintegration sets in and the vital principle is gone, both become equally mere effete matter; there is no difference between the two, and in the process of time both alike shall be resolved into the primordial conditions from which they can only be gathered up, the man and the fabric, by re-association with vital acts.

Now we find, in inspecting still more closely the magnificent field—dotted over, crowded in on every side, thronged, we may say, with the mass of living objects—that there are, notwithstanding, very few organs and functions that may be numbered up in the noblest of them all—man, no two creatures of whom, out of all earth's millions, are the exact duplicate of each other. When we attempt to search into causes, we may trace many antenatal conditions. Complexion is determined, it is said, by climate, by moisture, by atmosphere, no less than by inheritance. At the back of all, the cause of causes still remains to be discovered, and that is the mystery of this life-principle acting with special energy upon some portions of structure, and failing in

others ; and when we search at last into the primeval causes that determine the difference of temperaments and external appearances, we shall find that it is the action of this energetic tool of life—this formative instrument by which colour, stature, temperament, strength, weakness, and all the varieties of form are carved and shaped. Even so phrenology has shown us by the appearances on the cranium—even so of that still more influential portion of the structure that determines character. We have been informed, and probably upon the best grounds to which we are now able to reach, that the character or the mind expresses itself through a particular organ called the brain, which, acting through the nervous system, informs the whole organism of the nature of will. The will is not enthroned in the brain, but uses that as its instrument, and the nervous system has its telegraphic wires or messages. According then to the formation of the brain, we are told by phrenology that the various powers and purposes of the spirit are hindered or expanded. If the brain do not afford a suitable instrument for the expression of the spirit, that expression is limited and narrowed ; if the contrary, it is broad and expansive. What then is the cause of growth in the brain ? That which is the cause of growth in the flower ; that which lays down mineral veins ; that which concretes rocks, that which binds worlds, suns, and systems, and holds them in the mighty grasp of life, each one in its orbit ; that which forms the concrete power that binds together the atoms that compose the sun, and that which sits enthroned in the midst of the astral system, and throws off worlds and deposits the scintillating fires that sparkle in the midnight heavens. It is one and the same universal principle, one and the same universal element ; we call it by many names ; it is exhibited in one mode, and that is in the unrest, the eternal and ceaseless flow of motion, with its tidal methods of attraction and repulsion ; and in proportion as the tidal waves of force flow through the fine and wonderful mobile atoms of the brain, so is character determined ; and in proportion as the nervous system affords to the brain suitable means for telegraphing to every portion of the frame, so is will expressed ; and where this life principle clusters around certain portions of the brain, certain characteristics of mind are externalised. We do not find, as we have said, two human beings the duplicates of each other, and yet all possess these elements of matter, of mind, and of life ; and it is unquestionably according to the specialty or energy of the life principles in certain portions of the organism that the force used in spirit communion is given off in excess, and constitutes that peculiarity that we call spirit mediumship. When we speak of a specialty we mean that the life-principle resident in every human being

may be so regulated as to enable every creature to become a medium. Normally every creature is so; for were we now speaking of the grander and nobler instrument of spirit communion—inspiration, we should be enabled to show you that there exists not a creature, not even a clown who digs the earth without thought, the automatic and obedient servant of any will that would control him, who is not the subject of inspiration. All living creatures are spirit mediums, because spiritual essence is the daily bread of the soul. Without it the soul must inevitably fade and dwarf, and all but perish, just as surely as the body would fail without the elements of matter which are made up in food. The relation, then, of spirit and matter is this:— Spirit or will controls as if in habit the form of matter through the subtle medium of life, and this universal element, which we have shown you to reside in the world of matter, is the only medium which binds the spirit and body together. Now, if man is, as we believe, the microcosm of creation, do we not inevitably look for a soul of this world, a soul world, a vast totality of spiritual life and existence, permeating this world on a grand and universal scale, just as surely as we look for a spiritual existence to permeate this body? The individual is the microcosm of the general scheme, and therefore the general scheme holds the same relations as the individual man. Somewhere there is a grand man; somewhere must be everywhere; and the relations of spirit and matter, therefore, are just as inevitable with the spiritual and natural worlds as with the spirit and the body associated together before you.

We proceed a step further to show that this life-essence can be exhibited in many ways apart from matter—though we perceive its effect in the lodestone, though the whole of our system of navigation is dependant upon its exhibition in that fine point of metal that constitutes the mariner's compass. We can impart it in the physical world; we can project it from batteries; we can project it from the mineral into the vegetable kingdom; we can pass it from one kingdom into another. It cannot be an element of matter—it cannot be an attribute of matter, for it can be transfused from one body to another. The whole range of electrical phenomena proves the fact that electricity, if generated in matter, can also be transfused from body to body. Now, this life-principle in the human being operates in the same way. It is transfused into this fabric. This fabric (a pocket handkerchief), is not part of my organism, but the life-principle is there; it has passed from the organism. It is not an attribute of this fabric normally. It was a portion of me; it ceases to be so. What is it, then, now? Not a nonentity. There is a phenomenon called psychometry, and

those who have ever witnessed its experiments know, absolutely, that any sensitive, coming in contact with this fabric, though it should be removed from me by the distance of thousands of miles, shall accurately describe the organism from which that life-principle flowed out; character, physical temperament, and all the conditions of mind and matter shall be represented, and the subtle force which you cannot feel, nor see, nor smell, nor taste, but is an existence, and this obtains in all our acts and deeds. Our life-principle is writing out itself in living characters on the wall around us, and the ground beneath our feet. The air is prating of our whereabouts; and if the eye of the spirit were opened to behold the inscriptions that are written by us with every breath we draw, the secrets of our heart would be made manifest even in the sighing of the summer winds. And thus we see constantly by the spheres of those who are not in our presence, but who are approaching, or even thinking of us—by the letter, which is not the person, but yet conveys the sphere—by the approaching thought, the thought fixed upon the distant point, carried by magnetism, and sometimes taking even the tangible shape of the personage from whom it has been withdrawn, manifesting the oft-repeated phenomena of the living spirit—a phenomena exhibited only within a few days by your speaker in a far distant part of this country. Then this magnetic life which is the force, the reality, the essence, passes out of our bodies and maintains an existence independent of us. The whole fabric then, based upon the assertion that this life-principle is an attribute of matter, is shattered into pieces. Denial is of no avail in the face of the stubborn facts of these spiritualistic phenomena, for spiritualistic they are. We are spirits, we are in eternity, we are immortals as much as we ever shall be, and we are even now dealing with the functions of our immortal spirits, as the one speaks and the other listens.

And now we proceed to carry you another step forward beyond the living structure, with this wonderful vital principle, maintaining the integrity of the atoms, and making up the outward form of the man; and the day comes when the processes to which we have called your attention shall all be sped, fully sped—they shall be ended. The mysterious shadow has advanced across the threshold, and laid his formless mark upon the organism. It ceases to be man, it is a mere clod of clay: where is the life-principle now? If it was the attribute of matter, and has passed out of matter, it is obvious there is some period when matter exists without this life-principle. These atoms are disintegrated, and all the power of the scientist cannot reform them. The myth of the German Frankenstein is indeed but a hollow mockery upon the power of finite man,

pointing even by the impossibility of the legend to the fact, that from the moment when the charnel house has claimed its own, when the broken casket is put aside as a loathsome, worthless lump of clay, it is because the life is gone, the magnetism, electricity, the galvanism, the attraction, the gravitation— call it by what name you please; call it simply life, and you call it by that which is included in all these terms. Then matter exists independently of this life-principle, when this life-principle operates independently of matter.

Now we have gained one point, we advance to another— what has become of this life-principle? Here again we would earnestly call the attention of every true scientist to the position which Science has seemed compelled to assume. When a solution to the many problems of life and being has been demanded she has alleged first, that the life-principle is an attribute of matter, and she is therefore compelled to assume that when the peculiar change called death sets in, the life-principle has no longer form or being, because the atoms are incapable of supporting it. This we believe is the position usually adopted by those who do not believe in the continued existence of a soul. The machinery is stopped by want of fire. We do not ask the scientist to review his position, and tell us how it comes that the machinery only existed through the action of the fire; that it was the fire that called the machinery into being; we do not ask him to tell us why the fire should stop, why it should be quenched. First of all the machinery is the cause of the fire, and then it is the effect! This is not very philosophic; but we will not review these positions; it is enough for us to appeal once more to our facts, pending the speculations of those who question what has become of the life-principle? We are now brought face to face with a set of phenomena, which clearly demonstrates that that life-principle still maintains an existence, and a formative one; that in leaning to the mystery of the will or spirit, it has accompanied the spirit, it has formed an embodiment around the spirit, and it returns by hundreds by thousands, and by millions of individualized entities, and repeats all the functions of life, all the powers which the real man possessed, repeats all those various appeals to the senses which made up individuality and identity, and proves that the real man, though invisible and imponderable, still exists. The life-principle is discovered. It is of no use to chop logic with those who deny it, and repeat, or attempt to reason in a circle their tale about the life-principle being an attribute of matter. It has passed out of matter; it has become a separate and individualized existence.

But now for the methods by which it re-acts upon matter. We find that so long as this life-principle inheres in the human

body, we can rap, move objects, produce lights, perform various chemical feats which involve all sorts and varieties of changes; but we observe that the spirit with its spiritual body disembodied, we may say disenthralled from matter, is unable to do this,—it requires a medium. That medium must still be the life-principle, but also the life-principle associated with matter; and thus it is that the spirit requires for the manifestation of its presence a material body. It finds that material body in the organs of the certain exceptional persons we call media,—exceptional only in relation to the peculiarity of the life-principles and the surplus which they possess. By the aid of this life-principle, a *rapport* is formed with the spirit through the medium of the physical organization; the spirit is enabled to act again upon matter. Now, this is no hypothesis. If we can silence the rappings, extinguish the lights, bid the floating forms be still, and hush the involuntary speech of those upon whom the tongues of spiritual fire have sat by hundreds and by thousands, we must have the arms of a Briareus twice ten thousand times told, and even then the human hand that has been stretched out to quench this fire has most commonly returned again to the side with the sword of the spirit in it. And so no power of man has yet availed to crush out these manifestations, and that shows that the spirit and the spirit-world and spiritual forces are the real strength, the real power, the controlling will, the universal soul of this planet, and that as the soul of man is the force within him, the soul-worlds of being are the potential forces of earth, and these are the relations between spirit and matter.

Now, it only remains for us to show you by what methods we may utilize this form of communion, and control it. The two great obstacles with which we have to contend are these:—First, the wonderfully subtle character of the force;—so very subtle is it, that it seems liable to any disturbance from without, but chiefly to disturbances of a mental character. All the phenomena of which we spoke in our previous address may be neutralized by the will, the silent will of one individual. This is the position of extreme difficulty with which the scientist has to contend in examining this subject. When we remember that we are not dealing with the physical world alone, that we must enter into that unknown realm where the forms of spirit people are moving; that up to this period we have had no conception except a vague faith, the ideal dream which age after age has repeated; the beautiful and holy traditions of religion to convince us that a spirit had an existence at all. Are we not upon an untrodden field, grand and beautiful as it is, although we tremble at the threshold, and withdraw the shoes of our materiality from off our human feet, feeling that we

are treading on ground made holy by the presence of the Mightiest. Though all this baffles, and constantly turns us back, it is obvious that there are scientific leadings in this communion which we can follow out. We are speaking now of one of the chief obstacles—the fact that these powers are controlled, sometimes neutralized, and sometimes energized by will. There are other difficulties in the way, and one of the most powerful is the fact that hitherto all attempts at scientific investigation have been conducted upon physical formulæ; that those who approach this subject approach it with their well-worn theories, and their stereotyped methods of dealing with physics, and physics only. But they are not going to deal with physics; they are entering upon an untrodden field, and just so long as they persist in assuming that the life-principle is an attribute of matter, they will never advance one step. We shall show you presently what methods we do propose. In the meantime, we will pile up mountain high before the vision of the scientist the obstacles with which he has to deal. Let him turn back if he will, the Spiritualist knows there is no retreat with his spirit friend ever at his side; ever carrying the sword of the spirit to cut the Gordian knots of all human obstacles, we fear not!

This book was presented some time ago by a gentleman of much scientific research to a lady highly gifted with mediumistic powers, who was requested by him to preserve it for a time in her residence, in the hope that the kind visitants from the spiritual world, who favoured that dwelling with many marvelous tokens of their presence, would write upon the broad margin of its pages some of those philosophical sentences that have been given by the hands of spirits themselves. The book remained for many days, or weeks, we believe, in the possession of the lady. Within a few days, a number of persons were gathered around the circle table of this medium, your speaker and many of her friends being present—amongst them the gentleman who had owned the book. During the *séance*, his unspoken wish was that that book had been present, in the hope that the kind invisibles whose presence was forcibly demonstrated would take that occasion for writing on its pages. No sooner had the wish been formed than the sound as of rushing wings fluttering like a large bird was heard overhead, and the book fell upon the table. There are the best—the most perfect—the most undeniable reasons for believing that the book a moment before was in an upper chamber, the doors of communication in every part being carefully closed. The book was then subjected to examination, and the eyes of all present, by the aid of the light, fully scrutinised its pages, every one of which were blank. The moment the light was again put out, a very sudden and

rapid turning of the leaves was heard, and a rapid scratching of a pencil, and in ten seconds—counted by one present—five or six of these pages were covered with marginal writings, by the hands of whom we know not—by no human hand. No human hand could have executed one single sentence—and there are many—in that space of time.

We desire to illustrate our statements by facts, and now we call upon the scientist to observe where his chief difficulties lie. Spirit and spirit power operate wholly independent of space, time, or the obstacles of matter. These are bold statements to make, were we not justified in the assertion by thousands of phenomena equally well attested and far more marvellous than this. Objects, physical in their nature, but vitalised by the life-principle—objects like this book, which according to the law of physics must occupy a portion of space which no other object can occupy, in the hand of the spirit occupies no space. The ceiling—all the particles of matter which intervene between the passage of this object and the circle table—are as naught; the object itself is as naught; it passes through physical matter like unto itself—by what law? Again, what is time with the spirit? That which would occupy the hand of the mortal during a given period of time is executed wholly independently of time by the spirit. This is not with a view of heaping up against science the impossibilities of investigation, but rather to ask her to approach this subject with that child-like humility which acknowledges that it is entering now upon a temple where the foot of mortal has never trod before; that if it would become a learner in this great, new, and wonderful lyceum, it must forget all the formulæ, and all the hedge of laws, and all the bounds of mere mundane wisdom, by which it has been hitherto guided, and be content to sit at the feet of the great Spirit, and learn. From no doctor, from no schoolman, from no metaphysician can you ever derive a solution of this problem—independent of time, space, and matter. O, scientist!—if any such be present—when you attempt to compare the formulæ of physics with this new and wonderful condition, to enter upon a field of investigation where that which you are searching into moves and operates independent of time and space and matter, how shall ye ever succeed? There are but two conditions. It is not only by the observation which you can make at the spirit circle; we can all observe, but we may not advance beyond. The spirits are either not empowered to instruct you or are not enabled to instruct you. They are not going to fill up the niche in your brain which nought but effort can succeed in filling for yourselves, or they cannot find the language in which to impart their knowledge. You must com-

mence your studies, therefore, even from the very first or rudimentary forms of matter, and that not by inspecting the external or outward alone, but commence, like Galileo and Newton, with the mystery of this ever-moving force. Searching into that, bring no pre-conceived theories of that force being an attribute of matter, but study it alone, study its action, study its limitations, study its variations, and study its various modes, from the grand astronomical plane of the shining stars—from the fiery Scriptures where it is written in its boundless magnificence in the skies, to the humblest forms of dust and the grains of sand by the sea-shore: in all and each you will have one of the letters in this universal gospel of life. Commence your studies thus; carry them forward into this exhibition of life in the vegetable world. Already you have made some advance in that direction, and shown that electricity is in some way analogous to the mysterious force of life in the plant, by the wondrous growth of plants under the stimulus of electricity. Carry them forward into that plane of observation but very briefly skimmed on the surface by Reichenbach, into that plane of observation where by the eye of clairvoyants and by repeated experiments there has been recognised the living flame shooting forth from various physical forms. Carry it forward into that still more subtle and grand field of observation—animated forms. Study them first in those where the will is not active, in the lower forms of life. Pass on from point to point; tread humbly with Nature up the various gradations of form, until you arrive at the noblest and grandest. Turn not back as you meet obstacles of will. You will soon find that there are laws and hindrances bounding the human will, in the shape of character, that will oppose no actual obstacle to you but that of your own ignorance. Already it has been shown, by the application of the electric battery to different organs of the brain, that the various physical disabilities of the body, and with them the peculiar characteristics which accompany those disabilities, can be called into prominence.

Here is one great step reached. We find the connection between the external and the internal in this respect. The electrometer has not yet done its work; all the meters by which we can measure the magnetism, electricity or imponderable force of other physical objects can be and must be applied to the human system. Go forward, yet further; we shall not only measure the quantity, but determine the quality. That has measurably been done even in electro-biology. We realise there the possibility of transfusing magnetism and will from body to body—the possibility of transfusing these mysterious forces: and in all these experiments are multitudes of suggestions, leading

ideas, all pointing to the solution of the first great problem by which knowledge becomes power. What is this life-principle? How can we measure it? How can we gauge it? How can we classify its varieties of organisms? This accomplished, knowledge is power, and our knowledge will enable us to control it. The very elements of good upon which we build up the structure, the atmospheres by which we are surrounded, the garments we wear, are all more or less charged with force and influence. Where then are the real obstacles to science? Mastering this life-principle, we commence to follow its exhibition beyond the grave, and study it in its disembodied states. After we have arrived at the point when we have realised and explored its manifestation within ourselves, we shall find that it has gained new powers, new functions and enlarged spheres of possibility in the spirit-world; that the spirit, whose knowledge seems to be commensurate with its disembodied state, by comprehending the laws of its being is enabled to operate with far more marvellous effect, rapidity, and power as a disembodied than as an embodied being. This is the second field which we have to study, and in doing this we will once again remind you that though we have not this night attempted to analyse the mystery of spirit or the physiology of will, we claim that there are as many laws and hindrances that make determinate bounds and limitations to will as there are to matter, and one of the most potential evidences of this is the fact that this same attraction and repulsion, or positive and negative, is exhibited in will as in the life of matter. We realise this in all our actions. It is obvious, then, that when the mind brings to the spirit circle that positive will which we call antagonism;—that positive condition of mind which already builds up for itself a favourite theory and determines that no disturbance shall occur—we bring the power that neutralises at once the effects of life and the possibility of exhibiting it in matter. It is evident therefore that for the true and scientific investigation of this subject we must put off realisation of former theories; that we must forget for the time being the laws that we have laid down for the rule and guidance of physics, and be content to enter upon a field of investigation where all is new, where all is beyond us, where the laws of the spirit-country have to be learned, where the powers, functions and possibilities of spiritual existence have all to be tried over and over again with deep humility, with the most earnest purpose to search for truth and not for falsehood; not with that cold cruel predetermination that that which we are about to witness or to task is false, but with the earnest resolve to put ourselves in the hand of this mysterious spirit-world, learn of the teachers that are vouchsafed unto us through the evidences that they manifest. Thus shall we neu-

tralise this powerful antagonism of will, and permit the free play of the manifestations. One of the great sources of the failure which scientists have experienced in producing phenomena is the stubborn and determined antagonism with which they have approached the subject. They have plumed themselves on the possession of an unseen power by which they can destroy the manifestations; assuming in their littleness and pride, or rather, their utter ignorance of the subject, that no such manifestation can occur, and therefore determining that they shall not occur. The spirit of the true scientist must unquestionably be positive;—accustomed to search through the positive law of physics, he has become crystallised down to those laws. This crystallisation must be broken apart, and those who would approach the subject must come in the spirit of the little child. When this is done, when the phenomena of Spiritualism beyond the grave are compared with the phenomena of life, and we retrace our steps back to the sources of life, and forward again through all the shining footprints which God and the angels have made both on earth and in the world beyond, we shall have arrived at the scientific method of investigating Spiritualism.

REMARKABLE MANIFESTATIONS.

MUSIC BY SPIRITS.

A PARTY of eighteen ladies and gentlemen met at the house of Mr. Guppy, 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, on November 25th last (the anniversary of that gentleman's birthday). After tea, a *séance* was held in a darkened room—so closely packed that no one could move from his place without it being at once discovered. A guitar, a tambourine, and an octave of Turkish bells were placed on the table. These instruments soon were heard as though played on over our heads, and floating in the room. "The Last Rose of Summer," and other tunes were played, according to the request of one and another of the circle. Once or twice a single note was struck on one of the bells, signifying a negative in answer to a question. The bells were struck with great force. A note would be sounded and another, and then as this died away, another, until the room was filled with the vibrating harmony of the notes, softening and blending into one another.

REPRESENTATION OF A WRECK AT SEA.

Miss Georgiana Houghton, the lady to whom this manifestation seems to have been more particularly addressed, thus

describes this incident of the *séance*:—"The spirits commenced rocking the table in a very peculiar manner, as if to represent a vessel at sea, gradually increasing the speed, as if racing, and the movement became so vehement, that we feared the table would be broken, upon which Mr. Guppy said they were quite welcome to break it, when they immediately took advantage of the permission, making a complete wreck of it! We asked Miss Neyland what she saw, and she said it was the youth dripping with water, whom she had on other occasions seen near me; she also saw a steamer, partly under water, and another in the far distance; and at last, at the final plunge of the table, her dress and petticoat were drenched with water, and remained quite wet all the rest of the evening. She afterwards told me that she could not make out the name of the vessel, but she saw first a "C," and further on a "T." The *Carnatic* was lost in the Red Sea, while racing with a French steamer, and my nephew, whom she saw, was one of those who were then drowned."

OTHER MANIFESTATIONS.

The rapping sounds were frequently heard on the table, and in various parts of the room, sometimes in reply to questions, at others as a signal for the alphabet to be repeated when some directions were to be given. Lights, like phosphorescent lights, were seen. Miss Neyland was carried in her chair over the table. The company were sprinkled with perfume. Some conversation concerning the Davenport manifestations having arisen, the spirits were asked if they could transfer a coat from the back of one person to another. They signified that it was doubtful whether they could do so then, but they would try. Mr. Guppy consenting, was securely fastened to his chair, and his hands tied together behind him. Some expostulations soon proceeding from him, a light was struck, and Mr. Guppy was found with his coat not removed, but thrown back on his arm, his waistcoat unbuttoned, his cravat taken off, and his pockets emptied. The cravat and note-book had been taken to one gentleman, the watch to another, and the spectacles to a lady. He had been tied so effectually, that those who tied the knots could not readily untie them, and the spirits were requested to do so, and release him from his uncomfortable position. On the light being extinguished, this was instantly done. Mr. Guppy then placed his coat on the table, and asked if they could put it on some one else. On the instant, Miss Neyland exclaimed, "Oh, they have dressed me in it!" And sure enough they had, and buttoned it, too. But the most remarkable manifestation of the evening was the production of various fruits.

FRUITS BROUGHT BY THE SPIRITS.

We were told by the spirit through the alphabet that each one present might ask for any two kinds of fruit. We all availed ourselves of this permission, and, as will be seen from the following depositions, the request was in nearly every instance complied with:—

1. I asked for an apple, and it was found beside me on the sofa when a light was struck. Afterwards I asked for a banana, which was thrown on my hand a minute afterwards.—N. F. Daw, Portman Chambers, Portman Square, W.

2. I asked for a banana, which the spirits placed in my hand after almost all the other fruits had been given. They afterwards placed an apple in my hand, for which I had not asked, and I felt the hand giving it to me as clearly as any human hand. I asked for a "custard apple" from Canary, and they said they could not give it me.—Georgiana Houghton, 28, Delamere Crescent, W.

3. I asked for grapes, and some time afterwards they were placed on my dress. I next asked for anything they pleased, and a hand, which I felt, placed filberts, almonds, raisins, and other small fruits in my lap.—Helen Louisa Chevalier, 21, St. Ann's Villas, Notting Hill, W.

4. I asked for a pear, and it was picked up on the floor when a light was struck. An orange was next given me, which I had not asked for. Then I asked for a bunch of raisins, and some minutes afterwards some raisins without stalks were thrown to me wrapped in paper.—Heloise C. C. Scott, 76, Tavistock Road, Westbourne Park, W.

5. I asked for a bunch of *black* grapes, as the *séance* was a dark one, and colour undistinguishable; and they were thrown into my lap instantly. I next asked for a green fig, which was also thrown into my lap at once.—Amelia C. Williamson, 76, Tavistock Road, W.

6. I asked for a lemon, and some time afterwards it fell at my side, hitting my arm. I asked if I could have a pineapple: it was rapped, "no."—Emma Shorter, 23, Russell Road, Holloway, N.

7. I asked for a cocoa-nut, and immediately a large one was gently placed in my hand. I next asked for a Brazil nut, and two were presently dropped near me. The cocoa-nut proved to be a pound and a half in weight, when it was weighed after the close of the *séance*.—Thomas Shorter, 23, Russell Road, Holloway, N.

8. I asked for candied peel, and some time afterwards it was placed in my hand by a hand which I felt. I next asked for a quince, which was instantly thrown in my lap.—Sarah Pearson, 7, Guildford Place, Russell Square, W.C.

9. I asked for a medlar, and soon afterwards it was put in my hand by a hand which I felt. After that I asked for a pomegranate, but a quince was thrown in my lap. A hand made a sound upon my dress, and upon the dresses of four persons near me, which is my departed mother's signal to me of her presence at *séances*.—Mary Pearson, 15, Harper Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

10. I asked for an orange, which dropped near me some time afterwards. I next asked for some white grapes, which were given to a neighbour and handed to me.—Grace Emily Combes, 15, Harper Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

11. I asked for a Brazil nut, and one was put on the table. I next asked for a laurel berry, and did not receive it.—William H. Combes, 15, Harper Street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

12. I asked for a bunch of grapes, and in about five minutes it was placed in my hand. Afterwards a red capsicum was placed in my hand.—Samuel Guppy, 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, N.

13. I asked for a fig; my dress was pulled three times, and the fig lay at my feet. Next I asked for an almond, and three were quickly put in my hand by a hand which I felt. A medlar was also given me.—Alice Ellis, 29, Devonshire Street, Queen's Square, W.C.

14. I asked for a pomegranate, and immediately I was gently tapped upon my knee with the fruit. Next I asked for walnuts, and some minutes afterwards two walnuts and one Brazil-nut were thrown to me. I was repeatedly touched by spirit hands.—Edwin Ellis, 29, Devonshire Street, Queen's Square, W.C.

15. I asked for a capsicum, which was at once, while I was asking for it, put in my mouth. I also asked for a prickly pear, some biscuits, and preserved fruit, all of which I received. I also had some grapes.—Lizzie Nayland, 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, N.

16. I asked for some barberries, a pear for my little boy Tommy, and a quince, all of which were brought immediately. I began to eat the fruit, so Miss Houghton said, "It would serve you right if they put a capsicum in your mouth," and instantly it was done.—Elizabeth Guppy, 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, N.

17. I asked for a pine-apple, and the instant the last word of the request was spoken, something luminous shot in a curve

three or four yards long over the heads of the company from near the top of the wall opposite me, fell at my feet, and rolled under my chair. I picked it up, and found it to be the top and leaves of a pine-apple, with no fruit attached; when picked up it was not at all luminous anywhere, but the spot where it first fell was marked with several luminous streaks, which smoked, glowed, and smelt like phosphorus, and they remained visible to all of us for some minutes. I rubbed the streaks with my fingers, but could feel nothing liquid like phosphoric oil on the carpet, and the luminosity did not come off the carpet on to my fingers. Wondering at the instantaneous reply to my request, which was unknown to any mortal but myself until spoken, I asked, "Can you sometimes read the thoughts of some of those present, so as to know beforehand what they will ask?" The table gave three heavy thumps, the signal for "Yes." I next asked for bread-fruit, and the table signalled "No." I then asked for a capsicum, and some minutes afterwards a hand placed a capsicum in my fingers. I tried to seize the hand, but could not catch it, and was equally unsuccessful all through the *séance*, during which I was frequently grasped by hands at different parts of the body, and my hair was pulled many times; the owners of the hands could evidently see to perfection; if they grasped my foot, or hand, or ear, they did it at once without feeling about for it, and the hands seemed to melt away instantaneously. I asked for a South American cactus, which was not brought; a medlar, which I did not ask for, was put into the centre of my hand.—William H. Harrison, Wilmin Villa, Chaucer Road, S.E.

These depositions were all taken before the company separated. One only was not taken—that of Mrs. Davies, of 155, Queen's Road, Bayswater. At the instance of the spirits the *séance* had been suspended for an hour, that we might have supper; and this lady had left before the *séance* was resumed. Mrs. Davies had asked for a melon, and a water melon which we found *weighed four pounds* was placed in her lap.

Later in the *séance* this great water-melon was cut into pieces by the invisibles: some of the company were first made aware of the fact by the pieces being squeezed, wet side downwards, upon their hands. This sudden application of some cold wet substance, from which liquid poured copiously down the garments, caused a general outcry and a demand for "a light." When a match was struck, the consternation changed into merriment, coupled with a few protests about the effect upon the dresses. This ended the *séance*.

T. S.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY AND THE GRACE OF GOD.

By HORACE FIELD, B.A.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY, in his address to the Cambridge Young Men's Christian Association, which appeared in the May number of *Macmillan's Magazine*, states that Descartes, the father of modern science, gave it birth by first denuding himself of all previous faith, and arriving at a simple proposition as to which there could be no doubt, and on this proposition rearing the substructure by steps equally unquestionable; and he enforces with his authority the dictum of Descartes on which this mode of procedure was founded. "Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted."

One man will say white bread is best, and another brown; and we know that neither of them doubts the truth of his assertion. With such differences, indeed, in common things we are so familiar, that men seldom speak thus boldly, but say, at once, "I think it best."

I am not trifling in these words, for if the brown bread man has first liked white bread, and, by an effort, after many weeks of trial, come to prefer the brown, nothing can persuade him in his inmost heart that all men by the same means would not arrive at the same result; while the white bread man as certainly puts down the love of brown bread to a crotchet in his neighbour. Each thus, by what I may almost call the arrogance of his nature, convinced of the universal truth of his faith, they still, forced by the abundance of these differences, admit intellectually their existence, and pass on without arguing.

If, now, we allow that these familiar differences are types, and that what is clear to one man need not be so to his neighbour, who has slower or quicker faculties of perception, and different heart wants, I cannot quarrel with Descartes' dictum, which then, indeed, becomes a platitude. The brown bread man gives unqualified assent to the proposition that brown bread is best; but though he too often would desire, he does not expect to force his conviction on his neighbour.

I am not trifling in these words, I say. Let me explain.

Descartes' simple proposition, as amended by Professor Huxley, is "Existence is thought."

In dreamless sleep, then, is a man not in existence? Sleep no doubt, produces an effect on thought. The work which appeared weary, overpowering, impossible at night, is work

easy to be done in the morning. The whole value of sleep with which I am concerned is, no doubt, expressed to me in thought; but then would not the proposition be more correctly stated, "Existence is expressed to me in thought?"

Now, this to my mind, is a more truthful account of things than the Professor's, and the change produces this effect: it takes all finality out of the proposition. The tortoise is gone, and we are again on a globe floating in mid-space, are left free to descend in search of that existence which is thus expressed, but whose real nature remains as far from us as ever.

Here (if the Professor remains unconvinced, as I must suppose), is a precise case of white bread and brown. I admit (strange as it appears to me), that there is to-day, at all events, that mental difference between us which will make each of us think our statement the truth; and yet, while admitting the difference, I rejoice and am strengthened by seeing the vast field of agreement which arises from each regarding every phenomenon as an appearance only, and our life a thought created. I feel and rejoice in the brotherhood expressed by our common love for the substance of the bread.

There are personal differences between all men which needfully make the special belief of each simply his own possession; and these are differences fully acknowledged in science itself; they are indicated indeed in Professor Huxley's own remarks on the extreme case of colour-blindness.

In astronomical observations, also, under more normal circumstances, it is well known that one man will invariably see a star pass the wires of the telescope before his neighbour watching by his side. The one man will always say that the transit of that star took place a fraction of a second sooner than his neighbour—hence arises what is termed the personal equation in astronomy.

With such needful differences then, who is to say what time the star really did pass? It is an insoluble enquiry, the positive universal truth can never be known—it is non-existent for men; and instead of seeking it, a basis for agreement must be found by an average, or in some other mode. Here again we are obliged to find agreement only in the common substance of the bread, and leave each man to rejoice in the white or the brown for which his nature gives him the preference.

Some students even of mathematics can never creep over its *pons asinorum*, while those who master its most difficult propositions may be counted in units. These units, it is true, fully believe that others fail through want of perseverance and intellectual acuteness; but the dull men who fail live and die, and we must give them space with their faith, such as it is; they

have not yet attained the position of the learned, and the adept in mathematics stands, meanwhile, toward them much as the brown bread man stands toward the white.*

If then, in being directed to give unqualified assent to that only which cannot be doubted, we are allowed to be white bread men and brown, saying, this is a truth for me and may or may not be some day one for you, we all *must* obey. If, however, we are bid only to believe that which we are sure all wise men are bound to believe, we shall be puzzled to find the propositions, and if found they will be of the nature of a compromise; propositions which rather contain the truth than are it, like the astronomical averages, or the general proposition, "Bread is good."

The upshot of my remarks is, that (if we except geometry and mathematics) absolute truth is in the midst of us, but like the nature of existence (which the Professor seems to think is discovered when called thought) is undiscoverable by us, and, I may add, will probably so remain for ever.

I do not wish to quarrel with science. I glory in it, and its results; but I do quarrel with the apparent assumption that, while dealing with facts derived from observation, it enunciates positive truths. It does no more than enunciate truths founded on compromises, for ever needing correction and re-correction—truths approximating always nearer and nearer to *the truth* which they will never actually attain. Of these truths, therefore, we can do no more than say, "They are truths for me."

I glory in science and its results, and I gladly hear and accept Professor Huxley's account of its mode of procedure; but while, on the one hand, this mode of procedure produces no more than truths for the individual, it, on the other, is not the only mode, nor by any means the most prolific for arriving at these individual truths.

Man is a compound of heart and intellect, and this compound naturally produces two modes of procedure in the search for truth.

The intellectual mode is the one described by Professor Huxley, and may be called the method of denial.

The heart-mode is engendered by the child-like nature in us which hungers for God, believes in Him, and, attributing to His inspiration all the faith in the world which it sees productive of good works, comes believingly towards all such faith, examines it intellectually, and rejects from it only what the intellect forces

* Geometry and mathematics should, perhaps, be excepted from my remarks because they deal with finite quantities whose relations we appear able to grasp: though I really don't know that any of us can feel more sure of the truth of their propositions, than some students of diet are of the truth of the theories they believe.

it to disbelieve. This mode may be called the method of affirmation. It is the mode of recognising truth, directed to be adopted by Christ, when speaking of the discovery of false prophets, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Geometry and mathematics—the so-called exact sciences—have much to answer for in the fallacious models they afford. So long, however, as in these "exact sciences" a single man cannot follow, and, therefore, cannot admit their propositions, I really do not see that the truths they promulgate rest on any firmer basis than the outvoting of the single man.

Those, however, who maintain that the grasp of the intellect in the steps of mathematical proof is so absolute, that they who follow these steps are justified in wholly disregarding the want of affirmation in those who do not, such infallibilists would be at once shaken out of their infallibility if the fundamental axioms on which the whole unquestionable structure is reared, were found to need change and correction from time to time. If the statement or definition that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points lived under the faintest risk of requiring future alteration, the exactness of geometry would become a fable. And yet it appears from Professor Huxley's statements, that modern science, which would drape itself in the exact robes of geometry, rests upon a definition containing the wholly gratuitous assumption that existence *is* thought, while all that we can possibly affirm about it is that we are conscious of existence in thought alone.

How does my heart beat and my body perform its functions unaided by me? I know not; but this I know, that observation of this ceaseless action on which my life depends, forces me to believe that Deity is in some way within, around, and very near me every moment—that I am momentarily, sleeping and waking, dependant on Him though I can never see, hear, or touch Him in any unquestionable shape; and my belief about positive truth is the same. I believe all our thought hangs and depends on the existence of a perfect truth, clothed in the appearances about us, and never actually attainable.

If God, indeed, be Truth, am I far wrong in identifying the one with the other, and saying that absolute truth is His attribute—is God himself, of whom we are told "There shall no man see me and live?"

I have ventured to amend Professor Huxley's account of existence, as I think, wisely; and I look to my amendment containing the seeds of further corrections with the same certainty as did the Professor's account.

If soft, and hard, and every idea we have depends on our organisation (and Professor Huxley himself points out that it does) then, to assume the existence of universal truths for us, assumes absolute identity of organization—an assumption that the personal equation in astronomy would alone disprove, had we not boundless other evidence, some of which is adduced by Professor Huxley himself. That, therefore, any more than a brotherly and sisterly relationship between the truths we believe, (making my truths mine, and your truths yours) could be assumed by Professor Huxley, were very strange to me—impossible, indeed, of belief—did not the dictum he canonises as the mother of modern science, “Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted,” become thus a mere platitude.

The dictum, indeed, plainly implies that the Professor considers there is some far more positive kind of truth within our reach than individual truth—a species of truth of which I myself cannot conceive unless, looking to the Professors for deliverance, we discover somewhere in their body an infallible Pope of science.

If, indeed, Professor Huxley has any idea that mankind is likely to consent to be bound hand and foot and delivered over to the men of leisure and learning, he must be very little aware of what mankind already do with the conclusions of these men when they receive them. They invariably adopt one course—put the conclusions to the test of the heart mode of arriving at truth, never asking, How was this conclusion procured? but always, How does it work?

A question, indeed, this, which the man eager in using the intellectual mode of discovery, does, in fact, no more neglect, than the unlearned million by his side. The man of science, himself, checks every step of his progress by the inverse mode of procedure. He assumes the truth of each conclusion and asks, Will it work? My reasoning convinces me, he says, that this product is sugar, I will assume it to be, and test it accordingly. It is thus he makes his steps sure as he proceeds.

If then, Is this statement true?—does it work? is the ultimate test by which we determine all truth, of what consequence can it be whether the statements to be so tested are given us primarily by the laboratory, by common parlance, or by inspiration (if you will)?

In the name of all that is wise and holy, do not let us become so fascinated by the process of reaching what we call truth, as to see in it anything more than a finger pointing our attention to a statement which invites the heart test. Does this so-called truth perform what it professes for me?

“By their fruits ye shall know them.” This test of Christ, thank God, may be applied by any one without asking the consent of the Professors; and it is the one test, and the only one, which satisfies our nature.

We really seem to need an army of skirmishing words, in these days of science, before we can speak the thought which is in us. How, otherwise, could such a wordy preface be required for the defence of the mode by which a thousand convictions, bearing the test of daily action, are discovered, for one which the intellectual mode of procedure points out. The intellectual mode may be the surest indicator of truth, but there is no mode which does not require the truth reached to be tested by the heart test before it is accepted by mankind.

Once convinced by such test, once satisfied that we have found a truth for us, the heart man looks round for correction and amendment, and in the hope of discovering, not full and absolute agreement, but such agreement as will make his organisation seem to himself not wholly singular. He looks round, in fact, in the belief that there is one Father of all, and in the desire not to be brotherless. If his search is successful he is assured that no future correction will arise to rob him of the essence of his faith.

One instance before I close:—I am told that the infinite incomprehensible Father—the existence from whom our thought is—has made himself manifest in a most special way in His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

I find the statement handed down by our forefathers that Christ, who died on Calvary, is God incarnate; and that by faith in Him we are saved.

I look back and find this faith has flowed down the stream of life, and that acts which my nature most loves and honours have been announced by their doers in the words, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

There must be something vital (I think) in the faith by which men seem thus to live and act, not for earth but heaven; and with the thought, this faith becomes vivid before me, living tentatively.

I am in distress and trouble, and I pray to God; and as I pray God, whom I believe the Author of all, I perceive that I gain strength in proportion as I see God anxious to aid and

* The reader must regard this instance as an illustration simply, resembling an example in a grammar, without which its rules would often be incomprehensible. If he agrees that all human truths are individual truths only, he will perceive that while many may say “There’s some truth in it,” those alone who are prepared for its statements—or in Bible language “have ears to hear” them—will be persuaded by those statements.

succour—in proportion as I see Him not flying from the sorrow and misery in the world, and, therefore, not bidding us fly from it, but endure it with patience—in proportion as, by belief in Himself being present aiding and succouring and bearing with patience, I come to believe that He who is All-wise knows this misery and suffering needful—in proportion as I believe Him (guided by clear and distinct foreknowledge) to be willing, if needful, to endure in His own person my sadness and the sadness of all: and I look up from my prayer and before me is the hill of Calvary and the lurid sky, around the thunder, the lightning, and the Roman soldiers: on the cross is He, the thorn-crowned, the deserted by his friends, the reviled and crucified by his enemies—and in Him I behold a Man the Son of God (all as the tale is told)—a Man so full of the power of God, so absolutely one with Him, that he feels by a word, by one unwilling thought he can bring this direful mistaken deed to an end, and yet the thought does not come, the word is not spoken. I look, and as I look I find that succour from God comes to me just so far as I identify this Man with God; just so far as I am able by the Spirit of God—by the grace of God—to cry out, “Christ is God, Christ is God;” just so far as I am able to say “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me.”

And now to me, for ever, in the identification of Christ with God lies salvation. I *am* saved from sorrow and suffering and made strong and brave, so far as I see this identification. I can live indifferent to life and misunderstanding, to all things high and low, above and below, precisely so far as this Man is to me the Son of God—one with the Father—God incarnate.

This identity then, in the belief of which my fathers have lived, becomes life to me.

The word God implies that He who owns it is the One Power; and such a God as is revealed in Christ, and such a God alone, of any I can conceive, succours in the greatest things, and in the least, because the God who endures in His own person lets us see with His eyes that endurance is a needful work in this creation. The servant is not better than the lord, if the lord suffers the servant cannot escape. With Christ we are crucified.

I see, again, as I still look, that the God who responds to the prayer of any sufferer, gives help, practically, by making that sufferer feel that his suffering is for good—the fact of facts which is revealed in its fulness when we identify God with the Crucified. I, therefore, see that God, the Saviour, is revealed in Jesus Christ, the Crucified, Lord of all for ever.

I am conscious of nothing but thought. I can be conscious of God, therefore, only in thought. The thought of God, the

Father, revealed in Jesus Christ the Son is creative of me. This thought, therefore, by its work in me proves itself to be the true thought of God to me.

This thought, giving me life as God gives life to the flowers, becomes my truth. Looking up the unprisoned stream of existence I trace the glitter of the central fountain as it flows into this thought which receives it, and the thought becomes me. And in this thought (now me) I find myself not alone, but with a mighty brotherhood of the past and of the present who hand me the very words I desire, and thus I cry, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me."

SPIRITUALISM:

ITS TEACHINGS AND TENDENCIES.

By JAMES NICHOLSON.

SPIRITUALISM, looked at no matter from what point of view, is one of the great facts of our age. Brand it as a delusion, if you will, still it is a fact of immense significance that there are in the United States of America probably from five to six millions of Spiritualists; of these we are told there are 500 public mediums, 50,000 private mediums, 1,000 lecturers, and 2,000 places for public circles, conferences, lectures, &c.* In Europe there are, it is estimated, more than 1,000,000 Spiritualists; in the city of Lyons alone there are 30,000.

Nor is it the low and uneducated that are being converted to this new faith; on the contrary, the majority belong to the educated class, while not a few are persons of rank and position; some, even, whose names are well known to science and literature, as the deceased Dr. Gregory, Drs. Ashburner and Elliotson, Professor De Morgan, Robert Chambers, and William Howitt, with many other names equally distinguished in the United States. One would think that the very fact that such minds had, after long and careful investigation of the phenomena, been compelled, not only to admit their reality, but to adopt the spiritual theory of their production, and that in the teeth of preconceived beliefs and opinions, ought to make men pause in their condemnation of the whole movement as the result of fraud or delusion.

We say this by way of introduction to our subject, because

* Clark's *Plain Guide to Spiritualism*.

there is no subject of which the majority of intelligent men know so little, or are so ready to condemn on that account. A few there are, however, who having read some little on the subject, or may be, attended one or more *séances*, so as to have witnessed some of the lower phenomena: these are in advance of the general subject in so far as to admit the reality of the manifestations, though they are not due to trickery or collusion, but genuine facts, though not produced by spirits, whatever else may be the cause. And the main reason they assign for coming to this conclusion is, the exceedingly trivial character of the manifestations. No one of these does not believe, just because they do not know all the facts, that they go as far as their limited knowledge will permit, which is quite right and reasonable; but they err exceedingly in thinking that they have seen all that is to be seen, or that they know all that is possible to be known on the subject. Why, they might as reasonably take our imperfect English alphabet as the whole of literature, or its mastery as the sum total of education. In order to form a just estimate of Spiritualism, one must become acquainted with all of its phenomena, from its mere alphabet of table tipping and rapping, up to its sublime and beautiful transcriptions, its revelations, its writing and drawing by spirit hands, its visions of the departed, its hearing of celestial music and the spirit voices.

But in our humble estimation, the question for consideration is not so much what are the phenomena of Spiritualism, as what are its teachings. Not so much what is the mysterious agent that works behind these manifestations, but rather what has it got to say to us. You tell us that a certain intelligent something—call it spirits good, bad or indifferent; nay, call it devil if you will—is knocking at the doors of our understanding. Well, what does it mean? What has it got to tell us? Let us by all means heed that, then, as, thank God, we are blest with reason and sound judgment, and can judge for ourselves as to the nature of this intelligence. This we think is the most practical and straightforward mode of treating this subject.

To meet this sensible demand, let us now endeavour to bring before the reader some of those great leading truths or principles which have been communicated by this mysterious agent; though we would remark by the way, that the truths so communicated are not so much *new* truths, as tending to confirm certain ideas or opinions which have been long struggling to assume a definite shape in the minds of the more intelligent; certain truths which we have been long dimly, yet instinctively, groping after.

I need hardly say that the great fundamental doctrine of Spiritualism is, that communication between the spirits of the living and those of the so-called dead, is not only possible, but that it has been carried on in all ages. Again, the fact that

spirits can and do come back to hold communion with those still in the flesh, affords the most clear and satisfactory evidence of the immortality of the soul, a doctrine which no amount of reasoning is sufficient to demonstrate; and this is why so many have been driven from the strongholds of atheism by these manifestations; and, perhaps, no age ever produced such a number of minds so constituted that nothing short of the evidence of the senses is sufficient to convince them of the existence of the supernatural, or the soul's survival of the body.

Hence, this great fact of the possibility of spirit communion completely upsets the orthodox notion that the spirits of men, at death, pass at once to one of two places, viz., heaven and hell, from which there is no possibility of return to earth; those in the former being too happy to think of returning to revisit the scenes and connexions of the earth-life, while the latter place being of the nature of a prison, wherein souls are shut up to endure eternal punishment for the deeds done in the body, must afford still less opportunity to escape.

Now, the spirits all but agree in denying the doctrine of eternal punishment; they tell us that the remorse and suffering which the wicked really undergo is a remedial process, which enables the most depraved to progress to a better condition, however protracted the term may be; moreover, that the future state of the human spirit is one of endless progress and advancement. Here, then, is a doctrine, and that an essential one, which has long been struggling for a place in the minds of even intelligent Christians, just because it commends itself to their innate consciousness and highest reason; for, in spite of ourselves, we cannot help questioning the consistency of a God of love and mercy taking pleasure in the endless torment of millions of human beings, particularly in view of the fact, that even in human laws, imperfect as they are, there is a tendency to render the punishment of crime remedial. Are we then to suppose that man is in advance of his Maker, or that human laws transcend the Divine? Surely not. "As far as the heavens are higher than the earth, so far are my ways above your ways, and my thoughts above your thoughts."

The teaching of Spiritualism, then, on this head, is that the old Scripture doctrine of an intermediate state—held by the Christian Church up to the second or third century—is correct, although in the Roman Catholic Church it degenerated to purgatory, which through the avarice of the priests and the superstition of the people became so much abused. As to the nature of this intermediate state, the spirits tell us that it consists of a number of spheres which surround our planet, and which are adapted to the moral condition of spirits when they leave the

body ; the low, grovelling, and undeveloped naturally gravitate to the lowest sphere, there to herd with kindred spirits, and reap the legitimate fruits of the deeds done in the body, till sufficiently progressed to ascend to a higher sphere, from thence to a higher still, &c. ; while by the same law, the pure and unselfish spirits ascend to the higher spheres, there to enjoy an eternity of happiness with the great and good of all ages. Thus the happiness or misery of every human being is solely determined by the life it has led in the body ; one of the favourite spirit axioms being, that the present life shapes that which is to come. Consequently, no amount of faith or theological knowledge will avail a man in the world to come, without a corresponding development of his moral, intellectual, and emotional nature.

Hell, then, according to spirit teaching, is the lowest sphere of the intermediate state ; it is the condition of those who have neglected their opportunities of improvement in this life, who have abused and perverted their faculties of body and mind, so as to unfit them for the enjoyment of the heavenly spheres, having lived chiefly to develop that portion of their being which derives gratification from the material world. No sooner are those animal instincts cut off from the source of their gratification by death, than these same instincts become a source of fearful torment, till such time as this divinely appointed discipline shall have done its remedial work in developing that higher nature which can alone enable it to enjoy the higher spheres. On the other hand, heaven, according to our spirit monitors, is the blessed condition of those whose lower instincts have in this life been governed by their moral, intellectual, and religious faculties, who have used those faculties in acquiring and storing up that wealth which is alone capable of being carried with us when we leave the body ; those whose lives have been in conformity with the Divine law of Christ,—love to God and our neighbour.

But, as the reader must admit, by far the fewest number of those who die are in this condition : it follows as a natural consequence, that the great majority occupy a position betwixt the two extremes, *viz.*, the truly good, and the desperately wicked : they are too good for hell, and not good enough for heaven, and for these our orthodox theology has no appropriate place ; and for this we have to thank the fathers of the Reformation, who in their zeal to reform the abuses of the church, annihilated at one fell swoop one of the most essential doctrines of the Christian Church.

Now, let us look at this question from another point of view. From published statistics,* I find that the whole population of the

* *Chambers's Encyclopædia* : Art. "Religion."

globe amounts to 1,274,000,000. Of these, 793,000,000 are pagan idolaters; 120,000,000 are followers of Mahomet; 8,000,000 are Jews; making in all 921,000,000; all of whom, according to our theological notions, are excluded from salvation, simply because they are without the pale of the Church of Christ. Setting these aside as lost, we have still left 350,000,000 professing Christians of one kind or another—observe, however, that the idolaters amount to at least three times this number. But, to be orthodox in our estimate, we must still further reduce the number of those likely to be saved—first, by all the Roman Catholics, of whom there are 182,422,532; also the Greek Church, amounting to 74,624,300,—the two latter amounting in all to 257,046,832. This leaves us only the Protestant churches, the united members of which only amount to 95,755,534, being not much more than a third of the whole Christian Church. Shall we then stop here, and take our 95,755,534 Protestants as the number of those for whom salvation is possible? No, says our theology: you must deduct from these, at least, the Unitarians, 183,000; the Mormons, of whom there are 100,902; the Swedenborgians 12,000, and some would even include the Universalists, amounting to 656,000; thus reducing the Protestants to 94,803,632. But we must remember that these figures embrace a great variety of sects and denominations, as the Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Moravians, Morisonians, and others of less note, in each of which it is only the more advanced minds that will admit the possibility of salvation out of their own communion. And were it possible to ascertain the precise number of those who are really the followers of Christ, perhaps our total would dwindle down from millions to as many thousands.

And so, for all the rest of this vast multitude of human beings bearing God's image, our orthodox theology provides only an everlasting hell. Well, then, supposing all this to be true, what does it prove? Why, simply this, that the whole scheme of God's creation and Christ's redemption is a complete and total failure. Why should it fill us with joy, admiration, and gratitude, to contemplate the cosmical history of our planet, with its beautiful succession of races, animal and vegetable, illustrating the grand law of eternal progress, from the low to the high, from the simple to the complex, each link in the chain being a type and a prophecy of Him who was to be creation's Crown and Lord? We repeat, why should we take pleasure in all this, believing as we do that man, the last and noblest of the Creator's works, is not included in this grand law of progress and development? Is it conceivable that men in the middle of our nineteenth century should entertain such God-dishonouring ideas? Is there one

intelligent Christian in every hundred that believes them in his secret soul? Surely, then, it is high time some effort were made to harmonise our theology with sound philosophy and common sense.

From this it will now be evident that the chief element which characterises the teachings of Spiritualism, is progress. The human mind is in its nature progressive, and religion, being not a certain something apart from man, but rather a part of man, must be progressive also, otherwise it ceases to be of value. Herein, then, we believe, lies the chief defect of our modern Christianity,—we have made it a finality, a thing of the past. We have run it into the strong moulds of creeds and church dogmas, so as to give it a fixed and unalterable shape,—depriving it of its growing and expanding force, just as the Chinese put iron shoes on the feet of their infant daughters for the same purpose. But though the foot of a child may be thus dwarfed and thwarted in its growth, the human mind will not be so “cabined, cribbed, confined.” The human mind outgrows its creed, just as the youth outgrows the jacket of his boyhood. And is it not a fact patent to all who are capable of discerning the signs of the times, that our theological jacket is very much out at elbows—is, in fact, rending and bursting in all directions? What, we would ask, are the so-called heresies of our Macleods, our Smiths, our Lees, our Tullochs, but so many indications of the breaking up of the old jacket which has become too strait for the strong and earnest workers to do their God’s work in? And in our opinion, all attempts at union based upon existing creeds and systems are but so many attempts to patch up the old garment, which can only result in its being cast aside altogether.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that one of the greatest hindrances to human progress has been the attempt, so often made, to make all men believe alike, to make the religious opinions of one age suit all succeeding ages; in short, to fabricate a religious system that will suit humanity throughout every stage of its terrestrial career.

Thus acted the upholders of paganism, and we know the result; thousands and tens of thousands suffered themselves to be cruelly butchered, rather than yield up the right of free thought and religious liberty. In the very same way acted the Romish Church towards those more advanced minds who saw and condemned the abuses and superstitions that crept into it. They resolved in the strength of God to shake themselves free of its degrading yoke, and the result was, that humanity lost fifteen millions of its best and bravest sons and daughters by relentless persecution,—rather a heavy price to pay for liberty of thought and freedom of opinion. Yet notwithstanding all this, it is a fact

that the same relentless spirit of intolerance is cherished in our churches at this present hour—nay, is rampant in our Presbyteries and Church Courts. Indeed, so confident are the upholders of our present systems of theology in their absolute perfection, that the very idea of progress in religious opinion is reckoned nothing short of blasphemy.

Now, let us hear what Christ says of that religion He came to teach and establish in men's souls: "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Such was the nature of that Christianity introduced by Christ into the unleavened mass of humanity; the leaven was the Divine Spirit operating through human instrumentality, whether in preaching, prophesying, or miracles.

Now, it is precisely this element that is wanting in our modern Christianity; we want the leavening, the life-giving and expanding power, the power to convince and convert not only the simple-minded sinner, but the man of science, the philosopher, the materialist—the Sauls and Didymuses of modern times. Saul must be made to see, though it cost him his eyesight, and Didymus must be permitted to put his scientific fingers into the prints of the nails, though paralysis should strike him in the act; no matter, so that the thing is proven to be true. This is the kind of intellectual material that Christianity has to contend with in our day.

On the perplexing subject of miracles, the teaching of spirits is, that the so-called miracles of the Bible were not miracles in the sense of a suspension of the ordinary laws of nature, but that they occurred through the operation of certain occult—though none the less natural—laws, the very existence of which we are only at this late day beginning to discover. Now, the effect of the orthodox view of the nature of these extraordinary occurrences has been to place a stumbling-block betwixt science and religion,—the former denying the very possibility of a miracle, as ordinarily understood; hence those wonderful occurrences, which in the youth of Christianity were reckoned the vital evidence of its truth, are now looked upon as its greatest weakness.

Renan well expresses this opinion in his celebrated work, *The Life of Jesus*. He says: "The lapse of time has changed that which constituted the power of the great Founder of Christianity into something offensive to our ideas; and if ever the worship of Jesus loses its hold upon the mind of mankind, it will be precisely on account of those very acts which originally inspired belief in Him." Now, we say, on the contrary, that if ever the religion of Jesus comes to sway humanity in its whole, or

even its majority, it will be precisely on account of this original power being restored to it.

The Church has all along been guilty of a fatal error in teaching that the supernatural ended with the age of the apostles; it has existed in one form or another up to the present hour; but, afraid of the sneers of philosophy, the clergy of most denominations have endeavoured to stamp it out, rather than cultivate it. In no case has this tendency been more apparent than in the late revivals in Ireland and other places; not by the earnest men who took the more active part in the work, believing and rejoicing in the extraordinary phenomena, as proceeding from a spiritual source; but by those who stood aloof with folded arms, and finding the phenomena in question altogether beyond the reach of their materialised conceptions, solved the difficulty by declaring the whole movement to be the work of the devil. In refusing to cultivate, or even recognise, the spiritual element in the shape of physical manifestations, the Church has sacrificed much of her efficiency; while in no age has the want of these been more felt than our own,—an age when everything is brought to the tribunal of reason, when nothing is received as truth till it has passed through the fires of the laboratory. In the early days of the Christian faith we find in Saul of Tarsus a mind of the modern stamp, a mind so trained and so constituted that no amount of mere hearsay evidence was sufficient to convince of the truth of the new religion, or the claims of its Founder; nothing short of actual demonstration could convince him. But how comparatively few were minds of this description in that age, to those of our own. In that age it was possible for the Church to deal successfully with such minds so long as it possessed those divine gifts which rightfully belong to it; but now that this power is ignored by the Church, it finds itself all but powerless to deal with such cases. And yet, it is among this very class of minds that Spiritualism has been most successful. Atheists, materialists, and secularists of the deepest dye have been brought to acknowledge with thankful hearts the existence of the Deity and the immortality of the soul, just because Spiritualism affords that tangible evidence which has been so much needed and so long denied.

And it is not a little remarkable that these manifestations should occur at a period when all the teachings of science and philosophy tend to ignore the spiritual; an age in which we are taught to believe that the human race are the descendants of apes and oranges; that thought is merely the action or function of the brain, just as digestion is the function of the stomach. And on this ground they argue, that to assume that thought or reason can exist apart from brain is simply nonsense. An age, moreover,

when the entire efforts of men—Christian men too—are devoted to the accumulation of material wealth, to the neglect of that only real treasure which the Master urged His followers to lay up in heaven. An age when His professed followers pray daily for the coming of the Messiah's kingdom, while practically they are building the altars of Mammon or matter-worship. Surely in the face of all these tendencies of our age, it is not difficult to see the great need there is for spiritual manifestations. Several theories have been started to account for these manifestations; one of these is what is termed unconscious cerebral action, that is, that the communications spring from the involuntary and unconscious action of the brains of the investigators. Now, is it conceivable that the brains of a company of honest truth-loving men and women should thus conspire to maintain a lie, *viz.*, that the messages and other phenomena are caused by disembodied spirits? Why, this theory is far more improbable than the other.

Another theory is, that the whole of the phenomena are produced by Satanic agency. To this we reply, that if it is in the power or nature of Satanic agency to heal the sick, restore the insane, cure the lame, the deaf and the blind—for such have already been some of the blessed results of Spiritualism—besides lifting thousands out of the darkness of atheism into the glorious light of day and hope in God and immortality,—I say, if devilism can do all this, so much the worse for the upholders of a religion which confesses itself without the power to do such things, yet professes to have had such gifts when they were perhaps less needed.

Woe to that Church or denomination which accounts its best and brightest intellects madmen and heretics, because they have the boldness to stand up for free thought and progress. Just such a soul was that great and good man Edward Irving, who, because he believed and taught that the Church might and ought to have restored to her those Divine gifts which are guaranteed to follow the true disciple, and that the not having such was a sure sign of its own lifeless condition,—was expelled from his church as mad and heretical. And yet Thomas Carlyle, one of the greatest thinkers of this age, who knew and loved Irving, speaks of him in such terms as these,—“His was the freest, brotherliest, bravest human soul mine ever came in contact with; I call him, on the whole, the best man I have ever, after trial enough, found in this world, or ever hope to find.”

The teachings of Spiritualism fill whole volumes of the literature of the movement; and however the unseen intelligences may differ on minor points, they all agree in teaching the same great truth, that man is nothing more nor less than a matter-clothed spirit; that the body having performed its uses drops off,

leaving the spirit as the real man in a more real state of existence. "Spiritualism, at once, like a living, stirring wind, sweeps away all this fog and feeble theologic smoke from the human mind. It asserts and shows on the evidence of ever-recurring spiritual communication, that the souls of men and women leaving the body, instantly find themselves in the spirit-world in spiritual bodies, palpable and substantial, but at the same time more ethereal than those they have left. They not only know their friends, but find them waiting to receive and welcome them to their beautiful and heavenly homes, if they are morally fit for such homes. They find there all that they have lost, if they are worthy of finding them, and stand on the threshold of a life infinite, inconceivable, and for ever advancing nearer to God and perfection. Oh, inestimable knowledge! oh, unspeakable gift of God to this unspiritual age! worth all the knowledge piled in libraries; all wealth of the world; the culmination of all honours. To know, not through reasoning or tradition, nor even through the true Scriptures themselves, but by direct perception, and from the living lips of our still living and loving friends, that the inner world with all its glories and wonders and populations of purest wisdom and sweetest love—a vision more romantic than all romance, more poetic than all poetry, more wondrous than all wonder,—is the great substantial and eternal reality of the universe."

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE COUNCIL OF THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY DECLINES TO PUBLISH THE REPORT OF ITS COMMITTEE.

THE Second Report of the Dialectical Society, just issued to the members, contains the following allusion to the matter:—

"The Committee appointed for the purpose of investigating the 'Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations' has partly concluded its work, and has laid before the Council an interesting Report. The Committee suggested that this Report and the evidence upon which it was based should be published, but, for several reasons, the Council declines to adopt this suggestion."

Whether this course is best adapted to carry out what professes to be "the object of the Society," as set forth in its rules, namely:—"The philosophical consideration of all subjects with

a view to the discovery and elucidation of truth," we must leave its members and the public to determine.

The Council abstains from specifying its "various reasons" for declining to carry out the suggestion of its Committee, but we presume they all resolve themselves into this—that the Report of the Committee, and the evidence on which that Report is based, is altogether too favourable to the "Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations," to be acceptable to the Officers and Council of a Society, some of whose prominent members had too deeply committed themselves on the other side, and were unwilling to sanction the publication of a Report which would prove that they had been utterly in the wrong. Had the Report of the Committee shown conclusively that "the Phenomena alleged to be Spiritual Manifestations," were a delusion or a fraud, the Council would readily have found "various reasons" why such "an interesting Report" should be immediately published and circulated as widely as possible.

It remains to be seen whether the members will endorse the action of the Council; whether the Committee (numbering about one-third of the members) will submit to be thus snubbed, and their long, patient and careful investigations, with the Reports of their several sub-Committees, and all the evidence collected, to be so shelved. Many of the witnesses not only attended the meetings of the Committee (at considerable inconvenience in some cases) to give their personal testimony, and submit to searching cross-examination; but, at the request of the Committee, and on the distinct assurance that such evidence would be published with the Committee's Report, carefully prepared and sent in to the Committee their evidence in writing. Will the Committee consent to be a party to what would look very much like a breach of faith, and the obtaining of evidence under false pretences?

We of course acquit the Committee of any such intention; they have acted fairly and honourably, and no doubt expected, as it seems to us they had a right to expect, that the Council of the Society that had appointed them would enable them to redeem their promise. The Council it seems "declines" to do this, but we hope that if it persists in this refusal, the Committee will have the independence and the spirit to publish the Report themselves. It would furnish perhaps the most complete body of evidence on the subject to be found in any single volume; and the public who have heard so much of this famous investigation, which was to settle the question, have a right to know the result—to know what have been the findings of the Committee, and the evidence they have obtained, in a proper and authentic form.

If this long promised Report is to be burked, and the matter is suffered to rest where it now is, it will be indeed a wretched *fiasco*, and will furnish another illustration of the extreme difficulty of getting anything like justice done to this subject either by the Press or by any corporate body. It seems to be a settled determination in all such cases that, no matter what the evidence may be, there shall be but one verdict, and that an unfavourable one. If a contrary one is given in it must be suppressed; the public must not know it.

This is especially the tactics of those who make the loudest claim of being "liberal thinkers," but who, while denouncing the bigotry of sects, show that they have only exchanged for that form of bigotry the still narrower bigotry of unbelief; that they

Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to.

Happily the cause of Spiritualism is not to be arrested by any action of the Council of the Dialectical Society, or of any other body of men; learned or simple; they may miss a great opportunity of dealing fairly and honourably by it, and of gaining honour to themselves by doing so, with a wiser generation if not with this; but Spiritualism will progress in the future, as it has done in the past, without them, and it may be in spite of them. There will be plenty of men of this class to honour Spiritualism with their patronage when in the teeth of their opposition it has won its way to public favour; and its recognition involves no risk of the forfeiture of reputation. It may be very humiliating to men of science to find that the despised Spiritualists have taken the lead in the discovery of a truth which they had denied and derided; but in the end when the world sees it is the truth, and it is fast doing so, they will, like Parson Adams, rub their eyes and exclaim, "Well, I protest, and so it is!"

Since the foregoing was written we have learned that the Report in question is to be published, and that it may very shortly be expected. We presume the Committee have anticipated our suggestion, and have resolved to publish it on their own responsibility. We hope it will be found to contain all the evidence taken by the Committee, as we regard well authenticated facts as even more important than the opinions on the subject of any Committee, however carefully and conscientiously those opinions may have been formed.

THE "CHRISTIAN WORLD" ON SPIRITUALISM.

The *Christian World*, of December 9th, reports the lecture given by Mrs. Hardinge at the Cavendish Rooms the previous

Sunday; and in a leading article on "The Unseen World," the editor writes thus:—

The Destructionists, or believers in the terminableness of soul-life, are not the only innovators upon established opinion in reference to the Unseen World, for the Spiritualists are now propounding their theories with peculiar ardour, both by tongue and pen, and are boldly challenging the attention of the Church. Their interpretation of Scripture is of a very different order; and multitudes of people, including one of the chief of our electricians, and a celebrated mathematician, as well as historians and poets, have accepted their teaching as true, and are in their turn endeavouring to win others over to the new faith, which they affirm indeed not to be new, but to be as old as our race. We learn from various sources that quite a number of clergymen and ministers in London have been induced to investigate the claims of this Spiritualist Gospel; and that some of them, at all events, are clearly of opinion that Christian teachers cannot wisely treat the whole thing as a delusion, or as a latter-day device of the devil, without at least stating the grounds of their conviction that it is so. Now, apparently, is the time for such a service to be rendered, when the most accomplished of the American Spiritualists, Emma Hardinge, a high priestess of the sect, has begun a regular Sunday Evening Lecture in the very heart of the metropolis, and offers to meet all objectors to the views she has to advance concerning a Future State, and the relation of the Unseen World to that which is the dwelling-place of mortals. There was a crowded congregation last Sunday night to listen to her eloquent and impassioned discourse and earnest prayers; and judging from the spontaneous cheers that greeted some of her words, and the animated looks of the audience, it would be said that not half a dozen sceptics were present. He must be a far-seeing man who can say where all these upheavings of mind are leading us, and whether their issue will be for good or evil; but as Christian journalists it is clearly our duty too acquaint the Churches, and especially their teachers, with all these signs of the times, in order that they may consider their own duty in relation to them, for the greatest folly of which mankind can be guilty is to shut their eyes to facts, and go on in the dark.

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

"I wish I could persuade men of science, and men who have peculiar gifts of investigation and examination, that it would be most desirable for them, and a worthy employment of their gifts, to examine what for want of a better term we may call Spiritual Phenomena. Let them remember, that to dispel error may be nearly as important as to ascertain truth. Then let them recollect that almost all great discoveries have been accompanied by a great deal of quackery and imposture. Let them think how much these investigations might tend to promote medical science. Let them reflect how important a thing it is to investigate the value of testimony. Let them further reflect what a world of mystery we live in. Now look at the powers of memory. It is not too much to say that if the records of memory, even of a peasant, were written out in full, the weight alone of the ink would probably be greater than the weight of the brain that remembers. After this, can they say that any process of the human mind is astonishing? There are numbers of statements, apparently well authenticated, in which it appears that the last thoughts and wishes of a dying person have had great influence

over relatives and friends divided from these dying persons by large distances of land and sea. Let us carefully record and examine into all these statements. It would be an unutterable comfort to many minds to have it well ascertained that there was any influence after death of one mind upon another. But I do not rest my case upon these high, metaphysical grounds. I rest it upon three other grounds. First: that in investigating spiritual phenomena, so called, we should ascertain more about the laws of evidence; secondly: that we should ascertain whether there are any powers, forces, or influences, of which we are at present not aware, that have their place in the creation; and, thirdly: whether disease brings into operation faculties of hearing, eyesight, or imagination, of which we have at present no adequate conception, medically, morally, metaphysically or scientifically. These questions demand the most careful investigation from our best weighers of evidence, and from our most accomplished scientific men."—ARTHUR HELPS, *Author of "Friends in Council,"* quoted in "*Good Words*" for March, 1869.

SPIRITUALISM AT THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY UNION.

The subject of the last debate of this term at the Cambridge University Union was—"That this house sympathises with those engaged in the study of Spiritualism." The subject was introduced by Mr. William Cunningham, of Caius College, and on a division was carried, there being 54 ayes and 38 noes.

WRITING ON THE SKIN.

Moses Hull, a well known American writer and speaker, writes to the *Present Age*, a newspaper published at Chicago:—
 "At a recent meeting of the American Spiritualist Association, Mrs. Moliere, a lady from Toledo, Ohio, went to the rostrum, and holding up her bare arm before the audience, the name of Henry C. Wright and that of a daughter of Senator Wait came in raised letters on the arm. At that time I said I saw no test in the manifestation, as there was no evidence of its having a spiritual origin; and a further looking after it so far confirmed my suspicions as to cause me to publicly pronounce the manifestation a humbug, and denounce the effort to palm it off as of spiritual origin as an attempt to deceive the credulous. I then proposed that a manifestation be given under test conditions, and the effort was made, but, owing to our failure to comply with suitable conditions governing such manifestations, the effort failed. This, of course, gave a new impetus to my infidelity, and I was then perfectly sure the lady was an impostor.

Yet for a fortnight her last words to me rang in my ears: 'If you will come to Toledo and investigate this matter, I will pay your expenses.' These words did not sound like those of an impostor anxious to avoid detection. I finally decided to go, and go I did. I was not a little surprised to receive so hearty a welcome when I got to her house, for I had really supposed that her offer must be *ad captandum*. I was made at home, my carpet bag was brought from the hotel, and I was made to feel as comfortable as an honest man could in the presence of one whom he believed to be one of the most unmitigated humbugs in the world. All who wanted sittings were turned 'empty away,' being requested to call the next day, as the medium now had an important job on hand.

"The medium rolled up her sleeves and we sat down, I holding her hands to prevent her writing, and thus we waited for communications to be written upon her arms. Two hours 'dragged their slow lengths along,' and no manifestation. The lady felt terribly; she could not now blame me for thinking her a mountebank; yet as I saw her sincerity my suspicions began to loose their grasp, and finally a small indescribable mark came on her arm. 'There,' said I, 'I know you did not do that.' It was enough. That gave her or the spirits confidence, and in a moment her arms, hands, shoulders, neck, and face were completely covered with names, pictures, emblems, communications and tests. I was of course happily surprised, *confounded, converted*. I then mentally said: 'Now let a test be written on the back of her neck, where she cannot see it; Henry C. Wright, please write your name.' Presently she said: 'I feel them writing on the back of my neck.' I looked, expecting to find the name I had asked for, but did not. Instead of that, I found pictured out what I doubt whether she or any other lady ever saw, *i.e.*, the 'sign of an Odd Fellow.' This was to me more convincing than if my request had been granted. They were the last manifestations until a Mr. Norris, an acquaintance of hers, came in—a gentleman who, by the way, is not a Spiritualist. His own words were: 'I had supposed she had a good thing in the humbug line and she had better keep it up; the world demands humbugging, and she may as well do it as any one else.' I had not yet recognised Mr. Norris as a brother Odd Fellow when some of the emblems began to come out on her arms. Finally, in our presence, on her neck and shoulders, were printed many signs and emblems never seen outside of an Odd Fellows' lodge-room. My departed personal friends, many of them, signed their names and gave other tests in their own handwriting. After our investigations were over, and she found that I was convinced that she was an instrument in the hands of

angels, she took her pocket-book and tried to urge upon me the money to pay my expenses. No, I had but done my duty. I had gone to this expense, and proved my charges false. I was happier for the proof, and, I hope, made wise enough to never allow myself to indulge, much less express, a suspicion again until I *know* that it is true."

STONE-THROWING EXTRAORDINARY.

"Andrew Streit is the name of a moderately well-to-do farmer who resides near Cumminsville, on the western side of that limpid stream, Mill Creek, and who is now, in company with the rest of his household, consisting of a wife, mother-in-law, servant girl, and Irish hired man, in a troubled state of mind, resulting from a recent affair in which he was a participant. Several weeks ago the aforesaid servant was found, about six o'clock in the morning, lying upon her face in the kitchen of Mr. Streit's dwelling-house, with her hands and feet tightly bound, and a gag placed in her mouth that effectually prevented her from making any outcry. On being released from this predicament, she, in answer to the various questions propounded to her, stated that she was about kindling the fire to take her breakfast, when a man suddenly seized, tied, and gagged her. This strange occurrence was food for conversation in the quiet farmhouse for the rest of the day, but another still more startling circumstance took place that puzzled the brains of the honest inmates exceedingly. They were seated quietly conversing about the affair of the morning, when a volley of stones came rattling about the place. A rush out of the house was the immediate consequence of this onslaught, but when they stood in the open air no person was to be seen, and the question of who threw the stones was a mystery. This attack was repeated several times during the day, and the most attentive watching could not discover the perpetrators. The farmer was terribly frightened at this state of affairs, and started post-haste for the city, where he entered complaint at the Oliver Street Station House against the unknown disturbers of his peace. Officer Schmidt was thereupon commissioned to make a search around the premises on the following day, but his investigation developed nothing, while the bombardment of missiles still continued at intervals. On the third day following the inauguration of these unwelcome ceremonies, Lieut. Lew Wilson, of Oliver Street Station, determined to take the matter into his own hands, and therefore started for the scene of action with a force of six men to assist him. Arriving on the ground, he disposed his men to the best advantage, and after securing for himself a

commanding position upon a hill overlooking the field, set the officers to scouring the immediate neighbourhood, while he, with bated breath and eager glance, awaited developments. As the men were exploring a deep ravine and the lieutenant was watching the game to be unearthed, suddenly, to the inexpressible astonishment of the guardians of the law then and there assembled, "thud!" "thud!" came a couple of stones against the house. Others followed, rattling against the weather boarding, smashing windows, and one striking the leg of a baby the lady of the house was holding in her arms inside the dwelling. Consternation was depicted on the faces of the inmates of the besieged residence at this assault, and the lieutenant, though at a loss to comprehend where the missiles came from, ordered his men, with the energy of a military hero, to continue the hunt, and bring him, dead or alive, the reckless person who thus assailed a dwelling under his protection. The men, nothing loth, and with a fervent desire to unravel the mystery, beat the bushes in every direction, assisted by the Irish labouring man, who, with a musket on his shoulder, did guard duty around the premises. All to no purpose, however, and they were finally compelled to acknowledge their search a bootless one, and return to the city. The next day the servant girl, with the Irishman as a guard, was sent home to her parents in Cumminsville, and when the native of the Emerald Isle returned from the journey, his eyes were like miniature saucers, and big, cold drops of perspiration stood upon his brow. The cause was soon told. He had nearly completed his journey in company with the girl, when a sudden discharge of stones rattled about the ears of the couple, and frightened them nearly to death, as they were in an open country which afforded no opportunity for an ambush. Since the girl left Mr. Streit's house no stones have been thrown, but the family, as might have been expected, are at sea regarding the affair, and are strongly inclined to the belief that the place is haunted. On the Sunday following the incidents we have narrated, the girl was coming out of a church in Cumminsville, when she espied, a short distance from her, the identical man who had tied her so securely. A two-edged knife, she said, was in one of his hands, and the other was clenched and held in a threatening manner towards her. She was terribly frightened at the appearance and actions of the man, but before she could give an alarm he had disappeared. There are now one farmer, three women, one Irishman, and eight policemen ransacking their brains to find a solution of the deep mystery in which this affair is shrouded."—*Cincinnati Gazette*.

A STRANGE EXPERIENCE.

Under this head the *Boston Traveller* gives the following anecdote:—"A gentleman, now a resident of East Boston, states that after an unsuccessful sojourn in California of several years, he took passage in a barque bound to New York. She touched at Panama for provisions and water, and having procured these, her captain proposed to sail the next day. That evening the gentleman wrote letters to his friends stating he might be expected home in three months. At the usual time he retired to bed and fell asleep, but about an hour afterwards found himself on deck fully dressed. He was somewhat startled, but attributing it to a fit of somnambulism, after taking a turn or two, fore and aft, and exchanging a few remarks with the man who had the anchor watch, again undressed and went to bed.

"Imagine his surprise when he again found himself on the deck, dressed as before. Thrice he went to bed, and thrice he found himself on the deck. As he had never before experienced any kind of somnambulism, and was an uncompromising teetotaller, he began to reflect whether there was not something supernatural in this new and strange experience; and he immediately made up his mind that he would not proceed in the vessel, but go home across the Isthmus of Panama. With this thought in his mind he turned in the fourth time, and dreamed that he had decided rightly. Much to the regret of the captain, who had been very kind to him, and who expressed an ardent desire to enjoy his company, he left the vessel and arrived at home in safety. A few months later he learned from the newspapers that the barque had been captured by pirates in the Straits of Magellan, and that all hands but one boy had been murdered by pirates. The boy concealed himself below while the pirates were killing the rest of the crew, and after undergoing great peril, succeeded in reaching Valparaiso."

 DEATH.

Death is but a second birth, as natural as the first; not an evil, but a good; the only possible door to another world.

We are exhorted to prepare for death, as if it were a merciless arbiter of human destiny, when in truth it has nothing to do with the soul's weal or woe. Its effect is physical, not psychical. It is only a means of passage from one world to another. New conditions may, doubtless will, work a change

in the soul; but death, the means to those conditions, can of itself effect no radical change in the spiritual entity of man. Hence it would be more rational to exhort men to prepare to *live*, and to meet death as a necessary and salutary circumstance of life. Death is not a suspension of life, but rather a continuation of it. Progress is the law of life; and death is not in contradiction, but in harmony with this law. Hence, whatever of good is gained in one stage of life is not lost in passing to another, else there would be no reason for existence. Physical death is a part of the original plan of creation; it is not reasonable to think that God intended that man should always live in a house of clay.

That instinctive fear of death which has been wisely given to man as well as to the brute, has afforded an opportunity for a vast amount of imposition. Disrobe death of the artificial mantle with which ignorance and superstition have clothed it, and how much that is false and mischievous in popular theology would speedily wither and perish: men would have greater views of God, better and truer views of the hereafter. There would be less of gloom and terror, of profession and hypocrisy, and so men would be better prepared for life here and life beyond; profess less and do more, and hundreds of thousands whom fear has made hypocrites would not be afraid to die honest men.

FAIRIES IN THE ISLE OF SKYE.

[*Copy of Letter to Sir CHARLES ISHAM, Bart.*]

“The belief in fairies, although rapidly on the decline in the West Highlands, and their manifestations consequently less frequent than formerly, have not altogether ceased in the Isle of Skye. At Dunvegan Castle, the ancient residence of the MacLeods, situated on the north-west coast, they appear determined to hold their own, despite modern improvements and civilisation. Having been informed during a recent visit at the castle that one Collin, late a piper of the 74th, had for some months two or three years since occupied the basement apartment of the ‘Fairy Tower,’ and that he had there heard the fairies, and was still living in the island, I made a point of obtaining an interview with him, from which I gathered the following particulars.

“During the night he frequently heard music in his sleep or while dozing, and would be awakened by a noise like dancing in the room above, known as the Fairy Room. He described the music as very beautiful, and so distinct and continuous as to enable him to learn the tunes and play them; but not having thought much about them, he could not recollect them to play to me. The music and dancing always ceased the moment he woke; he would then for a short time hear dragging sounds, as if the dancers were re-arranging the furniture. The Fairy Room is occasionally used as a bed-room; it is some distance from the occupied part of the castle. Collin is quite indifferent as to whether he is credited or not. He had never heard anything of the sort before. Upon my suggesting the ‘rat and bell-wire’ theory, he replied that he knew the tramp of rats well, and added that as there were two rat-killing cats in the castle, it was cleared of those intruders.

“About a year since, the same room was inhabited for a couple of months by an Englishman, whom I have known for some years, and who had no knowledge of fairies. He also heard similar sounds, as may be seen in the following extract of a letter I have just received in reply to interrogations:—

““The first time I heard it was after I had been there three weeks. I woke up about twelve o’clock, and distinctly heard instruments of music, which came from under the floor.* I thought at first it was only fancy, but was quite convinced of it before I went to sleep again. It lasted about an hour. The room was quite light, as I had a fire, and I could see what o’clock it was without getting out of bed. I heard them five times playing tunes quite distinctly. I could not say what instruments they appeared to be, but it was very soft, low music, and I heard them dancing once—that was all, and I got out of bed and got a light, and lay awake until they finished; it was three-quarters of an hour from the time I got the light to the time they finished, and I heard them as plainly as I ever heard dancing in my life. No one there would believe me when I told them about it, but I quite believe it myself. Should there be any more questions you would like to ask, I shall be very glad to answer them as well as I can.

““I beg to remain,

““Your obedient servant,

““J. SMITH.””

* The room is excavated out of the solid rock.