

CHARLES DAWBARN AGAIN PHILOSOPHISES.

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(NEW SERIES)

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AUGUST, 1901.

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SPECIAL NOTE.

I have provided you with another month's reading of a nature equal to the best supplied in any other English Spiritualist Journal. This is no vain boast, as you will find if you peruse the Articles presented in this issue.

The Editor.

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Contents

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
Pros and Cons —What is Mesmeric Force?—Persons suitable to become Operators—The Forms of Mesmeric Force	7
CHAPTER II.	
Qualifications for an Operator—Spiritual, Mental, Moral, Physical	18
CHAPTER III.	
MISCELLANEOUS QUALIFICATIONS AND ADVICE TO STUDENTS.	
Phrenological Advice —Most suitable Age—Suitable Diet—Qualifications for Mesmeric Subjects—Mesmeric Force and Atmospheric Influences	27
CHAPTER IV.	
Magnetic Force and the Conditions necessary for making it active within—How to Train the Eyes—Preparing the Hands and Fingers—Condition of the Feet—Respiratory Powers—Mental Concentration	38
CHAPTER V.	
Methods of Developing the Magnetic Power —Inducing the <i>flow</i> of Magnetic Force—Augmenting Mesmeric Force—1st, 2nd, and 3rd Methods for so doing	56
CHAPTER VI.	
Transmission and Distribution of Magnetic Force — Passes : What they are and how to practise them—The <i>full length</i> or <i>long</i> Pass— <i>Relief</i> Pass— <i>Short</i> or <i>local</i> Pass—Focussed Magnetism— <i>Passes in contact</i> and <i>without contact</i>	64

CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER VII.

Elementary Experimenting in Testing Susceptibility	
—The Point of Magnetic Contact—Individuality	
—Physical Magnetic Contact—Mental Magnetic	
Contact	73

CHAPTER VIII.

The different Phases, Stages, or Degrees of the Mesmeric State, termed Controls or Conditions	
—Passive Control—Physical Control—Mental	
Control—Spiritual Condition—Elevated Con-	
dition	82

CHAPTER IX.

The Practical Applications of your Mesmeric Force—	
How to procure Subjects—Use of Mesmeric Sleep	
—Methods of producing Mesmeric Sleep or	
Coma—1st Method—2nd Method—3rd Method	
—How to remove the Mesmeric State	92

CHAPTER X.

EXPERIMENTING.

PART I.—Notes on Experimenting—Signs and Indications of Controls: Physical, Mental, Psychic, and Elevated	108
PART II.—Experimenting in the First Stages of Control—Fixed Physical Experimenting—Physical Experimenting—Experimenting in the Mental Control—Illusion and Hallucination—Production of Catalepsy—Removing Catalepsy	117

CHAPTER XI.

PART I.—The Inner and Higher Mesmeric Powers—Physiognomical Signs of Psychic Power and Psychic Susceptibility	136
PART II.—Experimenting in the Deeper States of Control—Developing the Psychic or Spiritual Faculties and the Elevated State—Removing Deep States of Control	141

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Speculations in Spiritual Philosophy.

The Philosophy of Ego Summarised.

BY CHARLES DAWBARN.

[Specially contributed to the SPIRITUAL REVIEW.]

THE explorer returns from his expedition, and proposes to tell the tale of his discoveries in one brief article. It will be practically a summary of his recent Ego Stories, in nine chapters, which may now be deemed closed—at least for the present.

It is well understood that neither God Senior, nor his child, God Junior, can manifest without form. We creep nearest to the divine when we intellectually sense the wondrous 'speck,' which in its minute grandeur, embodies substance, energy and intelligence ; and is thus a conscious, living entity, as indestructible as the divinity it represents. In its solitary grandeur Ego is almost as inconceivable as the Infinite All in All. It is its universal practice of brotherhood which tells the tale of Ego to mortal sense. The atom of hydrogen and the atom of oxygen elude mortal faculty. Homo neither sees, hears, tastes, smells nor touches these tiny representatives of God Senior. Yet, if we, or mother nature, blend any two parts of hydrogen with one of oxygen, water is immediately signed, sealed and delivered by Infinite Cosmos

to finite man. Just two and one, no more, and no less. Man may freeze it into a solid, or compel it into invisibility. He changes nothing but form. We know of seventy such units, which we call 'elements,' and whose blendings by number constitute all we call 'creation.' Mineral, vegetable, animal, are but questions of number. so many of this, and of that, and protoplasm is born. Number is divine. No wonder the sage of old declared "God geometrises." But number is no more, and no less, than Ego gaining experience by association with his fellows.

Endless change, and the crash of worlds leaves Ego untouched. Cosmos needs no census. Units may come and Units may go, but increase or diminution is impossible, for each is God Junior, a fragment of the divine. Ego in a drop of water has the experience of that drop. Ego in a world has the experience of that world, and these experiences are the consequences of form. From microbe to archangel is Ego's field; and the explorer claims that Ego is gathering his experiences from limit to limit at the same time.

We have been trained to limit Ego to just one personality. That personality, measured by the inch rule of mortal sense, we have called 'human form,' and used it as a plaster cast, in which to embed Ego. We have been taught there must be one Ego to each form. The microbe, the monkey, the man had each his own Ego, but as soon as we pass beyond we are told that spirit is only a second edition of man Ego, with improvements all up-to-date. There is no second edition of microbe and monkey. It is man who has been stereotyped, and then rebound in celestial cloth, with gilt edges, for circulation in celestial society. Such beliefs have been founded on ignorance. We have sensed just a little of Ego at any one time, and have called that little 'personality.' It has never occurred to man mortal that appearances are as deceitful physiologically as they are astronomically.

This great truth, that seems at first so startling to the student, becomes very simple by an illustration from every day life. Let us imagine Handel—the incarnate soul of music—as having composed his grand oratorio Messiah. He is now facing an orchestra, every member swayed by his will, and expressing the melodies of his soul. He has already sensed the entire oratorio, but is now seeking a grander expression by the united soul force of other musical souls. Now, by a further effort of the imagination, let the student reader place those musicians in a line, a mile apart; but at the same time raising Handel to an eminence from which he still guides and directs every instru-

ment. Ego Handel is now expressing himself from one end of the line to the other, *and every point at the same time*. The student reader will now perceive that the control of the various instruments will never be perfect, but always partial and incomplete, yet the experience of the whole, such as it is, is harvested by Handel, and cannot be enjoyed by any one of the players. Each hears his own disjointed melodies as harsh, discordant, and incomplete, according to the instrument, it is Ego Handel alone who grasps the 'Messiah' from the united band.

The experiences of the form belong, as a whole, to the form, and not to Ego. Ego has just so much as he appropriates, and all along the line at the same time, from Microbe to Archangel. The form, which is Home, may faintly exchange thoughts from his own instrument to its nearest neighbour, but, as we have seen, it is Ego alone who comprehends the whole.

Surely the student can now realise that human history has been 'form' history and not Ego history. And that spirit return could not break the spell, and let in the truth, until the time came. It needed far more than an Ego of any special talent or inspiration. It needed the hour and the conditions when at last the truth must burst its bonds, and come forth from its sepulchre. Then it is we notice for the first time that the entire orchestra is but expressing an experience for Ego Handel. Each player has lost touch with his neighbour. He plays his own part, and it often seems but a weary fragment of life rather than a divine harmony. Yet Ego Handel's soul is triumphant, and to him not even a note in the chorus but contributes to the divine whole. As a whole, Ego realises the divinity of harmony to a degree impossible to him who continues to sense only the effort of just one personality.

Such is the philosophy of Ego, as grasped by the explorer. It was impossible until science had gathered her facts, all ready to be marshalled into a higher philosophy, which demanded a broader and further outlook than was possible in any earlier period of human history. On the one hand we have Ego standing by divine right in a vast unity, wielding powers and gaining experience all along the alphabet of his existence. On the other hand we now discover that vastness clipped into petty personalities by our limitations—not his. To us there are a myriad separate expressions of individual life. To him but one—and that one himself.

The explorer discovered yet further, that human form was never

an abiding place of Ego from cradle to casket, as taught by theology to ignorant man. He perceived that every form was a personal nationality in which no Ego reigned or roamed for more than a brief experience. Our nation is a type of this great truth. It has an Ego at its head. There are Egos wielding power in its various organs. And myriad Egos bearing the weight of daily toil. But every Ego passes on, and leaves its unfinished labour to another. Ego comes, and Ego goes, but the nationality survives. Such is human life, and that of every other form. The personality is that of a myriad, but Ego remains for ever a divine whole.

Such is the philosophy of Ego as discovered by him who explores the realms of conscious existence. He discerns Ego manifesting in a myriad forms, all at the same time, with an experience in memories that never fade. Those players in the valley of life, and a mile apart, might each catch an echo from the nearest instrument, but Homo, in lofty disdain, has scorned to recognise a brotherly intelligence in life below man. But with awed humility he acknowledges that he catches now and again a note from the beyond which calls him 'brother,' and declares him immortal. Such was the thought embodied in the size of man, which was the first chapter in the explorer's record.

The experiences of 'God Junior' told the tale of creative power inhering in Ego by divine sonship. It was startling only to ignorance. The knowledge of the creative power of thought is becoming a factor in daily life, and stands as a legacy from the dying century to its new-born heir. Such was the second chapter of student history.

'Some experiences of Ego' pointed out that intelligence can do its work without brain. Certain conditions of earth life have demanded the limitation which man calls 'reason.' He weighs and measures, compares and decides, and proclaims to the universe that having relatively the highest development of brain, he has become lord of creation. But the explorer noticed that divinity would need no brain. He perceived that lower life was quite comfortable without it. And further, that in man himself, brain was not allowed to interfere with any of the important processes by which the human form is sustained. It was thus seen that Ego, as child of his father, inherits a divinity which KNOWS without reason. He has evolved a brain by his creative power, as a convenience of the hour for daily life, but as soon as he would reach out to his personalities above or below man, the mortal brain becomes useful as a scribe, and nothing more. Most

certainly a lesson of deeper import was caught and recorded by the explorer in his third chapter.

'A Descent into Nature's Kindergarten' was next made that the student might learn the lesson of 'form,' both in its limitation and its fulness. Without form Ego is as unthinkable as First Cause or Cosmos. But we needed to emphasise that form was not child of God Senior. Man has belauded himself until even Deity must wear human shape. Theology, like human history, has been founded on form. So we needed to emphasize, again and again, that speck Ego is the only God Junior; the immortal son of his divine father. The form we know and call 'man' may reappear after death, but he is only a nationality—not even a personality in the true sense. Homo is a reflection of Ego, as Ego is a reflection of First Cause, and that was the lesson of our fourth chapter.

It now became necessary to distinguish more clearly between the form which reasons and the Ego who KNOWS. And to this end "Ego and Company, Limited," was written, to bridge the gap between the here and the hereafter. Yonder, unseen and almost unsensed by normal faculty, is another manifestation of Ego. He is our next door neighbour in the divine orchestra, and playing his part on his own instrument in Ego's Oratorio. Homo's reason is only adapted to earth life. He must allow intelligence to outreach brain if he would hope for even a word with that next door neighbour. So he plays with his own creative power till psychometry is born. Then he begins to explore 'The Soul of Things.' But he leaves his brain at home every time, and thus learns something of his capacity to KNOW without the slow process of reason. This fifth chapter thus builds a bridge for Homo, ready for the hour when he shall dare to leave form limitation and proceed to explore the Great Unknown.

"Ego beyond Death" tells its own tale. It rests on a substratum of natural law, as demonstrated by scientific research. It introduces the student to the now celebrated Society for Psychical Research, and its renowned medium Mrs. Piper. Modern Spiritualism has revelled in phenomena, for the most part unattested and unexplained. It has accepted higher faculties of Homo as proofs of Ego beyond death, thus confusing the careful student of spirit return. Mediumship did not even discover the realm of Subconsciousness, or the mighty power of Suggestion upon every returning spirit. The sixth chapter was thus a preface to the wider outlook that has become possible to the student reader.

It is when we study the minute details that accompany the accurately recorded incidents of spirit return through Mrs. Piper that we learn what is really taking place. "Ego Entranced" will startle the old believer, because his beliefs, which he calls 'knowledge,' have been based on his use of the wrong instrument. His telescopic sensitive has discovered the Star of Immortality. But it is only by use of the Spectroscope of science that the true lesson of that discovery can be learned. Although this seventh chapter thus proves of vast importance to the student, it is but the introduction to a still keener analysis under the heading "Ego plays the Critic." Not the spirit visitor alone, but his teachings, are brought under the searchlight of modern discoveries. It is shown that dust in our atmosphere plays a most important part in earth life. That without its presence, light, colour, and moisture would be unadapted to mortal need. Spirit Return denies the dust, but offers no explanation as to how their spirit lives and homes are glorified under such totally different conditions to ours.

(To be concluded next month.)

Religion and Spiritualism.

BY H. FORBES. KIDDLE.

IN the modern revival of a practice in which men in all ages and of every grade of intelligence and civilization have participated, the modern materialistic sceptic refuses to see anything but the persistent survival of atavistic recrudescence of an unworthy superstition which the enlightenment of science is destined ultimately to banish from the mind of man. A host of intelligent powers, however, by irresistible demonstration have been convinced that there actually exists the possibility of intercourse between the denizens of earth and the dwellers in the veiled "hereafter." Upon this fundamental fact they have been compelled to agree; but beyond that there exists the greatest diversity of opinion among believers. Indeed, the field of inquiry opened up by Modern Spiritualism is a vast one, and agreement upon its multitudinous problems—problems demanding most skilful and candid scientific elucidation—is at present hardly more desirable than it is possible. The facts are obvious; but the explanation of the facts

and the deductions therefrom are by no means plain.

Nevertheless, a contemplation of the general subject in the light of modern experience impressively indicates that, like everything else within man's reach, Spiritualism is open to gross misconception and abuse, as well as to beneficent, ennobling use. Witchcraft, black magic, sorcery, necromancy—all are forms of Spiritualism, in the sense in which the term is now used ; but so also are the inspirations of the prophets, the ecstasies of the saints, and the miracles of the Christ. Wherever and whenever the practice prevails, there are present two distinct phases—one tending to vitiate and degrade, the other to sustain and exalt.

In the past, Spiritualism and Religion have been intimately associated. Both pertaining to the spiritual side of man's nature, the two have gone naturally hand in hand. At the bottom of every system of popular religion, Spiritualism in some form is discovered—indeed, it is the vital element in most religions. One is true and forceful in proportion to the presence of the other. There is, moreover, a mutual dependence in the matter of character and quality. Gross, uncouth spiritualistic beliefs and practices have been accompanied by a religious system of corresponding character. The offering up of bloody sacrifices as a religious ceremonial, for example, denotes belief in an invisible presence to whom such a brutal proceeding is acceptable. On the other hand, without the spiritual safeguards that constitute the fundamentals of pure religion—namely, reverence, devotion, purity of thought, and lofty, disinterested purpose—Spiritualism is in danger of falling into all sorts of debasement, wherein mystical fanaticism and deception abound and demoralisation and degeneracy are imminent.

Never has the need of intelligent co-operation between Religion and Spiritualism been greater than it is to-day. Religion, fixedly associated as it is in the popular mind with rigid dogma and arbitrary tradition, will not be able to withstand the assaults being made upon it by the present purely intellectual methods of historical and literary research and rationalistic deduction without the quickening illumination of pure, reverential Spiritualism. The few intuitive minds may be able to recognize the just discriminations of the "higher criticism," but the mass of men, discarding the false in the process of proving all things, will not be able to hold fast to that which is true in the old faith.

The concrete presentations of Spiritualism are absolutely essen

tial to demonstrate that genuine spiritual significance really does underlie the symbolism, allegory, ecstasy, and wonder-working of the Scriptures. In no other way is it possible to reconcile Bible "super-naturalism" with the *naturalism* of to-day.

The modern conception of a universe governed by undeviating, impartial Law makes no allowance for the so-called miraculous interventions upon which rests the religious faith of Western civilization. Miracles either must be accounted for or explained away: they are the products of a childish imagination, the charlatanry of designing men, or the paroxysms of hysteria; or they are veridical experiences not beyond the possibility of repetition or the hope of rational explanation. The Editor of the *Outlook*, in his answer to a recent query, "Did angels ever appear to people in the form of men?" wisely recognises the value of modern experience by stating that "people in modern times have been visited when awake by apparitions in human form, and in sleep have had visions of that sort. Forms so appearing would have been anciently called 'Angels'—a word signifying 'messengers.' This is a basis of fact for the Old Testament stories, to which there are doubtless some legendary additions." And is this not the only rational response to a question that to-day is definitely or indefinitely in the minds of a multitude of men and women? Because people are now visited by apparitions, it is possible to credit narratives of like experiences recorded in the Bible. It is astounding that the churches have not been eager to make use of this invincible defence against materialistic indifference and scepticism, which are destroying their influence and threatening their very existence. More astounding still is their strange scepticism toward the very things whence their own system was derived. Partisanship, the most subtle of human traits, is often mistaken for religion.

But the modern spiritual renaissance brings immensely more that is serviceable to religion than apparitions and phenomenal marvels. Besides bringing the key to a rational study of the spiritual gropings of humanity in various stages of mental and moral development, it brings the interpretation of religion itself. It proves the naturalness of the religious impulse by establishing the existence of an inner nature whence the impulse is derived and to which it pertains. The soul has its natural needs and cravings as well as the body. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." "When we go deepest down," said the Rev. J. Page Hopps at the International Congress of Spiritualists, held in London,

"we find the Rock of Religion; and when we penetrate to the heart of Spiritualism we find God."

It is the real significance of life that Spiritualism is now revealing to the world, by showing that the sojourn on earth is but the beginning of man's personal career. Here everything is transitory; the hopes of yesterday become the disappointments of to-day; to-morrow's realisation but shows the vanity of to-day's dream. Nothing certain or substantial has worldliness to offer its votary, because, in the words of the Spiritualist of old, "here we have no continuing city; we seek one to come. The earthly pilgrimage, says Spiritualism, is experimental and preparatory; its joys and sorrows, its dazzling hopes and bitter frustrations, the sunshine and the clouds, prosperity and adversity, tears and smiles—all are object-lessons and training to the soul in this its kindergarten.

But the New Revelation does not inculcate helpless submission, or a non-resisting drifting along the currents of circumstance. On the contrary, life here is a perpetual trial of strength—a stern wayfaring, not an idle tarrying. "He that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." In this matter Spiritualism admonishes the Christian religion that spiritual faith—or trust—may be perverted into a heedless indolence, entailing spiritual and social stagnation. Herein lies the secret of the "dying notions" to which an English statesman referred not long ago.

The inspirations and revelations of Modern Spiritualism, however, contain less of essential novelty than of corroboration and explanation. They rationalise and supplement rather than subvert; and, by demonstrating that spiritual revelations, as well as the revelations of external truth, are gradual and conditional, they explain and justify the statement of the Master that there are many things he might have said unto his people had their minds been prepared to receive them. There is a suggestive significance in that statement of the Nazarene which those who persist in the notion of fixed, infallible revelation seem to have missed.

It would be instructive to study history by dividing it into periods of Religion and Non-religion, of Worldliness and Other Worldliness, of Faith and Scepticism. There certainly have been such alternating mental or Spiritual states, both of which, we may be sure, are in harmony with the mysterious workings of Evolution—a process that is by no means confined to the physical world. "The elements and

roots of religion," says Max Müller, "are seen as far back as we can trace the history of man ; and the history of religion, like that of language, shows us a succession of new combinations of the same radical elements. An intuition of God, a sense of human weakness and dependence, a belief in a divine government of the world, a distinction between good and evil, and a hope of a better life—these are the radical elements of all religions.* Though sometimes hidden, they rise again and again to the surface. Though frequently distorted, they tend again and again to their perfect form." And Carlyle, writing of eighteenth century scepticism, speaks of it, with splendid insight, as "the decay of old ways of believing, the preparation afar off for new, better, and wider ways—an inevitable thing." "We will not blame men for it," he continues ; we will lament their hard fate. We will understand that destruction of old *forms* is not destruction of everlasting *substance* ; that scepticism, as sorrowful and hateful as we see it, is not an end but a beginning."

Scepticism is a sort of mental stocktaking of accounts and a clearing out of dead stock—preparatory to the closing up of the business of one era and the entering into a new and larger method of conducting the affairs of life. It is a sign of growth, not an evidence of degeneration, this doubting and questioning of time-worn conceptions and ancestral habits of thought—reverence for which sometimes becoming a thoughtless makeshift for a genuine religious ideal and breeding that "sincere cant" which Carlyle considered so worthy of consideration. It is a sign of growth, but also an indication that an inner power is at work lifting men out of the sluggish fixity of thought into which they are prone to fall. For the Infinite Presence—though ever abiding in the life of man—seems periodically to make itself manifest in unwonted ways ; to some, by startling signs and wonders ; to others by a holy inspiration bringing to their consciousness a clear discernment of essential Spirituality, and a certain realisation of Divine relationship and overshadowing.

*And, he might have added, a realising sense of contact with spiritual realms.

"Hold your dull life up to the light, and see how it will be transfigured. Life is not meant to be a path of ease, but steep and rugged ; and it is only through self-denial, discouragement, discipline, and trial that you may attain the higher life."

God, Christ, and Man.

The Finite and the Infinite.

BY JOHN M. STUART-YOUNG.

THEOLOGICAL difficulties and discussions are becoming more widespread as the vista of man's opinion is broadened by progress, thought, and discovery. There is, however, one insoluble difficulty—that of understanding the God-force behind Nature. Perhaps the reason why thinkers of all creeds pause on the threshold of speculation is that they have grown almost hopeless—hopeless of reconciling a lofty and holy conception of the Infinite with the malignant Jehovah of our priestcraft, or the ruined and man-distorted Christ of our Churches.

The condition of the world around us fills the mind with all manner of conflicting opinions. Because our nobler natures revolt from cruelty, an unjust, mutable God is impossible. Far easier would it be for us to believe in a perpetual, fitful, impersonal force driving the countless worlds on their various courses in obedience to capricious laws than it would be to conceive a God who creates, and yet is bound by no law of His Own Being to deal justly with his creatures.

At once the thought arises : “Of what use is prayer?” Why pray if response is doubtful, or resign with submission our dearest treasures if this obedience is not for good?

But the doubt exists. Day by day the newspapers are full of evidence which apparently proves that *our* world at least is not governed on any lines of thought within the human range of what we call justice. There is no proportion—the suffering die without earthly reward, virtue is downtrodden, vice rides triumphant, the rich oppress the poor—in fact, we have absolutely no evidence to show that God, the omnipresent, omnipotent God, regards individuals with a paternal eye, and arrests injustice when inflicted by the mighty of earth. True, we believe that Death gives recompense for all this misunderstanding and pain; but we naturally look for a better system here. That the righteous suffer more than the evil has become an axiom. Infants, pure guileless children, who have done nothing wrong, perish of starvation, while the evil eat the fatted calf every day. If God governs as well as reigns, we not unnaturally ask “Why this inequality?”

The Theosophist explains the problem in this manner. Behind us lie several lives. Our present earthly career is either a reward or a punishment for the good deeds or the sins of our previous existences. This explanation—simple as it appears, and holding in thrall millions of clever intellects of all climes—yet offers no satisfaction to the reasoner. Admitted that re-incarnations are possible new souls must be constantly created or the *numbers of the race could not increase*. Our Buddhist friends seem to have overlooked this aspect of the case. If I am not the re-incarnation of some Roman patrician I must be a baby-soul, and how is my fate to be accounted for? The question is not answered, and we are no nearer a solution of the problem.

Nor does the Orthodox Church settle the matter. The declaration of Jesus, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father but by me," is not explained by our spiritual directors. The Christian who attends his Church regularly, and never *dares* to think about his creed, tells us that all undeserved suffering in this world will be paid for in the next, and looks forward with unction to his sleep on the breast of Jesus; but this theory, though it has comforted millions by blinding their spiritual eyes to the cleansing fires of the after-life, can hardly be accepted by the reflective mind. To me it suggests unjustly whipping a child, and afterwards recompensing him for wrongful conviction by presenting him with a sweet-meat. Another Christian—worthy soul—raises his hands when the question "What is God?" is placed before him, and exclaims that the matter must be left alone, that to think is blasphemy, that the question is beyond the range of human intellect, that Infinity is an inscrutable mystery, that we cannot know the unknowable, and a lot more highly eloquent advice in the same strain. That is all very well in its way. We cannot comprehend anything which has had no *beginning*, though Eternity can be very dimly impinged on our minds. We dare not deny that there are mysteries beyond our finite understandings, but we cannot arrest thought. The man who voluntarily stifles investigation and speculation, even though the brain reel beneath the discoveries of science, is a *coward*. It would be as ridiculous to assert that because there are stars beyond the range of our present telescopes we must not try to solve their orbits, as it would be to say that because we cannot understand we must not try to perceive the infinite laws of God. Listen to the words of Longfellow, and let us strive to grasp the solution of the problem, which is, let us hope, only temporarily laid aside by the majority of our fellows:—

" All are architects of fate,
 Working in these wall of Time ;
 Some with massive deeds and great,
 Some with ornaments of rhyme.
 Nothing useless is, or low,
 Each thing in its place is best ;
 And what seems but an idle show
 Strengthens and supports the rest.
 For the structure that we raise
 Time is with materials filled ;
 Our to-days and yesterdays
 Are the bricks with which we build.
 Truly shape and fashion these,
 Leave no yawning gaps between ;
 Think not, because no man sees,
 Such things will remain unseen.
 In the elder days of art,
 Builders wrought with greatest care
 Each minute and unseen part,
 For the gods are everywhere.
 Let us do our work as well,
 Both the unseen and the seen ;
 Make the house where gods may dwell
 Beautiful, entire, and clean.
 Else our lives are incomplete,
 Standing in these walls of time ;
 Broken stair-ways, where the feet
 Stumble as they seek to climb.

An Historical Retrospect.

Spiritualism in England in the 'Sixties.

By ROBERT COOPER.

THE next question that engaged my attention was to afford facilities to the public for witnessing the phenomena on which the philosophy of Spiritualism is based. Mrs. Marshall and her niece, Mary, were the only mediums accessible to the general public. Mr. William Wilkinson had a fine collection of Spirit drawings at his residence, at Highgate, which he was always ready to exhibit, and they were visited by many hundreds of persons. They formed the subject of an excellent book by Mr. Wilkinson, who stated that afte

the death of a young son, his wife, who had, in her normal state, no artistic power, was made to draw them. Some were in colours and most of the subjects were flowers. Mr. Wilkinson also wrote a book on "The Revival," which related to some remarkable psychical phenomena going on in Ireland. "Spirit Drawings" was re-published. Mr. Wilkinson possessed excellent literary ability, and I may here remark that Mr. Emerson, when in England some years ago, made the acquaintance of Mr. Wilkinson's brother, Dr. Garth Wilkinson, who died a year or two ago, and said of him that he was the finest writer of English he knew. Mr. W. Wallace used to tell of table movements being exhibited after a lecture, but beyond this I never heard of any spiritual manifestations being exhibited in public.

The opportunities for the public witnessing spiritual phenomena being so very circumscribed induced me to consider the advisability of importing mediums from America, where they were more numerous. With this object, I wrote, in 1864, to Dr. H. F. Gardner, who was well known as taking a practical and active part in promoting the progress of the movement in Boston, which was the headquarters of Spiritualism. He made a speciality of getting up camp meetings. So I wrote to him on the subject, and in due course received a reply stating the names of certain mediums who were reliable and available, and waited my instructions about engaging them. Before I received his letter I read an account about the remarkable manifestations of the Davenport Brothers, and wrote for an engagement to be made with them, and before my letter reached America I heard that the Davenports were on their way to England. In due time they arrived, and a press Séance took place at the rooms of Mr. Dion Boncicault, who introduced them to the company. The next morning notices appeared in the London papers of the wonders that had been witnessed, which were deemed inexplicable. Mr. Boncicault also wrote a letter about them, and the whole country was in a state of excitement concerning what had been reported, but nothing had been said about Spiritualism; that had been kept in the background and it was evident that the Davenports had been brought over as a "show," by a theatrical speculator of the firm of Abbey & Palmer, who had an idea there was money in it on account of its novel and unusual character. But fortunately, Dr. J. B. Ferguson, who had been engaged to introduce them to the public and to manage their Séances, had a soul above money and regarded the exhibition as a means adopted by the spirit-world to give proof to this materialistic age that there is something in the universe beside matter.

The first time I saw these mediums was at the Hanover Square Rooms, the occasion being an invitation *séance* to a few scientists, who were evidently much perplexed and puzzled at what they witnessed. At the end Dr. Ferguson had a little talk with them, and I heard him say that if they were bound with ropes, their coats could be taken off. This I could hardly credit, but, although I did not see this actually done, I saw things equally inexplicable. On the next occasion, a public exhibition was being given, when some medical students were assembling in another room. I heard one enquiring what was going on there (alluding to the Davenports). The reply was "dreadful humbug, awful rot," which I expect is the estimate in which Spiritual Phenomena is still held by that class of semi-scientific persons.

On leaving London and going to the provinces, things did not go on so pleasantly. Spiritualism had taken root at Liverpool, and here it was that the Davenports on leaving London, "opened" in the provinces. Large audiences assembled in St. George's Hall, but the exhibition being credited with something more than *legerdemain*, did not suit the materialistic notions of a town like Liverpool, and a determination was made to put it down. So two men named Hulley and Cummings, one a conjuror, and the other a prize fighter, were employed for the purpose. Their tactics were tying the mediums so tightly that they could not bear it, and Dr. Ferguson cut the ropes and found blood on the wrist. A row ensued and the mediums and Ferguson had to escape for their lives. This was the grand "exposure" that led the British public to believe that the Davenports were frauds, and which idea remains to the present day. A *séance* was announced at Huddersfield with the same results. Hulley and Cummings (the "exposers") had followed them up, also in another town, so the Davenports deeming it useless to continue in that part of the country returned to London.

After the usual Sunday meeting at the Spiritual Lyceum, I and two or three others accompanied the Davenports to the Great Western Hotel, Mr. Guppy and Dr. T. L. Nichols among the number, and held a *séance* to hear what "John King" had to say on the subject. Sitting in darkness a loud noise was heard on the table and then a loud and gruff voice began to speak and denounce in no measured terms what had taken place at Liverpool. This was the first time I heard the "spirit voice," but I heard it many times after.

(To be Continued.)

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J. J. MORSE, Editor.

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AUGUST, 1901

MATTERS OF MOMENT.

Where is the Spirit World? Among the multitude of letters received by the Editor from literally "all sorts and conditions" of people, the question frequently recurs, "Will you tell me where the Spirits say the Spirit world is?" Probably the four greatest authorities upon the matter may be considered as Immanuel Swedenborg, Andrew Jackson Davis, Hudson Tuttle, and Pascal Beverley Randolph. The first-named conveys whatever information he possessed in so cumbersome and involved a fashion that but little help towards a solution of the problem is afforded by even a diligent perusal of his "memorable relations," to say nothing of the difficulty of searching his large works for information upon the point. As a whole, Randolph's works do not carry us very far, though the brilliancy of his writings are undeniable. Hudson Tuttle presents clear and cogent statements on the matter, and is most well worth reading on the question, while Davis affords,

probably, the most coherent, natural, and philosophical information on the nature and locality of the "Spirit" world that we possess. Read in conjunction with each other, Davis and Tuttle presents the most rational ideas of the locality of the Spirit spheres that Spiritualist literature affords. In each writer's case personal acquaintance with the Spirit world is the keynote of their statements. In each case the same strain of reasonableness is present in all that is said; and in each case it is claimed that the knowledge gained is strictly within the reach of the natural powers of men.

What we are Missing. Are we missing an important point? We are debating problems of various sorts, but are we realising that so far we do not seem to be in a much better position than many orthodox believers on the questions of "Where is the Spirit world?" "What is it like?" "What are its physical conditions?" We must give something more than an indefinite "Spirit" world in exchange for an indefinite heaven; something more satisfactory in the place of "everlasting day" and streets "paved with gold" if we would make good our place as teachers of the facts of the life to come. If our lecturers, claiming to be controlled by Spirits, cannot give us the information, let us turn to the pages of the illumined Davis and Tuttle. If we are descending into "believers" in a spirit world, and not knowers of its place and nature in the scheme of the universe, what better than others whom we often rail at are we who talk so loudly of what we know? We are missing our way, losing the opportunity that should be ours to teach facts concerning man's second estate. What is wanted is as clear and sound a knowledge of the nature, locality, and circumstances of the next world as we possess of the world in which we live. Knowledge is the only thing that will save us, and surely our Spirit friends can give us the information if we honestly and rigorously demand it. If we decline to take our 'Spirits' on trust, demanding they prove their claims, shall we take the evidence of the existence of a Spirit world upon any lower plane of proof? We shall be glad to hear from mediums, lecturers, and Spiritualists everywhere as to what information the Spirits have imparted to them upon the questions embodied in the preceding paragraph?

A Personal Note. The Editor craves the indulgence of his readers if they find the present issue of the REVIEW is not quite up to the usual standard. In the early part of the past

month he was ordered to take a week's absolute rest from all and any kinds of work, otherwise he was assured that serious nervous complications would ensue, most probably resulting in a complete prostration. Reluctantly, it must be confessed, the advice was acted upon, and the relief has been wonderful and decided. But the cessation from work consumed valuable time, and consequently the current issue of the magazine could not receive the care and attention that is always bestowed upon its production. With the above brief explanation the Editor retires until next month, with the confident expectation of the sympathies of his friendly readers.

Chinese Occultism.

By H. RODEN RUMFORD.

Asking the Spirits for a Husband.

CONTINUED.

They took us into an adjoining room, and there, being alone, they told us to be very careful we did nothing wrong, nor touch anything, and left us. Without exaggeration, I can truthfully say this room was filled with Chinese Gods, there being over a 1,000 of such images placed about. Each figure representing some form of worship regarding the sun, moon, birth, marriage, &c., &c. In the centre was one immense Joss altar surrounded by the gods of war and peace. The place stank so that in spite of the injunctions laid upon us I lit a cigar, though the women returned and implored me to desist; but on this occasion, it was health before amusement. The girls were greatly concerned as to whether the priests might molest us but not having seen any priests, so far, I felt pretty safe.

Presently the banging of the cans and the whistling of the flutes became more distinct, when we were escorted by the girls into another room, which was laid out in the prescribed Joss fashion. At one end was the Joss altar, strewn with all the different 'sacrifices' of 'samshu,' cakes, roast pig, &c., &c. A priest was sitting by the side of the altar chanting some kind of religious incantation, and close at hand was the inevitable

orchestra. Presently there came a procession of girls, headed by one girl, with another on her back, the one carried being the one for whom the ceremonies were performed. She was arrayed in some splendidly embroidered clothes, and was presently deposited upon a mat near the altar.

Various ceremonies were then gone through which have left no impression upon my mind, one was the worshipping of an umbrella, though what was the significance of so doing I could never discover. There was, also, the worshipping of 'cash' (money), which were dropped one by one into a bowl of water, and as each coin was dropped into the water the priest blessed it as it fell. Here the stench of the burning joss sticks became too much for me, so that seeing some 'samshu' I took a draft, which considerably relieved me. As the various prolonged ceremonies proceeded I began to crave for food, so I walked over to the table where the 'chow' (food) offerings to the Gods was, and took some, the girls also offering us some of the sweets, &c.

It appeared that the ceremonies had commenced at the dawn of the day, and were to continue until the dawn of the next day. By one o'clock, Warroll and I had had enough for the time, so we managed to slip out. In the evening we went in again, and got there just in time to see the sacrifices of clothes to the spirits who were present. This comprised the burning of all sorts of articles, such as 'dresses,' 'shoes,' 'umbrellas,' 'skirts,' 'trousers,' &c., all made of paper. Poor duped spirits! We stayed about an hour, but whether the girl had a husband procured for her I am at present unable to say.

Ancestral Worship, a Private Seance, and an Invention.

True to their habit of retaining manners and customs for centuries, with little or no variation, the Chinese still cling to "Ancestral Worship," probably one of the oldest forms of worship the world possesses, but which, in China, would most fittingly be described as "filial piety run mad," to such lengths is it carried, and so great is its effect on the thoughts and lives of all celestials. Truly, the study of the Chinaman at home reveals many secrets concerning his habits, occupations, predilections, and religious beliefs. I am writing this at the time when every Chinaman is bent on worshipping the bones of

his ancestors, and which task he will accomplish at no matter what personal cost or inconvenience to himself, for he would sooner give up his life than neglect his duty to his ancestors! The Celestial mind is so deeply impressed with the stability of family ties that even death is not considered to separate man or woman from their respective families, and it is, therefore, the common belief of the people that the ancestors of each family, though living in hades, are constantly watching over the interests and welfare of all their descendants living upon the earth. Or, to put the matter in another, and, possibly to my readers, more familiar form, they believe in Spiritualism, with the addition that the departed ancestors of a thousand years ago still continue to watch over the present members of the direct family line. These few preliminary remarks will enable the reader to better appreciate the following experience.

Having shown some of my Chinese friends our manner of procedure with the Planchette, and made them acquainted with the English methods of "table-turning," they expressed a desire that I should see one of their women mediums, called in Canton city a "Shang p'o." Accordingly, by arrangement, in company with a friend we met our three Chinese friends in Canton. We were staying at the only European hotel in the Settlement of Shameen, a very small island made by the English. This "island" was constructed by making the circumference of a cemented wall and levelling and filling in the enclosed space; in fact, the place is so small that one can walk round it in about half an hour. My three friends lived in the Chinese city, which is connected by a bridge with the island, and, of course, on the city side of the bridge there is the usual gate. This gate is in three sections, one large and two smaller sections, and all natives have to pass through one or other of the small side sections, but a Yamen runner is kept to open the larger or central gate for the passage of all Europeans, according to treaty. A rather ludicrous ceremony occurs twice each evening in connection with this gateway, when at 6 p.m., or thereabouts, for they are not at all particular as to the time or punctuality, when, about the time mentioned, horns are blown and a gun is fired off to scare away evil spirits! The gun is an old three-man blunderbuss, and it is placed on the shoulders of two men, the third man standing at the trigger. While other men are blowing horns most furiously, the man fires the gun, and the recoil throws all three men down with the gun on top of them. But so serious are they all that the proceedings do not seem to give them any sense of the ridiculous that it causes the European beholder.

However, to return to the matter in hand. On arriving at the house to which we were escorted, I found the "Sang p'o," or medium to be quite an ordinary looking Chinese woman. No preparations had been made for holding this seance, nor were any sacrifices offered; the only thing done was to light some incense sticks and place them in niches in the wall dedicated to the particular spirit whom it was desired to communicate with. These niches are to be seen in every Chinese house, and I have seldom found them without the burning Joss sticks occupying them. My Chinese friends explained to me that in the ordinary Chinese seance, that is at the family functions, which take place when this particular kind of medium is called in, such are only held to consult upon family matters, and thereto men are never admitted.

When all was ready the medium asked the nature of our inquiries, and the name and sex of the spirit we wished to converse with? As soon as she had been informed on those points she crouched down on the stool upon which she was sitting so that her head rested upon her knees, and commenced uttering in a low and measured tone an incantation, which, of course, I did not understand. This was repeated three times, and at the end of the third time a sudden change came over the medium. Her limbs were seized with a sudden torpor, her arms dropped loosely to her sides, a cold sweat covered her face, and she was shaken by severe convulsions, all symptoms which I have often observed with mediums at home before the spirit assumed complete control. At last the spirit was in full control, and my friends proceeded to put their questions, which, as I do not know the language, I could not grasp the significance of. After some considerable time the control broke into "pidgeon" English, and I had a very short and not very satisfactory conversation with the unseen visitor. The chief result of this chat was a piece of information which has resulted in my being able to carry out an idea which has long occupied my thoughts, and which has enabled me to perfect an invention for the better and more easily holding communication with spirits.

It came about in this wise. I was told that if I visited a certain woman I should find that she had in her possession an instrument, the sight of which would immediately put into my mind the method I was in search of for the purpose above referred to. It would be so simple in form and so trifling in cost, that it could be placed within the reach of any one. The control then left the medium, who roused herself as one does from after a prolonged and deep sleep, and then assumed

the usual professional swagger of her class, demanded her wage, which we paid, and then departed.

I subsequently visited the other medium to whom I had been so strangely referred, saw the article as stated, and at once discerned what could be done. The result is the patenting of what I have described as "Talka," of which I may say more later on.

HONG KONG.

Domestic Psychology.

The Psychic Atmosphere of Homes.

BY ELLEN BURNS SHERMAN.

THE man without an ear for music may spend thousands of dollars in studying harmony, and still be unable to master the crude complexities of "Yankee Doodle," as the man without an ear for the delicate distinctions of diction, may spend a decade thumbing the pages of text-books on rhetoric and still be unable to write a sentence of any length which will not reveal that lack of style which, as much as its presence, is *l'homme meme*. In like manner, a woman deficient in taste and feeling, though she have a million at her disposal, can never impart to a house or a room of it, that indefinable air of refinement, warmth and hospitality which changes a house to a home, a feat which another woman may achieve with a comparatively modest expenditure.

It would perhaps be an impossible and useless task to enumerate to the mistress of a stiff house the causes that rob her establishment of the mellow, artistic and hospitable air which prevades the home of her neighbour. But one may safely affirm that whatever is, or is not, in the character of a woman is gradually and inevitably infused into the atmosphere of her house, or home—if she is happily the right kind of woman. So the analysis of home atmospheres, though it may begin with the consideration of colours and shapes, leads back to an investiga-

tion of the minds and hearts of the home builders. If a woman is not hospitable or generous by nature, that fact will proclaim itself from the very temperature of her house and from the colours of her walls, pictures and rugs. She may have elaborately tiled fireplaces (most of them unsmoked, perhaps) all over her house—the writer knows such a home—but only in the Greek Kalends may one expect to see a cheerful blaze in any of them. Instead, a frugal, gingerly warmth, ranging from 68 to 51 Fahrenheit comes from dumb, mute, expressionless radiators that know nothing of the poetry, inspiration and hospitality of the red, crackling blaze of the fireplace. The temperature of a house is one of the most potent factors of its psychical atmosphere. One cannot look for great cardiac radiation and good cheer in a house whose temperature rarely gets above 64 and frequently drops to 58. Neither can one expect to find any colour warmth in such a house; ice-green and grey-blue shades will predominate, or frigid white and gold furnishings, that call up shiversome memories of winds “that blow by the cold grave-stones.” Even the chairs of the chilly house have an angular, crabbed air, as if they were saying, “Oh, yes; you may sit on me; but do be careful not to lean too hard on my brocade back.” In some houses there is a bleak, office-like severity about the rooms that reminds one that the mistress has a purely business-like type of mind, which finds pleasure in keeping a rigorously itemised cash account—from which she frequently reads extracts to her guests—of all her expenditures.

In refreshing contrast to the air of the chilly home is the home where the mistress is hospitable, generous and refined. There chances to flit before the writer the vision of a home of this kind situated in the region of Washington Square. A genial warmth, in which there is a fine fragrance of library leathers, greets the visitor as he crosses the threshold, and a cheerful glow from burning oak-logs lights up the warm-hued walls and dainty furnishings. No where can one detect a harsh or cold effect in pictures, rugs or any of the furnishings of the rooms, which faithfully reflect the gentle spirit of the woman who presides over them. In this particular home the library has overflowed its boundaries, as every good library should, and is making picturesque little literary rivulets into all the other rooms. As a rule, a house that has all its books in a single room is likely to be stiff

and conventional, and one may be pretty certain of finding the covers of such books painfully fresh.

The most impressive illustration, however, of the psychic power of atmosphere is undoubtedly found in the world's great cathedrals and churches. When one has felt the strong and subtle suggestions that may be carved and coloured into stone, wood and glass—suggestions that expand and uplift the soul—he will be ready to admit that the psychic atmosphere of the home, also, may be made one of the strongest influences in helping or hindering the development of all those who dwell in it.

The bleak barrenness of the homes and churches in which our forefathers worshipped reflected the bleakness of their lives and doctrines, and by the law of interaction our forefathers reflected the bleakness and barrenness of their homes and churches. The same interaction between man and his psychic environment is continually taking place in the homes and churches of to-day. This interaction is naturally more marked between sensitive people and their surroundings than in cases where there is little more appreciation of one's *entourment* than a horse gives its stable. But there are men and women, and even children, who are so susceptible to atmospheric effect that one dissonant rug or picture in a room will give them a sense of discomfort as acute as that felt by a musician who listens to a discordant strain. Here the Christian Scientist and all those of her religious foliage will remind us that we should not allow ourselves to be disturbed by such little things. To which one may answer that one should bear the painful picture or rug with precisely the same spirit with which a musician listens to a discord, *i.e.*, ignoring it as much as possible, but remembering always—lest his ear become corrupted—that it is a discord.

It is by no means uncommon to speak of the atmosphere, good or bad, of a picture, and the expression is fitly used; but a picture is not the only thing that has atmosphere. Everything that may be seen, touched, smelled or tasted has an atmosphere of its own, which it contributes to the sum total of atmospheric effect of the room in which it is. The flickering, fancy-stirring light of the fireplace, the soft tiger skin before it, the dozing house cat upon it, an ancient piece of bronze or tapestry mysteriously wise with palace lore of centuries ago, a musically voiced clock, a table strewn with books and magazines, an old

ink horn, a quaint paper-cutter or penholder—each of these has an atmosphere of its own as distinct and communicable as that occult something known as personality which emanates from human beings. Between the atmospheres of a yellow paper bound volume, bearing some such title as “For True Love’s Sake,” and Milton in russ et leather, one is aware of the same difference that is felt in the personalities of Maggie O’Flarrity, chambermaid, and My Lord Bishop of Sandown. The personalities of books—which are in reality disembodied spirits of the dead and living clad in typographical vestments—and their individual effect on the home atmosphere is a subject well worth the investigation of the curious. For every picture or book which is brought into a room as unavoidably adds to or detracts from its atmosphere as does the entrance or exit of a guest or member of the family.

And here, naturally, rise several queries, namely, how much atmosphere can a room hold? Cannot an atmosphere be too complex and is the effect of emptiness in a room not preferable to brimfulness or overflowingness? The physical atmosphere, of a room, as everyone knows, is quickly exhausted when there is a large number of people in it, and even the most improved methods of ventilation sometimes fail to prevent an unpleasant effect of closeness. Similarly, the psychic atmosphere of a room—as “everybody” doesn’t seem to know—may become, and frequently is, close and oppressive from the exhalations of too many things—pictures, bric-à-brac and furnishings in it. A certain amount of skilfully selected bare wall and floor—which corresponds to a ventilator, or the restful margins of a book—must be allowed in every room, or the effect is nearly as oppressive as the closeness which comes from the exhaustion of oxygen in the physical atmosphere.

Just where the psychic ventilators—blank spaces—in a room should be is a matter requiring much nicety of taste and feeling, and the woman who can wisely discriminate in the furnishings of her rooms between “the little more and the little less,” that are such “worlds away,” is as rare as the author who knows how to capture that rhetorical *will-o-the-wisp* which is known as the “inevitable phrase.” Precisely such a genius has been recently revealed in the author of “The Greater Inclination,” whose every

sentence and word give the reader a feeling that the author invariably succeeded in finding the *juste milieu* between the little more and the little less, both in her fancies and their framing, a conclusion that warrants the further conjecture that the psychic ventilation and colour tone of a room whose furnishings were chosen by the author of "The Greater Inclination" would be as near perfect as one might hope for in our present stage of psychological evolution. While education may do much for a woman in tutoring her home-making instincts, there is a good deal that is born and not made about the genius which can make a bare house grow to the "conscious beauty" of a home.

Emerson declares that all imitation—which is but one form of dishonesty—is suicidal, and his maxim holds good as a principal for home-makers as well as book-makers. Order, cleanliness, originality, harmony of colour tone, repose, sincerity and hospitality are all felt in the psychic atmosphere of the best kind of home, and each one of these effects is produced by an indefinite number of influences. Cleanliness cannot be felt where there are carpets or a multitude of wall and window draperies. Hospitality and cheerfulness can only be present when they are in the hearts of those who preside over the home, and even if there is good cheer in the hearts, it radiates less readily in a room that does not allow the entrance of hope-infecting sunshine. Repose is produced by a certain height and width of walls and floors, as well as by quietness of colour tone. An opposite effect is produced in a room where everything on the walls seems to be ready to fly at you, as some one has forcibly put it.

Lastly, sincerity is never felt in a room whose decorations have been servilely copied from another house.—*The Ideal Review*.

Our Contemporaries Reviewed.

THE CONTINENTAL JOURNALS.

ILL. CAFFARO.

Professor Falcomer, whose indefatigable industry is sustained by an equally indefatigable zeal in the cause of truth, contributes to the *Caffaro*, a daily paper published in Genoa, a powerful array of well

authenticated facts, which go to show how large a number of persons of all ages, sexes, countries and social positions, have spoken or written under the influence of a mysterious power, while they were in an abnormal condition. Muratori, the Italian historian, he remarks, mentions the case of an ignorant young girl, who while in a state of epilepsy (or, more likely, in a magnetic trance), used to improvise verses and converse in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and other languages of which she had no knowledge whatever. Dr. Cervello describes the case of an uneducated Sicilian girl, Ninfa Filiberto by name, who, under similar circumstances, would speak Greek, French, English, and the Siennese dialect in its utmost purity; and in passing from one to the other would forget all she had previously said, showing that there was a complete change of control with each. Eusapia Paladino, on the testimony of Professor Gerosa, speaks French, German, and English, while in a state of trance. Bossola, the historiographer, declares that she has replied to him in Greek with respect to the fragments of a very early Greek poet; and Dr. Masucci affirms that she has discoursed in French to him on the subject of magnetism, in a way which confounded him; and yet he is master of this science, while she, in her normal condition, is ignorant of it. Verdinois, (we are still quoting Professor Falcomer's words) published in the *Fanfulla* an account of a youth named Caputo, who taking a pencil in each hand, wrote a theme in Italian with the one, and in French with the other, on entirely different subjects. And Goethe, Picodella Mirandola, one of the prodigies of the 15th century, states that in his "morbidity attacks" he would converse in idioms with which, in his normal state he was wholly unacquainted.

After citing these, and many similar facts, Professor Falcomer asks what is the scientific explanation of them? Many hypotheses are put forward, but none of them are adequate to explain the phenomena. There is only one in fact, which adequately covers the ground and elucidates the whole question. It is that of the interposition of spiritual intelligences, who impress upon the sensitive and receptive minds of mediums the ideas they wish to convey, in the languages with which they (the impressors) were most familiar when they were last in human form. It is more than probable that, in the case of the Greek poet spoken of above, it was he himself who controlled the medium.

LE PROGRES SPIRITE.

In a volume of reminiscences just published by the Rev. Pastor

Wadstroem, a minister of the Lutheran Church in Sweden, as we learn from *Le Progres Spirite*, he relates an incident which he had received from the lips of the Princess Eugenie, sister of King Oscar of Sweden. It occurred in the month of March, 1871, and shortly before the death of Queen Louise. The Princess and her mother, the Queen Dowager Josephine, were passing through the apartments of Charles XV., on their way to the bedchamber of the Queen, when, in the middle of the salon, the younger lady of the two saw the figure of a tall and stately lady, very distinguished in appearance, standing in the centre of the room under the great chandelier. She wore a robe of white satin, and a lace collar falling over her shoulders. As the two passed her, she did not stir, but looked at them without any change of countenance. When they reached the door of egress, the Princess turned round and saw the stranger still standing under the chandelier. "Who is that lady?" she asked of her mother. "What lady?" replied the Queen Dowager. "The lady all in white, who never stirred and never saluted us as we passed." The elder of the two was profoundly agitated, and said, "Do not breathe a word of this to anyone, for it is most likely the white Lady your have seen; and if so, some great trouble is about to happen; possibly it is the death of the Queen. Next morning, the bulletins announced that the Queen's condition had become critical, and three days afterwards she died. The appearance of the White Lady in the palace at Stockholm has always been the prelude of a similar bereavement.

IL VESSILLO SPIRITISTA.

This mentions the publication of a work on Mediumship, by Dr. Visani-Scozzi, an eminent medical practitioner in Florence, which has been something like five years in preparation. It is described by our Italian contemporary as being a complete and scrupulous study of the subject, undertaken by a man of science, who is gifted in an eminent degree with the analytical and reasoning faculties.

In speaking of its author, Signor Enrico Carreras, well-known as an able journalist in Rome, observes:—"Visani-Scozzi, like myself, and like most Spiritualists, was a sceptic and a materialist of the first water. And he had every reason to be so; inasmuch as the studies he had made, and his lengthened practice of hypnotism, the extraordinary effects of suggestion, the theories emitted by many studious investigators of psychism concerning the transmission and the plastic quality of human thought caused him to explain most of the

phenomena of Spiritualism without having recourse to the intervention of discarnate beings."

But his scepticism and his materialistic ideas went down like nine-pins before the powerful impact upon them of hard irresistible facts; and to-day Dr. Visani-Scozzi has written a book on Mediumship which a trained critic like Signor Carreras of the *Secolo XIX.* pronounces to be a masterpiece of its kind.

Silence.

MY soul is sad, for the earth is still
 Save for the fall of the rippling rill;
 The moon rides swiftly across the sky,
 Flooding the ground with light, but I
 Am sad to-night.

My life is cold and congealed with care,
 The silence oppresses me everywhere;
 My mind still dwells on the haunting past,
 Rippling my peace like a pebble cast
 On waters still.

Throb! throb, my heart! for again anon
 The dawn will break and the moon be gone;
 Wake troubled soul and thy pain repress,
 God gives the night and its calm to bless
 Throb weary heart!

JOHN M. STUART-YOUNG.

I have, like other people, I suppose, made many resolutions that I have broken or only half kept; but the one which I send you, and which was in my mind long before it took the form of a resolution, is the key-note of my life. It is this—always to regard as mere impertinences of fate the handicaps which were placed upon my life almost at the beginning. I resolved that they should not crush or dwarf my soul, but rather be made to "blossom, like Aaron's rod, with flowers."

—Helen Keller.

The Books of the Month.

YOUR MESMERIC FORCES AND HOW TO DEVELOP THEM: Giving Full and Comprehensive Instructions How to Mesmerise, by Frank H. Randall. London: L. N. Fowler and Co., 7, Imperial Arcade. Crown 8vo., 150 pages, 2s. 6d.

THE SONGS OF CHRISTINE, by E. M. Holden. Limpsfield, Surrey: Carl Heath. Cloth, 122 pages, 2s. 6d.

A not infrequent complaint regarding works upon Mesmerism is their unintelligibility to the ordinary reader. No such consideration can arise as a result of reading the one referred to above. Mr. Randall commences with a clear and lucid style, which is continued throughout all his pages. He adheres to the "force" idea, and claims it as a reality. And unlike many mesmerists he boldly approaches the verge of things spiritual, coming very near to what Spiritualists know as mediumship in its mental and psychic forms.

The work is divided into eleven chapters, and chapter three gives some very practical advice concerning the most suitable age for an operator, with some excellent rules regarding the diet best suited to secure the necessary bodily conditions for the work. In another chapter the best methods for cultivating and exercising the power within oneself, the training of the eyes, hands, and fingers, the respiratory powers, the feet, and the amount of mental concentration necessary, are very clearly dealt with; while the chapter devoted to "Experimenting," with the "Signs" and "Indications" of the various forms of mesmeric control, conveys a quantity of useful guidance to the student.

The book is neatly got up, clearly printed, and full of interest from the first page to the last. Messrs. Fowler are to be congratulated by all would-be students of this fascinating subject on presenting a book at once entertaining, instructive, and free from an involved technicality, which latter has too often spoiled the utility of many otherwise meritorious productions.

The receipt of a book of poetry inspires a Reviewer with very mixed emotions. Fear, often, that some one has failed to realise that rhymes, be they never so good, do not make poetry! It is a pleasant satisfaction to record that opening the little work in question somewhat doubtfully it was read with increasing satisfaction, and laid down with a feeling of pleasure, which emotions

were the result of the sweetness of the song and the charm of the singer. The poems are stated to be "inspirational," and the 'Spiritual' element is largely present as a sweet pervasive influence, which is not the least of the charms of the various poems in the work, and particularly noticeable in, among others, the two poems, "O, Spirit World" and "Reverie," which are excellent illustrations of the above made point. Spiritualists whose thoughts love Spiritual themes will find this collection admirable for perusal in quiet moments, for the sentiment it contains touch the inner feelings, and suggest to us a subtle something breathing of the sweetness that is ever associated with the true poetic faculty, without which "something" the poet (?) appeals to the world in vain. Undoubtedly we shall hear of E. M. Holden again.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents and some times publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

INFORMATION WANTED.

Sir,—I am at times subject to a rather curious experience. It is this: During the night I dream of certain places and people, and at such times these seem quite familiar and natural persons and places, not at all as belonging to the "Spirit" world. During the daytime I have an haunting consciousness that my personality becomes, so to say, semi-detached from my active life, and in part associates itself with another world which I seem to partially penetrate. So marked at times are these sensations that for a moment I feel a difficulty in deciding which side of me is really my real self. Can any of your readers tell me whether they have experiences of like kind, or offer me any explanation of the phenomena I have described?

AZIZ DI FLUERKS.

A SUGGESTION.

Sir,—The question of organising Spiritualism is nearly always "in the air," and our journal deals with it from time to time, though, to my mind, in a far from satisfactory manner. I know there are several schools of thought on the topic in the cause, the pros, the antis, and the indifferents, but neither party has, so far, presented a complete case. Would it be possible to start a Symposium in the SPIRITUAL

REVIEW, wherein all sides of the matter could be presented by people capable of marshalling their opinions in clear and logical form. I hope such can be done, as I am sure it would add to the already unmistakeable usefulness and popularity of your magazine.

FRED HETHERINGTON.

We shall be pleased to print any letters sent us.—EDITOR.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

S.L.P., Liverpool.—There is no immediate prospect of the medium coming to Great Britain. G., Dacca, India.—Your favour received, and its requests attended to. Always pleased to hear from you. W.M.R., Pontefract.—Your letter is too long, and your method of treating the subject not quite the best that could be adopted. It is not the "driving of the Seer" out of the work, it is the prevention of incompetents making themselves and the cause appear ridiculous.

AN APPRECIATION.

The July issue of the SPIRITUAL REVIEW is a valuable and varied one. Mr. R. Cooper relates interesting incidents which occurred in the early days of the movement in this country. Mr. William Oxley re-states his experiences with different mediums for physical demonstrations, and the Editor, in his "Matters of Moment," has some wise and weighty words regarding the status of Spiritualism in this country at the present time. Reviews, letters, and several interesting articles make up a useful issue of this magazine.—*Light*.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

"The Banner of Light," "The Philosophical Journal," "The Light of Truth," "The Sunflower," "The Independent Magazine," "The Sermon," "The Progressive Thinker," "Mind," "Immortality," "The Star of the Magi," "The Temple of Health," "Light," "The Yorkshire Spiritualist," "The Spiritual Record," "The Keystone," "The Two Worlds," "Psyche," "The Harbinger of Light," "The Phrenological Journal," all for July.

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