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

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SPECULATIVE SPIRITUALISM.

At the present time several prominent Spiritualists are ablaze with speculation as to the principles at the root of the facts under their observation, and as for a considerable time past everybody has been tied down to the close studying of the actual phenomena, a little relaxation in the way of intellectual kite-flying may not be injurious. Moreover, the recent free talk has had the one practical result of bringing about a general agreement that ordinary "form-manifestations" do not give such clear evidence of the presence of the spirits of the departed, as inexperienced or enthusiastic Spiritualists supposed them to furnish.

The inductive method is so sound and safe in its results, that by it all the appliances of civilised society have been improved and revolutionised. By that method, when a new and doubtful problem presents itself, an appeal is made to fact and to experiment, and those who take part in contention on the various aspects of the problem, are content to be bound by the results of the experiments planned to solve the moot points. For instance, Sir Isaac Newton's hypothesis that light consisted of minute particles ejected with infinite velocity from the luminous body, once had the supremacy in the scientific mind, over Young's hypothesis that light consisted of the wave motion of the interstellar ether. Experiment proved Young to be right, so his opponents gave in; the great authority of Newton was also, in this instance, overthrown.

The difference between day-dreaming speculators and scientific men is this—that the former, having conceived a speculation, do not concentrate all their powers upon experiment and observation of new facts to solve their new problem, but they go about preaching it, build it up into a dogma, pin their faith to it, and become angry when their dictum is questioned. In short, they launch a new dogma upon society, and fight for it with all the intolerance of true theologians.

Nevertheless, no new discovery is ever made without the experimentalist working in harmony with some speculation in his head, which speculation he wishes to verify, and he commonly has to reluctantly throw aside several hypotheses before discovering the right one. The unscientific mind, not trained in this hard school of experience, clings to its first—therefore, probably, erroneous—hypothesis, builds it up into an article of religion, and frequently induces the blind multitude to fall down and worship. Hence, although it is well to take a little relaxation just now in Spiritualism, and to fly a number of intellectual balloons, after a time everybody will be glad to return to the study of sober facts, and to settle new problems by the results of observation and experiment.

WHAT IS REALITY?

BY ST. GEORGE W. STOCK, M.A.

WHAT constitutes reality is a question very difficult of answer, as most questions are which lie at the threshold of knowledge. Let us begin by saying what does not? The evidence of the senses, even when each corroborates the other, does not constitute reality. But here we must at the outset distinguish. In one sense of the term every sense-impression is an unquestionable reality. Of what am I certain if not of the impressions that break in upon me through the senses, of the sights and sounds that affect my eye and ear, of the savours and odour that delight or disgust me? These are primary facts. They may often be what we call hallucinations, but that does not affect the certainty of my knowledge of them, nor, consequently, in one sense, their reality. To say that a certain impression on the senses is an hallucination, is to say that it occurs without those marks of ex-

ternal reality which it is the object of the present article to investigate. There are other things of which I am as certain as of my sensations, namely, the thoughts which pass through my mind, the passions which agitate my soul, the determinations of my will—and these, unlike sensations, are never declared to be hallucinations, because there is no external reality of which they are the recognised indications. In one sense of the word then, all states of mind, all that may be summed up under the head of consciousness is real, but mere consciousness gives us only subjective and not objective reality; and it is the latter kind of which we are in search; the former is mentioned in order to be excluded.

The philosophy of hallucination offers a vast field of inquiry which has yet to be patiently cultivated. To say that a thing is a delusion is a very easy way of shelving psychological anomalies. But delusion must have its laws no less stringent than those of real perception. Sometimes, no doubt, the cause of what we call a delusion lies in a diseased state of the organs of the percipient. But it would be rash to lay down that this is always the case. Some delusions have an external cause though not the same kind of cause that operates when we are cognisant of a reality. Delusions differ in degree in many ways, more particularly in the number of senses that combine to impose upon us. There are hallucinations of one, two, or three dimensions, according as one sense only, or two, or even all three are called into operation. I say "all three" for taste and smell, as modifications of touch, may be roughly classed under the same head with it. You may hear a voice address you in the daytime, and though you were certain that the sound was real, you may still consent to call the experience an hallucination, if the testimony of sight fails to corroborate that of hearing. Or you may at the same time see a figure from which the voice issues lifelike, mobile, distinct in the light of day; but if your hand passes through this figure when you thrust it out, you will not resent the dictum of the doctor who pronounces you the victim of hallucination; and this, notwithstanding that each sensation was in itself perfectly real. But if the figure resists the touch then we seem to have all the certainty of external reality that it is possible for the isolated judgment of the individual to obtain. Under such circumstances a man would practically believe in the reality of his experience, and by most people it would be theoretically admitted that he is right. It is true he may be the victim of an hallucination of three dimensions, but he must run the chance of that. I am speaking of course of a case in which verification by means of the senses of other witnesses is impracticable. If we will not believe "that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled," then is our scepticism incurable, and we are shut out for ever from all hope of knowledge. But then, where possible, it must in a strict sense be "our eyes" which see, and "our hands" which handle. For the possibility of an hallucination of three dimensions is proved, if it need the proof, from mesmerism. A "subject" under the control of the operator will not only see and hear, but feel to order, and will deride the idea of his being under a delusion. The subjective reality is complete, though we know that he is deluded. It is plain, therefore, that the sense-impressions of the individual are not in all cases a safe criterion of reality. If Swedenborg walk arm in arm with St. Paul through the streets of London it may be a full reality to him, but we must pronounce his state a delusion so long as the passers-by see only Swedenborg.

But what if, under certain unascertained conditions of brain or nerve, hallucination be contagious? I have had personally a slight experience pointing in this direction, which I trust I may be pardoned for relating. Once when

an undergraduate at college, I was walking, towards dark, with a friend in the quadrangle. A passing impression occurred to me that I saw a man named H. leaning with his back against the common-room window. The impression was a momentary and very slight one, and I would never have thought twice of it only for what followed. My friend gave a start, and made an exclamation, and when I asked what was the matter, was silent. My curiosity being roused, I pressed him to tell me the reason of his exclamation, and he then said, "Oh, I thought I saw H. standing with his back against the common-room window." Now, this certainly took place, and to ascribe it to mere coincidence would, I think, be meaningless. Either the impression passed from one mind into another, probably from mine to his, as it seems to have occurred to me first, or else the same cause produced both impressions. Shall we then say, with the believers in a "double," that the psychical, astral, or fluidic body of H. was at that moment "on the loose," and veritably presented itself to the minds of both of us? Or shall we adopt a less ponderous hypothesis, and say that some temporary effect of light or shadow being sufficient to raise the idea of H. in one mind might without great wonder be sufficient also to raise it in the other? This is perhaps the common-sense view of the case. But, however that may be, the following story, if true—and I had it on good authority—would establish the possibility of simultaneous hallucination. I may not perhaps give the details of the story with perfect accuracy, but the following was the substance of it. An Indian juggler was exhibiting his powers under the shade of a tall palm-tree, amid whose leaves an English officer had previously ensconced himself. The juggler took a baby, hacked it to pieces with a sword, and handed the portions round to the company. He then collected them, and restored the baby whole as before. The company had the corroborated testimony of their several senses to the facts of the existence, dismemberment, and reconstitution of the baby; but the officer up in the tree, unaffected, we may presume, by the psychological influence of the juggler (not on account of distance, but because unperceived) saw that the fancied baby was only a pumpkin! Now, if this story be true, everyone will allow that that was the reality which was seen by the one and that the hallucination which was seen by the many. How is this? Why should we prefer one witness to a multitude? Because a vast amount of experience, which is prior sense-testimony, is in favour of the one and against the many.

We have left out of count one element in St. John's criterion of certainty. "That which was from the beginning." (This is my own meaning of the words, I daresay, but in preferring my own meaning to the author's, I am only following the example of respectable commentators.) But it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the reality of a thing and our belief in its reality. A thing is either real or it is not. No amount of analogies can make the real more real, or add being to that which is; as no amount of counter evidence can make the real less real, or take its being from that which is. The degree of belief we entertain of the reality of a thing is what constitutes its "probability." We are obliged to judge by means of probability; it is the "guide of life" and a safe guide in the main, though necessarily misleading in particular cases from being calculated only for averages. In the above story we unhesitatingly pronounce that the reality lay with the perception of the one, because the probability is all on his side. We have seen that that is not necessarily real which is vouched for by the united testimony of the several senses of an individual; nor even that which has in its favour the united sense-testimony of a number of witnesses. Neither will it do to say that those impressions are real which have a cause external to ourselves; and those hallucinations whose cause is internal. For the will of the mesmerist is a cause external, in a certain sense, to the patient; and for aught we know the reality of the world around us may lie in the powerful will of some superior being. We may all be subjects of the Divine Mesmerist, as Berkeley declares we are. In order then to be safe from objections we must say that a reality, be it object or event, is what would affect with like impressions all witnesses who have the ordinary complement of senses in good working order. This may perhaps be let pass

as a definition of mundane reality. We have unfolded (to use logical phraseology) the intention of the term. As to its extension, namely, what objects and events are to be considered real, that is quite a different question which revolves itself into an estimate of the value of evidence. It has formed no part of the scope of this paper to discuss the canons of credibility.

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

BY "M.A., OXON."

It was inevitable that papers which cover a wide area, and which deal with several moot questions, should omit to state some points in the argument, and so should seem to give undue prominence to those dwelt upon. Both for what I said and for what I did not say, I expected to be taken to task. It was inevitable that I should be in antagonism to some whose good opinion I highly value, just as it was certain that whoever stood forward to defend, however feebly, a cherished belief of a large number of persons would find unexpected sympathy and agreement in his views. That there is very wide-spread interest in the questions at issue the state of my correspondence testifies; as it does, further, that my position has not been so clearly defined in my previous papers as to guard against misconception. Doubtless the fault is mine, and it is my duty, frankly admitting so much, to do my best to state with more precision what I mean. I cannot reply to my correspondents personally. I hope they will pardon me if I embody what I have to say in this general form.

This is abundantly proved to be necessary from the criticisms and comments made upon me in *The Spiritualist* of January 18th. My friend, Mr. Massey, Spiritualist and Theosophist, metaphysician and lawyer, but, above all, courteous gentleman and kindly critic, deals with my statements in a manner of which I have nothing to complain, save in respect of the terms in which it pleases him to speak of myself. I must disclaim altogether, with some feeling of alarm, any right to speak in the representative character assigned me, any power of influence such as he gives me, and any intention of assaulting his belief or of defining my own in such sort as he seems to imagine. In an argument full of subtlety he selects such portions of my papers as are, in his judgment, most amenable to attack, and deals with me as the advocate of an "egotism of the affections," and a foe to Spiritualism in any scientific aspect, and especially to Theosophy.

Miss Kislingbury, no less flattering in her criticism, and no less in error as regards my position and intent, chides me for lack of "patience and care" in dealing with the views of the Theosophists, and would fain see me "standing as interpreter and reconciler between the Theosophists and Spiritualists." Thank you for nothing, my good friend. Such a position, however honourable, is hardly to my taste. I can fancy the shots that would whistle around my astonished ears, as my feeble efforts at mediation failed to please either party; and I seem to hear afar off, even now, the din of strife that would infallibly close upon me and stifle me with its angry clamour. The tones used by my critics are sweet, and the criticism is tempered as the wind to the shorn lamb, but (if I am not much mistaken), even those who now chide so sweetly could, and they would, assume a sterner tone, and use their weapons more severely. At any rate, they have at their command a veritable mitrailleuse in Dr. Carter Blake, whose polysyllabic designation of my paper, as "a multiform presentation of a poly-analytic simulacrum of truth" among other alternatives, has opened out to my mind unimagined possibilities of invective, equalled only by O'Connell's overwhelming description of the fish-fag as an isosceles triangle that kept a paralleliped concealed in the back garret.

It is quite enough that I endeavour to interpret what I know, without assuming a position, compared with which the meddler with a conjugal quarrel would be pleasantly placed.

In the effort to make clear what I have to say, I must elect between answering my friends' arguments seriatim and stating on broad lines what my position is. It would not be difficult to take Mr. Massey and Miss Kislingbury

line by line, and ground an effective answer, from my own point of view, on what they have said respecting my views and opinions as they have understood them. But this would inevitably lead to the emphasizing of minute points of difference, to literary criticism, to verbal analysis, and to the consequent development of *animus*, and to the obscuration of those broad points of agreement that exist between us. I am strongly impressed with the feeling that he who stirs up unnecessary strife accepts a position of grave responsibility at any time; and I believe, too, that the present is just one of those crises when it is desirable to minimize points of divergence, and to throw one's whole energy into emphasizing the many and far more serious points of agreement which exist among us; and especially between my present critics and myself.

I shall have private opportunity of answering any arguments that, in their opinion, demand reply; and I hope, therefore, they will not consider me lacking in courtesy, or inattentive to their instructive comments, if I do not reply to them now, except in as far as they are concerned with my argument. Nor must it be assumed that arguments which I do not answer I therefore deem unanswerable. I shall be quite ready to meet them at another time, when I have cleared away misconceptions.

It is desirable to go back, for a moment, to the manifesto of the Theosophists in *The Spiritualist* of Dec. 9th. That utterance seems to me to mark a crisis to which events had long been tending. Thoughtful minds had come, from various causes, to question the received belief of the Spiritualists. Those who were most concerned with investigation saw around them much that filled them with perplexity. Most of them had no personal evidence to rely on, and were compelled to accept such as they could get at second hand, either from records or from observation in promiscuous circles where none expects that the special points on which I insist would be proved, or even illustrated. The tests of identity, of the return of the departed spirits of earth, of intercourse with personal friends, are not so obtained, save in rare cases.

It came to pass, therefore, that the keenest minds found themselves without evidence of the return of departed spirits, and each evolved for itself a theory more or less sufficient to cover the facts within the observers' personal knowledge. The negative evidence was strong against the hypothesis of the Spiritualist; the positive evidence pointed to acts and words which were strongly antagonistic to any such belief. Moreover, men's prepossessions were ranged against the notion of human spirits so acting. They said indignantly that the acts were silly and the words frivolous, more characteristic of the antics of a Puck, or sometimes of the gambols of an animal, and even of the malignant mischief of an intelligence destitute of moral consciousness, than of the manifestation of the human mind of a responsible agent. By degrees there grew in the minds of some of us a strong conviction that these are not the people they pretend to be. Their highly-sounding names, their goody-goody talk, their evasion of anything like test and proof identity strengthened the conviction gathered from their acts. We have all of us, I suppose, felt the force of these conclusions.

Others again had studied the phenomena of mesmerism, and had arrived at strong opinions as to the power of the embodied human spirit. There were some public manifestations connected with Spiritualism that could not be explained on the previous hypothesis, and some accounted for them by the theory that the spirit of the medium was the operating agency. These views have been so clearly stated by Dr. Wyld in his late paper that I need not further allude to them.

Then we had to contend with the theories of men who, knowing nothing of the facts, found no difficulty in evolving from their inner consciousness the camel that they needed in the shape of an all round theory. They scornfully told us that we knew nothing about subjects which had engaged our patient attention for years during which they were occupied in asserting that no such phenomena existed. "Spirits! Pooh! Look after your liver. Private circles! Pooh! Private lunatic asylums. You are besotted, mad, deluded, defrauded, victims of prepossession. Do you not know that the savage explains everything by means of spirits? You are a mere savage, superstitious as a Red Indian, and not

quite as sensible. Revise 'the simplicity of your early conclusions,' and send the ghosts packing."

So it came to pass that circumstances within the movement combined with materialistic criticism from without to crush out the spirit theory, save in so far as we might keep a few spooks to do the dirty work of circle-manifestation. For the rest, spirits there were none that we ought to care to associate with.

Those of us who had assured themselves beyond a perhaps of the return of their own friends from beyond the grave, or who had received from progressed intelligences words of instruction and comfort in seasons of darkness and spiritual desolation, were not sorry that the wholesale claims of exoteric Spiritualism that none but the departed spirits of humanity were at work should receive a check. They said that it was not so; and they saw moreover, that their own faith was largely imperilled by such credulity.

Tua res agitur quum proximus ardet Ucalegon.

The next row of houses was on fire, and they found it time to look after themselves. Their belief therefore—their conviction, their great and "central fact" as I called it—was in abeyance so far as it was not insisted on in public, and so far as it was overshadowed by a pushing cloud of other theories. They had never wavered from it, never lost hold on its consolations, but it had dropped into the background.

It was at this crisis that Colonel Olcott came forward with the manifesto of Theosophy, and opened out "a new departure." Familiar as I had been with the speculations of that branch of Theosophical Science which is expounded by Colonel Olcott—for it must not be forgotten that there is another Theosophy of which Boëhmen and Saint Martin are the exponents, and which New York Theosophy ignores altogether—I was startled at some of the statements made, and sorry that they should have been put forward at such a time. For that, of course, Colonel Olcott is not responsible. He could not be supposed to be familiar with the progress of the movement in England, except very superficially; and even if he were he would have the same right to propound his panacea, as I have to question its efficacy.

But, as a matter of fact, into the slightly troubled pool—troubled, I should say, by a descending angel for the healing of the waters—came a Theosophical rock hurled by the vigorous arm of the President of the Theosophical Society, and creating a huge splash.

It was then that as one who has satisfied himself of the facts and who can give a reason for the faith that is in him, I venture to defend my belief in intercourse with the ascended spirits of humanity, and to claim for Spiritualism a field and a mission wider than that conceded by its critics. In so doing I did express my essential belief, but I also expressed, in a passage quoted by Mr. Massey, my accord with much of the incidental teaching of Theosophy. I did not think it necessary, I do not now think it necessary, to proclaim the exact lines of my assent. That concerns myself. I only thought it well, in the interests of truth, to ask for some evidence and even for proof of certain allegations. They were to me mere word-balloons. I, or any one else, with a speculative tendency could spin theories by the hour. What is important in dealing with psychological questions, as it seems to me, is to distinguish between a mere hypothesis, and a warrantable deduction from observed fact, or an accepted theory which has stood the test of time and is unshaken.

It was, and is, on this ground alone that I propounded my queries. Trained in the theology of the West, I have received from it such knowledge of the subject as concerns my soul and its progress. That knowledge has been increased and carried forward many degrees by the experiences of the last eight years. I have learned to put aside somewhat of the latter and to substitute for it the spirit of Christian teaching. I have a coherent and reasonable scheme of religious belief which centres round what to me is the purest and holiest system of teaching that I know of—the teaching of the Christ. I seek no better, for it tells me all that in my present stage of progress I can grasp. I will not abandon it, for it serves my needs, and before I cut myself loose from it to swim across an angry sea to something that I can only dimly discern in the distance, I must be quite sure that that something is a haven of surer rest than that which I abandon.

I see no such evidence, and can entertain no such faith. It may be that a fuller acquaintance with what I only know very imperfectly might alter my opinions. It may be that Buddhism is the nobler faith—that it is a noble one, I know—it may be that it suits others better than the faiths of the West. But it must be recommended on some more solid basis, and the philosophy that accompanies it must depend on some stronger arguments than any I have yet seen before I can accept it. Mr. Massey tells us that “authority is abhorrent to the Western mind.”

It depends very much on the kind of authority. I must assure my friends on both sides of me that they have misunderstood my position. I am not attacking anybody; I am not separating myself from any with whom it has been my privilege to act. I am not standing out on the side of any set of men against any other set of men. I am in a position of interrogation. I put my questions and pause for my reply. I assert my belief in much that Colonel Olcott propounds, and I am profoundly conscious of having derived from him, and especially from the honoured teacher whose views he expounds, much valuable light. But I am as far as I ever was from abandoning the banner which my hand has held for these seven years. I am occupied in holding it up now, and my eye can detect no rent in it from the attacks which it has sustained.

That some, that very many have no personal evidence of the return of the departed is unfortunately true. I am so far from denying that the evidence is not common that I lay stress upon the fact. If it were, I should not be writing this paper; for those who have achieved that platform of faith would not need any arguments of mine to defend it.

That immortality is conditional is, or may be, a misleading statement. What is meant by immortality? Miss Kislbury's thoughtful and able letter is pervaded by a fallacy. St. Paul and other writers, she tells me, propound the theory of conditional immortality. The Church recognises it, and obviates the prospective annihilation by baptism. The theory permeates the language of piety, and is found in the parable of the sheep and the goats. I rubbed my eyes when I read this, and looked up my references. “These shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.” Where is the conditional immortality there? Both sheep and goats are immortal; one in bliss, and the other in woe. The Bible gives no sanction whatever to the notion of potential immortality. It roundly asserts the indestructibility of the soul of man, and its endless life in heaven or hell. What Miss K. means is not immortality, but endless happiness; life eternal in opposition to eternal torment. No conditional immortality, as such, is predicated in the Christian system of any soul.

Mr. Massey makes much of my saying that some souls, by deliberate and conscious choice, sink into annihilation, and says that I am only separated by a thin division from the theory I reject. I fail to see the cogency of his argument. I do not *know* that any soul is ever annihilated. It may, as I hold, sink into depths of woe, be deprived of light, and live wholly in the filthy grovelling of a base material existence. In such cases the spirit is starved, and it sinks lower and lower until beyond spiritual ken. It *may* then be ruined, lost; as I also believe it *may* be saved. At any rate the cases, if there be such, are *the exceptions which, by their rarity, only prove the rule.*

This is a very different thing, surely, from that potential winning of something not inherently ours, that survival of the fittest, which Col. Olcott promulgates as a natural appendage to the Darwinian system—a *rule, not an exception.* It is another thing too from that notion of a separate overshadowing soul, which may be withdrawn from me even here. I believe that I have *within me* that which I cannot lose, save by a course of wilful sin deliberately persisted in to the bitter end, that which is mine to develop, cherish, to preserve; and this I value far more than that notion of a far off gloomy, brooding Presence, which is no part of me, though I may, perhaps, reach up to it; and which is so far from being the heritage immortal in each, that it is only gained by few.

This I hear of (as I should have said) for the first time as a part of the Theosophist platform, which is propounded to us by those “of the inner ring” as “a better guide to

happiness than Christian Theology,” as a part, in fact, of “the Oriental religious philosophies.” I have read both Mr. Maitland and Mr. Massey's review of him; and when I did so the idea jarred on me as strongly as it does now. I find no room for it in my system of religion, no countenance for it on the Western theology which I know, and no beauty that I should accept it in preference to what I hold as a “more excellent way” of belief.

This, be it observed, is the attitude of inquiry. If there are reasons why we Westerns should accept an Eastern philosophy or religion, why we Spiritualists should abandon one faith in favour of a new belief, let those reasons be set forth with exactitude.

It remains for me, leaving out much that I should like to say, to correct a misapprehension caused by my own words. I said that the return to us of the departed spirits of humanity was *the central fact* in Spiritualism. I do not, on reflection, maintain that position. I have already pointed out how the truth slipped into the background, and while, to me, from my own experience, it is a great truth, an assured fact, I quite see and understand that many share Mr. Massey's position, and have no personal evidence of the fact. I can readily see what a difference that would make in my mind.

Two lines will be sufficient for me to supply any omission which might be deemed uncourteous to my friends. If my words seem to be those of an antagonist, I beg them to believe that I write nothing in opposition; nothing in any interest save that of truth; and, I maintain, a mind free, not only from prejudice, but, I hope, from any feeling that could hinder me from receiving new truth. My position as yet is one that has undergone no change. A Spiritualist convinced of the truth of spiritual communion, I plead guilty to no “egotism of the emotions,” any more than I should to any such charge levelled against any display of my affections. I have affections, and I have emotions; and I am not ashamed of their legitimate exercise. I have known the impulses of affection to be true when the logic of the brain is at fault. I know the use, and I know the misuse of the emotional side of nature, and I am hardly likely to be accused of giving too loose a rein to enthusiasm.

Convinced, moreover, of the necessity of rigid investigation and careful scrutiny of all alleged facts, I am anxious to reduce to lines of scientific observation all that can be so treated. I earnestly desire to look into every phase of truth and to listen with attention to all who can teach me anything. I must be allowed to say that I do or do not agree with my teachers, and in so far I have a *Western abhorrence of Authority*, and no further. I have my own experience which I cannot give to others, my own faith which I will not yield, though I would gladly share it with my friends. I know what I believe, and why, and am prepared to defend myself. But of late I have felt as one might feel who saw a living and breathing body strapped to the operating table whilst various Theorists, each with the scalpel that he has made, is hacking and hewing its limbs and familiar lineaments in pieces, in the hope of finding evidence of his idea. And meantime the spirit has well-nigh fled, and the surgeons stand in grievous risk of assisting at the autopsy of a corpse.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

SEANCES FOR INVESTIGATORS.

A *séance* for inquirers was held at 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, on Wednesday, the 16th January, Mr. William Eglinton being the medium.

Mr. Eglinton sat as usual with his legs and feet exposed to the light, his coat being sewn at the elbows, cuffs, and breast, besides being bound to his chair with tape tied in a very artistic manner by, I believe, a sceptical investigator.

The voice known as “Joey's” was soon heard, and he at once pronounced the circle to be a very harmonious one. After a few friendly greetings to some old friends, he gave several manifestations of his power, by ringing the bell, playing on the Oxford chimes, shaking hands with two ladies, and raising the cover of a book when placed on the medium's knees. He also desired that a piece of paper and

a pencil should be placed on the medium's lap, when he wrote short messages to two of those present. He also, at request, wrote some words in the pocket book of one of the inquirers.

He finished the *séance* by desiring that some one should enter the cabinet *immediately* after a hand had appeared; this was done, and the inquirer found the medium's hands securely fastened.

These *séances* are doubtless very valuable, inasmuch as new investigators really begin at the beginning and in the light. As "Joey" says, they learn their A B C before being puzzled and astonished by the higher phenomena.

JOHN JAMES,
For the Séance Committee, in Charge.

MAN AS A SPIRIT.

BY GEORGE WYLD, M.D., EDIN.

THE paper by Colonel Olcott on *The Views of the Theosophists*, and my paper on *Man as a Spirit* have had this good effect—they have evoked a bolder, stronger, and more profound expression of opinion on these occult subjects than might otherwise have occupied the pages of *The Spiritualist*. In the place of a continual reiteration of phenomenal papers, there have been initiated a series of papers by men and women profoundly in earnest, and the result must be for good.

It is possible that this discussion may divide the Spiritual Church into two schools, the high and the low, the esoteric and the exoteric; but let us rather believe that the end may be the establishment of a broad church of spiritual truth and love.

With reference to the criticisms on my paper, I would, with Mr. Massey, most strongly dissent from the statement of "M.A., Oxon.," that a belief in our intercourse with the spirits of the departed is the cardinal doctrine of our faith, the heart and corner-stone of Spiritualism." I trust sincerely it is not so, for if it were, our faith would appear to me to rest on a most dangerous and untrustworthy foundation. The essence of true Spiritualism is to me the conviction that *I am a spirit*, a part of the great Central Spirit, and, as such, possess the capabilities of spiritual powers here, and the inheritance of a spiritual life hereafter. That the spirits of the departed do from time to time reappear in our midst we all admit, and that spirits of a low order may from time to time produce physical phenomena I also admit; but I maintain that the spirits of the living also appear and disappear as doubles, and that other spiritual phenomena can also be produced by these spirits.

"M.A., Oxon.," characterises my theory as "a scientific something which may amuse the *savan*." If this is all the effect which my paper has produced on his mind, then I feel that he has not comprehended its essence, for in my paper I attempt to express views which have more or less occupied my mind for thirty-nine years, and the writing of which was produced under strong emotion of the mind.

I repeat—Man is a Spirit, and as such possesses the same powers as the spirits of the departed. Further, I maintain that when he is entranced he is in proportion to the depth of his entrancement more or less a *departed* spirit.

When a clairvoyant travels, say five thousand miles in a few minutes, and reveals to us the secrets of those at that distance, that clairvoyant is a departed spirit.

Again, if chairs and tables are moved by departed spirits, so also can chairs and tables be moved by the spirit-force of the adept. If a foreign spirit can materialise itself, so also can the adept bring before us animal and human forms; and if the ghost of the departed now and again reappear, so also does the double of the living.

If so, then it must become a difficult problem to determine what proportion of physical phenomena are produced by the spirits of the departed, and what proportion by the spirits of the living.

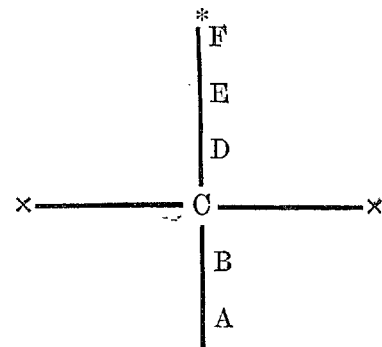
It has been objected that the phenomena produced by adepts are the result of intense will power; but on the other hand the double is generally projected not only without an effect, but without even the knowledge of the living man, and if so, why should other physical phenomena not also be produced without our consciousness. The clairvoyante is in

her normal condition unconscious of her clairvoyance, why should she not be equally unconscious of the physical operations of her unknown spirit?

If it is again asked how can the spirits of the living produce the phenomena without our consciousness? I reply the soul or earthly man does not know the spirit man, for the spirit is *hidden* within him. This has always been the view I have held, and I therefore feel much indebted to Mr. Fawcett, who, in *The Spiritualist* of the 11th January, quotes Swedenborg thus: "Every man has an inferior or exterior mind, and a mind interior or superior. These two minds are *altogether distinct*, by the inferior mind man is in the natural world together with men there; but by the superior mind he is in the spiritual world with angels there. These two minds are so distinct that man, so long as he lives in the world, does not know what is performing within himself in his superior mind, and when he becomes a spirit which is immediately after death [or entrancement] he does not know what is performing in his inferior mind."—A.C., 527.

I arrived at my view from my study of entrancement, and Swedenborg did so, I presume, in his own entranced condition.

I must again refer my readers to my diagram.



A B represents the soul or earth man. C the balance point between the soul and spirit, and D E F the spirit man. x x represents the wall of partition or river of oblivion separating the two worlds.

By this diagram it can be *seen* how the soul does not know the spirit, or the spirit know the soul, although it is said of A. J. Davis that from frequent entrancement his soul and spirit are more or less conscious of each other, and in our perfect condition "the spirit will bring all things to our remembrance," and thus complete the two in one identity. In our present imperfect condition the two are in a state of confusion or antagonism. "The flesh [or soul] lusteth against the spirit and the spirit lusteth against the flesh [or soul]."

When the soul returns to its normal condition from entrancement it passes through the point of oblivion, C, in total ignorance of the wisdom of its entranced condition.

The second grand objection to my theory is that it is monstrous to say that our controls are our own spirits, for we ourselves are simple, honest men; but if my control calls itself Dictator or Excelsior, it must be a liar if it is my own spirit.

This objection is at first sight a difficulty, but my diagram may enable us to see how it may be solved.

But, in the first place, the term *liar* is, I think, too strong; and if I were disposed to accept of it, might I not reply: Dictator, Excelsior (or any other title, not being the names of any human beings) are in giving these signatures not altogether truthful; and if it is said these are the mere signs of departed spirits who give privately their true names, it might be asked why withhold the true name? If the revelations are true and the individuals objective realities, why not declare themselves and permit us to judge of their identity by internal evidence?

However, to return, I would remark that entrancement is of every gradation from mere spirit reverie at D, in my diagram, to philosophic entrancement at E, and ecstatic entrancement in God at F.

If so, then the entranced soul, passing into spirit life as far as D, only reaches the place of spirit reverie, or dreaming, and is in a condition to receive any impression presented to it or dictated to it.

Let us for a moment illustrate this theory by the facts of what is called *electro-biology*.

Take, say, John Young, and partly mesmerise him into the state of reverie, and then ask him his name. He at once replies, "John Young." The operator replies, "No; you are Thomas Knox." The youth replies, "No; I am John Young." The operator imperiously asserts, "I tell you, sir, your name is Thomas Knox." The patient replies, "Well, that is queer; but I now know I am Thomas Knox." The operator proceeds further, and says, "You are quite mistaken; you are not Thomas Knox; you are only a chair." Thomas Knox finds this rather too much, and resents the insult; but the operator again imperiously insists on it that he is a chair. Thomas Knox now gives in, and says, "Well, that is queer; but I now see and feel that I am a chair."

Apply these facts to the spirit man at D. He occupies in the spirit life the corresponding position to the earth man at B. He is in the position of spirit reverie, and can be, by his own soul, or by dreamy spirits surrounding him, biologically into the belief of anything, and in such instances may declare himself to be Dictator, Excelsior, Plato, or Benjamin Franklin.

This is the explanation I would give of many of our communications from the supposed spirits of the departed. It is the view I have always held, and, much to my satisfaction, I met with a corroboration of this view on reading, for the first time, the *Seeress of Prevorst* last week. The Seeress says, in effect, "The spirit should be true and dominate over the soul; but if pressed by the soul with questioning, the spirit may consent to lie."

The soul of any man possessing a dominant idea will dominate over his own spirit until that spirit has risen so high into the heavens as to assume the master and dominion over the soul for its salvation.

But it may be replied we have high inspirational speakers and writers whose assertion is that they are controlled by foreign spirits possessing definite names. To this objection I would still reply that the souls of these writers and speakers may still dominate their spirits.

The view I take is, that when our spirits are highly entranced they are not controlled by departed human spirits, but are bathed, as it were, in the light, and wisdom, and knowledge of "the spirits of the just made perfect," and dwelling with the angels and with the spirit of God—utter the oracle "Thus saith the Lord." They never address us in the third person, they are not controlled, they do not surrender their own individuality, but as spirit born men and women speak the words of wisdom, truth, and holiness.

No Hebrew prophet was ever controlled by any departed spirit, and no evangelist ever spoke but as from his own God enlightened spirit, and Christ spoke from himself as the divine messenger. It is true as *Scrutator* suggests that Moses and Elias and angels came to Christ, but they came to comfort and minister to Him, but never to control Him.

I do not deny that earth-bound spirits or "elementaries" may control our mediums, but I would urge that it is safer, wiser, and holier by a perfect life to develop the angel which is within us, and to establish him as *our own familiar spirit*, our daily guide and friend, and "Comforter, who will guide us into all truth."

The early mesmerisers, knowing nothing of foreign spirit controls, produced clairvoyants who reasoned and spoke in their own spirit personality, and it is only since the subject of Spiritualism has become popularised that the idea of spirit control has become so prevalent.

For some time past I have had the assistance of Bella Tilley in cases of difficult diagnoses. So far as I can judge her medical opinion and advice when entranced have always been correct. While she herself in her normal condition is a most simple and truthful young woman. When she first came to me, she said an Indian spirit, a boy with a cloth only round his middle always came to her, and gave her medical insight and knowledge, and that his name was *Wise-Acre*. One day I said to her I think it is not *Wise-Acre*, but your own spirit which sees the cases. She replied, "I always see *Wise-Acre*." Months passed without further remarks on the subject, but only the other day she said to me, "I never see *Wise-Acre* now, I can't think what has become of him." I

replied, "But you see cases as well as ever, how is that?" "Well, I don't know I just see the cases myself."

The bearing of this confession on the question before us, seems to me most important. It is true Bella Tilley is a simple young woman without any knowledge of theories or philosophies, but her evidence may be all the more valuable on that account, for deep things are sometimes "hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."

With these views I must emphatically deny that *Scrutator* has any ground for saying "our own spirits are, according to Dr. Wyld, all liars on principle."

I never denied that Home could see spirits; I only expressed the belief that when he saw and described my deceased cousin, he saw her in my mind. *Scrutator* also thinks that the hidden angel and the kingdom of heaven within us, of which I speak, must be falsities if they so mislead us; but I have explained that the spirit in the state of reverie is *not* an angel of light, and that the spirit on its journey to heaven, if it pass through the region of spirit reverie is, for the time, in a purgatorial rather than in a heavenly condition.

Scrutator also fears that "modern Spiritualism may dribble away into mere psychology." But I reply that true psychology, or the wisdom of the soul, is destined to rescue modern Spiritualism from the dangers of a superstitious idolatry. "Regard not them who have familiar spirits: neither seek unto wizards, to be defiled by them. I am the Lord thy God. (Lev. xix. 31.)"

For scientific purposes the physical phenomena, whether produced by the spirits of the dead or of the living are profoundly important, for it is thus, possibly, that the mystery of matter may be revealed to us.

But physical mediums are subject to great trials and temptations, and often are injured in body and mind just in proportion to their mediumistic powers. This fact alone would indicate that the highest Spiritualism is not thus to be evolved. Spirits would appear to feed on mediums as vampires. Such spirits cannot be holy.

Swedenborg tells us that in spirit life "we surround ourselves with the forms of our affections." How profoundly important, then, must it be that we "set our affections on things above," and how imminent must be the danger of that man who trusts more to the control of a foreign departed human spirit than to "the still small voice" speaking in his soul—the Holy Spirit of the living God.

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

A REMARKABLE MATERIALISATION SEANCE.

BY A. J. CRANSTOWN.

MR. COLLEY informs me that he has written to you relative to Mr. de Veh's letter; now, in response to what you required from me in a late *Spiritualist*, with reference to that same letter, I hasten to inform you that this evening our circle held a *seance* at my house, with Dr. Monck, during which, first, a female form (Alice) materialised and remained with us for a short time. Afterwards a male materialised form appeared, which from its voice I believe to be Samuel Wheeler; this form walked about the room and spoke to me a few words. Afterwards the Mahadi was materialised just as fully and as perfectly as I ever saw him at Dr. Monck's rooms. He walked about the room with all the apparent volition and power of any living man, and remained with us for at least half an hour.

I shall send you fuller details of this *seance*, but I think it better to give you this short note, hastily written, so that it may be in time for you to add to Mr. Colley's letter.

I may add that Dr. Monck was never out of our sight, and remained in the same room with us during these three manifestations. The light was very good (once or twice turned up to the full), and enabled us to see the manifestations with the greatest accuracy.

23, Cathcart-road, S.W., Tuesday evening, January 22nd, 1878.

At the fortnightly meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists, on Monday evening next, to be held at 38, Great Russell-street, Mr. C. C. Massey will read a paper on "Ideas of Time, Space, and Substance."

A TEST SEANCE WITH MR. WILLIAMS.

LAST Wednesday night Mr. C. E. Williams, professional medium, gave a *séance* in the dark at the residence of Miss Ottley, 41, Denbigh-street, Pimlico, London, whose house he had never entered in his life before.

During the whole of the manifestations one of his hands was held by Miss Ottley, and the other by her friend, Mr. Inglefield.

Under these conditions, playing musical instruments belonging to the residents in the house, flew about over the heads of the sitters, touching the heads gently in their flight; a hand-bell was several times knocked against the high ceiling by request, and the same was done by a banjo; also, the materialised spirit "John King" appeared four times robed in white, floating over the centre of the table, his head, eyes, nose, beard, and drapery being seen by all present, by means of a phosphorescent-looking light in his hands, which flashed up momentarily. All this time the medium's hands were held as stated, so his whereabouts was satisfactorily accounted for.

When at the close of the *séance* a light was struck, a music stool was found on the top of the table; it had been lifted over the heads of the sitters and placed there so gently, that nobody knew till they saw it, that it had been moved from its usual position.

The witnesses to these phenomena were Miss Ottley, Miss Emmet, Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, the Chevalier Habicht, Mr. Inglefield, Miss Laura Emmet, and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

THE HON. J. L. O'Sullivan is about to leave Paris for San Francisco.

THE publication of reports of recent meetings of the National Association of Spiritualists, and of the Psychological Society, is unavoidably postponed till next week.

MR. QUARMBY, of Oldham, wishes to return his best thanks to all the Spiritualist friends who have shown him civilities, and have given him facilities for attending their meetings and witnessing manifestations during his recent stay in London.

AFTER Dr. Slade's return to Berlin from Vienna, the chief of the criminal department of police at the former place proceeded to worry him for having no recognised means of subsistence, and told him that he must leave the country. He and his party have accordingly left for St. Petersburg, where his powers will be tested by a scientific committee. What are the American ambassadors at foreign courts doing about this intolerant treatment of an American subject, who has won the good-will at home and abroad of all who have had the honour of knowing him?

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE' SAKE.—We mentioned last week that Mr. Henry Pride, a well-known Liverpool Spiritualist, had been fined the full penalty and costs for refusing to have his children vaccinated. Mr. Pride has thus met his sixth summons for preferring private judgment to public opinion. The *St. Pancras Gazette*, of the 19th inst., reports the decision of the St. Pancras Guardians to prosecute afresh Mr. William Tebb, of Regent's-park, for a like offence. Mr. Tebb has already been convicted five times. In view of these continuous prosecutions, we should like to ask an energetic vaccinator on what ground he would condemn Smithfield fires, or the Spanish inquisition, or witch-burning, if public opinion were in favour of the same? No doubt Parliament does not wish to punish people for their convictions, so could not some middle course be adopted? Could not some system of registration of unvaccinated individuals be established, and their subsequent liability to small-pox watched? Could not non-vaccination, under certain restrictions be recognised by the law? What medical men say about vaccination is of little value, for we all know that they and their journals often state what is not true about psychological phenomena.

ANTI-VIVISECTION.—Last Tuesday morning a number of friends assembled at the invitation of Mrs. Gordon, at 11, Leinster-gardens, London, to receive information respecting the objects and work of the London Anti-Vivisection Society. Lord William Lennox presided, and among the speakers were the Rev. Mr. Strickland, the Rev. Sinclair Pattison, M.D., Mr. Francis, Dr. Ward, Dr. De Noe Walker, and Mr. R. Cooke. The various speakers advocated the abolition of vivisection on moral, scriptural, and other grounds. It was broadly laid down that it was wrong to do evil that good might come; that there was no evidence that good had been done to any great extent by vivisection; that the onus of proof of any good having been done rested with vivisectionists; that supposing any good had been done, it would be better to suffer pain personally than to subject to torture helpless animals who had no remedy at law or otherwise. The last sentiment was loudly applauded. It was stated that further information as to the objects and aims of the society might be obtained of the secretary, 180, Brompton-road, S.W. Several votes of thanks were given at the close, including one to Mrs. Gordon for having brought the subject under the consideration of those present, and which was responded to by Mr. Gordon, M.P.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE REINCARNATION THEORY.

BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

WHILE having a sitting a few days since with that excellent trance medium, Mr. Fletcher, I was informed that in most cases the connection between a person and his guardian spirit is one of mutual advantage. With very few exceptions those who quit this world have not obtained from it all that it is intended to supply of intellectual and moral training, and until they have done this they are unable to quit the earth and set out on the path of purely spiritual advancement. In order to obtain such training it is necessary that they should attach themselves to some person with whom they are both physically and mentally in harmony, and through him obtain the new ideas and ever growing knowledge of the earth-life. To this person they impart, by mental impression, ideas and impulses connected with matters of which they may have a more extended knowledge. These impressions can be best communicated while the recipients are in a somewhat passive mental state, and I was much struck by the remark that while our *first* ideas and impulses are usually our own (as no impression can be given while our minds are actively engaged), our *second* thoughts on the matter are often those of our spirit guides, such thoughts appearing to come to us, we know not how, at a time when we had ceased to think actively on the subject. The well-known saying, "Second thoughts are best," may thus have a deep spiritual meaning. Of course, it is not to be supposed that all second thoughts have this origin. The more thought we give to a subject the more likely we are to arrive at correct conclusions; but how often, after having as we think settled a question satisfactorily, an idea occurs which we describe by saying, "It has just struck me that I had better do so-and-so," and we do it and find it for the best; though while ourselves earnestly thinking of the matter this particular course of action had quite escaped us.

Now, if this intimate communion between a spirit and a man is as necessary to the former as it is beneficial to the latter, it may be described as a *spiritual* reincarnation by which the spirit is enabled to complete that preparation for a higher life which is, on the spiritual hypothesis, the sole explanation and justification of the existence of a material universe. And, further, if this *spiritual* reincarnation, the reality of which such ample proofs are given in the writings of every class of Spiritualists, does really serve the purpose of carrying on the earthly education of spirits, there can be no need for that actual *material* reincarnation of which fully one half the spirits who communicate with us profess their entire ignorance.

I have little doubt that these ideas have been already better expressed by others, but they certainly struck me as being both suggestive and novel, and coming as they professed to do directly from a spirit-guide, they were very impressive.

I may here add that my first sitting with Mr. Fletcher a few weeks ago carried to my mind a fuller conviction of the reality of spirit life than all the physical phenomena I have ever witnessed. There was no *absolute* test, but I obtained information and advice which I value greatly, and the whole of the communications were given in a *form* which could not have been obtained from my own mind, even though most of the actual facts were within my knowledge.

THE reading of a paper by Miss Kislingbury, at a meeting of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, has been postponed until Feb. 4th, at her request.

MATERIALISATION PHENOMENA.—The Rev. Thomas Colley, late curate of Portsmouth, writes:—I have this evening, Jan. 22nd, 1878, at Mr. Cranstoun's residence, 23, Cathcart-road, South Kensington, seen three forms successively grow from Dr. Monck, and walk about the drawing-room easily and naturally in a good light, sometimes turned up to the full; first, a female form named "Alice;" next, "Samuel Wheeler," speaking with voice as when entrancing his medium; and last "The Mahedi," who stayed with us about half an hour in all courteous familiarity, and then, as with the others, was reabsorbed into the body of Dr. Monck, he never out of our sight for one moment.

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.]

THE EFFICACY OF CURSING.

SIR,—Knowing your interest in all tested and proved spiritual experiences, possibly you may find a corner in your valuable paper for the following.

Some months since I had to give up my bed to my daughter Lady L—and her infant. To improvise a bed on a lounge in my room was the work of a few moments, and night after night I lay awake thinking seriously about various troubles. One night a spirit spoke, whose voice I did not recognise, though I felt that it was a kind friend who was speaking. After bidding me “Good evening,” he asked how it was I had exercised so little judgment when God had given me reason to guide me? This puzzled me, for I could form no idea of *what* was meant, when he said, “Do you mean to tell me you are not aware of the dire influence of the lounge you are lying on?” I answered that I knew nothing about it. He then said, “It was the favourite seat and lounge of a drunkard, who, not content with the poison he put into it by his diseased mesmeric influence, also put a curse on it, as to no rest to any one who should even sit or lie on it, and you are being thoroughly poisoned by it, so be advised by me, and send it out of the room.”

Early the next morning I sent a message to the landlady, asking her if any such person had ever used this lounge, when she told me that an invalid (who had died from drunkenness) never would sit or lie on any other seat, and, when dying, “*he put a curse on it, that no one should ever rest on it.*” On having this “cursed” lounge removed, I was puzzled to know where to find another bed, and was in the act of asking the servant to give me the sofa from the drawing-room, when again this spirit spoke, and said, “No! Take the small bed from your maid and use it, as it is freer from this dire influence.” I did so, but kept the same bed and bed-clothes, when again the spirit came, and said, “Where is your reason? What is the use of removing the poisonous lounge when you keep the bed that has lain on it, and the bed-clothes tucked about it?” I then remonstrated, saying that the sheets had only been put on the night before, when this quaint answer was given, “Every physician is entitled to his fee, so I will accept the laundress’s price as my fee; put your own bed on it, and never tamper with yourself by changing again, as you are too sensitive for such experiments.” I then said rather irritably, “If you saw this month since, why have you not told me before?” The answer was, “As a rule, we are not allowed to interfere with your reason and intelligence, suffering being the developing of such; but I could not bear to see you suffer so fearfully, hence my outspoken warning.”

To-day, while reading of the death of a dear old friend, a celebrated homoeopathic physician, of New York (Dr. Carroll Dunham), the spirit said, “Now, do you know *who* it was who warned you as to that lounge?” On my asking him how he had traced me, as years had passed since I last wrote him, he said that he had unexpectedly met my brother (who had also been a physician at New York), and, on inquiring after me, had been told I had long been a great sufferer; he then volunteered to visit me, and immediately saw my ignorance of these common laws of mesmerism, and with his old skill gave me relief. There is one thing I would observe here, my brother being an allopath, never relieved me of any pain, while among the numbers of other physicians I had tried, I never met with one so successful as the dear, good Dr. Carroll Dunham, who for twenty-six years was a true friend as well as skilful physician, and in all the cavilling as to Christianity (?), my whole soul goes out in thankfulness to God for the knowledge of our beautiful Spiritualism, showing that death does not stultify the heart nor intelligence. The individuality of this spirit was indicated by his usual prompt diagnosing the cause of the suffering, and his usual prompt relief, setting at defiance all old stereotyped rules. X.

THE SANDOWN MURDERER.

SIR,—Seeing in *The Spiritualist* paper of the 11th Jan. a statement made at a *séance* regarding a murder committed in Sandown in 1860, I have made some inquiry as to whether the circumstance was true. It appears quite true, and the man was a sergeant, or what some say a gunner. His name was Whitworth (not Walworth). He killed his wife and six children in the Fort, and afterwards cut his throat, falling down in the room, where he remained till about twelve o’clock the next day, when he left the Fort, and met a man of the name of Robert Hoar, to whom he stated that some one had killed his wife and children. He was bleeding, but Hoar thought he had been fighting. Whitworth then went to the Barracks at the upper end of the town, where he reported himself, and stated he had committed the deed. He was afterwards sent to Winchester for trial, but being in an unsound state of mind was sent to a lunatic asylum.

Robert Hoar, who has given the above statement, thinks he died about six months afterwards. Other parties think he was living till very recently.

He was considered a sober man. Should you wish further inquiries made, shall be happy to do it.

ROBERT NUNN.

Elibank, Sandown, Isle of Wight, Jan. 17th.

MORE SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE DARK.

SIR,—It is a long time since I have written to you, and for the old simple reason that—“Story, God bless you! I had none to tell, sir.” In my last I mentioned how Firman had been summoned over to England on account of the alarming condition of his mother. He remained absent five weeks. After his return it was about five weeks more before any manifestations came through him. It took all of the Count

de Bullet’s wonderful patience and perseverance to persist under such discouragement. But we had several times before experienced the fact that, after a “great upset,” the revival of Firman’s singular mediumship is a slow and difficult process. So we persevered, even after hope had sunk very low with us, though John King would still strive to keep its flickering flame alive by his words, spoken and written, which were pretty much all we could get. At last incipient and partial success in photography in the dark began, together with an occasional *séance* of the old sort, in which certain materialised faces and forms would show more or less well. The photographs at first would come very imperfectly. Still they were positive facts of spirit-photography in the dark, and as such were, each and all, important facts—important as facts and as encouragement to perseverance. In these matters failures are often not less instructive and convincing than successes. At last within the past fortnight we have had a number of good and satisfactory photographs. They have been entirely of the two beautiful young girl spirits, “Angela” and “Alexandrine.” There have been efforts to photograph my mother, but thus far unsuccessful, she having less “fluidic” strength to hold together well and long enough before the uncapped camera. They are all now draped. You know that in several instances before such was not the case.

I may mention another point. At the outset of this spirit-photography in the dark. I was not actually in the *séance* room during the operation. My business was to be in the adjacent room, separated only by a door, with a view to my counting on my watch, in the light, the allotted number of minutes for the *poses*. When all would be ready to begin, in the *séance* room, where I knew that there existed no possible earthly means of creating artificial light available for photography, I would pass out, the Count alone remaining inside to uncup and recap the camera, and then to replace a new glass for another attempt. I thus could not then declare myself to have been an actual eye-witness of the black dark in which the pictures were impressed on the sensitised collodion, but his testimony was quite equivalent to that of my own presence. (I repeat that the Count always brought each day new and fresh plates.) But through all this subsequent period of over a fortnight, I have been inside the *séance* room of the dark photography. I can, therefore, add my own personal ocular testimony (superfluous as it may be) to that which before I had derived from the Count de Bullet—to the effect that here was this marvellous fact of, first, a black dark *séance* room or cabinet, in which was put up a camera, containing a fresh new collodionised and sensitised plate just brought by the Count (sometimes two or three of them); second, of the whole photographic operation being done without the presence, in that black dark room, of a ray of what we know as “light;” third, of the directing spirit, called “John King,” having given his directions when to uncup the camera, and afterwards when to recap it, the *pose* of the spirit from before it being said to be finished; fourth, then the plate (supposed or hoped to have been impressed), being taken out by the Count, and by him put through the ordinary process of the development, as any photographer would conduct it; and then, fifth, sometimes nothing appearing on the plate (failure), or else at other times faces or figures, more or less perfect, appearing there—and no mistake; with what the French call “the brutal fact;” that is to say the simple downright fact, as testified afterwards by the printing of them by the photographer, Fontaine, Boulevard des Capucines.

The latter, by the way, knows nothing of Spiritualism, nor of the origin of the plates thus brought to him. All that we have told him is that they were taken in the dark. “Then it is not *photography*,” he said, “but some other chemical action.” But it *is* photography, and at the same time a chemical action; for John King’s exposition of it is that he collects the elements of those portions of light, the actinic or chemical rays, which alone act chemically on the sensitized collodion, though invisible to our eyes. These pictures are therefore produced by precisely the same chemical light which acts in ordinary photography. Once only it was made visible to the Count, in a great, irregularly round mass of brilliancy, about a couple of feet in diameter, with a considerable number of outlying bits of light, from the size of an orange to a small point. Mrs. Firman, who is clairvoyant, has spoken of seeing what she called a “sort of gangway of light,” from the spirit posing to the circular opening of the camera.

The plates never show the slightest trace of background, though the figures pose close in front of a curtain, which hangs in vertical folds. In ordinary light these folds of the curtain would certainly show on the photograph. I have asked John King whether any of the light which he collected and cast on the spirit forms, to be thence reflected to the camera, was also cast on the background, or whether it was confined to the figures. “Very little,” he replied; “we can’t afford to waste it on background.”

He has told us more than once that it is hard work for him, because he has to do two distinct operations. “I have first to materialise the forms, and then to make the light. Sometimes, before I can get up the light, the form has melted away, and by the time I get it together again, the light has faded. That is why we have so many failures. The atmospheric conditions must be good, and the power must be strong.” He has told us that with time and perseverance we shall get photographs as perfect as any taken in the sunlight.

We have tried the experiment of blending natural material objects with the materialised spirit forms, by bringing artificial flowers (a full-blown tea rose, and two bunches of violets, the one dark, the other light), and requesting that they should put them in their hair or in their hands. And it was done with perfect success. The rose came finely in the hair of “Angela,” and, on the same day, when the Count brought the two bunches of violets, they appeared in the hair of “Angela” and “Alexandrine,” standing side by side. Also to-day the Count brought a long piece (six metres) of violet-coloured gauze stuff, with a view to its being employed in the drapery of the forms, as they might please. The result has been a very fine picture

of "Angela" with this gauze veil thrown over her head, framing her beautiful face, and then wrapped over her figure over other drapery visible under it. In regard to these flowers and stuff John King has required them to be put inside the cabinet just before beginning, so as to be "mesmerised." I once asked if that was necessary, for them to be acted on by his light. "Certainly," he at once replied, "how could they otherwise appear in the picture?"

For several days (in view of my near departure for California) he has been trying to "bring forward" my mother, but thus far without success. He promises that if he does not succeed before I leave, it will be done afterwards, and the picture sent to me. It was a long time before Angela and Alexandrine succeeded. "Angela" wrote to-day (through Mrs. Firman's hand) that she was so glad her picture had come out so well (it seems on the glass to be the best yet obtained), but was very sorry that "good Mrs. O'Sullivan" had not yet succeeded, though she had tried very hard. John King told me yesterday, in reference to that of my mother, that I was too anxious for it—that that condition of my mind was a hindrance, and that I should try to keep in a perfectly passive condition.

We are promised that of "Glaucus" next. I asked if it would be like his bust. "Of course," was the reply, "as there are the same features it must be like."

And now, one last word, specially addressed to the small number of persons whom I have heard of as connected with No. 38 (once rather irreverently spoken of by John King as "the Russell-street lot"), who, in view of the photographs of the busts, took up the notion that we over here were deceived by tricky spirits, who brought in (apported) plaster casts, or statue heads, which they dipped into the hot paraffin. [They did not explain how those supposed marble or plaster heads got out of the moulds afterwards.] We have now several photographs of "Angela" and of "Alexandrine," sometimes singly, sometimes side by side. And they are the same faces which show in their busts, and which we had often before seen. And yet no two of them are exactly the same. The form of face and features are substantially the same, yet the hair and other details are always different. I conclude with leaving to my friends, the authors of that marble-cast theory, this little nut to crack, and hope it will not break their wisdom-teeth. All my efforts have failed to elicit from "the Research Committee" the cross-examining interrogations which were foreshadowed to me, but I shall be happy in a few days to discuss it with them *vis à voce*.

J. L. O'SULLIVAN.

Paris, Jan. 21st, 1878.

WHAT IS THE INTELLIGENCE?

SIR,—It was with some surprise that I saw so much of my correspondence addressed to my esteemed friend, Mr. Massey, quoted by him in your paper of December 28th, and also to see the allusions to my suggestions in the following number, by two such able minds as Miss Kislinsky and Dr. Carter Blake.

Toward the close of his remarks, Dr. Carter Blake asks for the reasons which led me to assume the existence of a spirit independently of the minds of Miss Kislinsky or of Mr. Watkins.

Recognising that it is easier to ask a question than it may be to answer it, and also that in answering one question we only open the door to another lying just at the back of it, and so on without end, my task seems rather difficult.

The question may not strike your readers as it did me when I first saw it. I could only think of Dr. Carter Blake as having climbed to the top of the ladder, where, being comfortably seated, he deliberately pulled it up after him, before inviting me to join his company; and as nothing would afford me greater pleasure, I accept the invitation, but am compelled to erect the fabrics on which I make the attempt, leaving it to your readers to judge how far I may be successful.

Presuming that Dr. Blake will not affirm that either the mind of Miss Kislinsky or of Mr. Watkins *did* move the pencil, we come directly to the question—What did?

Miss Kislinsky tells us that a name was written under circumstances which preclude the possibility of its having been accomplished by either herself or Mr. Watkins. Now, I claim that, in the writing thus obtained, we have the strongest evidence that it was produced by something, call it what you please, which had not only the knowledge how to spell words in the English language, but was able to perform the mechanical art of writing as well.

I need not tell your readers how these arts are acquired, as they are all sufficiently familiar with the process. But I may remark that I have always supposed, and still do, that a syllable or word was never written independently of human intelligence and its agency. If this was an isolated case it might appear more difficult.

Fortunately, it is only one of many thousands where independent writing has been obtained. If the matter written, enclosed in an envelope bearing the proper stamp, had been received by post, the person receiving it would not have had the slightest doubt of its coming from the person whose signature was attached.

I claim, then, that the writing is only produced by persons who have first learned to write, and who claim that they are individuals who once lived, and still exist, after having passed through the change called death. In support of their claim I submit that the following instance—one only of many that occur to me—will be sufficient.

Five or six years ago a gentleman of Louisiana, or Mississippi, called at our house in 43rd Street, New York, and asked for a sitting with Dr. Slade.

On returning to the reception-room, after the sitting was over, he told me that Dr. Slade asked him to write the name of some person with whom he would like to communicate. He then wrote the name of a lady to whom he had been strongly attached in early life. In response to his wish he received a message covering one side of the slate, beginning with "My Dear Son,—The one you hoped to meet not being present I embrace the opportunity to tell you," &c., &c., and signed by a name

which he said was that of his mother. He also said that what was written was what she might be expected to say to him, and that her name was a very unusual one, entirely unknown to any other person in New York but himself.

While he seemed deeply interested, one could not help observing something like disappointment after all. He left our house and went directly to Mr. J. V. Mansfield, medium for answering sealed letters. There he had better success, for on again addressing his friend in writing, which was concealed from the medium, he immediately received a communication written automatically with the name of his friend signed to it. He said that the same endearing words were used at the commencement as those by which she used to address him in her correspondence; then she proceeded to say "I was at Dr. Slade's a moment before you left his house. Your dear mother informed me that had I been a little sooner I could have communicated with you there."

These are some of the many reasons I have for assuming the writing to have been done by a spirit independent of the minds of Miss Kislinsky and Mr. Watkins.

J. SIMMONS.

Hotel Kronprinz, Berlin, Jan. 19th.

SPIRITUAL MEETINGS IN EAST LONDON.

SIR,—It was with much regret that we at the East End heard it announced by Mr. Wallis, trance medium, that his retirement from the East End Mission (at 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile End), was drawing near, in consequence of the necessity he felt to work at his business for the support of his wife and child. He finds it impossible to attend to the spiritual wants of this district, and to follow his business at the West End also. It appears that the Spiritualists of the East End are either too poor, too few, or too apathetic, so have forced our excellent medium to announce his intended withdrawal; and, as martyrdom is of the past, I believe that, under existing circumstances, he has arrived at a wise decision. But cannot these circumstances be altered? The hardships under which he has laboured are as follow:—A little over twelve months ago he married, and immediately afterwards fell out of employment. He was then ten months without earning a penny for the support of himself and young wife, with nothing to fall back upon but the voluntary contributions of the people who attended his Sunday lectures—rather a poor look out, when it was necessary to pay £40 a year, rent, rates, and taxes; also to buy food and clothing. The consequence was, debts were contracted. Having obtained employment a couple of months ago, at very low wages—but better than nothing—he, of course, finds it (out of his affection for his wife and little one) his bounden duty to study his own and employer's interests; therefore he finds it impossible to attend to his Spiritual mission, and this at the time when success appeared to be rewarding his efforts. I hope all lovers of truth, and those who have had the courage to state their opinions, both orally and verbally, and who are both rich and poor, will now come forward, and prevent this young man from slipping into obscurity. There are many Spiritualists who boldly state their opinions in Spiritualistic papers, *Quarterly Reviews*, &c., who would not miss a few shillings weekly to advance the knowledge of which they so proudly boast. Forty at a shilling per week, or eighty at sixpence per week, would enable our medium to continue his work. I am willing to be one of the forty or the eighty, and so prevent that which would be a lasting shame to the cause of progress.

J. CAIN.

142, Burdett-road, Bow, E., Jan. 15th, 1877.

SIR,—For the last fifteen months Mr. Wallis has been endeavouring to carry on the work of Spiritualism, and the promulgation of its principles, at the East-end Spiritual Institution, 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile-end-road. In so doing he has been compelled to incur expenses which are pressing upon him, and he is now in debt to a considerable amount, which sum he must be ready with by the 8th of February next, when he will be compelled to discontinue the meetings he has heretofore held, because of the lack of material support. We think there are many friends who would gladly help in this matter, if asked, and made acquainted with the state of affairs; we, therefore, take this means and opportunity to inform them, and would respectfully solicit their aid. Mr. Wallis has generously given his time and service and incurred this debt on behalf of the cause, and we trust the liberal-minded friends will answer this request on his behalf as promptly as possible. Subscriptions from one shilling and upwards will be gladly received by Mr. Wallis, 15, St. Peter's-road, Mile-end-road, and Mr. West, 381, Mare-street, Hackney, and announced in *The Spiritualist* and *Medium*. Signed on behalf of the committee,

H. WEST.

381, Mare-street, Hackney, London.

WHAT TRUTH IS THERE IN ASTROLOGY?

SIR,—The King of Italy died on the afternoon of the 9th inst. The bulletin immediately before death reached England, according to the papers, about 2.27 p.m., stating that His Majesty was in "a very serious state, and that miliary eruption was very profuse."

Being desirous to learn the cause astrologically of the late King's decease, I erected a figure for the time of the telegram (namely Jan. 9, 2h. 27m. p.m.), from which I found that Cancer was on the ascendant, and Pisces occupied the midheaven. The moon, lady of the ascendant, had just passed the meridian, was in conjunction with Saturn, lord of the eighth, or house of death, and was applying to Mars, lord of the sixth (house of sickness). The sun is on the cusp of the eighth, and Mercury, lord of the fourth (house of the grave), is retrograde, and posted in the eighth. Mercury, moreover, is combust. Venus, lady of the twelfth (house of woe) is in the tenth, going to a conjunction of Saturn, the moon being "besieged" between Saturn and Mars, who are parallel.

The sextile aspects of Jupiter and Mercury with the moon under such circumstances were not sufficiently powerful to stay the disease. It would be interesting to know whether any, and, if so, what transits were taking place at this time. His Majesty was born March 14, 1820.

Perhaps some one of your correspondents who has an ephemeris for the year of birth would not mind taking the trouble to reply, and enlighten us on this point. The nature of the King's affliction, I may remark, is defined by the sign in which it takes place, namely, Pisces, and also that on the cusp of the sixth, which is Scorpio. Both of these belong to the water trigon, as does Cancer, on the ascendant. Mars, lord of the sixth, is exalted in Aries, a fiery, dry sign.

Claudius Darriott, in his *Judgments of the Stars*, referring to the diseases of Pisces, says they are "phlegm, scabs, breakings out, boils, ulcers, palsy, cough, and imperfection of the lungs—cold and moist diseases."

Since the above was written, I have read in a Roman correspondent's letter (*Manchester Guardian*) that the King died at 2.15 p.m., so that my figure will about represent the actual time of death. The writer states that His Majesty "went to bed with a shivering fit on the previous Saturday afternoon," and adds that "last week, being sleepless in consequence of the first symptoms of pleurisy, he is said to have opened his window in the night and smoked a cigar on the balcony. Those who know Rome best are most sensible of the danger of sleeping with open windows, or of allowing the night air to reach them when unprepared."

ALDEBARAN.

A QUESTION FOR HORARY ASTROLOGISTS.

SIR,—Will any of your correspondents, versed in astrology, favour me with a judgment on the following question of sickness? A female child, born on the 26th June, 1875, at 11.45 a.m., in London. Her nativity, cast by a well-known astrologer, shows no indication of early death. On the 8th December, 1877, at 8.16 p.m., I receive a letter from the mother of the child telling me that it has scarlet fever. Being a friend of the family, and having, moreover, an interest in the child's life, the letter renders me really anxious on her behalf. So I take this time as one suitable for the question. On the 12th December, hearing that the child is worse, and, being requested to call, I go to the house, and, at 5.5 p.m., am taken into the sick room, when again I feel extremely anxious. I take this time for a second question. The illness has terminated, whether in death or recovery I do not now say, but will communicate the result to your readers if they are favoured with judgments with which they can compare it.

I drew the two figures myself, and both appeared to me, whether rightly or wrongly, as it turned out, I do not say, extremely menacing. Here, since horary astrology does not involve the complex calculations of a nativity, is a simple test, which I hope it may not be considered too troublesome to respond to by those who are willing to advance their favourite study in public estimation.

C. C. MASSEY.

Jan. 17th.

"M. GUSTAVE DE VEH'S REPORT OF A SEANCE."

SIR,—In your editorial query appended to M. Gustave de Veh's account of his sitting with Dr. Monck, you refer to "séances which have been held in such stringent privacy on Dr. Monck's premises." Now, may I be permitted to say that "Dr. Monck's premises" are equally my premises, and that, for the sake of studying psychology most thoroughly, I live with Dr. Monck, occupy the same bed-room and company with him continually, during my wife's absence from London, and no inner circle is held of which I have not the entire management, Dr. Monck readily submitting to my will in everything.

Premising thus much, I have no need to add anything further touching the matter; indeed, if I thought that, beyond my bare word, any buttressing were required in support of the statements I have made from time to time relative to the astonishing things I have witnessed through Dr. Monck's mediumship, even truth's compulsive power should be ineffectual in constraining me to write another word, or report another fact pertaining to Spiritualism in any shape.

However, to disabuse the minds of any who, unaware of the real truth of the matter, may be adversely influenced by the inaccurate statements and depreciatory insinuations of your note, freely I will narrate what further transpired at the close of the séance referred to.

After the sitting had terminated, instead of (as elsewhere I have related on behalf of others) having to get home through the snow, I remained behind, and put the medium to bed (he being ill and exhausted), and slept in the same room with him. I had had the run of the apartments all day before, occupied them all night, and most of the day after, not being once absent.

Independent, therefore, of the fact (which you seem to have forgotten) of the mysterious figures being seen in process of extrusion from, and absorption into, the body of the medium (no curtain intervening, nor he out of our sight for a single instant, or either of the figures in their mysterious appearance and disappearance ever coming from, or retiring to, an inner room, but building themselves up, and dematerialising distinctly before our very eyes in the same room with us, and barely two yards distant from us), there could have been, under the conditions of my intimate relationship with Dr. Monck, and equal occupancy of the rooms, no possibility whatever of playing ghost. But, apart from the absurdity of the suggestion, it would indeed have been a perilous game for any one to play, since I rather think that certain reminiscences of Oxford Gown and Towns would have very quickly travelled into act, and muscular Christianity would have promptly had proper scope for exercise, especially as regards the adjective.

Suffice this concerning "Dr. Monck's premises," which are no less mine. And now, touching the "stringent privacy" complained of in which the séances referred to are held. I alone am responsible for this, and it don't greatly fret me if a certain few are annoyed at my

apparent exclusiveness in this regard, since it ought to be known by this time that mischief only and discord can come of promiscuous séances.

Let those who object to my policy adopt the same means I, at no small sacrifice and risk of my clerical position, have pursued, and possibly, and not else, they may in time approach the marvels that have been so astonishingly fluent at our inner circle.

In my study of Spiritualism through Dr. Monck, I have advised him, as I think wisely, though to his pecuniary detriment, to refuse the very many daily invitations he receives to carry hither and thither his peculiar powers, and hawk them about from this drawing-room to that for the mere entertainment of the idle curious. Hence, in recognition of this self-denying spirit on the part of Dr. Monck, and for the purpose of placing our valued instrument above the reach of the frivolous and wonder-hungering throng that so discredit the name of Spiritualist, I have, with other friends co-operating, instituted the inner circle, the large love of which he prefers to the ready fees of others, with their too often attendant suspicions.

But, again, it is a mistake into which M. de Veh has, perhaps, not unnaturally fallen, from inaccurate statements, diligently circulated (which mistake you have no excuse for sharing and propagating), to suppose that these recent manifestations through Dr. Monck, that have created such intense interest, take place only "on his premises;" for you, sir, know that there was no need for putting the question you have put, since you, yourself, in your own journal of Oct. 5th, 1877, published the report of a séance held at the house of Herr Christian Reimers, at Richmond, wherein details are given of phenomena precisely similar to those regarding which your questions now insinuate a doubt, where, with Dr. Monck as medium, "two living forms, one of them temporarily materialised, walked about as freely as described in M. Gustave de Veh's letter, and in a strong light."

London, Jan. 21, 1878.

THOMAS COLLEY.

[It was a right thing to point out the fact to the public that no evidence had been printed that "the Mahedi" had ever been seen walking freely about off Dr. Monck's premises, and it was Mr. Colley's primary duty to have told the public long ago where these séances were held. Let private feelings be kept for private life; for the public we require careful records rather than enthusiastic advocacy. The general tone of the above letter differs from that which is usual in these pages. As to the séance recorded on October 5th, it was not drawn up by anybody representing this journal; there was a want of detail in it as to the amount of light and other vital points about which the public would naturally desire information, and we had altogether forgotten its existence.—Ed.]

SPIRITUALISM AND THE SPIRITUAL.

SIR,—To those of us who believe Spiritualism to be the connecting link between science and religion, and that its end and aim are the development and making supreme in us of the Divine spark, soul, spirit—call it what we will—through knowledge of all the laws which govern psychic life, there seems a danger at the present time of our becoming Spiritualists merely in name, having lost all spirituality; in fact, materialists of the blackest.

To such, and to such only, I desire to offer a few suggestions, as one who has thought long and patiently upon the question, which may not, I trust, prove altogether useless.

The first and greatest of our difficulties is, of course, the old one of phenomena building, idly, curious, and scientifically, &c. No one is more anxious than myself that the most careful and searching investigation should be given, in order to enable us to know as far as possible the reason for all that occurs; but does it not behove us who believe in a kingdom of God side by side with a reign of law, to be careful, practically, that in all our investigations reverence keeps pace with knowledge, that the Spirit may save the soul? Ought we to attend séances merely as investigators, of any kind, with no higher feeling than curiosity influencing us; and, by so doing, are we not responsible for injury done to other men in the body and out of it? I do not mean that we should turn our circles into religious meetings, or indulge in cant *cum shoddy*; but that "evil is wrought by want of thought" in this direction, I believe.

The same principle applies with regard to "occultism" and other new theories. It may be nice, and, in some cases, desirable in the highest degree, to assist the development of our planet by removing mountains ("the real genuine article my Bible speaks of, and none of your modern explaining away"); to command cats, lizards, and other elementaries; to dissolve the universe by an Abracadabra; but would not a Spiritualist rather, waving possibly for ever the chance of tall bat and magic wand, have, through bread and soup and séance and prayer, brought one hapless one into the light of the All-Father. Paul was right, for the greatest, not the only good one of these, is love.

One word as to dogmatism. It is an old axiom, but a good one, that "the greater cannot take in the less." But the very much less, in my opinion, in both "astral" and human conditions, have, with opposite motives, been attempting among us that most difficult task. The "reign of law" can but take us to the foot of the world's great altars, and our upward progress would have been more faltering had not the "Light of the World" been before us showing us Who and of what sort was the One at the top. Might it not be wiser to be content to tread softly? The angels do on the downward path, for they are not materialised yet.

"Thou seemest human and Divine,
The highest holiest manhood Thou!
Our wills are ours—we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

Some Spiritualists not ignorant of Buddha and Zoroaster—not to speak of "Joey" and "John King" can say more, and would, if they were dogmatic or infallible. Are there many who can say less?

CANTAB.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

BY F. J. THEOBALD.

IN *The Sunday Magazine* for November, 1874, there is a most interesting article by the Rev. Professor Lindsey, D.D., headed, "Religious Life in the Fourteenth Century," being an account of the mystic Nicolas, better known as the "Great Layman." He was the leader of a few good Christians who called themselves "The Friends of God."

Probably the majority of the readers of this very orthodox magazine, if not the author himself, would be more than surprised—perhaps even a little sceptical—if we told them that the experiences related in this paper by no means belong exclusively to the religious mystics of old, but closely correspond to one of the many phases of modern Spiritualism.

We do not wish hastily to attribute to Mr. Lindsey such an unpopular belief as Spiritualism, but every word of this article might have been written by a Spiritualist, in proof of the fact that the beatific experiences on which his belief rests are by no means modern, but belong rather to every phase and process of the religious faiths of past ages. It is most anomalous to find orthodox Christians gladly recognising, in such lives as that of "Nicolas," and all the religious mystics of the past times, proof of their superior holiness, and of their having attained the "higher Christian life," whilst they reprobate the experiences of the Spiritualist (or mystic) of to-day, and attribute them to the devil.

Certainly, it is the phenomenal, and what we may call the materialistic side of Spiritualism which meets the public eye, and doubtless, vast numbers of Christians, repelled by this side, are ignorant of the fact that Spiritualism has as many aspects as there are types of character in humanity.

Perhaps if they knew that the most spiritual developments of it closely correspond to the religious mysticism of old, they would cease to long for that which they look upon as "a thing of the past," and gladly accept similar help, lying at their very door, ready to enter, if they will only welcome it.

The mysticism, or, what we should call the mediumship, of this heavenly-minded Nicolas received its first impulse to development by his reading the *Lives of the Saints*. He felt that they were but men, and that the same "life of devotedness to God" might bring others into the close communion with the unseen which they enjoyed. "And so," says Mr. Lindsey, "soon he found those heavenly visions which fill so large a part in these biographies, repeated in his own experiences."

Nicolas, in his desire to attain the holiness which would open to him intercourse with the saints (or, as we say, "spirits"), and acting up to the light which was in him, scourged himself, and "imitated their austerities" to such an extent that he wellnigh sacrificed his own life; when, in a dream, a voice thus spoke—"Foolish man, if thou killest thyself before the time thou wilt be sorely punished for it; but if thou didst allow God to exercise thee, He could exercise thee better than thou by thyself, or by the devil's counsel." Thus is Nicolas, like all other mediums, exhorted to "try the spirits," and to discriminate between the good and the bad.

After this we find his desires were purer and higher, aspiring even to understand "God, in His very essence." Trials and heart-sorrows awaited him; but, at length, it is evident that he must have attained the highest form of mediumship granted to man, and known in the more spiritual and mystical heights of Spiritualism as the gift of the "internal respiration."

The narrative of the teachings given by Nicolas in the following extract correspond entirely with the Spiritual teachings now given through some of our mediums explanatory of this high condition of Spiritual communion.

"When the heart was entirely given to God, and the will had become one with His, then it was illuminated by the gift of the Holy Spirit. This inward illumination is not the gift of the Spirit bestowed on all Christians in which the apostles believed, and in which we believe now, helping them to understand God's Word, and influencing and guiding aright their thoughts and actions."

It is something quite special, only given to those who are leading the "perfect life," and which, besides making clear to them the sense of Scripture, revealed actual events, past, present, and future, and gave positive directions as to what was to be done under all circumstances.

Nicolas and his friends, like the spiritual mystics of the present day, formed no sect. They desired rather to do God's will, and shed clearer light, as given to them by their mediumship, upon Christian truth. They had no wish to destroy any belief, but, to inspire fresh life where there were signs of decay. True it is, as Solomon said, "where there is no vision the people perish."

We read in the paper named, "It was between the years 1350 and 1360, that their little brotherhood was formed. In all it numbered only thirteen, but in this circle was, as it were, an inner circle of four special friends, who always remained with Nicolas. One of these four was a Jew, "who was converted to Christianity by a remarkable vision."

Nicolas also, Mr. Lindsey says, "was told in a vision to go and seek this man, of whom he had previously known nothing."

This little group of mediums "did not even follow the ordinary formal rules of the Church; they fasted or not, just as the spirit moved them. . . . They walked in the woods to meditate; they told each other about their visions and temptations, or they talked about the affairs of the world. This was their home life."

This harmonious way of living furnished the best conditions for the holding of their devotional *séances*; therefore, we are not surprised at the following account of the most wonderful manifestations of spirit power, given in direct spirit-writing, spirit voices, and apparitions."

"In the spring of the year . . . Nicolas and seven of his brethren held a sort of retreat in a wild mountainous place, beside a 'fair stream,' where there was a chapel hewn in the rock, where every day they celebrated Divine service.

The weather was wild and portentous during the eight days they spent in this place. They saw apparitions, and heard voices. . . .

"On the night of the following Christmas it was revealed to Nicolas in a dream that he should hold another meeting of the Friends of God, on the Holy Thursday of the next year. They, therefore, met at the time fixed, the whole thirteen. . . . All met together for the last time, and partook of the Holy Communion.

"On Good Friday they were all sitting by the stream, when, after a series of strange apparitions, the voice of an invisible speaker addressed them, and a letter fell into their midst.

"The letter which could be read, we are told in every language, commanded them to disperse for three years, after which, if God was about to send deliverance to His Church, they would again be called together.

"After Easter the voice again addressed them, and asked if they would obey the commands contained in the letter. They replied that they would. Nicolas relieved them all from their obedience to him, . . . and then the little brotherhood broke up, and the members departed all in different directions.

"And so," adds Mr. Lindsey, "amidst strange visions and voices, the Friends of God vanish from our sight into the mists of the past!"

The world around these good men failed to recognise that they walked with God; branding them as heretics, they honoured them by giving them a martyr's grave. Tauler had had predicted for his friend, in a vision "a hard death," and it was at Vienna, when Nicolas was well stricken in years, past eighty, that he, with two of his followers, were burnt, the crime of which he was accused being that he "audaciously affirmed that he was in Christ, and Christ in him."

Six hundred years have rolled away, and now these good men are held up to our view in their true light, as "Religious Mystics." But even, as history ever repeats itself, the Nicolases, or spiritual mystics of the present day, are branded as infidels; their experiences are either denied, or anathematised as coming, not from God, but from the devils.

13, St. John's-road, Lewisham.

MR. CHARLES BLACKBURN says that a friend of his writes to him:—"In *The Spiritualist* of November 16th, Dr. Carter Blake asks of Mr. Colley the meaning of the 'Arabic' word *N Mahédi*, which the latter gentleman could not give, so I presume to give it. The meaning is 'Guide' or 'Leader.'"

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—There was a full attendance on Monday evening last at the fortnightly meeting of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, when Dr. J. M. Peebles delivered an interesting address on "Items of Foreign Travel." At the close of the discourse, several questions were replied to, and the proceedings, which throughout were of an enthusiastic character, were brought to a close after a vote of thanks to the lecturer had been unanimously carried. The thanks of the meeting were also given to Mr. R. A. March for presiding, after which the members and friends dispersed.—Mr. Samuel H. H. Quarmby, during his recent visit to London, twice visited the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism, and the secretary informs us that he gave much satisfaction by trance discourses given through his mediumship on subjects selected by the members.—On Thursday, 3rd instant, the members of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism received a long-promised visit from Mr. J. J. Morse, honorary member, through whose mediumship an inspirational discourse was given, which was listened to with pleasure by those assembled on the occasion.—On Monday evening next, the 28th instant, Mr. W. J. Colville will attend at 53, Sigdon-road, Hackney-downs, London, E., when his second inspirational discourse will be given on the subject of "The Future of Human Existence on Earth." The meeting is open to all, a voluntary collection to be made at the close towards defraying expenses. Doors open at 7.30, to commence at 8.15 p.m.

"RIFTS IN THE VEIL."—*Public Opinion* of last week says:—"Rifts in the Veil. A collection of poems. (W. H. Harrison). This volume of poetry and prose, some of which claims to be inspirational, and comprises some really good literary productions, written by old hands. The chief one is an alleged post-mortem work by Charles Dickens, which purports to be a conclusion to the unfinished novel of the *Mystery of Edwin Drood*, through a medium in the United States, the results bearing all the marks of the genius and style of the departed author. The problem at issue is thus reduced to a very simple form, i.e., either a forger and impostor displayed the particular literary knacks of Dickens, and presented it to the world in connection with a movement not yet sufficiently understood to be popular, or the intelligence is actually that of the author of the narrative. To our minds, after the life of Barusha Barnstoeple, which, by the way, never came to an end, it is very difficult for any person to throw themselves closely into a frame of thought which commits even the same literary faults as its model, and also to carry the imitation so close as *jurare in verbo magistri*. The next bright spot in the work is an ode under the pseudonym of 'Adamanta,' of which the poetical merit is alike lofty and true. The writer speaks of ascending—

'More toilsome, lonely heights,
Whence I could gain fresh glimpses of my heaven,
And open up a path for travelling souls
Whose goal was one with mine.'

Some curious legends by Emile, Prince of Sayn-Wittgenstein, and some verse which has the rhythmical ocean-like rise and fall that only the daughter of the late Captain Marryat could write, adorn a singularly beautiful cento of contributions from a number of diverse schools of writers, who are only united by the bond of literary merit. We have rarely read a more ingenious compilation of excellent literary matter, and the selection reflects the highest credit on the editor of a collection of good prose and verse.

THE LATERAL EXTENSION OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY DESMOND G. FITZ-GERALD, M.S.T.E.E.

SOME time ago a friend wrote to me:—"Few people are wilfully opposed to truth. Men accept it freely when they can recognise it clearly. With the present means of demonstration the wonder to me is that Spiritualism progresses so slowly. Whose fault is this? and how can you explain the fact?"

Briefly, I think the "fault" is, for the most part, with those who have no appreciation of such truths as Spiritualism can offer, and who think that there are a great many things more important and better worth working for than mere truth. In many cases this "fault" may be active—due to a selfish cunning which may find its reward here, but will not be held guiltless hereafter. In most cases, however, it is merely the consequence of insufficient progression—a comparatively low state of mental rather than moral development. In regard to the explanation required, three persons, who must co-operate in harmony before spiritual truths can be promulgated and spread rapidly, have to be considered—viz., the Spiritualist, the Sceptic, and the Spirit. Let me glance at their relative positions, mainly by taking typical cases within my experience.

I may first observe, that in the comparatively few cases in which a triple unison has existed between them, such as is absolutely necessary in order to any beneficial result, the sceptic has at once become to other sceptics more or less of a Spiritualist—i.e., "a weak-minded dupe," with whom they would not care to hold commune. In the greater number of cases no such agreement is possible, for reasons which may be gleaned under the following headings:—

THE SPIRITUALIST.

His ardour for proselytising has of late years considerably abated, although his power to make converts may have become augmented. This is not very surprising when it is considered that the propagandist is generally regarded by self-sufficient ignorance either as a knave or a fool, if not worse, and that in no case of conversion is any apology rendered for the contumely and supercilious insult often heaped upon him. On the contrary, the disciple of truth seems tacitly held to be under an obligation to the convert. Few Spiritualists have the humility and patience, even if they have the time and means, to devote themselves to the service of the sceptic, to lead him on from one small truth to another that is greater, to quit their own calm abiding place of knowledge and conviction, in order to encounter the truculence and meet the gibes of those who may possibly condescend to allow the proselytiser to labour in their behalf, and to force some kind of conviction upon them. Again, Spiritualists have found out that such converts are seldom worth the time and trouble expended upon them, since they, in most cases, prove by their conduct that they are not endowed with any earnest love for truth, and that, therefore, the time and trouble devoted to their conversion might have been more beneficially expended in other directions.

THE SCEPTIC.

"If you think you are, in any case, going to make me stultify myself before the world, and admit that I have unlearned all I now know, and learned something very much better from *you*—all I can say is that you are very much mistaken. Granting for a moment, at your particular request, that the creaking and evolutions of articles of upholstery, or the visions and additions of an over-excited imagination could lead to any serious conviction in my mind, you must perceive that, as a man of the world, and as Editor of the *Mugby Advertiser*, I could not permit such a conviction to become exoteric. The *Mugby Advertiser* is a very valuable property, since it numbers a constituency of nearly a quarter of a million readers, most of whom, like Professor Huxley, would not be interested in the phenomena of Spiritualism, even supposing them to be true. If you imagine that I would attempt to force Spiritualism down their throats, as you are attempting to force it down mine, again I say you are very much mistaken. In the first place, the proprietary of the journal would not allow me to do so; in the second place the Eighteenth Century is not the period, nor is Great Britain the locality for martyrs; and I have not the slightest ambition to become one, even in a

pecuniary sense. In the contingency we have imagined, I should certainly not denounce you as I now think I am justified in doing—but I could not prevent my editorial colleagues from expressing *their* opinion, which, you must remember, is that of the vast majority of our readers. In regard to the test manifestations you wish me to witness, I have no objection to do so, providing you will bear in mind that the test conditions are to be *mine*—not yours or 'the spirits'—and that the other witnesses are to be selected by me. In case of failure, I think you must see that you will have no cause to complain if Spiritualism and your own credulity should be stigmatised in the columns of the *Mugby Advertiser* with even somewhat greater severity than heretofore."

THE SPIRIT.

"Dear brother yet on earth, working out earnestly and prayerfully your own initiation to the truths of eternity, ever hold forth your hand—so strong and yet so weak—to those who would walk in the path that you are treading, but who need your help, and would welcome it, even as you have needed and welcomed help. Our Father bids us help one another; and in His providence such aid is counted as help unto Him—for man is privileged to do God's work. Yet try to understand that is but little you can do; God ever does the hardest work, the real work, Himself. If I can help you, dear, it is that God has moulded your spirit to receive my help; He has given us eyes that can see the same light, ears that can hear the same music, a sense that can recognise the same gems of truth long before they are polished and set that all men may admire them. The spirits of each sphere—above that of Despair—minister in the sphere which is next below their own. The higher the sphere, the less tangible to earthly sense is the means of their ministration. If you see me now it is more by spiritual than by earthly vision. God has done the hard work for me. He did it by chastening your heart with suffering; by sowing in it flower seeds which germinated as undefined longings for something better than aught you had known, and blossomed as new truths on the threshold of eternal Truth; by sending to you less developed spirits, who did their work as I hope to do mine. Some little time back, before you dared to dream that, under God's law of progression, you would be able, even on this earth, to hold commune with the spirits of a higher sphere, I could not have approached you. You required a ministration more akin to earth, more in accordance with what you then accepted as truth and right. This you obtained from the sphere next above that for which you were then fitted. I tell you this, loved one, that you may understand whom *you* are fitted to aid, and also whom you should, wisely and trustfully, leave to others among God's workers and mighty agencies—lest you strike your foot against a stone, and cause men to desecrate that which is too holy for their touch. Be patient, God has an eternity to work in; His ways are orderly and all-perfect. I am not permitted to help those who have not sought, and yearned for, what I can bring. Neither is my sister in a lower sphere, nor are you, allowed to supersede the necessity for striving after Truth—to ignore the full meaning of the words: 'Seek, and ye shall find.'"

Mr. G. C. JOAD, Mr. N. F. Dawe, and Mrs. Honywood are in the South of France.

ON Sunday next, January 27th, Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver two trance addresses in the Temperance Hall, Keighley. Afternoon at 2.30; evening at 6.30. Admission free.

THE ROYAL INSTITUTION.—Professor Tyndall has just closed a series of admirable experimental lectures on "Heat" at the Royal Institution. One of the members writes to us:—"I caught my severe cold in the Royal Institution at Professor Tyndall's second lecture, sitting under the gallery in the pent-up foulness. Cannot you show up the disgraceful want of ventilation in that 'Black Hole' of a Temple of Science? This is the third season I have suffered from it, and the consequence is that I am unable to attend a third of the lectures, and, worse still, shut up from doing anything else." Thus scientific ventilation—and the Royal Institution is elaborately ventilated—does not appear to be practically successful. There are strong draughts near the various openings for the escape of air.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUEST.—None but intolerant organisations would attempt to fetter the liberty of opinion of individuals.

BOOKS ON SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHOLOGY, MESMERISM, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND BIOLOGY,

Representing the English and American Literature of Spiritualism, obtainable of W. H. Harrison, *Spiritualist Newspaper Branch Office*, 33, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.

[For purposes of mutual convenience the above office has been rented on the premises of the National Association of Spiritualists, but the Association and *The Spiritualist Newspaper* and publishing business are not in any way connected with each other.]

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY and MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Eugene Crowell, M.D., of New York. This is a standard work on Spiritualism by a competent observer, who, after studying its facts for many years, has drawn from them only such conclusions as they warrant, and who has comprehensively dealt with the whole subject. In two volumes, price 10s. 6d. per volume.

THE DEBATABLE LAND, by the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, formerly American Minister at the Court of Naples. A standard work containing interesting and well-authenticated facts, proving the reality of spirit communion. It also contains an elaborate essay defining the author's views of the relationship of Spiritualism to the Christian Church. 7s. 6d.

FOOTFALLS ON THE BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD, by Robert Dale Owen. An excellent book of absorbing interest, replete with well-authenticated narratives, describing manifestations produced by spirits. 7s. 6d.

REPORT ON SPIRITUALISM, by the Committee of the Dialectical Society. This committee consisted of literary, scientific, and other professional men who investigated Spiritualism for two years without engaging the services of any professional medium, after which they published the report. Original edition, 16s.; moderately abridged edition, 6s.

RESEARCHES IN THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM, by William Crookes, F.R.S. The best work ever published to scientifically demonstrate the reality of some of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. 5s.

MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM, by Alfred Russell Wallace, F.R.G.S. This book contains a masterly argument in reply to Hume's "Essay on Miracles." It also records a large number of interesting spiritual manifestations, and contains some of the personal experiences of Mr. Wallace. 6s.

PLANCHETTE; OR, THE DESPAIR OF SCIENCE, by Epes Sargent. A book rich in descriptions of well-authenticated spiritual phenomena. Information about the relationship of Spiritualism to Religion and Science is also given. 5s.

CONCERNING SPIRITUALISM, by Gerald Massey. A brilliant well written little essay on Spiritualism. Neatly bound, with gilt edges. 2s.

LETTERS ON SPIRITUALISM, by the late J. W. Edmonds, Judge of the Supreme Court, New York, U.S. This book consists of essays on the Social, Moral, and Scientific aspects of Spiritualism. 3s. 6d.

WHERE ARE THE DEAD? OR, SPIRITUALISM EXPLAINED, by Fred A. Binney. A practically useful work for inquirers, giving general information about English professional and non-professional mediums, also about the periodical and other Literature of Spiritualism. 3s.

THE OTHER WORLD, by the Rev. G. F. Lee, D.C.L. This newly-published book contains Facts and Traditions relating to Dreams, Omens, Apparitions, Warnings, and Witchcraft. The author admits the reality of spiritual visitations, but considers modern Spiritualism to be diabolical. He, however, gives valuable facts, previously unpublished, and prints the only authorised and complete account of the Apparition seen by one of the ancestors of Lord Lytton. 2 Vols., crown 8vo., 16s.

PROOF PALPABLE OF IMMORTALITY, by Epes Sargent. This work, by an American author of acknowledged ability, gives an account of the materialisation of Spirits in England and America during the past few years in the presence of famous mediums, and, as a rule, before educated witnesses of more or less literary and scientific ability. The work also contains remarks on the relations of the facts to theology, morals, and religion; and it is prefaced with a portrait of the materialised spirit Katie King, copied from a photograph of her taken by Mr. Harrison by the aid of the magnesium light. 6s.

MIRACLES, PAST AND PRESENT, by the Rev. William Mountford. The author is an acute and vigorous thinker, and a writer of unquestioned ability. Contents: The Anti-Supernaturalism of the Present Age; Science and the Supernatural; Miracles and Doctrines; Miracles and the Revolving Spirit; The Scriptures and Pneumatology; Miracles and Science; the Spirit and the Prophets Thereof; Anti-Supernatural Misunderstandings; the Last Ecstacy; Matter and Spirit; the Outburst of Spiritualism; Thoughts on Spiritualism; A Miracle Defined; Miracles as Signs; Miracles and the Creative Spirit; Miracles and Human Nature; Miracles and Pneumatology the Spirit and the Old Testament; the Old Testament and the New; Spirit and Spirit; Jesus and the Spirit; Jesus and Resurrection; the Church and the Spirit. 12mo., 500 pp. Cloth 10s. 6d.

ALLAN KARDEC'S "SPIRITS' BOOK" (Blackwell). 7s. 6d.

THE SOUL OF THINGS, by William Denton. In this extraordinary book the author, who is a Professor of Geology in America, employed clairvoyants to reveal to him by vision events connected with the early history of geological specimens—these sensitives thus saw the Mastodon and other extinct animals as if living and moving before them; they likewise saw the scenes by which these prehistoric animals were surrounded. The author also sent his clairvoyants to examine portions of different planets, and they gave descriptions of the inhabitants, physical geography, and vegetation of each. The book is illustrated with numerous engravings, drawn by the sensitives as the visions passed before their eyes. The substance of a review of this book in "The Spiritualist" was to the effect that there is no doubt as to the integrity of the author, who also possesses sufficient intelligence to select clear and simple words and not cheat him. The question as to the reliability of the narratives therefore narrows itself down to the question of the reliability of clairvoyance, which, when employed to gain information about distant places on earth, has been found sometimes to give accurate results and sometimes inaccurate results. The review further expresses the opinion that if ever interplanetary communication should be established it will be by means of clairvoyance or some other of the latent and little understood spiritual powers in man. Three Vols. 24s.; or 8s. per single volume.

POEMS OF THE INNER LIFE. Given by spirits through the mediumship of Lizzie Doten. The accusation is sometimes made by disbelievers that spirit messages are of a trumpery character, but these beautiful poems give evidence that all spirit utterances are not so. "The Prophecy of Vala," published in this book, and professedly given by the spirit of Edgar Allan Poe, is better than any which that poet wrote during the whole of his life on earth. Best edition, gilt, 10s. 6d.; cheap edition, 7s. 6d.

POEMS OF PROGRESS. Given by spirits through the mediumship of Lizzie Doten. This, like the preceding work, is a collection of beautiful poems. 7s. 6d.

BIBLE MARVEL-WORKERS, AND THE POWER WHICH HELPED THEM TO PERFORM MIGHTY WORKS. By Allan Putnam. 6s.

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