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Committee's Seance, at 7.30 p.m.
Tuesday, 19th.—General Purposes Committee, at 5.15 p.m.
Wednesday, 20th.—Soiree Committee, at 5 p.m.
House and Offices Committee, at 5.30 p.m.
Friday, 22nd.—Seance Committee, at 6 p.m.
Experimental Research Committee, at 6.30 p.m.
Committee's Seance, at 7.30 p.m.
Monday, 25th.—FORTNIGHTLY DISCUSSION MEETING, at 7.45 p.m.
" " "The Spirit-World as seen through Crystals, Mirrors, and Vessels of Water," by Dr. Kenneth Mackenzie, F.S.A.

SEANCES FOR INQUIRERS.

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LIBRARY.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

VOLUME TWELVE. NUMBER ELEVEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, MARCH 13th, 1878.

RELIGIOUS TOLERATION.

IN gathering together within these pages the opinions of the followers of all the great beliefs of the world, it is pleasing to see the gentleness with which deep thinkers of all religions treat each other, and how small are the real divisions between them when they consider the points at issue without dogmatism. But this approximate harmony is not attained without occasional difficulty; now and then we reject communications because the writers do not treat the religious convictions of their opponents with respect. The religious sentiments of any man comprise the highest ideals his mind can conceive, and violent attacks upon the innermost shrine of his consciousness merely lead to bitterness of feeling and dislike to the religious ideas of his aggressive opponent. Contributors to these columns are, therefore, requested to advance their own views, not by attempting to rudely shiver that which is dear to others who may or may not be less advanced than themselves, but to present their own ideals in such high and attractive forms that they shall be voluntarily adopted. The publication of more letters than usual has been stopped of late, because the writers have not been careful to treat with proper courtesy those from whom they differ in opinion. The majority of our readers also, have little sympathy with aggressive writers, who are too ready to wield the tomahawk.

IS MAN'S IMMORTALITY CONDITIONAL ?

BY FREDERICA SHOWERS.

IN *The Spiritualist* of last week you call upon Theosophists to furnish Spiritualists with some evidence of the occasional annihilation of the soul. Now, it appears to me, that this is a sort of evidence which it is clearly impossible for them to furnish, otherwise than by consistently employing the conclusions arrived at by other thinkers, and by giving well-attested and trustworthy accounts of the teachings of spirits themselves. About two years ago—under most remarkable circumstances—I obtained some testimony which leads me to conclude that this assertion of the Theosophists, regarding the spirit, is substantially true, notwithstanding the almost insuperable difficulties that lie in the way of demonstrating its truth.

I will proceed to relate an incident in my own somewhat uncommon "experiences," in the hope that this communication of mine may be instrumental either in diffusing, or confirming, or kindling faith and confidence in the blessed intelligences who unquestionably surround us, in one of whom my trust is absolute, not solely on account of the high moral character—nay, holiness—of his teachings, but because of the incontestable proofs that have been furnished us, of his prescience, prevision, and power. With all becoming deference to the high intellectual attainments and unquestionable sincerity of those gentlemen who are examining spiritual phenomena, with minds apparently made up as to the results of investigations that they have only half way completed, I beg to affirm that the spirit who gave the communication to which I refer was not my spirit, neither was he that of my daughter, and I know, and can as conscientiously affirm this, as I can affirm that my conscious, personal life is my own life, and that any power of will or intelligence exercised by me is conceived and resides in my own brain, and not in that of another. I know I am expressing myself in a very obscure and unsatisfactory manner, but—

*Was kein Verstand der Verständige sieht,
Das übet in Einfalt ein kindlich Gemüth.*

This quotation, by the way, is not altogether appropriate here, but, no matter, it will do to express what I mean.

One evening, in the winter of the year 1876, I was sitting in a very miserable—I may say half heart-broken—state of

mind, working by the fire. What I felt to be a great injustice had been done me. I had been misunderstood, and my actions had been maliciously misrepresented. It is true there was a consciousness of my own integrity and a trust in a Higher Power to support me, nevertheless life seemed like a dark labyrinth in which I was wandering about most dejectedly—in a word, nothing was to be discerned clearly save my own unhappiness. My daughter was practising at the piano, and though I was at first too occupied by my own reflections to notice what she was doing, yet the noise at last began to jar on my nerves, and I asked her to give up practising, and try to let us have a *séance* quite to ourselves. With evident and unmistakeable reluctance she drew a chair towards the table by my side; and glad to have secured her compliance on any terms, I rose hastily, and placed before her a piece of paper and a pencil, taken from a side table in the same room. To the best of my recollection, not one word passed with reference to the reflections that had been occupying my mind for the previous hour or two. Almost instantly that she took up the pencil, a sofa was sketched out on the paper before her. She has never either learnt drawing or shown any desire to draw. "What can that mean?" I thought. "Are we to look on the sofa for anything?" was my inquiry. There were three loud raps, which signified to me a reply in the affirmative. My daughter rose and went towards the sofa. She moved it from the wall, she took up the cushions and antimacassars, and examined carefully the seat and the ground below, but all was as usual, and we both thought "Peter" was playing us some trick. Miss Showers said as much, as she returned to her seat, the raps accompanying her all the time, and becoming louder and more imperative as she sat down. Upon this I rose, and walked to the sofa, which was hardly four feet from where I was sitting. I looked at it carefully, and even raised it to examine the seat underneath. In vain—nothing was to be seen there, and I was giving up the search when it occurred to me, why or wherefore I cannot say, to put my hand down in the narrow space between the back and the seat. To my astonishment, my fingers touched some paper, and I drew out a crumpled sheet of foolscap, on which were the following lines:—

Our realm is one of purity,
'Tis spirit land ;
No woe and no obscurity
In our fair band.
'Twill last into futurity,
Aye, ever stand;
Come, friend, and have thy name enrolled,
For spirit land.

May be thou'lt find thy cross here
Hard to carry ;
But onward, ever onward,
Do not tarry.
For One alone will bless
And help the humble,
And guide the weary footsteps
Lest they stumble.
And then, when death arrives
To call thee home,
Though closed within the precincts
Of the tomb,
A light will break with radiance
Through the gloom,
'Twill be thy Lord
To wake thee from thy swoon.

Now courage, courage, friend,
Yet still a little longer
Put faith in Him,
And He will make thee stronger.
But wickedness feeds
On its own heart's core,
Consumes the soul,
And then it is no more.

Day after day, I have pondered and puzzled over the meaning of some of these lines, and have written and repeated them to Mr. Walhouse, Mr. St. George Stock, and many others, narrating, at the same time, the remarkable circumstances under which they were given. I may as well observe here, that, as something very different from a high poetical effusion is intended, there is no necessity to criticise the above composition with reference to its literary merits, though there may be nothing to say against it, even on that score. What spirits mean to give us, is proof of a life after death: and of an invisible existence. The noble literature of our own and other countries furnishes us abundantly with "teachings" in the priceless records that have been preserved, and the heroic deeds that have been immortalised.

The handwriting strongly resembled that of my daughter.
103, Seymour-place, Brynston-square, London.

"ISIS UNVEILED," AND THE TODAS.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—Allow me to add a few words to the observations of "H. M." on the account of the Todas, extracted from Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, in the last number of *The Spiritualist*. I was for fifteen years in the district to which the Nilgiri Hills belong, and am well acquainted with those hills throughout their length and breadth, and with the habits of the various tribes inhabiting them. I have known numbers of the Todas, and am familiar with their villages, habits, ceremonies, and belief. Let me say that with regard to the communication from the very holy personage who commands Madame Blavatsky's great respect, every statement in the first paragraph is absolutely and directly contrary to fact. In the second paragraph the statements about the Todas not being born of Toda mothers, but being the children of a select sect, set apart for special religious purposes, and having places of worship unknown to Europeans rivalling splendid pagodas—(the "Brahmanam-guru" does not seem to know that a goparam is the tower of a pagoda)—are ludicrous nonsense. And this I must assert, notwithstanding the warning against disbelieving those statements which Madame Blavatsky has been rash enough to insert in the closing lines of the extract under review.

Such an endorsement of such statements naturally leads to distrust of the volumes which contain it, and it must be said that to an old Indian, there is much in them that seconds Mrs. Showers' doubt whether Madame Blavatsky has ever resided in India at all! It is especially dangerous to meddle with the Todas; during the last twenty years much has been written about them by persons who knew them well. Any who like, for example, may compare Colonel Marshall's *A Phrenologist Amongst the Todas*, published by Longmans, two or three years ago, with the account of the "Brahmanam-guru!" The honorary member of the British National Association of Spiritualists, Captain R. F. Burton, might also have a good deal to say about the Todas, since he published his work on the *Blue Mountains* more than thirty years since. All good spirits of whatever degree, astral or elementary, *vous* or *ruach*, prevent his ever meeting with *Isis*—rough might be the unveiling!

LATE MADRAS, C.S.

London, March 12, 1878.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

SIR,—I am thankful that the subject of Madame Blavatsky's reference to the Todas has been ventilated, though the critic of her work has not been able to cite any other authority than the *Cornhill Magazine* for last January in support of his statements.

It is possible (though I can hardly credit it) that readers may exist who may imagine that Madame Blavatsky's statement may not be easily corroborated. To such I commend in the first place Lieutenant-Colonel William E. Marshall's work, entitled *A Phrenologist Amongst the Todas*. (8vo. London, 1873). This contains his study of a primitive tribe in South India; its history, character, customs, religion, infanticide, polyandry, and language, and is illustrated with a very large series of plates by the autotype process. As the work probably gives a more minute description of the eight Dravidian races than any other, its

information being partly derived from facts supplied by "the only European able to speak the obscure Toda tongue," the Rev. Friedrich Metz, of the Basle Missionary Society, I respectfully request your readers to peruse it before they accept "H. M.'s" statements as necessarily precise. I may further cite: Shortt, John, M.D. *Tribes on the Nilgherries*. Privately printed. 8vo. Madras, S.A.; Ouchterlony, Captain J., Madras Engineers. *Statistical Report of the Nilgherry Hills*. 1847; Pope, Rev. G. M., D.D. *Brief Outline of the Grammar of the Tuda (sic) Language*: 8vo. London, 1873. [Bound up with Marshall's book, but separate copies existing.]

And if it were worth while to collect a bibliography of writers on the Toda race, I could do so. But most men would refrain from entering into a field where Dr. Shortt and Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall have been before them.

I carefully abstain from criticising the singular points of detail in which "H. M." differs from the voluminous authors I have cited, as I do not wish to notice anonymous writers. If the subject appears to be divided into two separate camps, Madame Blavatsky, the sun (as shown by the autotypes) and the current authorities being on one side, and "H. M." on the other, anthropologists may be able to draw their own conclusions as to the accuracy of statements which appear to be corroborated by those persons who are qualified to give evidence to scientific men as to points of Indian anthropology.

On a more particularly zoological subject I may note that Dr. Joseph Fayer's work, *The Thanatophidia of India; being a Description of the Venomous Snakes of the Indian Peninsula*, folio, Lond., 1872; and Dr. Albrecht Gütther's *Reptiles of British India*, 8vo, Lond., 1864 (Ray Society's publication), will tell inquirers whether a traveller in the Nilgherry hills, if he had eyes, would have seen more than "two kinds of snakes, and neither of them poisonous." "No snakes in Virginny" used to be an American proposition, equivalent to the assertion of an imaginative statement. "Few poisonous snakes in the Nilgherries," is even stronger still.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

London, March 12th, 1878.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

INQUIRERS' SEANCE.

A *séance* was held at the rooms of the Association, 38, Great Russell-street, London, on Wednesday, 20th February, with Mr. Eglinton as medium. The cabinet was inspected, and the doors of the *séance*-room locked. Two of the visitors, strangers who had not attended a *séance* before, asked permission and were allowed to secure the medium in any manner they might choose. Mr. Eglinton's coat was sewn across the chest and his sleeves sewn together at the wrists behind, in addition to which tapes were tied tightly round the wrists, and each wrist secured thereby to the back of the chair, so that release of the medium's hands without untying or breaking away the tapes and the sewing was admitted by those present to be ordinarily impossible. Immediately after the curtains were drawn the manifestations commenced; a hand was seen in front of the medium, messages were written on paper placed upon the "Oxford chimes" on the medium's knees; and the "Oxford chimes" were taken inside the cabinet and played upon. "Joey's" well-known voice was addressed to nearly every one in the circle, and in particular to the two gentlemen who had secured the medium, requesting them, towards the end of the *séance*, to come close up to the cabinet, so that when they again saw the hand appear they might rush inside the cabinet as quickly as possible, and, with a light, examine the fastenings of the medium's hands and wrists. The two gentlemen availed themselves of the challenge, and found the medium's hands and the fastenings just as they had secured them. At the conclusion of the *séance*, a unanimous vote was given approving the conditions and satisfactory nature of the *séance*.

T. H. EDMANDS,

Member of the *Séance* Committee, in charge.

WOMEN'S FREEDOM.—The recent articles in this journal on this subject have brought us much information by correspondence, and some by callers at the office, all of whom have given thanks for the raising of the question in the public mind. The details of two cases have been furnished us, of a mother forcing a daughter to sell herself for a title, and in both cases the sale resulted in a living grave; in one case the misery was of thirty years' duration. Novelists and playwrights, who are numerous among the readers of *The Spiritualist*, can best combat these evils, by holding up match-making tradeswomen to public observation. This is being well done at the Court Theatre, where a woman is truthfully represented as inducing her own daughter to sell herself bodily in the matrimonial market, first in this way and then in that way, as best serves her material interests, until the heroine—notwithstanding all Miss Ellen Terry's splendid acting—becomes so time-serving from the low ideals of the authors, one of whom we regret and are surprised to have to state to be Tom Taylor, that observers possessing any moral or spiritual sense, cease to take any interest in her welfare.

A RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF SPIRITUALISM IN 1877.*

BY ALEXANDER CALDER, PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

RETROSPECTION by a skilful hand would prove profitable work; a kind of stocktaking, where the salient points are recognised and examined, imperfections noted, and future direction marked off. In the performance of such a task, I ask your kind indulgence.

"PASSED TO THE HIGHER LIFE."

And first let us offer an affectionate tribute to the memory of those departed beyond our view during the past twelve months. Mr. James Wason, President of the Liverpool Psychological Society, and Registrar of the Birkenhead County Court; Dr. Dupuis, editor of the *Gallileen*; the well-known Robert Dale Owen; William Davenport; Andrew Leighton, of Liverpool; General Don Bassol y Marañón, President of the Spiritual Association at Madrid, and Mrs. Hardy, of the United States. These are now—

"Where the wicked cease from troubling."

DR. SLADE'S CAREER ON THE CONTINENT.

Of wickedness and trouble we have, unfortunately, something to relate, for early in the year Slade was driven from England, carrying with him our warmest sympathy. Honest, and innocent of all deceit, we regard him as the victim of an unruly and senseless persecution; and we naturally follow, with considerable interest, the history of his career. There is something noble in the behaviour of one who, having been pronounced an impostor by a race speaking his own tongue, is not afraid, but, on the contrary, cheerfully commits his liberty to the care of utter strangers to that tongue. Instead of returning to his own country, the United States, he preferred, in spite of all he has suffered at the hands of prejudice, to cast his lot among people on whose consideration he had not the least claim. What sublime assurance to challenge a verdict on his medial powers by people wholly unknown to him in manners and language, and on whose bare civility he could scarcely reckon. What feeling but that of conscious integrity could sustain such a man under this most novel ordeal. Yet Slade went, first among the French, then to the Hollanders, next to the Danes, and after that he lived with the Germans; and now he is at St. Petersburg among Russians. A whole year has been spent among these several peoples; and what are the results? Everywhere great interest has been excited by the phenomena manifesting themselves in his presence; everywhere the power exhibited is held in respectful attention, and even admiration. In Germany, perhaps more than elsewhere, has it drawn on him the largest share of regard. At Berlin he created a profound sensation, and his departure thence witnessed several of its wise men meditating over the features of the phenomena. The instructive remarks of a reviewer in that famous city of intelligent sceptics may be quoted with advantage. He says (after five most satisfactory *séances*)—"It devolves on our scientific authorities to examine into the truths of Spiritualism. On them is it incumbent, while so phenomenal a specimen of humanity dwells among us, to probe the subject to the bottom, and decide whether it is a mere swindle, or whether we are on the verge of discovering some hitherto mysterious force which may be utilised for the benefit of mankind." The Court Conjurer of the Emperor of Germany has also taken the field of criticism and enquiry; and certifies, avowedly for the love of truth (a love which happily dwells in the minds of some conjurers), that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by him with the minutest observation, and investigation of the surroundings, including the table; and he declares that he has not in the smallest instance found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations or by mechanical apparatus. More than all others, and far superior, is the testimony of the Professor of Astronomy at the University of Leipzig, Mr. Zöllner, an ardent experimentalist at Slade's *séances*, and a man recognised by scientific men in this country, as a great authority on stellar physics. This gentleman has recorded some most interesting phenomena in certain of his scientific treatises published this year in that city. The

theory of the passage of matter through matter has received at his hands a considerable advance towards solution, and has been performed in a manner which may, it is boldly hoped, commend itself to the notice of our scientific assailants. Briefly stated the problem stands thus. On a string, the two ends of which were sealed and held by Mr. Zöllner, while the remaining portion rested on his knees, four knots appeared in the space of a few minutes. How did these knots come where previously there had been none? It being quite impossible to form such knots unless the two ends of the string are perfectly free, how were they formed, if not by a process wholly unknown to us of the manipulation of matter? One can understand a quantity of rags or other raw material thrown into the manufacturer's vat coming out as paper; but such a process requires time and the employment of various agents. But in the former instance the transformation was effected in a few minutes with apparently no external aid. Professor Zöllner explains this on a theory of the possibility of four dimensions in space, instead of three—a theory now much canvassed by mathematicians.

We behold then this strange spectacle—Slade resolutely challenging experts, men of science, conjurers, and others, to the strictest examination of most singular phenomena, occurring on their own ground, and in their own houses, far from his own country, in lands where he can count on little sympathy; in despotic countries where he might readily be cast into prison. This of itself, apart from other considerations, is a marvellous fact: and to any ordinary understanding furnishes a strong sign of good faith and innocence. But it may here be advanced well, what is the use of all this slate-writing even if true? As a trifle sometimes shows which way the wind is blowing, so a little incident related not very long since by Mr. Epes Sargent may be offered in reply. A gentleman once called on Mr. Charles Watkins, the well-known writing medium of the United States, and asked for a *séance*. They were perfect strangers to each other. After a little while this famous medium proceeded to open a paper pellet on which he had written the name of his unknown visitor's father. Now mark the effect. "The visitor turned pale, covered his face in his hands, and wept like a child. The atheism and unbelief of years were shivered as by a lightning stroke." This is one of a thousand illustrations which may be adduced of the influence which Spiritualism works on life and conduct.

THE LITERATURE OF SPIRITUALISM AND ANTI-SPIRITUALISM.

It is owing to such solid foundation of fact for good that produces the mental energy we see displayed in many directions, for during the year we have a work from Mr. Riko; *Isis Unveiled*, from Madame Blavatsky; *The Soul and How it Found Me*, from Mr. Maitland; *Serious Letters to Serious Friends*, from the Countess of Caithness; Mr. Barkas's *Researches*; Mr. S. C. Hall's *Words of Warning*; *Rifts in the Veil*, by Mr. Harrison; and *Spirit and Soul*, by Mr. George Harris; while tremendous activity has been kept up all along the line by M.A., Oxon., Mr. C. C. Massey, Dr. Wyld, Mr. E. Sargent, Dr. Carter Blake, Mr. D. Fitzgerald, Mr. J. L. O'Sullivan, Mr. Peary Chand Mittra, Captain James, Miss Kislingbury, Mr. Peterson, and others. In connection with literature, regret will be felt by some at the disappearance this year of perhaps the oldest of our publications, the *Spiritual Magazine*. Attacked by a mortal malady, it lingered on for some months, becoming gradually more and more etherealised, until at length it vanished out of sight altogether. And we cannot here well omit Mr. Home's contribution. It may be said, *sans malice*, of this once great medium, that, having been out of work for a long season, he seems to have joined our new, though undesirable, acquaintances, the elementaries; and has taken active service under that old and well-known employer of idle hands. But while the idiosyncrasy of Mr. Home is well understood and accounted for, what shall we say concerning the persistent assaults of that ancient foe to Spiritualism, Dr. Carpenter. Afraid of losing his laurels in the field of mental philosophy, he has been unusually busy during the year, plunging wildly, again and again, into the very vortex of the strife. Pierced through and through by the lances of several knights, hotly pursued, flung down, and trampled on, he has been left on

* An address delivered at a *soirée* of the British National Association of Spiritualists, held at 88, Great Russell-street, London, on Wednesday, March 13th, 1878.

the field signally wounded. Will he rise again to the combat? Has he good grounds for all his rash and venturesome proceedings? Is he not impeding the march in the discovery of nature's truths? Are her secrets not worth unravelling? May not his opponents be right after all? A wise man would ponder well on all these things. The real man of science cares little for victory, and much for truth; and the best victory for Dr. Carpenter, if he can accomplish it, would be the triumph over himself. As is said of a good many other feeble folk, he seems to suffer from monomania. However this be, he certainly owes the Spiritualists of this country, and of the United States, some amends for all his remarkable statements. Will he have the courage and the patience to make full enquiry? Will he not, in reason, admit that every champion of materialism is bound in honour to know something of Spiritualism before he publicly undertakes the office of tormentor of Spiritualists? Either he cannot be the robust man of science, who resolutely follows truth, or he resembles in this particular his medical contemporary, who obtained a sudden, unenviable, and and short-lived notoriety, by his astounding assertions as to the insanity of Spiritualists. It will be remembered that Dr. Forbes Winslow had publicly stated "this form of delusion (meaning Spiritualism) is very prevalent in the United States, and the asylums contain many of its victims; nearly ten thousand persons having gone insane on the subject are confined in the public asylums of the United States." Pandering to popular prejudice he did not hesitate to throw out, with all the recklessness of a madman, a statement exaggerated more than a hundred-fold; and which, however distant from the truth, was caught at most greedily by the newspapers and made the most of. But what are the facts on this very important point? Early last year we had the gratification of receiving from Dr. Eugene Crowell, of the United States, a full and exhaustive account of the question. The gratitude of Spiritualists is due to this good friend for his exertions in collecting and marshalling the facts which have so signally overthrown Dr. Winslow. The whole number of insane patients of all classes and denominations, Non-Spiritualists and Spiritualists, inhabiting 87 asylums in the year 1876, was under 30,000, and of these there were only 76 Spiritualists: less than one to each asylum. What a crushing defeat for poor Doctor Winslow. A further circumstance deeply interesting to society, ascertained by Dr. Crowell, is that insanity from both religious excitement and Spiritualism, was diminishing, from the fact that under the influence of Spiritualism, more correct and consequently less irrational and revolting ideas were being disseminated concerning the doctrine of future punishment, its nature and extent. I do not know whether Dr. Winslow has in any manner apologised for his perverse display. I venture, at all events, to remark it may not after all be surprising that the keeper of an asylum for lunatics should himself occasionally appear to have his wits paralysed by hallucination; and therefore it would only be fair to attribute the escapade, however wanton and malignant, to the influence exercised on his mind by the unfortunates under his charge.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P., ON SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

Turning from this guardian of intellectual dwarfs, let us pass on to notice the attitude towards Spiritualism of a most renowned leader of men; one of the highest types of humanity. In May last the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone placed on record one of the most impartial and unbiassed opinions ever uttered by an outsider; and from which I extract the following words: "I know of no rule which forbids a Christian to examine into the signs of preternatural agency in the system called Spiritualism. . . . If the reviews and facts of the day have in any way shaken the standing ground of a Christian, is it not his first and most obvious duty to make a humble but searching scrutiny of the foundations? I speak as one who is deeply convinced that they will bear it, and that God has yet many a fair plant to rear in this portion of His garden." Such are some of the thoughts of the greatest of living orators and statesmen. Never did he act with more magnanimity than when he penned these few words to a Liverpool journal. The most popular man in England to speak thus of the most unpopular

of systems marks him as the noblest of men, for his mind undazed by the height on which he stands, is in harmony with nature whose sacred interests he is ever ready to uphold whenever challenged or assailed: ever furnishing a bright example of wisdom and fortitude in a world distinguished for evasion, trimming, and petty manoeuvres. The ex-premier undoubtedly felt that there was sound reason for examining the foundations on which our religion was built, if that could be done. Like a wise builder he would, if possible, in this most sceptical age have a survey of the ground on which the edifice of belief rests, and he evidently perceived in the philosophy of Spiritualism, a path capable of affording a sufficient solution to so deeply interesting a problem. And he is abundantly justified. For what after all is Spiritualism? What if not primitive Christianity made positive to our apprehensions; brought with certainty to our homes; presented with startling force to our, alas! too dull and obtuse senses. And all this not by miracle working the supernatural, but by plain revelations of nature. That some material elements issue out of the side of a medium, assume a form and become a visible and walking entity; capable of eating, talking, and writing; that this entity after a while disappears by being absorbed into the medium's body is most astounding. Such a transaction would make the idea of the resurrection of Jesus cease to be inconceivable; and the most critical mind might fairly accept it as an interpretation of the truth. The chief item of the Christian creed would no longer be denounced as a gross fiction by writers of speculative treatises however ingenious. The accounts of Messrs. Blackburn, Colley, and Stainton-Moses, added to those of Mr. Crookes and others, throw immense light on this stupendous subject; and there is reason to hope that we shall in time fully understand that there is no supernatural interference with the reign of law; that nothing in this is opposed to nature, but all in harmony thereto. The day is perhaps nigh, when it will be evident that a ton of speculation of the most cunning theorist is of less value than an ounce of the Spiritualist's facts. Now, if all this be true, why should Christians shrink from Spiritualism which is identical with that which is professed and taught by the Church? Why do they not act in accordance with their profession? Are they alarmed because they never knew the truth with power? Is it that, while they deal in words, the Spiritualist deals in things? While they follow the shadow, he grasps the substance. This has made him familiar with some of the great truths relating to humanity. Verily and truly, instead of the fast vanishing hopes of some, and the annihilation schemes of others, the Spiritualists have good cause for congratulation, for the firmness of the ground under them is real. Of life beyond the present we continue to gather ideas from a variety of sources, and have abundance of evidence in the materialisations in London, Newcastle, Paris, and elsewhere. These manifestations become more and more remarkable. The abolition of the use of cabinets has greatly improved these highly interesting phenomena, and more important results are obtained. It seems, however, a pity there should be any necessity for exclusiveness in these *séances*, and that the example of Slade in inviting all to a thorough investigation is not, or cannot, be universally adopted. Less stringent rules, I venture to think, might with safety be made, and more attractive methods employed than now obtain; and thus all appearance of mystery would cease, for wherever there is the least evidence of such design it creates suspicion. To the informed in these matters all this is, of course, unreasonable; but we have a world to convince and conquer. In support of this view, I would here quote the closing words of an instructive paper, read last November by Mr. Stainton Moses, in this room, on Form [Manifestations— "The thing itself is there, but by what method it has been formed, what its source and object, whether it is an animated statue, or a spiritual being entrusted with molecules of matter? Whether, if so, it be of our race or not, and, most important of all, what is the power that lies behind it? What the formative intelligence that can create and destroy in this wise? These are questions which remain for solution, and which will be solved, not by wild guesses or enthusiastic speculation, but by sober, patient, and protracted investigation." Wise language, in which, I am sure, all will heartily concur.

PHYSIC FORCE, "EVERITTISM," AND OCCULTISM.

Of occult power we were furnished in the most striking evidence, last May, of very simple character, demonstrating the existence of an unknown force, and perhaps no better or more ready test of its presence could have been desired or exhibited to satisfy the most captious appetite. I refer to those singular displays called Everittism, in which the learned Serjeant Cox took considerable interest. Furnished with hand-cuffs borrowed from Clerkenwell prison, of a special make, and which had served to secure hundreds of criminals so well that it was even said the devil himself could not make his escape if once locked in them. Well, these extra perfect implements were fastened by being duly locked on Mr. Everitt's hands. But all to no purpose. It was soon found impossible to hold him, for, in a few minutes, he became released from the fetters, and was wholly free. It was now surmised, with charming simplicity, that Mr. Everitt's hands might be unusually small, and they might therefore be rapidly withdrawn from the handcuffs. In order to satisfy such a profound observation, the hand-cuffs were next fastened to the round of a chair and securely locked. In five minutes they were, by the invisible power, taken off the chair and placed on Mr. Everitt's wrists; and while in this position, his coat was removed off his back by the same agency in sixteen seconds. Several other astonishing feats were performed equally perplexing in character, and furnishing, at least to the candid observer, ample food of a nature to show that there is something on earth beyond the scope of his philosophy. When people so glibly talk of Spiritualism as a superstition they ought, at least, to stand so high on wisdom's tower as to be able readily to explain the *modus operandi* of such palpable and unvarnished marvels as these; and when men of science refer to the uniformity of nature, they should not stumble at so slight and simple an eccentricity as that called Everittism. Can they explain it? No. Then surely they make the too large assumption of possessing the facts relating to nature. It is an ordinary remark that when critics surrender their preconceived imaginings, and seek after facts their verdict on them when discovered resembles ours. They find the disposition of nature something very different to their prefiguring. They see she does not regulate her ways to please them; but marches onward in a pathway of her own. It is observable of most people before they are the least informed in the knowledge of Spiritualism, they fancy they know all about it. Content to enjoy a fool's paradise, they live in sublime delusion. And yet the whole matter is purely one of observation and study. "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." But as fast as men and women witness the phenomena they range themselves in our ranks, becoming staunch allies and supporters. The world may call them idiots: all they know is they are constrained to yield to powerful influences which they feel to be real; and as to the very gratuitous compliment paid them they remember that St. Paul, recounting his spiritual experience to King Agrippa, was told he was mad. He did not mind it a bit, but went earnestly about his business, leaving an example for all time.

There is a vast amount of confusion in the public mind respecting Spiritualism; nor is this surprising, for if it is difficult to form a sound decision on the smallest thing, without the possession of the facts concerning it, how great is the difficulty of determining the nature of so occult a study as Spiritualism, and yet there are people—the world is pretty full of them—who with utmost complacency, and with the lightest of heart possible, venture to jeer at it all as imposture. They prate about what in all probability is either too distasteful to their materialist turn of mind, or too profound for their understanding. They fling their taunts at it with about the same amount of prudence as a savage would exhibit hurling his arrows at the sides of an armour-clad.

Men of science may say what they please; but until they can satisfactorily dispose of the positive testimony on these weighty matters of such men as Wallace, Crookes, Varley, Cox (the latter not a Spiritualist) in this country; Pertie in Berlin, the astronomer Flammarion in Paris, Aksakof and Butlerof in St. Petersburg, to say nothing of a host of

others in the United States and elsewhere who affirm that the phenomena in question are real, and proceed from some unseen intelligence, they should either hold their peace, or enter seriously on the work of its investigation; for it requires no great sagacity to conclude that arguments based on the life-long actual observations of such men as these named are far more trustworthy than all crude and fanciful theories wherever originated and upheld. A little knowledge on this momentous subject not only misleads but furnishes self-prepared inglorious pitfalls. Besides, there is such a thing as a betrayal of truth. A man of science truly worthy of the name tells not only the truth about a well-known thing, but the whole truth, and this is not what our adversaries do or have done. Nor is a contemptuous attitude scarcely becoming men of science in relation to phenomena of the highest character regarding humanity. It is as true now as it was in the time of Solomon, "The scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not." Unless their intrepidity is sufficiently cooled to deny themselves the luxury of fresh attacks on Spiritualism they might wisely abandon their ambitious dream for its destruction, and store up all their intellectual energies lest they some day feel exhausted by their assaults, and, breaking down, have to halt in their too exalting pursuit after atoms, germs, and infusoria.

FRIENDLY UNION AMONG SPIRITUALISTS.

And now, a word in conclusion concerning our association. During the past three years we have laid the foundation of a noble work. We possess a valuable library of books, and handsome, well-furnished rooms. Where was disorder and chaos in the Spiritual field, we have established, in spite of the persistent disintegrating efforts of some, a well-organised central association, capable of great expansion and development. The various lectures from time to time, and the weekly *séances* for inquirers which are held at these rooms, become more and more useful and instructive, and constantly make fresh converts. Slowly, but surely, we go forward, recording the discovery of items of scientific truth. Our officers are annually elected by the body of members, and our funds are administered by responsible individuals: our accounts are audited by auditors especially appointed in general meeting for that work. We are aware that much improvement may be effected in more ways than one. Bearing all this in mind, and looking at the advantageous position we have reached in a short space, and being free from debt, we have some good grounds of appealing with confidence for the support of the entire body of Spiritualists. Unselfish and eminently constructive in its character, capable of much good, it should commend itself to the thoughtful consideration of all.

In presence of the fast-rising tide of Atheism, swelled enormously by the aid of scientific Materialists, it behoves Spiritualists to understand more clearly their moral responsibilities, and unite all the more seriously in widening the bases of an organisation which, besides other most excellent purposes, is a useful rallying-point, and a permanent protest. Who that knows anything of Spiritualism can doubt that it raises the value of life immensely, by the offer of new and invaluable impressions. It lifts us above the things of sense, and places us in the clear realms of a higher enjoyment. It alters the whole aspect of existence. It affords a better knowledge of human nature, it animates with a higher purpose by a clearer insight into the future. It reveals, through actual experiment, facts hitherto unknown in respect to ourselves. It proves life to be a stern reality, and every step of its journey is shown to be full of meaning. The student of physical science, standing in the darkness of spiritual inexperience, can scarcely be expected to appreciate, much less to recognise, the dignity of Spiritualism. But all true Spiritualists will persevere again and again in the promotion of their great aim. They will steadily press Nature for the discovery of her secrets. I am more than ever convinced of the sterling worth of Spiritualism, rightly understood, as an important factor to influence life and conduct—a remedy well calculated to stem the torrent of recklessness, imbecility, and crime. Founded on the instincts and affections, it is no artificial creation, but has an everlasting source. It is destined to emancipate the world from Materialism and other forms of corruption; and

as its chief and noblest work is to deepen the religious sentiment by imparting true knowledge of the soul and spirit, it should possess the sympathy of all good men.

EVIDENCE OF THE PERSONAL IDENTITY OF CERTAIN COMMUNICATING SPIRITS.

BY THE BARONESS ADELMA VON VAY (COUNTESS WÜRMBRAND.)

THE identity of spirits and of their spirit-messages is confirmed by a great number of mediums and Spiritualists.

I was one day writing automatically, under the influence of my guides, when I suddenly felt my arm impelled by a strange and unknown power, and the following was written in large letters:—"I am here, Joseph Schmied." As I had never known any one of that name, and many people called Schmied die in a day, I suspected that I was being imposed upon, and asked, "What Schmied?" "I, Jacob Schmied, died to-day, in Vienna, Hernals, of disease of the throat; help me. The day after to-morrow you will see my death in the newspaper." I awaited with impatience the day mentioned, and on looking over the list of deaths in that day's paper I found—"Died, from disease of the throat, in Vienna, Hernals, Jacob Schmied." The date of his death was also the same as that of the day on which I received his message. Now, if this was not indeed the spirit of Jacob Schmied, I do not know how all this could have entered into my brain.

I was once in correspondence with a lady, C—E—, for the purpose of curing her of a nervous affection. I had had no previous acquaintance with her, either personally or otherwise, and she was living in Bavaria at the time. My guides wrote to me:—"Deliver C—E— from the influence of her uncle, Ferdinand E—. He was a bad man, and now, as a spirit, hovers around his family; his presence brings on these nervous attacks in the sensitive C—." I wrote to the father of the lady, asking him if he had a relative in the spirit-land named Ferdinand, and who had been rather a bad sort of man. He answered me, greatly moved, that he had had a brother Ferdinand, who had, indeed, not behaved well to them. I then received a communication from the spirit Ferdinand, whose manner of expression and writing were so very like what they had been in his earth-life that his brother, who was no Spiritualist, immediately acknowledged his identity. Now a reconciliation is effected between the living and the spirit-brother, and C—E— is freed from her nervous attacks. These people were total strangers to me, and living in Bavaria.

A gentleman, a stranger, wrote to me from Hanover, that he had been unable to sleep for seven years. He had dreadful visions, heart disease, a feeling of suffocation, and he often feared he should go mad. He begged me to give him deliverance. My guides said:—"Again it is a very low and base spirit of the name of Anton Stein. Mr. C—, who writes to you is about sixty years old; he knew this Anton Stein in his youth. Try to bring this spirit into a better sphere and Mr. C— will be cured." I wrote this to Mr. C—. All was correct. He was nearly sixty years old, had known two brothers Stein, in Hanover, thirty years ago. One of the brothers, Anton, was a dissipated youth, and had disappeared in a mysterious manner.

Doctor M— was on a visit here. First, he obtained through my mediumship a communication from his father, which he identified; then came some small writing, half Italian, half German. A girl signing herself Annetta wrote:—"Do you remember having seen me? I was your old nurse." The doctor was greatly moved, and happy to recognise his old nurse Annetta.

A man suffering from epilepsy wrote to me from Marienberg, Saxony. I immediately received the following communication from a spirit, who wrote in large rough characters, and called himself Theodor:—"I was a sort of *crétin*, but a very wicked one. I and the uncle of your patient were brothers, and as we were walking together in a wood, we quarrelled; he became angry, struck me on my head, and I was dead. He buried me in the wood, and no one ever knew what had become of me, while he lived quietly and died a respected man. Now, I will slay his nephew." This communication greatly shocked me. I wrote to the patient's father asking him if he remembered having had a relative, a half idiotic young

man, who had suddenly disappeared. He answered—"Your question greatly astonishes me. How can you, a lady in Austria, know anything about this poor relative, who, forty years ago, disappeared from a small town in Saxony, and was never more heard of? Some believed he was murdered. He was seen to go into a wood one day from which he never returned." I had the greatest struggles with that spirit, and then the murderer came, and by thus bringing them together they were reconciled.

I could give you hundreds of such examples proving spirit identity, and the reality of communications from base and low spirits, whose pain it is that no annihilation is possible for them.

Gonobitz, Hungary, March 9, 1878.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPIY: A LAST WORD.

BY "M.A. (OXON)."

THE proportions which the claims of Theosophists have now assumed are not such as to need further assault. Mr. Massey's contention that any who is "dissatisfied with the evidence of disembodied human agency has, *pro tanto*, evidence of the existence of spirits other and, probably, lower than those of our race as actors in the field of Spiritualism, is a very mild statement, and one to which I raise no objection, except that it is in no sense *proof*, or even presumptive evidence on which such claims as Colonel Olcott's can reasonably be allowed to rest. The platform which he erected needs a broader and securer basis; and, had this been all that the Theosophists meant, I, for one, should not have troubled to take exception to their statements on this particular point.

Mr. Massey wishes to know whether I "do or do not hold to the popular creed of Spiritualism—that every physical manifestation and spirit-communication is due to the agency of a departed human being." He knows my opinions: no man better. I must presume, therefore, that he challenges me to put in print yet again what I have not been slow to maintain at all seasons, in public as well as in private, with such clearness as I am master of; so that I should fancy that any one who honours my action with a thought could not possibly mistake my position. I stated that position briefly and very plainly in a speech after the reading of Dr. Wyld's paper, which preceded this discussion; and I am sorry that I cannot refer Mr. Massey to that speech in print. If he had heard or read it, he would not have needed to ask his question. But, since he appeals to me, and desires me to repeat a ten-times-told story, I have no hesitation whatever in avowing myself a Spiritualist first and before all. I have no mental reservation whatever as to the action of departed human spirits. That is to me a *fact which I know*. It has entered into my spiritual life, and I act upon the knowledge.

For the rest, I do not know all the agencies at work in producing the various phenomena of modern Spiritualism; but I will claim for myself, now and always, the fullest liberty to investigate every phase of spirit-action, and I shall not be surprised to find, as the result of repeated experiment, and of more extended knowledge, that what now exists in my mind as a suspicion, strengthened by report, is true—that the grades of spirit are infinitely various, and that most or all of them impinge upon our world in some one of many ways. It would not surprise me to find, as a fact, that much that is now propounded as theory has basis in truth, though I do not expect to live long enough to verify or disprove all the theories that the busy brain of man finds time to spin. But, if my friends please, I will wait before I promulgate my belief in what I know very little about. I do not refuse to investigate their theories; quite the reverse. I do not say they are untrue; I only say they are unproven speculations in the main, and that they seem to me to have been rashly and rather recklessly accepted and promulgated.

It is one thing to advocate the frankest and fullest inquiry into all facts and theories. *This I do*. It is another and very different, thing to accept or advocate hypothetical theories without proof, and even in the teeth of facts which are not successfully attacked. *This I am not prepared to do*.

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers.]

"ISIS UNVEILED," AND THEOSOPHY.

SIR,—I, for one, protest against the showers of abuse with which Madame Blavatsky is deluged in your last issue. That picture (it might be termed a cut) of a woman scratching the face of woman, of Christian assailing the "Heathen," had better have been relegated to some missionary magazine as a representative specimen of the way in which the English have so frequently saluted and insulted whilst intent on converting the "benighted" Hindu. My feeling is that such writing should have had no place in the present discussion, and I fail to recognise the literary qualifications of the writer for giving the lie direct and wholesale to the author of *Isis Unveiled*.

When that lady, on entering the arena, uttered her prefatory "*mortuus te salutat*," she could little have expected such a libation, which falls not only on the grey-headed worker, whose range of reading is certainly immense, however deficient she may be in manipulative skill, but also splashes every one of us who have taken part in the controversy, and makes one rise up to shake one's self.

Of course, it is fair enough for critics to raise questions concerning matters of fact upon which they themselves are well informed, which is a different matter to going out into the middle of the road and "swearing at large." But any one who does so should be careful not to expose themselves. Mrs. Showers' letter is not unimpeachable on the score of accuracy. To take but two instances; she remarks that—"The statue of Memnon may still utter its wail at sunrise." "Might your name be Mr. Smith?" asked an inquirer of an American. "Well," he replied, "it might, but it isn't by a long chalk." So it may be said of the statue erected by Amenhept III. (the Greek Memnon)—it may utter its wail at sunrise, but it does not, and is not likely to avail itself of Mrs. Showers' permission. It was overthrown and shattered by an earthquake, B.C. 27, and although restored by Severus, the Roman Emperor, about 27 A.D., it never more responded to the rays of sunrise, either with, or anything very like, a wail.

The second statement is implied in her allusion to the "foul Osiris worship of Egypt." As a student of Egyptology, I challenge proof of that. The worship of Osiris was as pure as any in this world has ever been. Egyptian art is spiritually pure. Egyptian literature is pure. The monuments, the ritual, the volumes of the *Records of the Past*,* are my witnesses. What are Mrs. Showers' ? A certain emblem borne in the procession of the spring festival! Just so. And that meant precisely the same thing as our May-pole, and the church spire with the weathercock atop. It was the natural hieroglyph of the resurrection. It is the moderns who read their own foul imaginings into the symbolism of the past. Nature is not ashamed of her emblems. But I should judge that Mrs. Showers is entirely ignorant of the origin and significance of symbolism.

Whilst recording my individual protest against this treatment of Madame Blavatsky, allow me, as one who took exception to one of the points of doctrine held by the Theosophists on the grounds of its origin, to say that I do not think they are receiving fair treatment from our side. We are forgetting that they are also Spiritualists. I remember how frank and manly was Colonel Olcott's avowal, made to me at a dinner of the Lotus Club in New York, in the presence of Mr. Bradlaugh:—"Aye!"—this followed some other remark—"and I'm a Spiritualist of seventeen years' standing." This was not amongst people who were Spiritualists.

All that I objected to was the bringing in of misinterpreted mythology as Spiritualism. This is continually being done with statements made in the Hebrew writings, which have no relation to our Spiritualism.

Spiritualists have quite enough to do in fighting for the existence of one soul, whether here or hereafter, and have no time to lose in bickering over cut-and-dried doctrines of triplicity or duplicity, or we shall find ourselves as impotently entangled in a net as was the Christian theology, with its doctrine of a trinity, inherited, but never understood, through ignorance of its origin.

To class the physiological origin of certain myths with Spiritualism is to damn it, and we cannot be too solicitous of their being left alone until further explained. The first feeling of the Spiritualist is to clutch the evidence for our facts to be found in the past, and the likelihood is that we claim all sorts of stray property that does not belong to us.

Because we know that man emerges beyond the tomb, we cannot be saddled with the unscientific and non-spiritual resurrection of the body. The natural genesis of that belongs to the annual resurrection of the sun, and the embalming of the mummy, with which Spiritualism is not concerned.

Because spirits are asserted to walk and talk with man to-day, it does not, therefore, follow that the mythical representation of the supposed Creator of this universe taking shape, and walking and talking with Adam, is a spiritual truth or a fact in nature. It can be proved otherwise. Mark this, Spiritualism has no interest in violating natural law. Science can accept nothing that is in violation of the laws of nature, and mythology, when read, will be found sticking as closely to the natural law as the limpet to the rock. But to read those symbols as actual facts and direct occurrences, implies all sorts of violation of natural law, and myth becomes miracle. The miracles of the Hebrews can be shown to be Egyptian myths! Because spiritual communication be a fact within the sphere of natural law, the immaculate conception is not, therefore, a fact. And its mythical, in this instance, solar origin and meaning, is provable. The only virgin mother who ever bore a child

without a natural father belongs to the solar allegory. It was not only an Egyptian myth, applying to Ta-urt, Hathor, Neith, Isis, in four different dynasties of deities, but it was also applied to an Egyptian Queen, as the representative of the divine virgin mother. The fable was necessitated in consequence of the Pharaohs, their consorts and sons, the Repas, Princes, heirs-apparent being made to personate the solar trinity. And amongst the sculptures of Luxor in the temple, chiefly built by Amenhept III. (Memnon), the immaculate conception and birth of the miraculous child is portrayed in a series of scenes. Tii, the wife of Amenhept, is depicted with her son Rhuen-Aten being incarnated. The scenes pictured are those of the annunciation, the conception, the birth and adoration of the Saviour child, Son of the Sun. In the first scene, Thoth the Logos—word, male messenger of the gods—announces the coming birth to the mother. In the second, Kneph (god of breath—Nef is breath) and Hathor, the cow-headed bearer of the sun, take the queen by the hand and hold the Ankh, symbol of life, to her mouth. This is the act of incarnation, which has a visible result in the fuller shape of the queen. In the next scene the child is born. In the fourth, we have the adoration, with three human figures kneeling behind the god Kneph. These may be seen in Sharpe's *Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christianity*, p. 19. Sharpe calls the child Amenhept III.; this is a mistake. Queen Tii was the wife of Amenhept III., and mother of Amenhept IV. (otherwise Rhuen-Aten).

After this (and it could be paralleled fifty times over in mythology, for I have collected the proofs) the reader will understand that it is not absolutely imperative for Spiritualists, as such, to go forth to the world, and in the name of Spiritualism vouch for the fact that the Creator and Sustainer of the universe did actually run the risk of a general miscarriage of all things during nine months of gestation.

It was necessary that the origin and meaning of mythology should, if possible, be ascertained to distinguish between one kind of fact and another, before the ground could be clear for Spiritualism. Till this was done, I saw we were sowing the most precious seed in a thicket of thorns, a wilderness of brambles, hence my work of pioneering the way in a *Book of the Beginnings*, and in which the brambles will have a bad time of it. All who care to know what is what, will do well to think over the material collected by Madame Blavatsky and Godfrey Higgins, for its iconoclastic value. Iconoclasts are greatly needed, for there are huge buildings, and rocks, and boulders, that have to be pounded, as with a Nasmyth steam-hammer, into sand, and disintegrated into soil for the seed of Spiritualism to be sown. As to the past, my own conviction is that Spiritualists cannot do better for the present than begin afresh, about 1848, and go on verifying and vouching for nothing but their own facts (every one has the right to his own theory) even at the risk of canonising Kate Fox as the saint of a new dispensation, and sacre-ing Madame Blavatsky as its satan. GERALD MASSEY.

SIR,—It appears to me that self-justification must always be a thing abhorrent to every true and independent mind; yet, as Mrs. Showers' accusation of credulity in myself is made the signal of an attack upon Madame Blavatsky's good faith, I feel bound to speak, though I would far rather be silent. Indeed, so distasteful and foreign to my natural character is the public controversy into which I have latterly been drawn, from having complied with a request sent to me in America to give an account of my experiences on my return, that nothing would now be more welcome to me than disappearance from the pages of public journals altogether; but so long as peace is not consistent with honour, I am bound to remain exposed to fire. I will, however, be as brief as possible.

Allow me, therefore, to inform Mrs. Showers that while in New York I spent five weeks as a visitor in Madame Blavatsky's house, or rather flat, on Eighth Avenue. Previously to that, on first arriving in America, I had spent two afternoons with her, and during my month's absence in the New England States and in Niagara I corresponded with her, besides meeting many friends who knew her personally. While staying in her house, in addition to my own daily intercourse with her, I had the privilege of hearing her converse, often for hours together (for her Russian hospitality never permitted short visits), with learned men of all degrees on the subjects connected with her book. I also saw the greater part of her correspondence during that time, for with all her wonderful power of language she distrusts her own knowledge of English, and frequently asked me to correct any grammatical errors I might find in her letters. Those letters often contained quotations in Greek, Hebrew, and Oriental languages, which, I need not say, I was incompetent to read, but which I assume to have been correct, or Madame Blavatsky would hardly have ventured to send them to men holding chairs in (even) American Universities. As regards *Isis Unveiled*, I may also state that I have had in my hands a large roll of MS., which the authoress and publisher of that book agreed to reject, as making it even more bulky than it is already, and which was in Madame Blavatsky's own handwriting. Possibly these pages contain some of those experiences which Mrs. Showers so much desires to read, and it is not unlikely that they may even yet be given to the world.

Possibly, also, Madame Blavatsky may think well to inform Mrs. Showers more directly than I feel able or at liberty to do as to the sources from which her knowledge is derived. I will only add that the learned men of the East, whose existence Mrs. Showers seems to doubt, are known to me, some of them by name, others by their portraits, or handwritings; in short, much in the same way as other persons whom we have not seen, but whose existence we do not doubt, are known to us.

I repeat, then, that Madame Blavatsky is a Buddhist, that her home is in India, or rather in Ceylon, and that she intends to return there shortly. She may, or may not, stay in England on her way thither; her plans are as yet unsettled.

*Tagster and Sons.

With regard to another point, Madame Blavatsky will be able to inform Mrs. Showers, in her own inimitable manner, that the learned Brahmins and Buddhists of India did not require a Sir William Jones or an Asiatic Society to teach them what precious treasures were in their own possession, treasures always jealously guarded from European eyes, and, moreover, that one of the deepest insults offered them by the British Government is the appointment of German professors to the chairs of Sanscrit in Hindu colleges.

I do not expect, in the above explanation, to convince any one of anything of which he or she does not wish to be convinced. But I hope I have shown that I have a fairer claim to a knowledge of Madame Blavatsky's character, habits, modes of thought and life than those who, like Mrs. Showers, have, by their own showing, only *partially* perused her book, who have no personal acquaintance with her or any of her friends, and who have, I maintain, no right to cast upon me the slur of credulity without inquiring what opportunities I may have had of ascertaining the truth of "pretensions" which I grieve to see have excited the hasty "vituperation" of one, in other respects so accomplished as Mrs. Showers. And if anything had been wanting to confirm me in the wisdom of "esoteric" methods, it is the manner in which the present controversy on Theosophy has been conducted, persons having entered the lists under double disguises, with no other preparation than the perusal of one or two newspaper articles, and no other weapons than ill-pointed epithets. It has been well said by an ancient Jewish writer—"Herein is a mystery; and whoso understandeth it, let him hold his peace."
EMILY KISLINGBURY.

SIR,—The editorial privilege of the "last word" is a condition of journalistic controversy. Still, such last word may contain matter that, in fairness, makes a rejoinder admissible. So when you say, in your footnote to Dr. Carter Blake's letter this week, "if it gives offence to Theosophists to be asked for proofs or facts, let it be so stated," I may be allowed, in reply, to use your own words in reference to a question of mine, *mutatis mutandis*, "If you know that it does not, and that nothing we have ever said in your paper contains evidence that it does, perhaps there may be a slight trace of accidental unfairness in unnecessarily importing prejudice by putting such an idea into the minds of casual readers." We are not offended, we are simply bewildered when we are asked for evidence of such a proposition as that of the annihilation—as a conscious personality—of the thoroughly sensual and material soul. That proposition results from our philosophy of spirit, and "evidence" of it can only be found in a study of that philosophy. I am afraid we cannot show you an annihilated soul. And that we should present "the ghost of the shadow of an example of the occasional annihilation of the spirit of a living man" we must hold to be indeed impossible, since it is one of our "cardinal doctrines" that this never happens, or can happen, "the spirit" being necessarily immortal, and that which confers immortality upon man. Personal immortality we hold to be the result of that complete identification with the spirit, the higher self, which comes from the final extinction of all the selfish propensities and desires of the lower self. It is that which the intuition of religious "mystics" of all ages has described as "union with God." All that is temporal is subject to change and decay, and if the consciousness, attracted by desire, clings to material conditions, we think that it must needs be lost with the dissolution of these, as that it will enter into eternity if it attaches itself to that which is eternal. This is the principle, that immortality is potential, and must be won; that regeneration—the Divine spirit individualised in consciousness, or coming to consciousness in us—is no religious figure of speech, but a veritable metaphysical fact, and that the lower, sensual consciousness is neither worth preserving, nor has any foundation of permanence. We are here confessedly in the region of metaphysics; yet we are met with a demand for evidence, as if we were giving an account of a dark *séance*. The effects of will-power do admit of more palpable exhibition, but as you yourself call attention to the evidence on this head of Prince Wittgenstein (to which you might have added a very remarkable communication in your journal, from Mr. Judge, also a member of the Theosophical Society), I may perhaps assume that, so far, you do not adhere to the charge of our putting forward unproved statements; for the transcorporeal action of embodied man, the evidence has been recently collected and published by "M.A., Oxon." Both to him and to you I must apologise if anything I have said implied that either of you have failed to recognise the subjective origin of much that purports to be communication from foreign spirits. But, in fact, I only stated a dilemma in which you seemed to be placed, and I asked for a much larger admission, which it is clear that you, at least, are not disposed to make. Nor do I think that an appeal to critical interpretation of phenomena is very appropriately described as "vague generality." I meant that purposeless lies, aberrations from the logic of the commonest intelligence, the piecing together of fragments of mental furniture are very unlikely products of the lowest human reason; that when the intelligence is clearly that of the medium I cannot believe that the agency (as in direct writing, for instance) is that of a distinct human spirit, and that the failure, in the great majority of cases, to supply satisfactory tests of identity—surely, the very easiest demand which can be made upon a human being with a history and a memory—should lead us to the recognition of one or both of the other causes for which I was pleading. For direct testimony I would refer to the literature of magic and witchcraft. So far from the Theosophical Society or its representatives wishing Spiritualists to accept anything without evidence, their whole desire is that they should be well informed and critical.

I hardly know how to deal with "M.A., Cantab.—Scrutator." Usually, a disputant may be assumed to have read what he quotes, and that if he mistakes the meaning there is at least some apparent ambiguity or obscurity in the passage to account for it. I should have thought that it would not require the education of a Cambridge graduate so to read a sentence of English that it should refer to the subject-matter of the im-

mediately antecedent sentence, and not to another sentence further back, to which the whole context makes it utterly inappropriate. Col. Olcott is speaking of the fate of the debased and materialised soul, and he says "Usually the separation of soul and spirit occurs before the bodily death. His critic—this literary duality—makes that proposition apply to the earlier statement, with which it is clearly inconsistent, respecting the progress of the man who does finally attain immortality, and asks the "candid reader" to apply it in the same way. I hope the candid reader will do nothing of the sort, and will not read a plain English sentence in a manner which can only be justified by the exigency of the critic. Col. Olcott's position was very clearly stated, that the spirit accompanies, but it is not actually united with us during our lives of probation. The ultimate union or junction, spoken of in the earlier sentence, has, therefore, no reference whatever to any separation at or before death. But "M.A., Cantab.," repeats what he and his "double," "Scrutator," said before, "in justice to himself and his readers." His statement was, and, therefore, still is, that all physical mediums, according to Colonel Olcott, have lost their spirits, and are doomed to annihilation. He founds this on Colonel Olcott's proposition that all the physical phenomena are produced either by elementaries or by the soul of the medium. I asked, first, how is this sweeping condemnation to be extracted from an alternative proposition? No answer. I asked, secondly, where does Colonel Olcott say or imply that the soul of a physical medium has lost its spirit? The answer is the citation of a passage about the separation of soul and spirit, in which there is not one word about physical mediums or their souls, which is evidently confined in its application to debased and materialised souls, and which, if it was not so confined, must apply to all souls, good, bad, and indifferent alike, without any special reference to mediums. It is only a trifling addition to this confusion that "M.A., Cantab.," regards the progress of the soul during the incalculable period (which, by the by, may be short or long) of purification as equivalent to its annihilation. Then, thirdly, I quoted Colonel Olcott (from the same letter) that in a particular case of physical mediumship the phenomena must have been produced by the medium's own soul, *because* of her purity, rather than by an alternative cause, which would, in his opinion, have implied impure affinities. Oh, says "M.A., Cantab.," Colonel Olcott makes an exception of this young lady. He is the best judge whether this sort of thing does justice to himself, but I venture to suggest that he pays a poor compliment to his readers in saying that he repeats a statement so supported in justice to them. One mystery, which sorely perplexed me, I am glad to have cleared up. It was that two independent minds—"M.A., Cantab.," and "Scrutator"—should have read Colonel Olcott's letter in the same unaccountably perverse manner. That appeared to be a coincidence likely to mislead many into supposing that an interpretation thus independently arrived at, must have something to say for itself. I confess the hypothesis of identity did occur to me, but I repelled it as an unworthy suspicion. Probably, sir, you will be of opinion that the "double," however interesting as a phenomenon, is not to be encouraged in literary controversy.

In taking leave of "M.A., Cantab.," I may explain that the "compulsion," about which he is curious, simply refers to the repeated invitations of the editor of this journal in its pages, to the Theosophical Society to come out and explain themselves, and which at length elicited Colonel Olcott's letter.

I have only to add my cordial concurrence with Dr. Carter Blake in acknowledging the liberality with which the most opposite opinions are allowed expression in *The Spiritualist*.
C. C. MASSEY.

Winchester, March 10th, 1878.

SIR,—I am no stranger to you, and you know that I read *The Spiritualist* with one of my friends, and that we both are Spiritualists in the real sense of the word. I have seen and heard much, and thought more about what we may safely call "our religion," because we Spiritualists *know*. I am virtually in the position of St. Thomas, who felt the wounds of Jesus. I *know*. Therefore I am very sorry that a kind of war is going on between the Spiritualists and the Theosophists, and for this reason I should like Madame Blavatsky to read the recent work of Professor Zöllner, *Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen*, 1878, Leipzig. I will not take up the gauntlet which Theosophy has thrown to us. My sole desire is to give to our brethren a generally accepted definition of Theosophy.

Theosophy (from *théos* and *sophia*, divine science) is the science which pretends to be inspired from God Himself, without however being a positive revelation. The Theosophists form a school of mystical philosophers, who declare human reason nonsense and impossible, and who believe themselves inspired and enlightened by a supernatural principle; they add to all this enthusiasm the observation of nature, and the study of metaphysics and medicine. It is in reality nothing new, for the same thing is found among the mystics of all times—among the Gnostics, the Neoplatonists, and the Philosophers of Hermes. The real Theosophists date, however, from the year XVI., or thereabouts, and begin with Paracelsus. They are there divided into two parts, the one more popular and more mystic than learned, to whom belong J. Boehm, Swedenborg, Martinez, Pasqualis, and St. Martin; the other branch is more scientific, philosophical, and theological, and includes Paracelsus, Cornelius, Agrippa, Val. Weigel, R. Fludd, and Von Helmont.

In tracing the history of Theosophists, we come to those who considered themselves *Illuminés*. These were persons who believed themselves to have received the light of truth direct from above, *i.e.*, the reflection of divine wisdom. The root of this belief may be found in India among the Brahmins and others. We find the *Indian Gnosticism* revived by Boehm, about A.D. 1700, and again in 1800 by Pasquales and others.

I have no intention to continue this historical *résumé* of what Theosophists claim to be, who at the eleventh hour wish *de marier leur*

manière de voir with us. Those who study Spiritualism are no babes, and do not want any milk. If Madame Blavatsky can tell me why the egg of a bird, boiled under certain circumstances, cannot become hard, or by what process an idiot can be made, or by what reason, under different circumstances (she is as strong as a man, therefore I have no reason not to say what I wish), the sex of an unborn child may be changed, *ad libitum*, I will answer her, but not with elementaries.

Madame Blavatsky is a woman. I have the greatest respect for her personally, but . . . the rest may be guessed. *Qui sine peccato est vestrum primus in illam lapidem mittat.* ALPHA.

The Hague, Holland.

SIR,—In your number of March 8th, page 115, Mrs. Showers kindly exhorts "Mr. O'Sullivan, and others, who are bewailing their approaching bereavement, to be of good heart!"—because she does not believe a bit in Madame Blavatsky's intention of returning (now that she has accomplished her "mission" of publishing her book, and laying the foundations of her school of Occidental Buddhism) to her beloved Orient again, never more to quit it, nor to be looked upon by European or American eyes, or to be listened to by our ears.

Will Mrs. Showers allow me to say that, while fully appreciating the strong intellectuality of her style of writing, I am not aware of having expressed any such bewailing an approaching bereavement, nor uttered any voice of wailing at all.

I certainly find more points of concurrence and sympathy with ideas indicated by Mrs. Showers—a Spiritualist, like myself, and, like myself, neither a Buddhist nor a Theosophist, but a simple and humble, however unworthy (so far as regards myself), Christian—than I do with what I understand of the views of Madame Blavatsky or Colonel Olcott. Having had the honour and pleasure of seeing somewhat of the latter two remarkable persons in New York—not as a disciple, but as an observer and as a friend—I simply related some of the extraordinary phenomena I witnessed in Madame Blavatsky's presence, and expressed my perfect conviction of the sincerity, the honesty, and the elevation of character alike of her and of Colonel Olcott. That conviction remains fixed and deep-rooted in my mind.

Mrs. Showers seems to have no faith in that lady's pretension of having ever been in the Far East at all (she told me that she had spent the best part of her life, thirty years, in the very heart of it), but to assume that she has culled the materials of her two huge volumes out of other people's books. I will not call this judgment uncharitable, since it is that of a lady, and that lady, Mrs. Showers; but I may be allowed to deem it a little precipitate, and thereby unjust. I used to see the proof sheets of the earlier pages passing under the hands of Colonel Olcott and Mrs. Blavatsky, and I perfectly remember their having told me that the work was to consist mainly, not of her own statements of what she had seen and known, but of the concurrent and confirmatory testimony of other travellers and authors. I have not yet seen her work, but I know, both from her and from Colonel Olcott, that this is the point of view from which it should be understood and judged.

Let me beg Mrs. Showers to reconsider her judgment about it by the light of that idea of its purposes and meaning. At the same time, Madame Blavatsky told me she had seen all those things, and much more, but that she meant to collect the independent, various and published, testimony of what others had seen, rather than to present only her own.

Mrs. Showers declines to believe in her intended early return to her beloved Orient. I can only say that she expressed to me that purpose, and that earnest longing, in the strongest manner. Nor have I the slightest doubt of its sincerity. I only alluded to the fact, without "bewailing" anything. If Mrs. Showers should declare to me any strong and earnest purpose, dependent solely on our own will and desire, the last thing I shall dream of doing will be to doubt her sincerity. Is she not a trifle rash in disbelieving that of a lady wholly unknown to her, but who is undeniably a woman of high intellectuality and vast and varied learning, as well as one who (apart from marvellous abnormal or medial power) always awakens an extraordinary degree of respect and confidence in those who approach her? And amongst those there are certainly some who, with the aid of personal acquaintance and intercourse, are at least as favourably situated for the formation of a right judgment of her as can be one who views her only across an oceanic distance of three thousand miles.

I asked Madame Blavatsky whether she meant to return to her antipodal Thibet, by going east or west—by way of Europe or that of California. She did not know. "And when you get there, what will you do?" "Oh, I shall end my life in a lamasery." That is to say she would become a sort of Buddhist nun, or "adept" priestess—which it is my belief that she is already. If she goes by way of England, I hope Mrs. Showers will make her acquaintance, and then, I think, she will be the first to wish to unwrite some part of her letter, which has suggested this most respectful reply from one who is no more a disciple of Madame Blavatsky than is Mrs. Showers herself.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

Paris, March 9.

SIR,—I have read with much regret in your last issue the communication signed by Mrs. Showers. I am not a member of the Theosophical Society, and I have not the honour of Madame Blavatsky's acquaintance, but I certainly should not have thought that a lady whose learning and ability have commanded the respectful attention of "M.A., Oxon.," and who has been claimed as a friend by Miss Emily Kinslingbury, would have met with what I must term the uncalled-for abuse with which Mrs. Showers has seen fit to assail her. Your correspondent has hastened into print before, according to her own statement, she has even taken the trouble to read through Madame Blavatsky's work, and, judging from some of the remarks she makes in the course of her letter, it

appears to me that her present fitness to pronounce an opinion on the subjects treated therein is open to question. When Mrs. Showers has attained some little knowledge of the ancient astronomical religion, which will enable her to apply to it some other term than "The foul Osiris worship of Egypt," and when she is able to perceive that though it is perfectly true that the temples of Karnac and Luxor are in ruins, it does not necessarily follow that the knowledge once imparted in those temples is not still in the possession of those who are found worthy to receive it, or that "Astrologer, and prophet, and magician, passed away for ever long centuries ago," she will, I think, be prepared to attach a proper value to *Isis Unveiled*, and to appreciate the knowledge and research which have been employed in its compilation.

With regard to the emblems of the much misunderstood phallic worship alluded to by Mrs. Showers, I may state for her information that they are to be found decorating nearly every church in the kingdom, and may easily be recognised by any person who has the smallest knowledge of the subject.

R. PALMER THOMAS.

London, March 9th, 1878.

SIR,—Instead of Spiritualists going off into discussions with the Theosophists as to the probability or improbability of "elementaries," "elementals," and "lost souls," would it not be better to keep to the primal and cardinal fact, and either establish or disestablish it? The Spiritualist says, he (the Spiritualist) is only the clay in the hands of the potter, spirit; but the Theosophist says, he (the Theosophist) is the potter, and the spirit is the clay. Now, Spiritualists are like most other people, I dare say, and have no particular desire to be servants when they can be masters; and I have no doubt would gladly receive from the Theosophists their "rules for commanding the spirits, even as the Spiritualist publishes his "rules for the formation of spirit circles." The Spiritualists could then try their hand at commanding, and there ought to be no difficulty about this, because, as Dr. Wyld says, "the spirit of the medium does it," and of course a man can do as he likes with his own. I do not know whether the Theosophists intend their society to be a secret one on the mutual admiration principle, or whether it is to be a money matter, but I shall give them credit for a desire to benefit others, just as the Spiritualist does; and if they decline to give the Spiritualists their "rules for commanding the spirits," I think that Spiritualists may fairly consider their teaching as mere sophistry, that their *ism* is Theo-sophism, and its professors Theo-sophists.

ONLOOKER.

DAILY NEWSPAPER MISREPRESENTATIONS.

SIR,—In reference to the paragraph from the *Manchester Guardian*, referred to by Mr. Charles Blackburn, and reproduced in your issue of the 8th inst., I have to state, on behalf of the Research Committee of the British National Association of Spiritualists, that there is no foundation whatever for any of the statements of the London correspondent of the above paper, with the exception only of that which notifies the appointment of the committee in question, a piece of news which is already nearly two years old.

DESMOND G. FITZ-GERALD, M.S.Tel.E.,
Chairman of Committee.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE HEBREW PROPHETS.

SIR,—In your last number Mr. McKinney respectfully asks me for my authority for writing in *The Spiritualist* of 25th January, "No (true) Hebrew prophet was ever controlled by any departed spirit, and no evangelist ever spoke but as from his own God-enlightened spirit;" and he instances the narrative given in the first and nineteenth chapters of Revelations as an apparent refutation of my views.

I turn to these chapters; but, instead of a refutation, I find a confirmation of my views. The very first begins—"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him" (John). Verse 10—"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard a great voice." It is true that an angel was sent to communicate the message, but is it not self-evident that consciously to receive a message from a visible angel is a totally different transaction from being controlled by an invisible and unknown departed human spirit?

I am much obliged to Mr. McKinney for reminding me of chapter xviii. of 2nd Chronicles. It is a grand chapter, and most emphatically illustrates the difference between the false prophets and "the prophets of the Lord." A lying spirit is there described as volunteering to control the 400 false prophets—"to be a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets;" who, being thus controlled, one and all urged the King of Israel to go up to battle. But the King of Judah, more wisely, asked, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides (these 400), that we may inquire of him?" Micaiah, the only prophet of the Lord, was sent for, and he predicted the death and destruction of the King of Israel and his host, if they went up to battle. The reward Micaiah received was to be "smitten on the face and shut up in prison, and fed on the bread and water of affliction." The King of Israel, however, believing the 400 false prophets controlled by the evil spirit, went up to battle, and was slain, and his people scattered over the hills, as predicted by Micaiah.

These 400 false prophets were mediums, under the control of one evil spirit. The one true prophet of the Lord spoke "as the Holy Spirit gave him utterance." Throughout the Old Testament the language always is, "Thus saith the Lord," or "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." In not one single instance, so far as I can remember, was any prophet of the Lord controlled by a departed human spirit. On the contrary, the doctrine of the Bible is that the control of departed human spirits is necromancy; and this is emphatically condemned.

In reply to Mr. McKinney's last question I would say that although necromancy was thus condemned in those early days, this does not, I

conceive, preclude us from *experimenting scientifically* in this matter; nor is the obligation to put witches to death binding on us now.

In these ages of the world, before the existence of philanthropic societies and reformatory associations, the laws applied to delinquent human beings were much the same as we now apply to beasts of prey. We do not now put witches to death, but if mediums were by trick or conjuring to rob us of our money, even modern Spiritualists would not hesitate to imprison them.

The object of my recent papers has not been to disprove the facts of the control in certain cases exercised by departed human spirits; but to indicate that such control is always unreliable, frequently deceptive and dangerous, and sometimes very wicked. As a scientific experiment such investigations are profoundly interesting, but as the basis of a religion spiritual phenomena may become a worshipping of false gods in contradistinction to the only true religion, which by temperance, love, and prayer so awakens our own dormant spirit, that it seeks, finds, and is controlled by the Father of all Spirits. GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

12, Great Cumberland-place, Hyde-park, London.

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS BUDDHISM.

SIR,—May I intrude on your space to suggest some considerations awakened by Col. Olcott's letters, which, as it seems to me, have not yet been touched upon in the interesting comments upon them hitherto published. Like "M.A., Oxon," I am startled at Col. Olcott's assertion that "he adheres to Oriental religious philosophers as better guides to happiness and morality than the Christian theology"; and I would ask him if these religious philosophies are, in his opinion, better guides for the majority of mankind than Christian theology, or only better for a small inner circle of sages? If he considers that Eastern faiths have really done more for their followers in the mass than Christianity has done for its followers, I would ask him how he accounts for the degraded state of women and the maintenance of caste among the Hindus (an Aryan race like ourselves) and for the gross superstitions and cruelties, and the utter recklessness of human life which distinguish the lower classes in countries where Buddhism has been the prevailing creed for centuries? Why, if the teachings of these religions tend to produce greater happiness and a higher morality than Christianity, have they not emancipated women, broken the bonds of slaves, mitigated the cruelties of legal punishment, let light and mercy into prisons, and taught men to look on themselves as equals in rights and blood, as Christianity has done? If, on the other hand, Col. Olcott only means that the highest teachings of these religions, as understood by the few, are more philosophical and enlightening than the dogmas of Christianity as understood by the gross-minded many in Christian countries, is he not comparing two things that have no relation to each other? Ought not a religion to be judged by the whole of its fruits? And is not that religion most divine that can descend lowest and leaven the whole lump, as well as raise a chosen few to high attainments of wisdom? Col. Olcott will hardly say that Christian theology, as expounded by its highest teachers—such as Thomas à Kempis, Fénelon, Pascal, Madame Guyon-Tauler, Professor Maurice, &c.—has any tendency to promote lazy self-indulgence, or allow men to rest content with a small degree of effort after the higher life.

It often seems to me that contemners of current Christian theology make an unfair use of the allegorical forms and somewhat gross phrases and images under which average preachers present obscure doctrine to their hearers. Many, doubtless, do hold the literal and sordid views of "rewards and punishments," "atonement," "conversion," that their critics credit them with; but the words carry quite other meaning to all thoughtful and sincere souls—to those whose ears are open to spiritual truths. These, while they sing of golden crowns and glory, remember that Christ the "King of Glory" is also the "King of self-sacrifice"; and, in talking of atonement and salvation, understand that it is *sin* from which they look to be saved; and that conversion, let it be ever so much the effect of an outside influence upon them, means for them the passing from a life of self-indulgence—from death—into a life of holiness and active benevolence, which *is* life.

It always puzzles me why Spiritualists should sneer at conversion. Do they not recognise spiritual influx, and is it not very comprehensible that there should be epochs in a soul's history when the avenues to spirit influences, closed before, are opened to receive them, and men may suddenly become conscious of new powers, and new motives in themselves? Spiritualism seems to me to open out all Christian mysteries, and flare them with a clear light. Do not let us throw away our jewel caskets just when we have found their keys.

A CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST.

VISIONS.

SIR,—I am sorry to be obliged "to take the 'shine' out of" Mr. Atkinson's method of explaining away spiritualistic phenomena, but your correspondent is a sort of philosophical Rip Van Winkle. He appears to have made no progress in spiritual knowledge during the last quarter of a century, and, in accounting for visions, he has resorted to an old-fashioned theory which one would expect to find in some antiquated *Encyclopædia* or *Physiological Journal*.

Mr. Atkinson tells us of a lady in a delicate state of health, who saw for several days in succession a snake climbing up her table, and sipping from a vessel which was placed there; whereupon Mr. Atkinson immediately jumps to the conclusion that the lady's vision was not an objective reality but a subjective phantasm, superinduced by a morbid state of the nervous system. This style of theorising makes one almost despair of ever establishing spiritual truth.

Your space is too valuable to be occupied in an elaborate refutation of Mr. Atkinson's inference; but none of your readers ought to be

allowed to remain under the fallacy which has been thus revived. I may therefore positively assert that there are real spiritual serpents as well as material ones, and that the ghosts of animals are seen by clairvoyants as frequently as the ghosts of human beings. This fact I have been able, after a long experience, to establish beyond the shadow of a doubt. There is no reason for supposing that the sick lady referred to did not actually see, as an objective reality, a spiritual snake gliding and clambering about her room; and I am sure it was as certain a reality as Mr. Atkinson's letter to you. Miss Martineau's visions were of a similar spiritual nature. ADAMUS.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Tuesday night, at the ordinary monthly meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists, Mr. Alexander Calder, president, occupied the chair. The other members present were Dr. George Wyld, Mr. Morell Theobald, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. H. Withall, Mrs. Maltby, Mrs. Lowe, Mrs. Makdougall-Gregory, Dr. J. M. Peebles, Mr. Glendinning, Herr Christian Reimers, Mr. Cornelius Pearson, Mr. C. C. Massey, the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Mr. Stainton Moses, Mr. R. Pearce, Mr. E. D. Rogers, Mr. M. J. Walhouse, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Miss Houghton, and Mr. H. T. Edmands.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read and confirmed, Three new members were elected. There was one resignation.

It was announced that Mr. R. Pomeroy Tredwen had been elected to represent the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism on the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists.

The Report of the Finance Committee set forth that the balance in hand of the Association amounted to £161 4s. 3d., and recommended payments to the extent of £32 19s. 10d. The outstanding liabilities of the Association were estimated at £15.

Mr. Dawson Rogers moved that Dr. J. M. Peebles be allowed to copy a list of the names and addresses of the members of the Association. This was seconded by Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Stainton Moses moved the reception of the report of the General Purposes Committee, which recommended the abolition of the monthly agenda, the letting of the spare room of the Association, the subscribing among the members of the amount necessary in consequence of the expiration of the guarantee fund, and the raising of the charge for admission to *soirées* to 2s. 6d. each person.

Mr. C. C. Massey seconded the motion for the reception of the report, and it was carried unanimously.

Mr. Stainton Moses moved that the monthly agenda be abolished. He did so on the score of the expense of the agenda.

Dr. Wyld seconded this.

Mr. E. T. Bennett moved an amendment, that the agenda be enlarged, and continued to all members free, and to other persons on payment; he further announced that five or six persons whose names he would not give, had agreed to buy 1,000 copies at 4s. per 100.

Mr. R. Pearce seconded this.

Mr. Massey wished to know the nature of the suggested enlargement. Mr. Bennett said he meant the agenda to be much the same as at present, *plus* the reports of committees, and *plus* advertisements.

Mr. C. C. Massey thought that if they enlarged the agenda as proposed, and tried to turn it into a journal, they were launching the Association into more expenses over it than at present.

Dr. Wyld objected to the continuation of the agenda, and wished to know, if Mr. Bennett's plan were carried out, who was to edit it?

Mr. Dawson Rogers supported Mr. Bennett's plan, and said that two or three persons should be appointed editors.

Dr. Wyld thought the plan looked like trying to make the Association set up an opposition to the Spiritual newspapers, and that, supposing money could be raised for the purpose, it could be spent more advantageously in other directions.

The Chairman was of the same opinion.

Mr. C. C. Massey thought that the proposition, if carried out, would provide plenty of "hot water" for the council. An association composed of persons of different views would not let the association be committed to literary matter coloured, as it must be, by the opinions of the proposed editors.

The question was then given to the General Purposes Committee for reconsideration, the financial aspect of the case having been altered.

A proposition to raise the annual subscription of the future new members to £2 2s., in consequence of the advantages of the use of the rooms and libraries being worth it, was postponed till next month for consideration.

It was resolved not to raise the charge for admission to *soirées*.

It was resolved that tickets to the Inquirer's *Soirées*, admitting a member and one friend, be sold to members only, at 3s. 6d. each. A proposition that they might be sold to outsiders was negatived.

On the motion of Mrs. Lowe, it was resolved that no bills or notices be posted in the rooms of the Association without the authority of the Council.

Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald announced that, owing to an oversight on the part of the Research Committee, and not to any fault of the medium, the "bell test" had not been obtained under such absolute test conditions as was supposed at the time.

The proceedings then closed.

THE EVOLUTION THEORY CONSIDERED IN ITS RELATION TO PSYCHOLOGY.*

BY G. F. GREEN, AUTHOR OF ONE OF THE PRIZE ESSAYS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

THE notion that man is descended from some lower form of animal life is not in itself new, but also not until the present century has it been sufficiently supported by facts to make it a coherent and tenable hypothesis. It is now so buttressed round by facts and analogies gathered from every department of natural history that it is fast taking its place among scientifically proved theories. I will here state what I mean by a *proved* scientific theory. Arguments may be divided into three kinds—(1) demonstrations, (2) proofs, (3) probabilities. Under the first head come metaphysics and the exact sciences; but their scope is narrow. The two other kinds—proofs and probabilities—differ only in the effect produced upon the mind, and under one of these two heads we may place every scientific theory. By scientific or inductive reasoning we arrive at something which the human mind *does* not doubt, as that the sun will rise to-morrow. By deductive reasoning only do we arrive at conclusions which the mind *cannot* doubt, as that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. While granting this to the metaphysicians and Mr. Massey, I claim the inductive method as the most reliable in the end, for it bases its conclusions on a broader platform than any other. At the beginning of the argument the postulate, "I think therefore I exist," may seem more indisputable than "the world of phenomena exists, therefore I think"; but as we proceed it becomes apparent that the edifice erected on the former basis assumes the shape of an inverted cone, and the higher we build it up (albeit the foundation is immovable) the unsteadier it becomes; in fact, it cannot be carried to any height. But not to dwell on this well-worn metaphor, I will only say that the doctrine of evolution seems to me to belong to the class of highly probable theories (such as the theory of gravitation) which produce on the mind the effect of *proof*. Whether any other causes have been at work—besides "natural selection"—in producing the variations of type which constitute distinct species, it is not necessary to inquire, but I am taking it as proved that all existing varieties have one common origin, and have been brought into existence by the action of universal laws. It seems to me that this theory is sufficiently proved if it be shown to be *possible* only, for there is no other way of accounting for the existence of species, except by a separate act of creation for each new species, which is an indolent hypothesis—a pure assumption without any scientific evidence in its favour.

If, then, physically man is descended from some lower form of animal life, and this in its turn from a lower and a lower still until the bottom of the scale, where the animal kingdom insensibly merges into the vegetable, let us consider how this truth bears on psychology. At first sight it seems to militate against the belief in a future life, for it brings to light another purpose in nature—the perfection of types and species—to which the well-being and life of individuals are altogether subordinated. Like the discovery that our planet is not the centre of the universe, and the other heavenly bodies merely designed to give it light and heat, the discovery that man is subject to and the product of the same laws as his brute fellow-creatures, is somewhat humiliating. Feeling within him the aspiration for a larger life of which he sees no ratification in nature, he cries out with Tennyson—

"Aro God and Naturo, then, at strife,
That Naturo lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems—
So careless of the single life!"

When psychology takes its proper place as a part of the science of biology, and is divested of all admixture of theological dogmas and metaphysics, maybe this feeling will no longer seem to be justified.

In any case, there is such a desire for truth in the human mind as would prompt it to acknowledge even a mud-ancestry rather than be cajoled with lies into false hopes.

The chief difficulty in thus reconciling evolution with current beliefs about the soul of man, arises not from any direct evidence which it furnishes against the soul's existence, but from its clashing with certain foregone conclusions as to its nature and origin. Supposing for a moment it were proved by the doctrine of evolution that man has descended from a soul-less ancestry, the difficulty of determining the precise period in the remote past at which "soul" made its appearance is no greater (as Darwin has observed) than the difficulty of determining the exact period in the development of the individual from the minute germinal vesicle to the child either before or after birth, when man becomes endowed with a soul.

Instead of disputing the conclusions of this, the more advanced branch of biology—which treats of man's *physical* origin—it may be a more useful task to re-examine the foundations of the younger science, psychology, and see whether they support any views really antagonistic to the former. The facts of psychology are well ascertained, and must override the theories of all other sciences, but its inferences are matters of doubt, and need all the corroborative evidence which can be brought to bear upon them. The theory of the origin of the soul should harmonise with the theory of the origin of the body—otherwise both are in doubt.

The order in which I propose to treat this subject, is (firstly) to state the foundations of the science of psychology, and (secondly) to consider some of its theories, especially in relation to the nature and origin of the soul.

The only indisputable facts of psychology appear to me to be two, viz., (1) the existence of a spiritual part in man which is capable of transcorporeal action; (2) its survival in numerous proved cases after the dissolution of the body. Doubtless, these two facts come far short

* A paper read last Monday night before the British National Association of Spiritualists.

of the ordinary creed of the Spiritualist, inasmuch as they include no assumption of the soul's imperishableness. As I am dealing with this question from a purely scientific point of view (without contesting, however, the validity of other methods) I submit to your notice the following proposition. Science can only recognise man as a duality—body and soul; not as a trinity—body, soul, and spirit. It seems as unscientific to add the third term, about which only a negative idea can be formed, as to add a third term to express the combination of gases which produce water. The chemists formula for water is HO, not HO+X. Hydrogen *plus* oxygen are not water, but as the cementing force is undiscoverable as a separate element, and indescribable, it would be useless to include it in the analysis. We may say "man" or "water," and a distinct idea is conveyed by the words, but in expressing the elements which go to make up these compounds, we can but set that down which we find.

From what I have said it will be seen that I limit the field of psychology to discovery of the origin, nature, and attributes of the psychical entity—astral body, or whatever it might be called—without taking into account the life-principle. This principle, whether it be the all-pervading Divine energy, as the Pantheists hold, or something separate and distinct from God, is "as full, as perfect, in a hair as heart," and therefore would seem to have no attribute exactly equivalent to human consciousness. That attribute, so far as we know, inheres only in an organised form, and apart from an organised form of some sort we cannot conceive of it.

There are many theories about the soul which lie outside of the scope of the present inquiry, and are entirely based on metaphysical or theological speculation. Some of these, however, may be mentioned incidentally; and I shall first allude to the old belief that the soul after death *sleeps* until the resurrection of the body. This belief indicates the difficulty felt in conceiving of the soul's active existence apart from the body. It is, perhaps, less difficult to conceive of it as unconsciously existent, and thus the dogma has found acceptance. Another belief is that the soul is a distinct entity, sent to inhabit the body, as a tenant inhabits a leasehold messuage. This idea finds expression in the literature of many countries, in times near and remote, and may be regarded as a pre-scientific theory, based on a partial and incomplete view of nature, like many other poetic images handed down to us from the past.

The body has been likened to "an earthly house," "a tabernacle," "a temple," for the soul to dwell in; thus conveying, together with a partial truth, the impression of a disconnected origin. I do not contend that it is false metaphor, but only an imperfect one; and I shall refer to this again when I come to state the view which I wish to submit in contradistinction to it.

The defect in the old systems of psychology appears to me to lie in their ignoring the idea of growth and development, which is as patent and obvious in regard to the soul as in regard to the body; and if this is found to be true as regards the individual soul, it will also, I believe, prove to be equally true in a wider sense. Darwin says—"In the distant future I see open fields for far more important researches. Psychology will be based on a new foundation, that of the necessary acquirement of each mental power and capacity *by gradation*."

To return to the current theologic ideas of the soul inhabiting the body, of its being a separate creation, and of its sleeping for a time after the dissolution of its "earthly house," I affirm them to be all incomplete explanations, or else pure assumptions outside the pale of psychological science. If we inquire whence comes this undefined tenant of the body, we are asked to accept as an axiom, what should only be a hoped-for conclusion to the argument, viz., that it is something which will survive

"Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds."

Is this something our ordinary consciousness? No, because that appertains always to a body. Is it the life principle? No, because it would be merely playing with words to say that the life principle will continue to live.

Next to the theologic idea of the soul, we come to some philosophic speculations, amongst which I will only briefly notice that of transmigration. The chief feature of this belief is the notion that the soul goes through many metamorphoses, and is incarnated many times, until purified of its earthly passions and desires. In considering this hypothesis, we first note that it contains the idea of growth and development, and in so far harmonises with the analogies which we see around us in nature. But what is it based on? Not certainly upon our ordinary consciousness, to which in fact it is entirely opposed. We have no recollection of any former life. It must be supposed, therefore, that each incarnation of the soul is a kind of sleep; that the soul is

"Moving about in worlds not realised;"

and that the experience of earthly life, on the awakening of the soul after death, is remembered as a kind of dream. To my mind, this militates against the usefulness of the process. But what grounds are there for believing that such a process takes place? I know of only two—and no doubt, if wrong, I shall be corrected—these are (1) the teachings of spirits; (2) "those shadowy recollections" of another state of existence, which Wordsworth has described as

"The fountain light of all our day."

As regards the former and the latter, I will only say that in both cases the *raison d'être* of the belief may be real, while the belief itself is not formally accurate. In a recent number of *The Spiritualist*, Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace has expounded a theory on this subject which contains valuable suggestions. To my mind, the theory of reincarnation, as propounded by Allan Kardec, presents these difficulties:—

- (1.) It is opposed to the ordinary consciousness.
- (2.) It necessitates the belief that souls have come from other planets, to keep pace with the multiplication of bodies in this.

(3.) It makes the belief in a double consciousness necessary.

I maintain also that some facts of psychology are opposed to it. For instance, when a spirit controls the body of an infant (as in the case of Mr. Jencken's baby, and the alleged reincarnations of Buddha, related by Madame Blavatsky), is it not to all intents and purposes in the position of a spirit *permanently* reincarnated? Ought it not, therefore, by the Spiritist theory, to forget its past knowledge and career, and begin its education afresh by learning to spell? Instead of this we find intelligent messages written and ideas conveyed as from a fully matured mind, using the child's body as a piece of mechanism.

To pass on to some other theories. It is held by the Materialists that "soul" is not a thing at all, but only an abstraction. We know this to be untrue as regards the psychical entity we are discussing. This view can only apply (if at all) to the theologic definition of soul.

A more tenable theory, not on the face of it opposed to any known facts, is that soul has, in its first beginnings, been evolved from matter. This theory may be held in two forms, either that the soul is evolved in the case of each individual from the action of vital processes taking place after birth, or that it has been first evolved at some past time in the history of the race, and then transmitted like the physical organism. A lady, who has been all her life a highly-gifted seeress, writes to me:—"I believe in evolution from God, but not from mud. The evolution from spirit finds its ultimatum in matter in which it works for a time, but where are we to look for the ultimatum of mud? Not in spirit, surely?" This is the dilemma of those who contend for only *one* existence—either spirit evolved from matter, or matter from spirit. Let the metaphysicians choose whichever they like best. Certainly, if we conceive of God as spirit, matter must have proceeded from Him, and we have here the idea of matter evolved from spirit. On the other hand, if we regard the physical or phenomenal procession of events, we find matter tending constantly towards higher modes of existence, and this gives us the idea of spirit being evolved from matter.

Thus it depends entirely on the point of departure we take, whether we call the processes of nature evolution or involution. In the line of argument which I am asking you to follow, we are not concerned with either horn of the dilemma, because we do not assume that there is only *one* existence, matter or spirit, but we confine ourselves to concrete ideas, soul and body. We may trace the evolutions of both, and, so far as the eye of science can follow, their lines are parallel to one another, but never intersecting or meeting.

I will endeavour now to lay before you as briefly as possible my view of how the theory of evolution bears upon psychology.

Returning to our facts for a moment, we know that the soul is the seat of consciousness, and not the body, and when it is withdrawn the body dies. We cannot but believe that the living substance is the mould on which the grosser material is cast.

If, then, the theory of evolution be true at all, it is true of the soul in a fuller sense than of the body. I cannot understand the affirmation that the physical body, which is merely the shell, is evolved from lower types, and that the soul has a different origin; for, as in the history of the individual we can trace the gradual unfolding of the powers from infancy up to manhood, so in the history of the race we can follow the development of all the more complex faculties from their earliest beginnings through a long chain of slight variations. In the *Genesis of Species*, by Mivart, it is contended that while man is physically descended from some lower species, his moral powers cannot have been so derived, because there is not in the lower animals "any trace of actions stimulating morality which are not explicable by the fear of punishment, by the hope of pleasure, or by personal affection."

The question is, whether savages have any moral ideas which are not explicable in the same manner. To maintain the affirmative, it will be necessary to show that they have some absolute intuition of right and wrong. I am not going over this old battle-ground, but whichever conclusion is accepted as to the origin of the moral sense in man, will also, I believe, be found to apply to the brute conscience. Whatever it is which makes a dog or a man hesitate betwixt a higher and a lower impulse, this is conscience, and there is not, to my mind, much more difference in the expression of this sense between a civilised man and a savage, than between the latter and a civilised dog.

This brings me to some very serious difficulties, and if anything my argument leads me to advance should go beyond the bounds of legitimate speculation, I have no doubt the cause of truth will benefit in the end by the correction it will receive from you, in the discussion which is to follow.

If soul is an organic entity which has been derived from other organic entities of a lower type, it is highly probable that animals and even vegetables have some kind of soul. This belief is tenable on several grounds. Many Spiritualists in the present day believe even that the souls of animals will live again. We have some cases of the ghosts of dogs appearing. Mr. Maitland states, in *England and Islam*, that in a moment of lucidity he saw the soul of a tree. The power in some animals of reproducing amputated members, has been adduced as proof of a spiritual body, as tending to show how material substances mould themselves upon pre-existing spiritual forms. I might cite more instances, but must pass on to the consideration of how the belief that all living things have souls affects the question of the immortality of the human soul.

The thought of the countless myriads of forms which there must be peopling the spiritual world is no real difficulty, if we think of it in connection with some facts in the material universe. Number has no relation to infinity. If we reflect upon the number of highly organised forms, the mortal remains of which are preserved in a lump of chalk or coral, it may aid us to find space in our imagination for their souls. But it is not necessary to believe that all souls live for ever.

The fact, however, that a future existence is denied to the souls of the lower animal creation according to my theory, must throw some doubt on the alleged necessary immortality of the human soul. It is

quite possible to conceive of this life as the embryonic stage of the soul's existence, to regard death as the birth of the soul into its real world, to suppose that it will run through a given period of growth and development in the spiritual world, and then be dissolved and go to form the pabulum of other and higher spiritual forms—thus completing the analogy with the processes observed in the material world. This theory, I say, is quite thinkable, as also the Buddhist theory of ultimate absorption into the Deity.

If we consider that our individuality is only made conscious by that which differentiates us from our surroundings, we come near to believing that conscious individuality will end as soon as we are in perfect harmony with the divine will. If we can imagine a state in which two beings were in absolute and perfect sympathy with each other and their surroundings, it would be no mere figure to say that they were *one*. Swedenborg held the belief that societies are formed in the next world by the law of affinity, in which the wills of individual members are expressed as it were synchronously and in the same act, their thoughts, perceptions, and acts being as those of one intelligence. I am ignorant of the views of the Theosophists on this matter, but I hope we shall hear something of them to-night.

Before concluding my remarks on the connection between psychology and evolution, I would refer to the New Testament teachings about the soul. Every Spiritualist must regard them, and especially the words of Christ Himself, as a high (if not the highest) authority which can be brought forward. There has been for many months past a lively controversy carried on in an orthodox religious paper, the *Christian World*, in which one of the combatants maintains that "conditional immortality" is a distinct tenet of Christ's doctrine. It is true he takes the view that it is conditioned by the acceptance or non-acceptance of Christ as our Saviour. Although I should find it difficult to believe that a difference of opinion as to the meaning of Christ's life and mission, could constitute either a barrier or a passport to heaven, I am free to admit that there is some force in the other part of his argument.

The following passages, taken together, are, I think, presumptive evidence that the doctrine of unconditional immortality is not taught in the New or Old Testaments.

(1.) "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26.)

(2.) "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to *destroy* both soul and body in hell." (Matt. x. 28.)

(3.) "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Philip. iii. 11.)

(4.) "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 20.)

(5.) "Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

(6.) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Looking at the whole of the Apostolic teachings, as well as those of Christ Himself, in a wider view than that which usually obtains, I see much to favour the belief that "salvation" meant saving the soul *alive*, and not saving it from eternal torments.

I submit, in conclusion, (1) that the theory of evolution, if true at all, is true of the soul primarily, and only secondarily of the body; (2) that it is quite compatible with natural and revealed religion, and with the facts of psychology; (3) that it should modify some articles of the Spiritualist creed, especially those which concern the soul's origin.

HUMAN LIFE.

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge;
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles; as the old bursts, new emerge,
Lashed from the foam of ages, while the graves
Of empires heave but like some passing waves.

BYRON.

HERR CHRISTIAN REIMERS will read a paper on "Objections to Teachings in Connection with Spiritualism," at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston-lane, Hackney Downs, London, E., on Monday evening next, at 8.30 p.m.

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW ON SCIENTIFIC DOGMATISM.—"A dogmatic habit of mind was till lately the special reproach of theologians. It is a fault of which they have had occasion bitterly to repent, and their temper at the present time is apt to be only too apologetic and cautious. But the dogmatic energy which has thus disappeared from their minds, seems to have been transferred—perhaps by some application of the law of conservation of force—to the minds of men of science, and Professor Virchow has to address to his brother professors a rebuke which a generation ago would have been deemed appropriate only to hot-headed divines."—"Scientific Lectures, their Use and Abuse," *Quarterly Review*, January, 1878.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W.—As pointed out a year or two ago in this journal, the experiments of Mr. Earl Bird made known that sewing a medium's coat sleeves together behind his back, without also sewing together the edges of the coat here and there in front, was no test at all. So far as a few of the recent reports made the proceedings known, this precaution appeared to have been neglected, therefore your letter was printed. Beyond this, we see no reason for giving space to allegations about what conjuring tricks a man says he can perform, because, without the performance of them before the committee, and the publication of the method of doing them, it is waste of time to give attention to such statements, as well as to write them.

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