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CONCERNING MIRACLES.

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"Absolutely speaking, in the strict and philosophical sense, either *nothing* is miraculous, namely, if we have respect to the power of God; or, if we regard our own power and understanding, then almost *everything*—as well what we call natural as what we call supernatural—is in this sense really miraculous; and it is only usualness or unusualness that makes the distinction."—Dr. CLARKE *On the Attributes, &c.*

"God's miraculous interpositions may have been all along, by general laws of wisdom." "There may be beings to whom the whole Christian dispensation may appear as natural as the visible known course of things appears to us."—BUTLER's *Analogy*.

"Miracles imply no suspension of the laws of nature . . . The interposition of superior power implied in a miracle, too, may be entirely natural."—Dr. PRICE, *Four Dissertations*.

"A miracle may be said to take place when, under certain moral circumstances, a physical consequent follows upon an antecedent which general experience shows to have no natural aptitude for producing such a consequent; or, when a consequent fails to follow upon an antecedent which is always attended by that consequent in the ordinary course of nature."—SMITH's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

THE recent correspondence on Miracles in the *Spiritual Magazine* is but one of many illustrations which this subject presents of the truth of the statement of the late Professor De Morgan, that the greater part of the controversies of mankind are due either to ambiguity in the use of terms or to the assumption of certain "first principles" adopted as self-evident truths. Indeed, it not infrequently happens, as in the subject of the present inquiry, that these too fruitful sources of misunderstanding and of error run into each other; that the common term is used in different senses by different writers because in truth it does not simply represent an alleged fact, but the philosophy, theory, or belief which those writers severally entertain concerning it. Hence, there are writers who, like Mr. Atkinson,

recommend that we should abandon the term "miracle" altogether. The suggestion, however, apart from all other considerations, is impracticable; the term is too deeply rooted in our thought and language to be voted out of use. It is true that, after all the controversies on this question, no common agreement has been reached as to what constitutes a miracle: it is vain in this matter to appeal to the authority of lexicographers or to begin by defining terms, for the term is the symbol we use to express the outcome of the whole matter as it finally presents itself to our minds; nor, as it seems to me, can we all use the same term in the same sense, and in no other, so long as our conclusions on the subject designated by it are so widely different.

Must then all attempt at agreement be abandoned as hopeless? Must this confusion of tongues ever prevail, so that, like the builders of Babel, we may not understand each other's speech, and when we ask for brick receive a stone? I hope we are not so shut up in this dilemma, but that some way out of it may be found. Suppose that instead of defining our term at the outset, and implying thereby a foregone conclusion, we in the first instance consider whether or no there is reasonable ground for believing that as a matter of fact any such events as have been called miracles have taken place, apart from any theory or inferences, or reference to the question whether they should be called miracles or not;—questions to be reserved for subsequent consideration.

And I suppose it will be generally conceded, and even insisted on by the unbelievers, that we should if possible test the question by reference to facts of the present, rather than those of the past; as the former are more open to investigation: living witnesses can be confronted and cross-examined, their qualifications ascertained, and their evidence compared and sifted. There is also this further advantage, that whatever may have been the case with regard to past ages, the present is certainly not marked by excessive credulity on the subject, but is by comparison scientific and enlightened. How are facts of this class to be determined? How are any facts of which our knowledge depends on the senses to be determined? First, by observation (which may include experiment), and secondly, by testimony. All possible evidence of such facts may be comprised under these two heads; the former is evidence at first hand, and can be had only by those who were present at the time and place where the event took place, or could be witnessed. Their statements on the subject is testimony, and though this second-hand evidence is inferior to the other, it may be so strong as to leave us without reasonable doubt—so strong indeed, that the life or death of men is determined by it.

The evidence of modern "miracles" is of both kinds, and of both in the strongest degree. Take, for example, the recent *Report of the Committee of the London Dialectical Society*. This Committee report that they received evidence from 33 persons who described phenomena which they stated had occurred within their own personal experience. The Committee further received written statements relating to the phenomena from 31 persons. These phenomena include nearly the whole range of what is called "spiritual manifestations," and which need not here be enumerated. No exception can be taken to the witnesses, among whom are persons of high social standing, members of the learned professions, and men who have achieved marked distinction in literature and science; and their testimony is corroborated by the Committee, who state that "a large majority" of their members "have become actual witnesses of several phases of the phenomena without the aid or presence of any professional medium, although the greater part of them commenced their investigations in an avowedly sceptical spirit."

And this evidence is but a small fraction of the entire body of evidence relating to the phenomena which has been pouring in without intermission from every class and every land for the past quarter of a century. In short, as Professor Challis has said, "the testimony has been so abundant and consentaneous that either the facts must be admitted to be such as they are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by testimony must be given up." So far as concerns the facts in question, the last alternative is indeed adopted by the sturdy, thorough-going sceptic, for he feels truly that it is the only consistent ground left for him to take. Why does he prefer to occupy so extreme and desperate a position, rather than admit the alleged facts, supported as they are by the testimony to like facts of men of every age and creed? The answer is, that to admit them would be to admit the existence of "miracles," and that miracles are impossible. If we ask why impossible, we are told that they are contrary to the Order of Nature, that they are a violation of the laws of Nature, that these laws are proved by the constant and uniform experience of mankind, and that they are never departed from.

Here we approach the heart of the question, the alleged facts are rejected, not because of the insufficiency of the evidence, but because it is thought they conflict with a preconceived theory of the Order of Nature. Let it be shown that miracles, or spiritual manifestations, belong to this established "Order;" that like the winds and tides and seasons they are subject to the operation of natural laws; that, in fine, they are only a branch of natural science, and the philosophy of our time would lay down its

weapons of attack and welcome this wide extension of the domain of science.

In this temper of mind, however, we see only the illustration of that fallacious principle of reasoning pointed out by Professor De Morgan, of testing alleged facts not by their proven evidence, but by their supposed harmony or disagreement with assumed "first principles," or "self-evident truths;" a principle always arrayed against every new and great advancement of human knowledge, for in every age men have regarded the established theory of the universe as the Order of Nature, and as a consequence have held that whatever could not be brought into harmony with such theory must be false. One would have thought that in these days when the inductive philosophy is so extolled, that its practice would not be so widely departed from as it is when the evidence is presented of facts which run counter to existing theories. The sceptical philosophy of our time will not even entertain the discussion of a "psychic force," still less of an invisible intelligence from behind the veil which controls and governs it; in its view Spiritualism is a strange portentous apparition, and our philosophers will not "as a stranger give it welcome," lest they should "entertain an angel unawares." Miracles, angels, spirits, these are terms the sceptical philosophy would banish from its vocabulary. The belief in these, and especially as having any place or part in our midst now, is regarded as a vulgar superstition which science has exploded, and philosophy is in no hurry to confess its mistake in this respect and to read its recantation.

But here, to the wise caution given by an inveterate sceptic to distinguish carefully between facts and inferences, I may add that it is unphilosophical to reject any fact because of the inference to which that fact may lead. The first essential to determine is whether the alleged occurrences are truly facts; and until this point is decided any question as to their cause or as to the name by which they should be designated is premature, and confuses the enquiry.

And if, divesting our minds for the time of all other considerations, we limit our enquiry to this single issue, the point is surely not difficult to determine. The motion of heavy bodies and the production of sounds without muscular contact or mechanical contrivance, and the employment of these as a code of signals by which questions are answered and communications spelt out, facts correctly given wholly unknown at the time to any one present; the elevation of the human body, and its suspension or movement in the air without visible or tangible support; the introduction of fruits, flowers, birds, ice, snow, and other objects into closed rooms previously searched and

locked; the appearance of hands not appertaining to any human being in the flesh, but life-like in appearance and mobility, and which have been grasped by some of those who witnessed them; the application of red-hot coals to the hands and heads of persons without pain or scorching; the elongation and contraction of the human body; the playing airs on musical instruments with no person touching them; the speaking fluently in languages utterly unknown to the speaker; the information of future events, which have taken place at the very hour and even minute that had been foretold; the production of writings and drawings without human intervention, and "in so short a time and under such conditions as to render human agency impossible;" these things and much more of the like kind are none the less matters of observation because they are unusual. It requires no great scientific training to see whether a table is in motion or at rest; whether a man is standing on the ground or in the air; whether in a closed room some object (say for instance a cocoa-nut, as happened to the writer of this article), is at your request placed in your hand, and which you know was not there before; and though we have the testimony of an F.S.A., a barrister-at-law, and other witnesses, that burning coal was placed on their heads and hands without scorching or pain; yet we suppose Hodge the ploughman could as well testify to such a fact if it occurred in his experience as could the President of the Royal Society.

Now, whether these things are true is not a matter of speculation to be settled on *à priori* grounds by a consideration of probabilities; the typical instances enumerated are not hypothetical; they are all affirmed in evidence before the Committee of the Dialectical Society, and as stated by the Committee, "many of the witnesses of the more extraordinary facts are of high character and great intelligence;" and in this respect they are representatives of hundreds of witnesses to facts of the same kind all the world over. Moreover, many of these facts are demonstrable, because reproducible.

In what other way can such facts be proved, nay, what kind of proof can be imagined as applicable to them, save that of observation and testimony? If this kind of evidence be not valid, to what other court can the appeal be made? Am I referred to the "Laws of Nature?" What are these laws but simply observed facts which, as we are told, "a uniform experience has established," and which it is further said "are never departed from?" This, indeed, is the standing philosophical objection to miracles and to Spiritualism. But if observation, the evidence of the senses, and the testimony founded thereon are impugned as delusive and untrustworthy, what reliance can we place on these "Laws of Nature," which

rest on the same foundation? If it be replied that in this case the evidence is so much stronger than the other, the principle of our argument is conceded. It is then a question only of degree; and if there is any insufficiency in the evidence, or any fatal flaw in it, let it be pointed out after careful review (as far as practicable) of all the evidence in the case. Till this is done, I feel justified, both from many years' personal investigation and from careful survey of the evidence, in considering these startling facts of our time as fully proved. At all events in reasoning with Spiritualists (for whom this paper is chiefly written) I may without further reference assume them as the basis of my argument.

The "Laws of Nature"—this phrase, so constantly dinned into our ears,—is again a term used with such difference of meaning, and with such difference in the ideas which underlie it, as to cause much misunderstanding in controversies on this question. What do we mean by Nature? I do not ask what is Nature? that is another question. I remember in my youth to have met with a hymn to Nature in a Socialist hymn-book, which began with the couplet:—

What Nature *is* no mortal knows,
And, *therefore*, none can tell.

But I suppose even our logical poet would admit that if we employ the term Nature we may tell what we mean by it. "Oh, we all understand well enough what we mean by it," says the simple reader. Don't be too sure of that, my friend. I know of no term more elastic or more variously employed in philosophical discussion. It is the master-word; understand clearly what a writer means by it and you have a clue to his whole system of philosophy; it is the key-stone of the entire edifice. This whole question of miracles, I am convinced, turns upon the conception we entertain of Nature, and all our talk about its laws and order, and about what is possible and impossible, is so much beating the air until we arrive at some common understanding on this point.

In particular there are two widely different conceptions of Nature, with of course corresponding differences of signification in their employment.

There are many, and even some Spiritualists, who by Nature mean not alone the physical universe with all that appertains to it, its solids, fluids, gases and ethers, its minerals and metals, its flora and fauna, its elements, products, forces and phenomena, however widely extended and variously distributed, which is the conception of Nature commonly entertained, but who in their idea of Nature include all existence, all being, all that is or can be; natural law with them means only that all things act according to their own nature and constitution, whatever these

may be. Of course in this view there can be no miracle, nothing supernatural: all is Nature—Nature is the all.

Is there, then, no God? Or is God only a part of Nature? Are the lines of His being (so to speak) parallel and conterminous with it? Is His existence so bound up with Nature that were it not, He, too, would cease to be? Or, while imminent in Nature does He infinitely transcend it; Nature being only the theatre of His operations, the one actuality shaped by Him out of an infinite range of possibilities, and its laws but the methods of His eternal wisdom?* The whole question of Atheism or Theism is involved in the enquiry. The former language is that of Atheism or of Pantheism, and in no other sense can it be intelligently and consistently employed. Those who inconsiderately adopt it should at least understand what it implies and whither it is drifting them. Far from placing Spiritualism on better terms with science and philosophy it is alien to both, no less than to religion, and to the genius of Spiritualism itself.

On the other hand the acknowledgment of God is the admission of the supernatural, the cause and source of Nature,

* This is finely rendered by Mr. Palgrave in his poem, "The Reign of Law," quoted by Dr. Hooker in his Presidential Address to the British Association for the Advancement of Science. I give the concluding stanzas:—

To matter or to force
The All is not confined;
Beside the law of things
Is set the law of mind;
One speaks in rock and star,
And one within the brain,
In unison at times,
And then apart again;
And both in one have brought us hither
That we may know our whence and whither.

The sequences of law
We learn through mind alone;
We see but outward forms,
The soul the one thing known:—
If she speak truth at all,
The voices must be true
That give these visible things,
These laws, their honour due,
But tell of one who brought us hither,
And holds the keys of whence and whither.

O shrine of God that now
Must learn itself with awe!
O heart and soul that move
Beneath a living law!
That which seem'd all the rule
Of Nature, is but part;
A larger, deeper law
Claims also soul and heart.
The force that framed and bore us hither
Itself at once is whence and whither.

its root and stay. Were Nature eternal and self-sufficient,—a self-existing, self-adjusting machine, evolving its laws and forces from itself as a spider spins its web out of its own bowels, and with nothing superior to itself, a miracle were impossible; but if it be derived and dependent, a divine picture-writing, a manifestation of the Great Creative Spirit, a vesture woven in the loom of Time by which we visibly apprehend Him who is invisible, and if miracle is an outbirth from the supernatural, an action originating from a sphere beyond and above the range of natural law,—then Nature is a perpetual miracle, and in this respect the type of all miracle.

So much will perhaps be generally conceded, but there are some who find the miracle not in the cause, but in the effect; to them miracle is simply a synonyme for marvel; thus Carlyle, in a burst of admiration, speaks of the human hand as “miraculous,” and Mr. Atkinson insists that “all Nature is miraculous,” which it truly is in this sense also as in the other. Indeed (still speaking in this sense), we may add that the common miracles of Nature are more miraculous than any other. Moses saw a bush that burned with fire and was not consumed, but in this glorious summer time *every bush* burns with a divine fire and is not consumed. Jesus fed a multitude with five loaves and a few

We may not hope to read
 Or comprehend the whole
 Or of the law of things
 Or of the law of soul;
 E'en in the eternal stars
 Dim perturbations rise,
 And all the searchers' search
 Does not exhaust the skies:
 He who has framed and brought us hither
 Holds in His hands the whence and whither.

He in His science plans
 What no known laws foretell;
 The wandering fires and fix'd
 Alike are miracle:
 The common death of all,
 The life renew'd above,
 Are both within the scheme
 Of that all-circling love;
 The seeming chance that cast us hither
 Accomplishes His whence and whither.

Then, though the sun go up
 His beaten azure way,
 God may fulfil His thought
 And bless His world to-day;
 Beside the law of things
 The law of mind enthrone,
 And, for the hope of all,
 Reveal Himself in One;
 Himself the way that leads us thither,
 The All-in-all, the Whence and Whither.

small fishes; but what is this to Nature's daily miracle of feeding all the countless multitude of men and the cattle on a thousand hills? The germination of seed, the growth of plants, the building up of the human body from the almost invisible nucleated cell, life and death, birth into the natural world, birth into the spiritual world, we may call these the most miraculous of miracles. Think of it; with every beat of the clock a child is born, a man dies! What is the raising of a dead man in his natural body to the resurrection of the spiritual man out of the natural body, which occurs at the death of every man? Were it not that custom dulls the fresh eye of wonder, every green blade, every leafing tree would be a miracle. Goethe forcibly expresses this when he represents Mephistophiles tapping wine from a table, with the exclamation to Faust:—

Wine is sap, and sap is wood,
The table yieldeth wine as good;
Have faith, and here's a miracle.

In the absence of experience both would seem equally miraculous. To the untutored savage a balloon, a comet, a steam ship, an eclipse, are miracles. Are we, then, to conclude with some that the miracle is simply the extraordinary and unexpected, and of which the cause is to us unknown? If so, the miracle lies not in the outward fact, but in ourselves. It is relative only, a synonyme for ignorant wonder. That which is a miracle to-day may be no miracle to-morrow; as soon as we understand it it ceases to be a miracle; so that beginning with finding miracle everywhere, we may end by finding it nowhere. Or, without pushing our conclusion so far, shall we take the middle course, and say that a miracle is only the marvellous and exceptional—that which so far transcends common-place as to excite astonishment, as when we say that the Apollo Belvidere is a miracle of art, or Shakespeare a miracle of genius? The bolder conclusion seems the more logical and consistent, but neither is satisfactory; both alike empty the miracle of all significance; but we may take the hint which they suggest, and see if we cannot find in human nature a key which may unlock the mystery.

Man stands as the middle term between God and Nature; by his body he is allied to Nature, by his spirit he claims kinship with God, for God is Spirit. In him the two worlds of matter and of spirit meet and blend. Hemmed in by the limitations of his physical nature, subject to the laws of matter and the conditions of time and space, he yet infinitely transcends them. In vain does Nature oppose her barriers of mountain and of wave; in vain hide her secrets in farthest star or deepest mine; he sails the wave, pierces the mountain, and links together islands and continents. Mightier magician than

Prospero, he bids his faithful Ariel fly, and she outdoes the boast to put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes. The old earth unrolls for him the record of her history; the sunbeam yields its secret; Orion and the Pleiades are known to him. Higher than wing of bird ever soared, deeper than plummet ever sounded, reaches and pierces the aspiring, penetrating mind of man. He is the divine vice-gerent on earth: Nature's lord and king. Even the grave holds not from him her secrets; he studies the laws of intercourse with the spirit-world and holds converse with the mighty dead. Is he not then essentially above Nature—*supernatural*? In this inquiry he and the laws of his being must be taken into the account. In conquering Nature by his so potent art does he violate her laws, or does he harmoniously co-operate with them? In fine, is not man a free intelligence in Nature, comprehending more and ever more of the elements and forces around him, unharnessing them, yoking them together, varying their combinations, arranging, directing, controlling them; knowing what they can do for him, and making them do it? We do not, however, call this miracle, for he is still operating from within the realm of Nature. But, now, Nature asserts her claim over all of him that belongs to her, but even in this her final victory man gives the crowning proof that he is not her thrall. Liberated from the bondage of Nature and mortality he is now the free citizen of a higher world, a member of that glorious company of immortals whom no man can number. Of the laws of that spirit-country whither he has migrated; of the new powers he is able to wield; of the new possibilities that lie before him, we can know but little; it may not be in our power to realise them, till we, too, enter on our glorious inheritance. But this we know, that he is free from the infirmities and limitations of the body; from the illusions of sense; from subjection to those laws of space and time which had chained him down to earth. Even while a denizen of Nature, his achievements were all of the spirit, the body simply being his instrument and organ of communication with his fellows and with the outer world: the true man, acting from behind the mask of clay, being invisible; the spirit being known to us, as spirit can be alone known, by its manifestations. How puerile, then, the objection that spirit cannot act upon matter, when in every act and movement of the body the contrary is demonstrated. The subtle links between spirit and matter are indeed but imperfectly apprehended, but from daily experience we know that they exist, and many of us have like evidence that such links may be established when the spirit is no longer a tenant of the mortal form.

Everywhere Science finds traces of the reign of law: in the

winds and tides, in the spinning, weaving and building of insects, in the flight of birds, in the path of comets, and of cosmic orbs. She

Looks through natural forms,
And feels the throbbing arteries of Law
In every pulse of Nature and of Man.

That the laws of Nature are universal and uniform in their operation, that like causes produce like effects, are propositions that need not the elaborate apparatus of argument and illustration sometimes employed to set them forth. No one for example disputes that oxygen and hydrogen always form water when combined in certain proportions, and in none other. What merchant would engage in foreign trade unless assured that his ships would swim? What husbandman would sow were he not certain that every seed brought forth fruit after its kind? If the food of to-day might to-morrow be poison, what an agonising uncertainty would be our daily life! If we are faithful to Nature, Nature is faithful to us. But does this beneficent constancy of Nature preclude the agency of those who have passed beyond Nature—an agency analogous to our own? How is the Order of Nature hereby infringed? What law of hers does this violate? Let us bear in mind that the laws of Nature are not all on one common level, but move on different planes of action, at different elevation, and by gradual ascent—the principle or law which governs these laws being that the lower is ever subordinate to the higher. Thus the law of mechanical cohesion is overcome by the higher law of chemical affinity; and chemical affinity which resolves the human body into its constituent elements is held in check by the law of life, which maintains the physical structure in its integrity; and as we have seen in man, the animal is subordinate to the spiritual. It is this which constitutes him the roof and crown of things, in apprehension so like a God. Our treasure, however is contained in earthen vessels; we here, as in a glass, darkly see only the shows of things, but in its own proper realm, emancipated from the body and from the bondage of sense, the spirit discerns things as they truly are: it is in the world of essences and causes. With larger knowledge, clearer vision, freer movement, Nature lies below it; it deals with the laws and forces of a higher world, and to which all laws of physics are subordinate; so that, working on the secret affinities and hidden springs of Nature, with subtler chemistry, more potent magnetism, with elements and forces at command, beyond our grasp, Nature becomes plastic to the regulating and formative power of spirit; it dominates matter, produces in it changes and transmutations so confounding to previous ideas as to constitute what has been called “The Despair of Science.” Operating on lines

of causation inaccessible to us, and forming new conjunctions of causes, what we find impossible may be easy to the spirit, and effects familiar to the scientists of the inner world, when manifested in the material sphere, be as strange, startling, inexplicable to us, as are the highest exploits of science to the untutored savage.

If I am told that this is contrary to the Order of Nature, or at all events a deviation from the ordinary course of Nature, I shall not contest the point, which may prove only a question of the nature and fitness of terms. A universal and consentaneous testimony might be cited to show that at all events it is not contrary to all human experience, not even in this enlightened nineteenth century, and that therefore it must be accepted as a part of that larger Order of the Divine Economy of which Nature is but a subordinate member, and in which Nature and the Supernatural are included.*

If on the other hand, as some contend, miracles lie within the Order of Nature, then we must so extend our conception of Nature as to comprehend in it at least all ranks and orders of created beings, including the great realm of spirit with all its laws

* The folly of dogmatising on the laws and possibilities of Nature, of which we know so little, and assuming that these laws are a finality, is humorously illustrated by Mr. Kingsley in his *Water Babies*, which I cite for the benefit of those "land babies" for whom this charming fairy tale was written:—

"And Tom?"

"In fact the fairies had turned him into a water baby."

"A water baby? You never heard of a water baby. Perhaps not. That is the very reason why this story was written. There are a great many things in the world which you never heard of; and a great many more nobody ever heard of."

"'But there are no such things as water babies.' How do you know that? Have you been there to see? And if you had been there to see, and had seen none, that would not prove that there were none."

"'But a water baby is contrary to Nature.' Well, but my dear little man, you must learn to talk about such things, when you grow older, in a very different way. You must not talk about 'ain't' and 'can't' when you speak of this great wonderful world around you, of which the wisest man knows only the very smallest corner, and is, as the great Sir Isaac Newton said, only a child picking up pebbles on the shore of a boundless ocean. You must not say that this cannot be, or that is contrary to Nature. You do not know what Nature is, or what she can do; and nobody knows; not even Sir Roderick Murchison, or Professor Owen, or Professor Sedgwick, or Professor Huxley, or Mr. Darwin, or Professor Faraday, or any other of the great men whom little boys are taught to respect. They are very wise men; and you must listen respectfully to all they say, but even if they should say, which I am sure they never would, 'that cannot exist; that is contrary to Nature.' You must wait a little and see; for perhaps even they may be wrong."

"Wise men are afraid to say that there is anything contrary to Nature, except what is contrary to mathematical truth, but the wiser men are the less they talk about 'cannot.' That is a very rash dangerous word that 'cannot,' and if people use it too often, the Queen of all the Fairies is apt to astonish them suddenly by showing them, that though they say she cannot, yet she can, and what is more will, whether they approve or not."

and forces and modes of existence and operation; a startling innovation, and leading to ambiguity and confusion. But if we conceive of the spiritual world as discrete from Nature, constituting another and a higher Order, then we are justified in applying the term supernatural to that other-world Order, and to miracles as acts proceeding from it; this being not only the more conformable to common usage in thought and speech but also the more correct and philosophical. Bushnell, confirming his definition by reference to the etymology of the terms in question, says "Nature is that created realm of being or substance which has an acting, a going on, or process from within itself, under and by its own laws, . . . or, a scheme of orderly succession, determined from within the scheme itself. . . . That is supernatural, whatever it be, that is either not in the chain of natural cause and effect, or which acts on the chain of cause and effect in Nature from without the chain. Thus if any event transpires in the bosom, or upon the platform of what is called Nature, which is not from Nature itself, or is varied from the process Nature would execute by her own laws, that is supernatural, by whatever power it is wrought."

Our investigation then has conducted us to this point, that a miracle is the intervention by supernatural agency in the ordinary sequences of Nature producing effects which would not otherwise have taken place. It is not, therefore, an effect without adequate cause, but only of a cause operating from beyond and above Nature, possibly by laws and through links of connection with which we are either imperfectly acquainted or wholly ignorant. As remarked by an eminent mathematician: "A miracle is not necessarily a violation of any law of Nature, and it involves no physical absurdity: As Brown well observes, 'the laws of Nature are surely not violated when a new antecedent is followed by a new consequent; they are violated only when the antecedent, being exactly the same, a different consequent is the result;' so that a miracle has nothing in its nature inconsistent with our belief of the uniformity of Nature. All that we see in a miracle is an effect which is new to our observation, and whose cause is concealed. The cause may be beyond the sphere of our observation, and would be thus beyond the familiar sphere of Nature: but this does not make the event a violation of any law of Nature. The limits of man's observation lie within very narrow boundaries, and it would be arrogance to suppose that the reach of man's power is to form the limits of the natural world. The universe offers daily proof of the existence of power of which we know nothing, but whose mighty agency nevertheless manifestly appears in the most familiar works of creation. And shall we deny the existence of

this mighty energy, simply because it manifests itself in delegated and feeble subordination to God's omnipotence? . . . If we define a miracle as an effect of which the cause is unknown to us, then we make our ignorance the source of miracles, and the universe would be a standing miracle." *

From this view some important consequences would seem to follow. It brings the whole question of miracles, past and present, under one general and comprehensive view, and supplies their law on general principle. It enables us to understand how they may be associated with different and even conflicting religious faiths. Able and learned men have thought it necessary to show (often in spite of evidence to the contrary) that Roman Catholic and Pagan Miracles must be spurious, because it has been thought that miracles were evidence of the Divine authority of the worker or visible agent, and of the truth of all his doctrines and teachings, or at least of the general truth of the system in attestation of which the miracle was considered to be wrought. But we may now see that miracles furnish no such evidence. Were Pio Nono suddenly endowed with the power of speaking in unknown tongues—say in the Chinese language—what evidence could that be of Papal infallibility, or of the dogma of transubstantiation? Were a Hindoo philosopher to walk upon the sacred Ganges as upon dry land, what proof could that be of the metempsychosis? What miracle could prove two and two to be more than four, or less than four? Or how could it effect any belief we may entertain as to the duration of the world, or the origin of species, or any theory either of physics or of metaphysics to which it does not stand in immediate relation? What proof or confirmation of ethical or religious truth could we derive from witnessing a miracle except in so far as it proved the reality of spirit existence, or was in some way related to that belief? Could any heathen miracle make it right to offer human sacrifices to appease the anger of the gods? Or could any miracle make the parable of the good Samaritan more true, or endow it with more persuasive efficacy? The Bible itself exemplifies this: it shows that miracles in themselves are no evidence of divinity or of truth, but only of power: that they may be magical, demoniacal, and even diabolical, as well as divine. The first miracle it records—that of the talking serpent—was satanic, and one of the latest visions the New Testament records, is that of unclean spirits working miracles. If Moses and Aaron wrought miracles before Pharaoh, "as the Lord had commanded," "Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers and the magicians of Egypt; and they also did in like manner with their enchantments." Nor does it

* *Passages from the Life of a Philosopher.* By CHARLES BABBAGE.

affect the point that in this trial of strength the wise men, the magicians, and the sorcerers were ultimately vanquished. If "the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip," it was "the Devil" who took up Jesus "into an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them."* The Evangelist who records this, represents Jesus as saying, "There shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, inasmuch that were it possible, they shall deceive the very elect," and Saint Paul speaks of "Him whose coming as after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders." If, then, miracles are no certain credentials of a divine authority, no infallible test of truth, what purpose do they serve?

The New Testament speaks of miracles as "powers" or "mighty works," "wonders," and "signs." The latter is the more common and characteristic term. Miracles are the sign of a presence and a power that is not of earth, of a world beyond Nature, of a life beyond the present; they evidence that we are indeed—

Moving about in worlds not realised.

Phenomena, otherwise the most trivial, acquire deep significance when we realise them as spirit-manifestations, tokens and greetings from those who have o'erleaped this bank and shoal of Time, and thus—

Shame the doctrine of the Sadducee.

They are voices of the night, messenger-birds that come to us across the deep sea of Time, from the further shore, and tell us of that miracle country—that spirit-world whither we are bound. Miracles may have also other significations which we need not here consider, but this I take to be their main, primary, universal signification; and especially is this their chief value and significance in our day of doubt and denial as to all spiritual things.

Miracles are not the special product of any clime, race, creed, or period; they are not governed by considerations of geography, or of ethnology. We cannot put up a fence anywhere and say, "This sacred enclosure is a magic circle in which miracles were once common, but they have never occurred since, and never have occurred, and never can occur outside it." The spirit-world underlies Nature, and overlaps it; and wherever at any time there are suitable conditions may sensibly manifest its presence. We are now living in the midst of those experiences in which the infant religions of the world were cradled. Trances,

* Whether these narratives are or are not historical does not affect the present question. In any case they illustrate the Bible view of miracles—the only point for which they are here cited.

visions, healings, converse with spirits, communications from the invisible world, and manifestations of supernatural power:—these are familiar and avowed experiences in our time, as in past ages. Their correspondence with those of the primitive Christians is admitted even by those who believe in neither. Renan in his *Life of Jesus*, says:—"For nearly a century the Apostles and their disciples dreamed only of miracles." "The disciples deemed it quite natural that their master should have interviews with Moses and Elias." "The compilers of the Gospels were living in this respect in a world analogous to that of the 'Spiritualists' of our time." Of, course, M. Renan does not believe in any such world. In a later work, *The Apostles*, he tells us, "It is an absolute rule in criticism to deny a place in history to narratives of miraculous circumstances. Such facts have never been really proved. All the pretended miracles near enough to be examined are referable to illusion or imposture. If a single miracle had ever been proved, we could not reject in a mass all those of ancient history, for admitting that many of these last were false, we might still believe that some of them were true." That is just the contention of "the Spiritualists of our time," who from their own experience know that all miracles are *not* "referable to illusion or imposture;" and who find that their experiences in the nineteenth century illustrate those of "the Apostles and their disciples" in the first century, that the present and the past shed light upon each other.

"A miracle in Paris before experienced *savans* would put an end to all doubt," says Renan. I more than doubt it. To say nothing of the Apostolic miracles, even the lesser marvels of Spiritualism in our own day, attested by such *savans* as Alfred Russell Wallace, Professor De Morgan, and half-a-dozen Fellows of the Royal Society, backed by a crowd of witnesses from the learned professions and from all ranks of society, and from every civilized land, does nothing of the kind. Were an indubitable miracle to take place before a company of the most experienced *savans* of Paris, as M. Renan suggests, what would happen? Simply this: that the Members of the Institute, the Fellows of the Royal Society, and other learned bodies, would tell them plainly it was all imposture or delusion. If it were a miracle of vision it would be an hallucination; if one of hearing, they would be told it was probably a disease of the audital nerve, or the miracle would be explained as a nervous epidemic, or automatic cerebration, or past ideas renovated, or possibly as due to hypnotism, or electro-biology. They would be reminded that anyhow it could not be a miracle, because a miracle is impossible, and not to be established by any amount of testimony. Finally, it would be insisted

that if the miracle was to be believed, it must be done over again, and as often as might be required, and under such test conditions as the more experienced *savans* should impose. When M. Renan tells us "miracles never happen," he may be right if he means only that they never happen before some collective body of "experienced *savans*," for they never place themselves in the way of their happening; and if brought before them by one of their number they refuse to even listen to such matters, as did the American Association for the Promotion of Science when invited by Professor Hare and the Spiritualists of Washington, and as the Royal Society has done more recently in refusing even to hear a paper on "Pyschic Force" read before it by Mr. Crookes; but if M. Renan means that no experienced *savans* in our day testify to such facts as were formerly called miracles, then he manifests an ignorance of the subject that would be strange in so learned a man, were it not, alas! so common.

Dr. Littledale, writing in the *Contemporary Review* for August, 1872, on "The Rationale of Prayer," in reply to Professor Tyndall, says on this point:—

"I employed myself some time ago in speculating as to what would be the practical result on modern unbelief of a public revival of miracles. I have put before me the hypothesis of my being myself invested with a supernatural power of healing, and have asked myself what would come of it, assuming that the number and notoriety of the cures forced the physicists to take the matter up and inquire into it, instead of dismissing it with contemptuous incredulity. And I became satisfied that unless the power were universal and persistent in me, that is, that no case failed under any conditions, its evidential value would be superciliously disregarded. The objectors would insist on God's working so as to please them. They would require a variety of specified conditions to be fulfilled in every instance, bargaining for the nature and duration of the disease, the character and number of the witnesses to be present, the uniform repetition of the cure under carefully diversified circumstances, and the like. Then, if God did not choose to submit Himself to such critics, or withdrew after a time the power conferred, they would look to the cessation of the miracle, not to its previous persistence, and reject it accordingly as a mere abnormal phenomenon not deserving of serious attention. While, on the other hand, even if it did continue, they would, I am convinced, ascribe it to the discovery on my part of some hidden pathological law, and would deny the existence of any superhuman causation. The Evangelists are careful to let us know that the miracles they ascribe to Christ were so far from converting His chief opponents

that they merely embittered their hostility. And I consequently do not believe for a moment that even if the proposed experiment (a ward in an hospital to be specially prayed for) were one which is lawful for a Christian to try, if it were carried out to the letter as suggested, and if the tabulated result exhibit an enormous percentage of cures in the favoured ward, that the hyper-dogmatic asserters of the impossibility of miracles would be convinced. They would whisper about that one of the physicians had got a secret specific somehow, and was in league with the parsons to palm off his success as theirs. And they would probably point their remarks by showing how very conceivably that trick might have been played when chloroform was discovered but not yet currently known."

In terms almost identical with those of Renan, Strauss assures us, "There is no right conception of what history is, apart from a conviction that the chain of endless causation can never be broken, and that a miracle is an impossibility." But, now, are we quite sure that miracle is a breach in the continuity of causation? Do we know the whole chain from end to end? or, Do we see only a few of its lower links, the higher, invisible to mortal ken, reaching, it may be, beyond the realm of Nature, and producing effects we term miraculous? Büshner sneeringly asks, "Do not the table-spirits belong to the order of miracles?" and in a very different spirit, Cudworth argues, "Though all miracles, promiscuously, do not immediately prove the existence of God, nor confirm a prophet, or whatsoever doctrine; yet, do all of them evince that there is a rank of invisible, understanding beings, superior to men, which atheists commonly deny." The sneer of the atheist, and the argument of the philosopher might alike suggest to the brilliant Frenchman and the learned German that their objection to miracle is based on an entire and fundamental misapprehension of its nature, that it is not a synonym for a break in the chain of endless causation; and with the rectification of that fatal error their objection to miracle disappears: it has no longer a foothold on the earth.

The supernatural is as much in harmony with law as is the natural. The intervention of spiritual agency in Nature, acting upon forces and in ways unknown to us and thereby producing effects contrary to common experience, as when what we call solid matter is made to pass through solid matter, is no more a violation of law, or a break in the chain of endless causation, than when man intervenes in Nature and employs the electric current to transmit a message to the Antipodes.

That mistrust and doubt, especially when these are of the will, rather than of the understanding, are real powers of

hindrance in all spiritual working; and that such powers are intensified by union and brought to a focus, is certain. Even the Master Miracle-worker, in the midst of a sceptical community, "could do no mighty works because of their unbelief." So far were His miracles from being acts of omnipotence, that He expressly insists on their limitations, and on the conditions—spiritual and physical—necessary to their performance,—faith, prayer, fasting, unity, harmony. No doubt it was to the observance of these divine laws, to His habits of solitude, meditation, and prayer; His perfect trust in God, and His oneness with the Father, that He was able to perform those beneficent mighty works that were indeed a sign to that faithless and perverse generation. Doubtless there was also conjointly in Him what may be called an organic fitness—a harmony of the entire nature, an openness to the highest influx, the natural body itself being pre-eminently a temple for the Divine Spirit; so that both spiritually and physically, and in an especial manner, He was thus constituted the living organ and medium of its communication and power. And if now, as we are told, "such things never happen," let it, among other things, be remembered that such a personality is never found, that such a life is never lived. When our "experienced *savans*" are thus open to influx from the Heavens, and attain that moral and spiritual union with God which Christ exemplified, and to which His true disciples aspire, they may realise the truth of His words, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater than these;" and of His promise to be in the midst of those who were gathered together in His name; and understand how the great Pentecostal outpouring occurred, when "the disciples were all with one accord in one place."

To our "experienced *savans*," however, I am aware such language is like talking in an unknown tongue. Spiritual insight indeed is rarely found in men profoundly penetrated with a sense of their own learning and wise in their own conceit. It is true now, as of old, that spiritual mysteries are often hidden from these wise and prudent persons and revealed to fishermen, and even unto babes. Scholarship may teach us of the past, and science of the facts of Nature and her methods, but spiritual arcana are beyond their province. Philology and mathematics will not help us to any knowledge of the laws, forces, and relations of the spiritual world, and the most experienced *savant* may be stone-blind to the simplest facts concerning it; as indeed he is when he seeks to test and gauge those facts by the laws and methods of purely natural science, except in so far as they relate to phenomena and effects of spiritual action within the range of physics.

While we contend that there is no antecedent impossibility in miracles; that, like other facts, they may be established on sufficient evidence; that they violate no law of the Divine Order, when we take a comprehensive view of that Order as including both the natural and the spiritual universe with which they may be coeval and co-extensive; they at the same time become divested of that false and superstitious character which in a scientific age has so impeded their reception.

I trust that the time is not far distant when this whole subject will be reconsidered on larger grounds than those on which it is now generally discussed, and apart from any bearings it may be supposed to have on theories and systems on either side. It may be that our definitions may have to be corrected and our theories revised, and that our systems may be found partial and incomplete; but let us take all facts into the account and resolve to follow Truth whithersoever it may lead us, and I apprehend we shall be on the high road to a better understanding of the *rationale* of miracles, past and present.

NOTE.—I have abstained from direct discussion of the New Testament miracles (to which, in consideration of this subject, our thoughts naturally revert) as their adequate discussion would demand much fuller treatment than is here possible. I would, however, recommend the reader desirous of prosecuting this enquiry to Trench's *Notes on the Miracles*, especially to the Introduction, which gives a historical and critical review of the objections to them. It is a pity this Introduction is not published as a separate essay in a cheap form for more extensive circulation.

In reply to Hume and more recent objectors to miracles, see an able paper by Alfred Russell Wallace, read before the Committee of the London Dialectical Society, and published in *The Spiritual Magazine*, No. 3, Vol. VII., New Series.

SOME "MEMORABLE RELATIONS."

A LADY writing from Lucan, County Dublin, has communicated the following "memorable relations:"—"I have been lately reading cases of insensibility to fire related in the *Spiritual Magazine*; my husband can bear witness to a case of the same kind in this neighbourhood. Within a mile from this place, my husband has seen a man who worked at the blacksmith's forge in the village, take a red-hot bar of iron from the forge out of the furnace and lick it, all present hearing his tongue upon it sound as if frying; and he would take live coals in his hands, receiving thereby no injury, his skin remaining without any trace of fire having passed over it."

The spirit of a suicide is described by the same lady as

lately to have appeared in their neighbourhood under the following circumstances:—She says, “A man committed suicide the other day by cutting his throat. He was unmarried, and had a sister who lived close to his house; but I do not know whether she lived with him. On the day of the funeral, when she returned home, she went into a shed for his spade and shovel. They were standing in a corner. When she entered she saw a cloudy form between them and the wall. She became alarmed and ran out, but gathering courage ran in again, upon which the spade and shovel attacked her as if they were in a man’s hands. She ran out terrified, and after a little while she asked a man (who knew nothing of what had happened to her) to get for her the spade and shovel. He went in and brought them to her without their showing any hostility to him. But immediately upon their being brought into her presence they attacked her furiously, and she had to fly for her life.”

In a later letter received from this lady, she says that the cottage of the suicide is now empty, no people being found, however poor, willing to live in it, owing to this disturbance caused by the uneasy spirit.

Writing, June 14th, 1872, our correspondent tells us of another haunted cottage in her neighbourhood. She thus writes:—

“We live close to the Grand Canal, at the 12th lock from Dublin (that is how we reckon here). About twelve years ago there was a lock-keeper who lived in the lock-house, which stands about 12 yards from the lock. There are sluices in the gates which are like wickets drawn up by an immense key that works like the key of a barrel-organ. I need not say how laborious the turning is of this key; and if it slips off, which it sometimes does, the person turning it generally falls into the water, and not unfrequently is drowned. At the time I speak of, the lock-keeper was a man of the name of Michael Dunn. He was a quiet, decent man, with only one fault. He occasionally took a dram, and then he drank in fits; for months he would drink nothing, then take to it again and drink incessantly for a week at a time. He was married to a heartless, vixen of a woman, who completely ruled him. They had three or four children, the eldest of whom was a boy named Isaac, who was an unusually smart, intelligent, amiable lad. The unfortunate father at the time I speak of, the summer of 1860 or thereabouts, in one of his drunken fits, was lying on his bed sleeping off his drink, when a boat was seen coming up to the lock. Poor little Isaac was ordered by his parents to prepare for the entrance of the boat. The child cried bitterly and besought that he might not have to empty the water out of the lock, for that very

morning the key had slipped, and but for the presence of a bigger boy who assisted him, he would have then been thrown into the water. His entreaties were in vain, the father stupid with drink and drunken with sleep, drove him off with curses. In a moment the heavy key once more slipped from the child's weak hands, and the child was driven through the aperture by the violence of the water and hurled to the bottom of the lock, his back-bone being broken by his having been forced through so small an opening, not more than two feet square, or so. The wretched father was sobered by this horrible accident, but appeared as one stunned so as to scarcely understand what really had occurred. At length he was roused by the curses and screams of his wife, who from that day forth never for one moment ceased calling him the murderer of her child. One morning about ten days after the tragedy, the wretched father, driven wild by his wife's reproaches, fled from the house like a madman, and, about half a mile away in the fields smothered himself.

There is at the present time a lock-keeper, together with his wife and his little son, living in the house by the lock; and his wife's sister, a decent young woman, a dress-maker, who sleeps in the room formerly occupied by Michael Dunn. For a considerable time, the dress-maker has seen lights and heard voices. Lately she has constantly seen the figure of a little boy with bare feet and head, with a kind of cloak, however, partly drawn over the head and concealing the face. This figure would walk from her room to her sister and brother-in-law's bed-room. She bore this as well as she could, telling the priest of it, who only laughed at her account. Four mornings since (this is written, as we have already said, June 14th, 1872), she saw the boy, instead of passing on without noticing her as usual, turn and look up in her face, and the poor girl has been in a dreadful state of mind ever since.

Since writing the above, our correspondent sends us word that she learns that during the miserable eight days of his life after the death of little Isaac, the father used every night at eleven o'clock to say he should go to the lock, as Isaac had promised to meet him there. And there for an hour he would be seen pacing up and down, as though conversing with some one.

THE DARK *SÉANCE*, AND COLOURED LIGHT.

By CAPTAIN CASEMENT.

DURING my early investigations of the spiritual phenomena in North America, commenced in 1851, I happened to be at New York, on one of my visits to that country, in the Spring of 1853 or 54, and shall never forget the sensation produced among Spiritualists and others there, on the introduction of the *spirit-voice* and accompanying manifestations by the spirit of "John King," at a spirit-room, built to spirit-order, in a very secluded spot among the mountains of Western New York, by a Spiritualist named Koons.

I was prevented then from paying a visit to Koons' spirit-room, as I had arranged to do, but I heard Mr. Charles Partridge, the publisher of the first modern spiritual newspaper, the *New York Spiritual Telegraph*, relate his experiences at the spirit-rooms in question, avowing the extremely satisfactory character of the manifestations taking place there, which were *free* to the public, and visited by persons from the most distant parts of the country, he having met one gentleman there, who had actually come through 11 degrees of latitude, expressly to witness those extraordinary manifestations. I had, however, once crossed the Atlantic previously, chiefly to investigate the wonderful case of Andrew Jackson Davis, and I may add that I never regretted it. As to the reason why "John King" had selected such an out-of-the-way spot for his astounding manifestations, much curiosity existed, for it was near no town or village, and part of the journey was fatiguing, the mode of locomotion being arduous and difficult during the latter stages.

In reply to queries put, it was explained that the magnetic and electric emanations of that district, influenced as they were by the peculiar geological formations underneath, produced *conditions*, which in connexion with the mediumistic powers developed in Koons' family, enabled the spirits operating to give the peculiar manifestations then and there exhibited. It may be asked, how is it that the same "John King," with his spirit-assistants, are able to afford to us now, in the heart of London, manifestations equal, and in some instances far superior, to those originally given at Mr. Koons' spirit-room? The explanation is simple yet instructive, as pointing to that great law of *progression*, which controls all things seen and unseen, animate and inanimate in the universe. For since the time

when the spirit of Benjamin Franklin accompanied by a few German spirits sympathising with him in his researches and aims, made the first experiments which resulted in the electrical vibrations at Auburn and Rochester in Western New York, according to the communication made by Franklin to Davis, recorded in his *Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse*, the spirits have been themselves evidently making great progress, by the aid of numerous experiments, in opening up a tangible intercourse with mankind on our earth, in a great variety of modes, so that what could only be effected at first in certain localities, and with one or two mediums, may now be produced almost anywhere, and in presence of a great variety of mediumistic persons, while the phenomena continue to increase, though, with the exception of spirit-photography, probably not in much greater power or variety yet than in times long gone by.

The intense delight experienced by the inhabitants of the progressive rudimentary spheres, on becoming acquainted with the success of Benjamin Franklin and his *confrères*, in discovering this telegraphic mode of communication with earth, which words could scarcely convey an idea of, was not the least interesting point to which Franklin's communication directed attention.

It would appear that throughout the world's history, whenever fit recipients could be found or developed for the influx of spiritual mediumistic influences, during periods of intellectual advancement, as in the days of the Greek republics, and when local electrical conditions suited, as at Delphos, spirits have always shown extreme readiness to avail themselves of such conditions and opportunities, for the drawing up of men's minds heavenward. And now, as in the words of one of the Reverend Mr. Harris's spiritual poems, it may be well said, "the gods on earth renew their bright career."

Among all the various phenomena which I have witnessed, none have appeared more demonstrative to me than the conversational spirit-voice of "John King," now so common at such *séances* as those where that indefatigable spirit superintends the proceedings. The spirit-faces and figures have been recently added at several of his *séances*, as well as at a few others, including Mrs. Jennie Holmes's, which very greatly enhance the value of the conversational manifestations, and I am perfectly convinced that if investigators would only take the hints which "John King" and his daughter "Katie" have now given recently on two occasions, as to the great advantage of using a faint coloured light at his *séances* and similar ones—a plan which I am most desirous of calling attention to—very soon such a system of

happifying and purifying social spiritual intercourse might be generally reckoned upon, as would supersede altogether the dark *séance*, except in cases where exceptionally powerful physical manifestations were required.

At a private *séance* in June last, at Manchester, in presence of the mediums Messrs. Herne and Williams, a small hand was perceived by the company present to be waved round the red spark of the candle on the latter being blown out. This led to inquiry, and "John King," explained that if the sitters could manage some permanent red light of a similar character, visible results would be obtained. A small piece of thick red ribbon was then placed over the bullseye of a very small lighted lantern, when the musical instruments, &c., in the room were *seen* floating about, as well as the lantern itself, without any hand touching it. This was a very successful experiment, and not so primitive either as Franklin's famous one with a boy's kite, which has brought such grand results to the world.

During the present month, a second and superior illustration of the principle involved in the use of *coloured light alone*, at spiritual *séances*, was displayed at Kingston-on-Thames, in Mr. Russell's private photographic studio, which I have examined. Here there is a single red pane of glass, admitting coloured light freely, and in a small enclosed space attached to this room, similar to a cabinet, "Katie King" and her father showed themselves quite unexpectedly, in the presence of Mr. Russell and some members of his family, during an unexpected visit from Mr. Herne. "Katie" walked out into the centre of the red lighted room, and in direct voice, was very particular in asking that all *white* light should be excluded, as it was a great obstacle to such manifestations. Her lips were seen to move in speaking, and her dress was felt and handled. "John King" put his arm out of the cabinet, but said he would have to practise more, as Katie had done, before he could walk out into the coloured light.

Eventually it may be discovered that some particular colour, or combination of colours, may be preferable to all others. A small piece of coloured glass inserted in a folding door, allowing the *white* light from gas, oil or wax, in the outer room, to penetrate through it to the inner or *séance* room, might prove a suitable mode of experimenting, care being taken to prevent any *white* light from stealing in through crevices; *whiteness* in light in these experiments being prejudicial.

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF MRS. JENNIE FERRIES HOLMES.

HOW JAMES GORDON BENNETT AND PROFESSOR HALLER GOT
MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR.

DURING the winter of 1865, and while travelling through New York State, I received an invitation from Mrs. James Gordon Bennett to make a visit to her country home at Washington Heights, on the Hudson, for the purpose of holding *séances* for the benefit of herself and a few friends at that time visiting the family. Mrs. Bennett was a firm believer, but Mr. Bennett was very sceptical on the subject of spirit-phenomena, and as an offset to Mrs. Bennett and myself, he invited Professor Haller, the celebrated "magician," who was at that time giving exhibitions in New York City, and pretending to expose Spiritualism. So confident were Mr. Bennett and Professor Haller of making an *exposé* of me, that they were quite elated and very jubilant over their prospect of an easy victory, and a good joke on Mrs. Bennett and myself.

I invited Mr. Bennett and his friends to form a circle. He declined. He did not believe in circles or anything of the sort. I then invited him to go into the room alone with me, while the rest of the party guarded the doors and windows. Mr. Bennett then went into the room alone with me, he holding both of my hands firmly. We were no sooner seated than he was touched by spirit-hands—his face slapped, his hair pulled, and the iron ring which he was holding down on the table with his elbows was put on his arm. Mr. Bennett called for a light, and wanted me to get one. I firmly declined to let go his hands, but requested him to go with me to the door and ask the friends to get one for us, which was done, when Mr. Bennett related his experience to his friends, just as everything occurred, and expressed himself satisfied for that night. Mr. Bennett observing that Professor Haller looked rather astonished and incredulous about the matter, told him to investigate the phenomena for himself. Mrs. Bennett was highly delighted at Mr. Bennett's discomfiture, and urged Haller to try his hand with the spirits. Professor Haller finally consented to sit alone with me; everything being arranged as before, and to the entire satisfaction of all present. The manifestations instantly commenced on taking our seats, and Professor Haller was treated in the same manner as Mr. Bennett, *only more so*. Professor Haller made quite a little speech to the party assembled, and admitted that he could do many wonderful things which were very deceptive to the

senses of sight and hearing ; but with his hands held he could do absolutely nothing. He expressed himself satisfied of the presence of spirit-power while getting the ring test, as he held both the medium's hands firmly, also holding both of her feet and knees between his own, and at the same time was repeatedly touched by hands, some large and some small, and three and four at a time. *Séances* were held nightly, Mr. Bennett being in attendance each time. He also received many private communications—a full and lengthy account of which was written by himself, and published in the *Herald* at that time.

MANIFESTATIONS AT THE COOPER INSTITUTE.

During my stay in New York, I gave many cabinet *séances* at the Cooper Institute, under the management of Dr. Fitzgibbon. One night the hall was filled to overflowing, and we did not get a single manifestation. The spirits, for some cause best known to themselves, would not even rap. I was terribly annoyed and expected to be mobbed, but the Doctor spoke to the audience and quieted them, and invited everyone to come the next evening, which they did, and we found it impossible to accommodate one half that tried to get in. That night the manifestations were perfectly furious. The sceptic element that had been so delighted on the evening previous went away more confounded than ever. The result of our labours in New York was the organisation of a Progressive Society and a Lyceum. The same results were obtained in Brooklyn, where I afterwards went, and held many private as well as public *séances*. We went to Philadelphia from New York, where I met Emma Hardinge, who was doing a noble work from the platform. She lectured and I held *séances* alternately for the benefit of the poor. While delivering one of her inspired lectures she described how the ring test was done at my *séances*.

HOW A POOR GIRL WAS RESCUED.

During the last four years I have been professionally engaged in New Orleans, La, U.S.A. I went there a perfect stranger, and found but very few Spiritualists, and that few very despondent. I left there last May, when the Society of Spiritualists, under the presidency of Hon. A. Alexander (who was made a Spiritualist at my *séances*), numbered nearly 3,000 members. During the latter part of July, 1870, I was located at No. 190, Buronne Street, where an event happened to me that caused considerable emotion throughout the city, and gave a new

impetus to our cause, instigating many to investigate who had hitherto held aloof. One evening while engaged at my toilet, preparatory to the *séance*, a scene came up before me in my normal state, that for the moment quite startled me, but soon passed out of my mind, as many others of like import had on previous occasions. The second evening the scene came again, but in a more convincing and startling manner. The apparition appeared for the third time. I saw a sick girl, whose pitiable situation excited my compassion; the room in which she stayed, its furniture, the exact likeness of the inmates, and the appearance of the house; the threatening manner of the old hag who seemed to have charge of the poor miserable creature, who was pleading for mercy, and begging to be sent to the hospital. The fiendish-looking old woman, standing over the trembling girl, told her "if she did not die that night, she would find a way to make her; she did not intend to be bothered with her any longer."

So forcible an impression did it make upon my mind that I called in several of my lady friends, and stated to them that this vision had appeared to me on three separate occasions. I told them that this girl appeared to me in an attitude so beseeching that my sympathies were excited beyond restraint. Looking at her and her surroundings attentively, I perceived that the woman having the girl in charge was actually engaged in making grave clothes, while yet the patient lived; also that she had prepared a bath in which, even before life was extinct, she was to be immersed preparatory for the tomb. Interested at this information, the ladies determined to visit the house and make inquiries. The residence was so accurately described by me that it was impossible to miss it, and on arriving there, they inquired if a sick lady occupied one of the rooms of the house. They were answered in the affirmative; and on being shown to the apartment, found everything as I had described it, and the old hag actually standing over the girl, gesticulating and repeating the very words I had heard in the vision, the information being correct in every particular. The girl was there, sick, wretched, and apparently dying; and in the same room was the woman engaged in making her shroud. Of course, such a condition of things could not be tolerated. They at once informed the police, and steps were immediately taken to have the girl conveyed to the Charity Hospital. The heartrending story of her flight from home and parents, and finally her ruin and present sickening condition, was learned from her own lips.

The New Orleans *Picayune* gave a full and detailed account of the whole affair, closing with the following paragraph:—

"Whatever may be said of mediums in the abstract, Mrs.

Ferris has illustrated in this instance a kindly Christian charity which has rescued a human being from death, and built up in her heart a longing for a purer life, which if it does no more, will cherish at least this single virtue."

Afterwards I made frequent visits to the hospital to see the girl; and as she grew stronger and realised that she had really escaped from her tormentors, and was safe from further persecution, she related to me the story of her ruin, with all details up to the time of her rescue. Suffice it to say that it was the oft-repeated tale of man's inhumanity to woman.

MR. FRANCIS GALTON ON THE STATISTICS OF PRAYER.*

By R. M. THEOBALD, M.D.

MR. GALTON has taken up the subject that Professor Tyndal introduced in such an extraordinary fashion. The professor suggested a method of testing the efficacy of prayer by experiment. Mr. Galton now asserts that the experiment has been tried and failed. It is proved that prayer is not efficacious. The proofs are already at hand, and they are such as these:—Medical men never attribute the recovery of their patients to prayer:—"The universal habit of the scientific world to ignore the agency of prayer is a very important fact. All royal persons are prayed for, that their lives may be preserved, yet the average duration of their lives is rather below than over the usual average of persons in affluent circumstances. Clergymen are not so long lived as lawyers and medical men, nor are they specially favoured in the worldly matters which enter into their prayers. Missionaries have no immunity from casualty and death, even when their work is scarcely begun. Children who are prayed for do not live longer than others. Every day the prayer is offered that the nobility may be endowed with 'grace, wisdom and understanding,' but the upper classes are especially liable to insanity. Men who have made the most mark in their times have not been conspicuously devout, often the reverse. Religious men are often bad men of business, unskilful and unpractical, and bring failure to the concern they manage. Insurance companies do not inquire into the devotional habits of those who present themselves for insurance, but are guided by quite other considerations. If these reasons are sufficient to

* *Fortnightly Review*, August, 1872.

convince Mr. Galton of the futility of prayer, we do not wonder at his assertion that "the efficacy of prayer seems to me a simple, as it is a perfectly appropriate and legitimate subject of scientific inquiry." Doubtless it is a very simple matter if you begin by determining that all conceptions involved in the words "efficacy" and "prayer," shall be as shallow and narrow, and human, and limited as any of the smallest questions of political economy.

The fact is that the phrase, the "efficacy of prayer," is a sort of formula, a string of words that are, as Hobbes says, "counters to wise men and money to fools"—words that have no meaning at all till the entire realm of spiritual facts to which prayer belongs has been brought into view. These physical philosophers are really playing with words and phrases, while the realities which these words only dimly suggest are never present to their consciousness at all. "Efficacy" they understand in the sense in which the word is used when applied to drugs or mechanical forces, or the expedients of committees and Parliaments. "Prayer" is a word that means a definite request which can be formulated and put into schedules. Prayer is efficacious when its terms are complied with, when the good (or goods) requested have been duly received and the transaction settled. All noble words of this class dwindle as soon as these *savans* use them.

Can anything be conceived more ridiculously unphilosophical than this method of measuring infinite facts by the two-foot rule of statistical computation? The latest exponent of cynical philosophy is not altogether mistaken when he remarks, "Your pseudo-philosopher, who will always think he has plumbed the ocean with his silver-topped cane, is a great bore sometimes."

It is remarkable how invariably scientific men, when they pretend to investigate supernatural facts, make the facts attitudinise to suit their convenience. Here is a very subtle piece of attitudinising:—

There are two lines of research, by either of which we may pursue this inquiry. The one that promises the most trustworthy results is to examine large classes of cases (such classes he means as the number of still-born babies announced in the *Record*—babies presumably prayed for—as compared with those announced in the *Times*) and to be guided by broad averages; the other, which I will not employ in these pages, is to deal with isolated instances.

He selects exactly those cases which he can manipulate at pleasure, which every one knows can produce no satisfactory result, while he politely bows out of court the cases which do not admit of manipulation, which present some of the most curious and difficult problems that the human mind can be exercised upon—the cases in which prayer is apparently answered in an exact and literal way by an act of supernatural intervention. We need not discuss such cases in these columns—we merely claim that

they should have special attention when the question of the efficacy of prayer is investigated. And this not merely on their own account, but because they illustrate a very usual method of Divine working. The deep and obscure ways of Providence are intended to be interpreted, or, to a limited extent, illuminated, by the more intelligible acts. It may be that petitions for spiritual and universal blessings are as really answered as George Müller's prayers for daily bread and daily cash (assuming his case to be really one of repeated providential interference, as he describes them.) But prayer for general rather than individual benefits may be answered in quite inscrutable ways: by the birth of a child or a thought, by some apparently chance word or event which contains the infinitesimal germ of the intended result. Indeed, it is quite possible that the answer to any prayer may be involved in some event outside the limits of this planet, the effects of which will not reach us till after an indefinite lapse of time. The Christian conception of the solidarity of the universal realm of God, in all worlds and ages, compels us to admit the possibility that such links of connection may exist between earth and the heavens, between time and eternity. Now it is plain that if this is the only way in which prayer is answered, the strain put upon faith would be beyond human endurance. Prayer may, however, vary infinitely in its range, from a crust of bread to the eternal welfare of the whole human race, and the answers may be small enough for even a physical philosopher to appreciate, or beyond the ken of the loftiest created intelligence. It may be that the answers which we can understand are selected, typical, and on the whole exceptional cases, intended to assist our faith when we can see no answer at all, and that it is as unscientific to investigate the question of the efficacy of prayer while these cases are left out, as it would be to study the atmosphere of the sun before we have found out what are the properties of the oxygen and nitrogen of our own atmosphere.

We make bold, therefore, to deny in *toto* Mr. Galton's assertion that the efficacy of prayer is a "simple, appropriate, and legitimate subject of scientific inquiry." In a very limited sense, it is a subject for science; but only where the inquiry has been so restricted that it becomes almost useless. It is doubtless true that in Mr. Galton's sense prayer is *not* efficacious—it will not yield any definite percentage on the time and energy spent upon it; it is not a transaction whose value can be expressed in any known currency. But this only proves that its value must be gauged by quite other considerations. Physical science and statistical inquiries must necessarily concern themselves with the phenomena of time and space. So far as prayer has reference

to this class of conditions—and it has doubtless a very important reference to them—science may, with some success, investigate its results. But let science do so with due modesty, and not think it has scaled the heavens merely because it has worked out a problem in book-keeping by double entry. The grandest results of prayer do not belong to the phenomena of time and space at all, and therefore are only the subject of scientific investigation if there is a science which can emancipate itself from these sensuous conditions, and grasp infinite realities. Any competent metaphysician knows this, if Professor Tyndall and Captain Galton are not aware of it, and make stupid blunders in consequence.

It is not our fault if we are constrained thus to expose the ignorance of eminent men of science on these elementary questions of psychology and metaphysics. It would be very delightful to render homage to the depth of thought, accuracy of reasoning, and the keenness of insight of men who are deservedly respected for their sagacity and soundness in the investigations of physical science. And it is proportionally humiliating to find in these same men the shallowest thinking, the most fallacious reasoning, and the most confused perceptions when they attempt to deal with matters that lie beyond the region of sense and sight, though they are not beyond the discernment of any plain man whose spiritual vision has not been dimmed and distorted by pseudo-scientific sophistication. Alas! alas! What a fantastic compound of littleness and grandeur is presented by some of our greatest men! As a small compensation, we smaller folk may be delivered from the tyranny of great names. There is no one so unskilled in science and philosophy who may not take up the words of Elihu, "I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment. Therefore I said, hearken to me, I also will show my opinion."

THE *SPIRITUALIST* AND SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHS.

OUR contemporary, *The Spiritualist*, appears angry with other spiritual journals, and with this Magazine in particular, because they are unable to confirm its conclusions in regard to the spirit-photographs taken by Mr. Hudson. We wish to employ our space to better purpose than self-vindication, and have no desire to be drawn into a controversy with any spiritual journal on differences of opinion arising out of investigations of new

phases of phenomena in which difficulties may naturally be expected, especially when they are of so subtle and delicate a kind as in spirit-photographs; and as to which differences of opinion may be honestly entertained. We, however, observe with regret, that our contemporary continues to reiterate imputations against the *bonâ fides* of Mr. Hudson and the mediums in whose presence the majority of these spirit-photographs were obtained, which we cannot but regard as unsustained by any thing like sufficient evidence. If, indeed, loudness of tone and confidence of statement could be accepted as evidence, it certainly would not be found lacking in the columns of our contemporary. We should not be at all surprised to learn that it is quoted as the latest illustration that the assumption of infallibility is not limited to either the Vatican or the Royal Institution. It will, however, be found on careful examination that the greater part of what it is pleased to call "the facts of the case," are only its *opinions*, *inferences*, and *fancies*, and we respectfully decline to take these as current coin for facts, partly because we have made more personal inquiry into the subject than our contemporary gives us credit for, and still more, because those inferences are in conflict with a large amount of direct unimpeachable testimony, and with the statements of spirits whose forms appear on Mr. Hudson's plates, and who exhibit facts which attest and confirm the truth of their statements on the subject.

We cannot receive as decisive the judgment of those who look on these pictures with a merely "professional eye;" were we to do so, we should have to give up as spurious *all* spirit-photographs, including those the *Spiritualist* admits to be genuine; nay, for that matter, all spiritual manifestations so regarded would come under and have come under the same condemnation. When professional photographers are as familiar with the laws and methods of spiritual photography, as the more scientific members of the profession are with those of common photography, their opinions on this question will be entitled to greater weight. Perhaps by that time they may have learned that phenomena of spiritual agency are not to be wholly judged by those narrow canons of professional criticism which apply well enough to phenomena of purely physical and mundane origin.

To follow our contemporary in detail, to correct its misrepresentations, exhibit the wrong constructions it puts on facts, and point out its false premises and fallacious reasonings, would lead to long trivial discussions and to personal references, perhaps irritating—certainly wearisome—and probably attended with but little profit. As spirit-photographs are better understood they will vindicate themselves, they are

already doing so. The effects so confidently regarded as indubitable proof of double exposure, it has been shown appear on plates where certainly only a single exposure has taken place, and on plates where recognised portraits of departed friends and relatives clearly appear: Facts are also coming into view which explain the resemblance which the spirit-portrait sometimes bears to the medium. Some facts of this kind were given in our last number, and in the same number of the *Spiritualist* in which the editor flings about charges with so free a hand, there is an article, apparently also by the editor, on "The Systematic Appearance of Spirits;" giving an account of manifestations through the mediumship of Miss Florence Cook. Speaking of the spirit-faces seen, he says, "The first face which appeared, and which called itself Katie King, was much like her own, to her great annoyance. . . . The spirit Katie said she could not help being like her medium." Now, if this face had been photographed at Mr. Hudson's studio, would not its resemblance to the medium at once have been set down as conclusive evidence that it was the medium who had here personated the spirit, and had acted in fraudulent collusion with the photographer to palm off upon credulous Spiritualists a sham spirit-photograph; or what our contemporary calls an "artificial ghost picture made by double exposure of the plate, the said plate being first exposed on the person dressed as a ghost, then preserved in a wet state, and afterwards exposed again on persons who come for spirit-photographs."

A little further in the same article we read, "The spirits say they *manufacture* the faces more or less perfectly, and that the life in them is derived from the medium, who is usually in a deep trance all the time. The sides, tops, and backs of the heads are covered with white bandages. The heads have been felt, but only in total darkness at present; in some cases they have been hollow at the back, just like a wax doll with the back of its head pushed in. They are all living faces, with sparkling eyes and mobile features. When the power is weak, the eyes are more fixed than at other times, and the spirits say they cannot see out of them." Again we ask, if this spirit-head like that of a wax doll had been photographed by Mr. Hudson, would it not at once have been denounced as "a dummy ghost picture," or "make up?" Is it not strange that our contemporary does not apparently perceive even the force and bearing of its own facts?

It is greatly to be regretted that our generally intelligent and careful contemporary has not in this matter acted with its usual discretion; that, instead of following those who looked at these photographs with only a "professional eye," the editor

did not possess his soul in patience, wait for more light, and take counsel with Spiritualists whose longer experience might have made him more cautious and been a safer guidance. He would not then have so hastily occupied the seat of judgment, and, deceived by fallacious appearances and facts he did not properly understand, have defamed the character of men on whom no breath of suspicion had blown, and whose good faith and extraordinary mediumship he had himself attested. He has made certain serious charges; it is his duty either to substantiate or withdraw them. At present, he has done neither. His plain duty in this respect is not to be evaded by reference to other persons who, he alleges, are in possession of evidence. It is his duty to produce that evidence, not ours to go hunting after what we believe to be mare's nests. The testimony on the other side, which has come to us unsought, has been neither "anonymous," nor that of "letters dropped into the office from anybody;" but of experienced Spiritualists, well known and respected as such long before our contemporary was heard of. To this mass of evidence we have much pleasure in adding the clear and decided testimony of Mr. William Howitt, which will be found on another page.

It was our simple duty to point out, as we have done, the inconclusive nature of the evidence on which accusations of imposture and fraud had been based, and to publish rebutting evidence on the other side. We hope the able editor of the *Spiritualist* will yet see reason to abandon the untenable position hastily taken up by him. When he does so, we are sure that Spiritualists will readily condone the wrong he has unwittingly done, in consideration of his good intentions and past services, and that if he learns the salutary lesson which this experience should have brought him, he will furnish no occasion for a "double exposure."

Since the foregoing was in type we have received the following:—

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

Sir,—In consequence of having seen statements in the issue of the *Spiritualist* of the 15th instant, I beg to inform you that I called on Mr. Benjamin Pycock, of Brooke's Hotel, 33, Surrey Street, Strand, yesterday, the 20th September, and showed him the statements referred to in the *Spiritualist*. He expressed to me the greatest astonishment, and denied the matter *in toto*, saying that he had never made any such communication to Mr. Harrison, neither had I made any such confession to him. I simply give this as it comes from him, and I think it needs little more denial of Mr. Harrison's insinuations

against me ; one false statement proved throws doubt on others. I shall answer the matter more fully elsewhere, as I do not wish to occupy too much of your space. Mr. Pycock has expressed his willingness to corroborate what I now say. The other statements made with reference to me are equally unfounded.

I remain, sir, yours faithfully,

C. E. WILLIAMS, Medium.

RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, NOT PHYSICAL BUT SPIRITUAL.

From a Discourse by the Rev. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.

WHY has it been thought necessary to advocate the resurrection of the *body*? If we can only understand this, we shall be far on the road towards understanding the error itself and the remedy for it. First, it is said that the body must be raised because it is necessary that the body in which man has sinned shall *suffer*. But this notion grows out of the gross and earthly view of life which goes not beyond our present physical sensations and our present knowledge of material things. But how poor and unworthy this idea appears when we once come to understand that the body is only the instrument of the spirit,—the medium which it uses to put itself into communication with outward things, and that the body is only what it is, as a sensitive organization, simply because it is connected with the spirit by mysterious and subtile laws, which are, nevertheless, not *necessary* to the spirit's being, but which are temporary as necessary only to our existence here. He who can once master the thought that the spirit is the centre of all life and the real recipient even of our present sensations, will be at no loss to understand this great truth, that under new conditions of being, the spirit, without such a body as we now have, may receive sensations which, whether of bliss or pain, are not to be compared with those which it now duly receives through the present body, that really hinders sensation and deprives us of more than it bestows. Besides, the absurdity of the notion that the body is raised in order that its sins may be punished in itself appears, when we consider that during a life-time a man changes his entire body many times. Thus John Locke puts it as against the Bishop of Worcester,—“A sinner has acted here in his body (say) a hundred years: he is raised at the last day, but with what body? The same, your lordship says, that he acted

in, because St. Paul says he must receive the things done in his body. What, therefore, must his body at the resurrection consist of? Must it consist of all the particles of matter that have ever been vitally united to his soul? If so, then it follows that many bodies must arise or be united to the soul, since in many bodies sin, in a long life, has been committed."

Second, it is also said, that the body must be raised that personal *identity* may be preserved. But this again grows out of the same gross and earthly idea as the last, that the body and not the *soul* is the real man. Let any one see that personal identity is something which depends upon the spirit, and that, however the body may identify us to the *outward* eye, it is no more necessary to our individuality than the clothing we wear, and the truth will shine out as clear as a sunbeam, that when we bid farewell to this husk of the body and blossom out into the new life, we shall not only not need the earthly body to preserve our personal identity, but we shall find that the body hid us more than it manifested us, and did more to keep us from the knowledge of ourselves than to help us to possess ourselves. But that our personal identity does not depend upon the body, must be plain to any one who will consider what we have just said,—that the body is in process of change from year to year; and yet that personal identity remains. I feel and know that I rule behind this body,—that it is only my servant, and that out of it, I should probably know myself better and be better known. The body necessary to personality! Why, what is personality? Is it a collection of features and limbs? Or is it not rather the vitality that moulds the features and uses the limbs? I spurn the animalism of finding my personality in my flesh! My loves and hatreds, my aspirations and discontents, my thoughts and affections, these are more to my personality than the eyes through which I look, or the hands with which I work. Why, if we could all escape from the body this moment we should probably know ourselves and each other in a way that would startle us. Do not fear: you will not need the earthly body in that beautiful new world; you will know yourselves and be known well enough. Thus it is only our want of light that leads us to cling to this rudimentary form of life,—to cling to this body as though our personality depended upon it. Let it go! this mortal must put on immortality; and when we are so clothed we shall never need to take up the cast-off dress of time again.

Third, it is further said by those who affirm the necessity of the resurrection of the body, that without the body our future existence would be an unreal or imperfect one. But this, again, grows out of the same poor, gross idea, that the body as we know it now, is the living reality: hence it is that we fancy we

should be spectres without a home, if we were without the body. That only comes of our earthliness,—of our poor grovelling ideas of life—of our low and imperfect knowledge, nay! of our dense, dark ignorance respecting the reality and the true substance of the spiritual world. But reflect upon it. They say the body is necessary in order that life in the other world may be *real*. Are other substances there, then, physical and sensuous also? They ought to be: for if the physical body is raised, it surely must be to tenant a world adapted thereto. Is Heaven, then, a material world like this? But that is what they make it who say that this body is to inhabit it.

If, moreover, the body must be raised hereafter that life may be real, then those who are gone before us are still unblest, lingering in a desolate, houseless, impersonal condition,—mere spectres, hapless beings bereft of something they need to give them personality and a real existence,—beings who have not progressed but retrograded, and who, before they can be real existences again, must come back to some old forgotten grave to take up the cast-off garments of the flesh. Do you believe it? Is it not time that this hideous, grotesque nightmare of the Churches ceased? Can you believe it? If you do, you must think it a wretched thing to bid good-bye to the body, you must conceive of the other world, not as a better, but as a far worse one than this, you must give up the great and beautiful law of progress, you must shiver to think of those who have crossed the river, not to enter into life but to leave behind that which gave them personality, you must dwell beside the sepulchre and make your Heaven in the tomb. Nay! but turn from such old-world dreams to the divine idea that the history of a life is the history of a beautiful progress, that we are in a material body now only for the temporary purpose of putting the soul into communication with a material world, that change of worlds is change of conditions of life, and change, therefore, of the body; the new life being not such a life as needs the old body of a past imperfect state, but something altogether different, yet as real,—nay! more real. Grasp the glorious idea that when we have done with the body here we have got beyond it, never to need it more; and that when we leave this world as to the flesh we shall never have need to return to it, to linger for ages beside some dreary grave till, on some far distant day, the poor lost body shall return to give us “a local habitation and a name!”

But then they tell us that the Bible teaches us the resurrection of the body, and that St. Paul has a long argument in an Epistle to the Corinthians to prove it. I think this is a mistake. St. Paul clearly enough argues for the resurrection of the *dead*, but he nowhere seeks to establish the resurrection of the *body*.

In that great chapter in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the whole argument is directed to the very reverse of the ordinary theory; it is, in fact, a great argument to prove that the body is *not* raised. "Flesh and blood," he says, "cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption." The "thou fool" of St. Paul in this great chapter refers to the man who fancies that the risen man needs the material body;—some poor earthly creature who says—"But how can there be a life hereafter at all, since the body perishes in the grave?" "Thou fool!" replies the Apostle,—"*Thou fool*"—*what?*—Thou fool! God *will raise the body up again?* No: but—Thou fool! the body is not needed: for there are many kinds of bodies, bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial,—all of them diverse in their glory and uses. Thou sowest what is corruptible, but that which is raised is incorruptible. Thou sowest what is earthly, but that which is raised is not earthly. *Thou sowest a natural body, but that which is raised is a spiritual body.* "Yes," he emphatically repeats, "*for there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*" Here, then, is the secret! There is a *natural* body; that is one thing: and there is a *spiritual* body; that is another thing. The first is weak, and corrupt, and dying, and of the earth; the second is strong, and beautiful, and immortal, and of Heaven. The first is committed to the kindly grave for ever; the second rises to enlarged life. Thus it is as much opposed to Scripture as it is to common sense to go on believing in this dreary mistake of the resurrection of the *body*.

Note, also, that the same Paul, in another place, seems to spurn the idea of the body being necessary to him in the after-world: "We are willing," he says, "to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." No fear, with him, of being St. Paul no longer if the poor worn-out husk fell from him; but with him to be "absent from the body" was to be "present with the Lord." And the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews confirms the glorious truth when he tells us of some who endured martyrdom, "not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection;" that is, they sacrificed the body to save the soul, they gave up the body of the flesh and rose triumphant with the new and glorified body of the enfranchised spirit.

Believe, then, not in the resurrection of the mortal body, for that we shall get far beyond presently, but in the resurrection of the spiritual body; for we walk in darkness, we are the victims of time and sense, we are slaves of earth, we are defrauded of the true spiritual idea of the life to come, so long as we think of the body as necessary for the high employments and blest activities of Heaven. We lift up our hearts, then, with thankfulness to the Lord of all life; we bless Him for the resurrection

of the glory and beauty of the earth, the witness to His unfailing love and care; we bless Him for bringing life and immortality to light, for the precious words that fall on our ears like the distant music of another world—"He is not here, but He is risen." Yes, He is risen, He Himself, and so are your dear ones and mine: for when they left us they blossomed into life; and, thank God, so shall we!

THE WORLD OF LOVE.

It is sweet as we journey through life,
 So darkened by sorrow and sin,
 So full of unbrotherly strife,
 So far from the goal we would win—
 To know that a bright world of love
 Surrounds us in every land;
 To know that the angels above
 Rejoice to be ever at hand
 To "lift up the lap of this dark
 And speak clearer" of that which they know;
 To kindle the heavenly spark
 Which brighter and purer shall glow:
 To comfort, to counsel, to warn,
 To lighten the burden of care;
 To point to a happier morn,
 To banish the gloom of despair:
 To give bread to the famishing soul,
 And freedom to those that are bound;
 And still as the ages unroll
 Spread "more light" to the nations around:
 To speak of our Father in Heaven,
 To speak of our brothers on earth
 Of the penitent sinner forgiven,
 Of death, as the spirit's new birth
 In a world more divinely fair
 Than foot of man ever has trod:
 No sorrow, nor trouble, nor care,
 In that glorious city of God.
 O, 'tis sweet to hold converse with those
 Who have gone to the world of the blest,
 Where the tree of life evermore grows,
 And the soul that is weary may rest!

T. S.

Obituary.

MR. J. H. POWELL.

ON the last day of August we received a note from Mrs. Powell, in which she says, "My poor suffering husband was released by the Angel of Life this morning at 5 o'clock." Mr. Powell, for months before his release, had been a great sufferer, and Death must indeed have been to him the Angel of Life. The story of his life as related by himself in his *Life Incidents and Poetic Pictures* is a sad one, and having personally known him almost from boyhood we know that it is an "ower true tale."

Born in London in 1830, of poor working people, who did not reckon temperance among their virtues; with scant education he was early sent to work at a paper mill; subsequently he was put to learn the business of an engineer. Marrying early, the cares of a family, combined with ill health, made life to him a constant struggle for the means of living; but gifted with buoyant spirits and a hopeful temper he maintained the contest manfully, and almost cheerfully to the last, and never allowed his time and interests to be wholly absorbed in providing for physical necessities. He took a leading part in the Mutual Improvement Society established among his fellow-workmen at the Railway Works, Wolverton. A lecture delivered by him at the Wolverton Mechanics' Institution in 1843 on "The Poetry of Feeling and the Poetry of Diction," was published and widely circulated. He had already appeared as the author of a small volume of poems, *The Three Voices*, and both at Wolverton and at Brighton, whither he removed, he frequently occupied the "Poet's Corner" in the local press.

In 1860 he abandoned his employment, in order to devote himself more fully to literature and lecturing. His career as an author may be traced in his volume, *Life Incidents*, to which we have already referred. As a lecturer, his chief subjects were mesmerism and electro-biology, and when in tolerable health his experiments in connection with these lectures were generally very successful. He had just taken his new start in life when it was our privilege to first introduce Spiritualism favourably to his notice. He at once entered on an investigation of the subject, which soon led to his entire conviction of its truth. From that moment Spiritualism became the dominant idea of his life. His friend Mr. Robert Cooper, of Eastbourne, soon after this, issued the *Spiritual Times*, the first weekly journal published in London exclusively devoted to Spiritualism. He appointed Mr. Powell the editor. The same liberal gentleman founded the

Spiritual Lyceum, which he also placed under Mr. Powell's management. In 1864, Mr. Powell published *Spiritualism: Its Facts and Phases; illustrated with Personal Experiences*. Both the *Spiritual Times* and the *Spiritual Lyceum* were a great pecuniary loss. When they were given up, some of Mr. Powell's friends, in the hope of improving his health and benefitting himself and family, raised a subscription to enable them to emigrate to the United States. The testimonial was presented to Mr. Powell at a meeting presided over by Mr. William Howitt, and at which readings were given by Mr. D. D. Home. Mr. Powell remained in America four years, lecturing, preaching, debating, and writing on behalf of Spiritualism, as occasion offered. Some of his spiritual experiences in America were published in this Magazine, in 1868. In 1869, he published at Boston *Life Pictures*, a poem in three cantos,—a handsomely got-up volume. He always regarded this as an inspirational poem.

With shattered constitution, and suffering from internal cancer, he last year returned to his native land, as it turned out to die there. As long as he was able to use the pen he was the regular London correspondent of the *Banner of Light*. Only a few days before his death he published *The Invalid's Casket*, a volume of poems chiefly written in America and avowedly issued to raise funds to maintain his family. In the first week of August he received a visit from Miss Lottie Fowler, who, with some hesitation, informed him that she had received a spirit-communication that he would not outlive the month. But the circumstance made little impression on his mind; when we visited him a fortnight after, he spoke of it slightly, said he felt better, and even talked of going in the country. A change for the worse, however, soon set in. Two days before his departure he called his wife to look at the clock; she saw nothing. "No," he said, "it is removed now, but there was a piece of black crape over the clock. I saw it quite plainly, it covered the figure four." On the last day of August, at 5 a.m., he departed this life easily and peacefully, his sufferings towards the end having greatly abated. The last time we saw him he spoke gratefully of the many friends both in England and America who had ministered to him, and to the relief of his family during his affliction. He had no fear of death. To him it was indeed a friend—a messenger of mercy—the Angel of Life.

Fluent of speech, and with the pen of a ready writer, our departed friend embraced every opportunity to serve to the best of his ability the cause he loved so well. Reader, "go thou and do likewise."

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE LATE DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.

"ONE of the more bulky papers which he left is a species of inquiry into the so-called manifestations of Spiritualism. Without pronouncing an opinion dogmatically, he considered the subject worthy of patient investigation. "The phenomena of Spiritualism," he says, "may be the confused elements of a new chapter of human nature, which will only require some careful investigation to form a respectable addition to our stock of knowledge. Such, I must confess, is the light in which it has presented itself to me, or rather the aspect which it promises to assume." Acknowledging so much, perhaps he thought of a saying he had heard used by Sir Walter Scott, that "If there be a vulgar credulity, there is a vulgar incredulity." In his anxiety for fair play, he perhaps leant to the side of credulity."—*Memoir of Robert Chambers, with Autobiographic Reminiscences of William Chambers.*

The relations of Dr. Chambers to Spiritualism are fully set forth in the obituary notice of him which appeared in this Magazine (No. 4, Vol. VI., New Series). He was most careful in his investigation and acceptance of the facts. To his friends he did not hesitate to freely express his earnest conviction of the truth and importance of Spiritualism, which he supported both by his pen and purse; although with his habitual caution he shrunk from publicly identifying himself with it by attaching his name to these writings. It is earnestly hoped that the bulky paper on Spiritualism to which his brother refers in the foregoing extract will be published early, and without mutilation or abridgment.

CONFERENCE AT DARLINGTON.

A Conference of Spiritualists has recently been held at Darlington. Resolutions were passed to support the London Spiritual Institute, and recommending the support of public mediums, the formation of private and family circles, the holding of weekly conferences, the securing of public halls and meeting rooms, the special cultivation of healing mediumship, and the establishing of libraries and of Children's Lyceums. Public addresses were also delivered: Mr. J. Burns being the principal speaker.

THE DRUMMER OF TEDWORTH.

The famous story of the Drummer of Tedworth, referred to by Mr. William Howitt in our last number, and the leading incidents of which are given in an article "Spirit-Rapping no Novelty" in the *Spiritual Magazine*, No. 1, Vol. II., First Series, is one of the most remarkable and best attested of its class, and has often been told. Under the head of "Old Stories Re-told," it is very circumstantially related in *All the Year Round*, No. 150, New Series. The writer professes to consider it as "a very remarkable instance of a long-sustained, apparently purposeless, yet successful imposture; and a good example of the superstitions prevalent in the reign of Charles the Second; an imposture carried out by "a secret conspiracy of servants," aided by "the rats." An explanation so obviously futile and ridiculously inadequate to account for the facts on his own showing of them, as to suggest the idea that it is merely put forward to save appearances. He appends the following footnote to the passage above quoted:—

It is but justice to the modern believers in the Drummer of Tedworth to give the following communication, lately received by us from a Wiltshire correspondent: "I have known the house in question for about thirty years. I have had, therefore, a good opportunity of testing the accounts given by people in the neighbourhood. I formerly knew an old lady who, in her young days, lived in the house. I have compared her accounts given with others I obtained from other old people, and they all agree in this, that there was, in or about the house, something they could not understand. They all agree in this account, that about midnight a terrific noise commenced in the top of the house, similar to the beating of a side-drum, only much louder. This continued until near morning incessantly. The house has been repaired at different times, and occupied, soon, however, to be deserted, the people declaring they could not live there for the incessant drumming. About fourteen years ago I was working on the Tedworth estate for T. Assheton Smith, Esq., of fox-hunting notoriety. The house was then repaired, and put in habitable order, for the holding of the national school (it had been shut up for six years before this). Two sisters went there as school-mistresses, with whom I was well acquainted. They could not stay there, and in consequence the school was removed to another building. I ridiculed the assertions of these young women, but neither ridicule nor banter could turn them from their story, and it was the old one—the incessant drumming. I may further say that all those of whom I have inquired agree in their assertions that there is something supernatural in connection with the house. The house stands in a very pleasant situation in a meadow in close proximity to the churchyard. It is a brick-built house. I have been in it many times. I believe there is no more wood used in the building than there would be in ordinary buildings, the partitions, &c., being, as near as I can recollect, of brick, four inches in thickness."

THE ETHICS OF CHRISTIANITY AND SPIRITUALISM IDENTICAL.

An experience of sixteen years has convinced me that if communications from the spirit-world are sought in a fitting frame of mind, these, when they touch on religion or morals, are found to be essentially Christian. I mean that there is not a

grand truth, ethical or spiritual, taught by Christ himself, that is not endorsed, more or less distinctly, from the other side. I am speaking of Christ's teachings, pure and simple; not of Paul's, still less of those put forth by more modern commentators. To me the great proof touching the stability and perpetual sway of Christian ethics and Spiritualism is, that, in spite of all the deformities with which orthodox theology has obscured them, they still maintain their sway over the heart of the civilized world. If we are candid and just in estimating ourselves, we are bound to confess that we fall short, nationally and individually, of the Christian standard. This is not true, or but partially true, of any other teacher of morals. In proportion as we study Spiritualism reverently and intelligently, we shall become more and more convinced of this. If Spiritualism were to supplant Christianity, it would be supplanting its own very heart and essence. The grandest of all Christian principles, for example, is the principle of love. Love, according to the Christian system, is the fulfilling of the law. According to Paul, even, who had much of the theologian about him, though the influence of faith and hope be great, love is the greatest. This lies at the base of all sound spiritual philosophy. So of mercy, so of humility, so of peace-making, so of treating others as we would ourselves be treated. Spiritualism and Christianity are identical in essence; and, in their essence, not in the anomalous excrescences with which ignorance or prejudice disfigures them, both will endure for ever.—ROBERT DALE OWEN.

Correspondence.

MR. HUDSON'S SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

DEAR SIR,—I observe that my article in the last number of the Magazine, on "Stone-Throwing," went to press without my corrections, and consequently exhibits some curious misprints, such as "*Sadducissimus Triumphatus*," instead of "*Sadducismus Triumphatus*," as the title of Glanvil's book; and at p. 396, "*funny* manifestations," instead of *furious* ones, with others not quite so outrageous, and which may pass.

What I wish, however, more expressly to state to you is my satisfaction at seeing the accusations against Mr. Hudson's spirit-photographs gradually clearing themselves off. During my recent short and hurried visit to London, I and my daughter paid a visit to Mr. Hudson's studio, and through the

mediumship of Mr. Herne—and, perhaps, of Mr. Hudson himself—obtained two photographs, perfect and unmistakable, of sons of mine, who passed into the spirit-world years ago. They had promised to thus show themselves, if possible.

These portraits were obtained under circumstances which did not admit of deception. Neither Mr. Hudson nor Mr. Herne knew who we were. Mr. Herne I never saw before. I shut him up in the recess at the back of the studio, and secured the door on the outside, so that he did not—and could not—appear on the scene. Mr. Benjamin Coleman, who was with us, and myself took the plates at hap-hazard from a dusty heap of such; and Mr. Coleman went into the dark chamber with the photographer, and took every precaution that no tricks were played there. But the greatest security was, that not knowing us, and our visit being without any previous announcement or arrangement, the photographer could by no means know what or whom we might be expecting. Mr. Coleman himself did not know of the existence of one of these children. Still further, there was no existing likeness of one of them.

On sending these photographs to Mrs. Howitt in Rome, she instantly and with the greatest delight recognized the truth of the portraits. The same was the case with a lady who had known these boys most intimately for years. A celebrated and most reliable lady-medium whom they had spiritually visited many times at once recognised them perfectly, and as resembling a spirit-sister, whom *they told her* had died in infancy long before themselves, and which is a fact.

I had written a letter to state these particulars publicly, when a friend, who mixes much with the London Spiritualists, assured me that to his knowledge Hudson and Herne had played tricks. On hearing this, as I had no means and no leisure, during my short and fully occupied stay in England, of ascertaining what was really the truth, I kept back my letter, reluctant to sanction fraud should it by any possibility exist; but on all occasions I have stated that so far as I was concerned the result of my visit to Mr. Hudson was a perfect success.

It was my full intention to have made another experiment with him, but found it impossible, much to my regret. I feel it, however, only due to Mr. Hudson and to the cause of spirit-photography, to say that my visit to him was thoroughly satisfactory—that by no merely earthly means could he have presented me with the photographic likenesses which he did; and that I, moreover, feel an inward and strong conviction that he is an honest man. Were he otherwise, he would, in fact, be a very great fool, since my own experience with him is proof positive that he can and does produce realities.

I may add that the two portraits in question are the best and more clearly developed of any that I have seen, except that of Annina Carboni, obtained by Chevalier Kirkup in Florence.

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM HOWITT.

August 10,
Dietenheim, Bruneck,
Austrian Tyrol.

DOUBLES.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—As in the June number, so now I repeat, that no alleged spirit-photograph can be accepted unless the spirit-figure is a clear likeness of a deceased friend or relative, and of which there exists no painting or photograph; and rightly so, because the experiences of professional and amateur photographers are such in the use of chemicals, admission of light, shifting of camera, &c., that perpetual phenomena arise, which may easily deceive those who are of an ideal cast of mind, on the hunt for the supernatural.

In like manner, nothing is more easy than to misunderstand an expression, if two persons have preconceived ideas as to the meaning of words. This has been evident in regard to the word "doubles," in the assault on me for exposing the manufacture of sham spirit-photographs; I using the word "doubles" in connection with one of the Bristol soul-photographs, and one in London in its true sense, that of a *double* image of the sitters, as if a mirage or reflection. To you, "double" appears to mean the ghost of the brother of the sitter, in a totally different position of body; a sense I had not in my mind.

I deeply regret your personal inability to practically examine the evidences, owing to weakness of eyesight. Others have done as I did, and found out the shams; and those were and are as true Spiritualists as any one you can name.

Enmore Park, S.E.

JOHN JONES.

[What has our correspondent to say to what he calls "The Bristol Soul-photographs," which he attests as genuine, as we have no doubt they are? But does any one of these or the one in London present a clear likeness of a deceased friend or relative? Our correspondent confounds what has been called "the doubles" with the explanation of the spirit that it was his portrait on the plate in question, therefore, neither a "sham ghost," nor the medium's "double;" the close resemblance which had led to this misapprehension arising from his being

the brother to the medium, and, greatly resembling him, a resemblance evident to all who were present at the *séance*, and who saw the spirit quite plainly.—ED.]

INSTINCT, GENIUS, AND COMMON SENSE.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I think that the remark of Dr. R. Angus Smith, F.R.S., is very wise indeed, since it is all very well as an hypothesis to suppose man to be a creature of inherited experiences. But how did he exist before he had acquired these inherited experiences, since the lowest races of mankind even now are only just able to maintain existence, and certainly but a little lower in the scale and life would not be possible; surely nothing can be more certain than that. Then what becomes of the hypothesis of natural selection? Anyhow man must have originally had instinct essential to his needs, which may have, as it were, subsided in course of time as knowledge and reason became predominant. It would then not be the unaided, but the sense of man aided by experience, "working through ages" with certain remains of the original instinct that would be the source of the results referred to by Dr. Smith. But for a moment it is the pleasure of scientific physiologists to deny instinct in the vain endeavour to build up man both physically and mentally by a slow mechanical process, as the loftiest genius is only regarded as a kind of sharper common sense. But after all what is common sense but the genius of the multitude—an instinctive sense of right and wrong, by which in a very great measure the statesman and moralist is guided?

F. G. S.

"DO FORCES SPEAK?"

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I think the reply to the question of the voice to Robert Dale Owen is very clear and simple. The question was, "Do Forces Speak?" If by Forces we understand the "energies" of Nature, or potential ability, whether of matter or of spirit, it is certain that Forces do speak, simply because there is nothing else to speak, assuming of course the requisite development and conditions. The question, then, would be, Can Forces speak except by the organs of voice, or through the agency of an organised physical or spiritual being? And so far as we know or believe, the reply would certainly be in the negative, and more particularly if the speech is supposed to convey a meaning or purpose; and of course that is what was supposed by the question.

H. G. A.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

SHALL we be left forgotten in the dust,
 When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
 Shall Nature's voice, to Man alone unjust,
 Bid him, though doom'd to perish, hope to live?
 Is it for this fair virtue oft must strive
 With disappointment, penury, and pain?
 No; heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive;
 And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
 Bright through the eternal year of love's triumphant reign.

BEATTIE.