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No. 319.—(VOL. XIII.—No. 14.)

LONDON: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1878.

Published Weekly; Price Twopence.

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

No. 319.—VOLUME THIRTEEN; NUMBER FOURTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4th, 1878.

## HOW A "DEAD" GIRL RETURNED TO EARTH AND LIVED AGAIN FOR THREE MONTHS.\*

(Concluded.)

On May 7th, 1878, Mary called Mrs. Roff to a private room, and there in tears told her that Lurancy Vennum was coming back. She seemed very sad, and said she could not tell whether Lurancy was coming to stay or not; that if she thought she was coming to stay, she would want to see Nervie and Dr. Alter and Allie, and bid them good-bye. She sat down, closed her eyes, and in a few moments the change took place and Lurancy had control of her own body. Looking wildly around the room she anxiously asked: "Where am I? I was never here before."

Mrs. Roff replied: "You are at Mrs. Roff's, brought here by Mary to cure your body."

She cried and said: "I want to go home."

Mrs. Roff asked her if she could stay till her folks were sent for.

She replied: "No."

She was then asked if she felt any pain in her breast. (This was during the period that Mary was suffering from pain in the left breast.)

She replied: "No, but Mary did."

In about five minutes the change was again made, and Mary came overjoyed to find herself permitted to return.

The child seemed possessed of all the natural affection for the family that a daughter and sister of fine feelings and cultivated tastes might be supposed to possess after an absence of twelve years, and she often took occasion to demonstrate that affection by endearing names and kindly words. When walking with Mrs. Alter, her sister "Nervie" as she called her, she would say, "Nervie, my only sister, put your arm around me." Or, "Come, Nervie, put your arm around me and we will take a little walk in the garden or the grove, for I cannot be with you much longer, and I want to be with you every minute I can." When Mrs. Alter would ask her when or where she was going, she would say, "The angels tell me I am going to heaven, but I don't know just when. O, how I wish you could live here at home with us as you used to when I was here before." She thought a great deal of Dr. Alter, the husband of her sister, but hardly seemed to realise that Nervie was married and had a family. She said that when she got into that body she felt much as she did when she was born here twelve years ago. The new body seemed as natural to her as though she had been born with it, yet she could not do with it as she would like to. She did not seem to realise at first but that this was her own original, physical body, until the angels explained it to her, and she had received information and instruction from her parents, sister, brother, and friends about it. So natural did it seem to her, after knowing all the facts, that she could hardly feel it was not her original body born nearly thirty years ago.

In conversation with the writer about her former life, she spoke of cutting her arm, as heretofore stated, and asked if he ever saw where she did it. On receiving a negative answer, she proceeded to slip up her sleeve, as if to exhibit the scar, but suddenly arrested the movement, as if by a sudden thought, and quickly said, "Oh! this is not the arm; that one is in the ground," and proceeded to tell where it was buried, how she saw it done, who stood around, and how they felt, but she did not then feel bad. I heard her tell Mr. Roff and the friends present how she wrote to him a message some years ago through the hand of a medium, giving name, time, and place; also of rapping and of spelling out a message by another medium, giving time, name, and place, which the parents admitted to be all true. I heard

her relate a story of her going into the country with the men, some twenty odd years ago, after a load of hay, naming incidents that occurred on the road, which two of the gentlemen distinctly remembered.

In one of those beautiful trances which rendered her entirely oblivious to all physical surroundings, but in a state of happy ecstasy, and, so far as manners and movements were concerned, perfectly normal and graceful, with visions and senses fully open, she went to heaven, as she called it, in company with another young lady in like condition, whose name must be reserved until the wonderful history she is making shall be made public by the consent of all. They saw and conversed about the beautiful scenes before them, pointing out individuals, giving names, relationship, histories, facts, and describing places and things. Mary pointed out and described some with titles of royalty, such as Mary Queen of Scots, Henry IV., King of France, and others of equal note, showing either rich biographical and historical reading or experience and acquaintance in spirit-life. Then bowing low, and kneeling with hands folded and heads together, as if in the most devout and solemn devotion, they remained in listening silence for some time, then rising, the unnamed girl said—"He came to bless, didn't he, Mary? a bright, beautiful angel."

After talking of the different classes they were observing, and the "lovely children," Mary seemed to take in her arms a very little, tender infant, and said—"This is sister Nervie's baby; how sweet and beautiful it is; don't you think it is a sweet little angel?" The other, in softest accents, said—"Yes, but it seems to me they are all too pure to be touched by such as we," and after some time the babe was carefully handed back to the care of the angels. Mrs. Alter, who was present, had recently lost by death a beautiful babe, and had scarcely recovered from her confinement. The whole scene was one of uncommon interest, affecting and impressive beyond description.

For the discovery of facts unknown to others, Mary seemed remarkably developed. One afternoon she, with much concern, declared that her brother Frank must be carefully watched the coming night, for he would be taken sick, and would die if not properly cared for. At the time of this announcement he was in his usual health, and engaged with the Roff Brothers' band of music up town. The same evening Dr. Stevens had been in to see the family, and on leaving was to go directly to Mrs. Hawks, far off in the Old Town, and the family so understood it. But about nine and a half o'clock the same evening Dr. Stevens returned unannounced to Mr. Marsh's, Mr. Roff's next neighbour, for the night. At two o'clock in the morning Frank was attacked with something like a spasm and congestive chill, which almost destroyed his consciousness. Mary at once saw the situation, as predicted, and said, "Send to Mrs. Marsh's for Dr. Stevens." "No. Dr. Stevens is at Old Town," said the family. "No," said Mary, "he is at Mr. Marsh's; go quick for him, pa." Mr. Roff called, and the doctor, as Mary said, was at Mr. Marsh's. On his arrival at the sick bed, Mary had entire control of the case. She had made Mrs. Roff sit down, had provided hot water and cloths and other necessities, and was doing all that could be done for Frank. The doctor seconded her efforts, and allowed her to continue. She saved her brother, but never made a move after the doctor's arrival without his co-operation and advice.

Mary often spoke of seeing the children of Dr. Stevens in heaven. She said she was with them much, and went to his home with him. She correctly described his home, the rooms, furniture, gave names and ages of his children, and as evidence of her truthfulness, told of a remarkable experience of Mrs. E. M. Wood, one of the doctor's married daughters, which, on account of its peculiar features, and

\* Slightly abridged from recent numbers of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, of Chicago.

the faith of some of the relatives, is not for the public, yet was a beautiful evidence of angel guardianship. She stated the story minutely, saying where and when she obtained Mrs. Wood's name, for she was present with others she named.

The doctor's daughter, Emma Angelia, who had been in spirit-life since March 10th, 1849, sought through Mary to take the body she was controlling and go home with her father to Wisconsin, to visit the family for a week, and Mary was disposed to let her do it; she asked Mr. and Mrs. Roff if she should let Emma Stevens have the body for a week to go with her father to see and be with her mother, sisters, and brother, so they could realise it to be Emma. But no one thought it advisable.

To show the ease with which Mary controls, or goes in and out, as it is said, and the perfect medium the body of Lurancy is, a single instance will suffice. On the 21st day of April, in the parlours of Mrs. Roff, in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Roff, their hired woman Charlotte, Doctor Steel and wife, Mrs. Twing, of Oregon, Mrs. Alter, Mr. and Mrs. M——, and the writer, manifestations of a peculiar character occurred. Mary being the last one to join the company in the parlour, took the only vacant seat, next a gentleman friend. Dr. Steel became influenced by a brother of one of the persons present, and made a striking address. On his becoming disentranced and entering into the general conversation, Mary voluntarily disembodied her controlling power, and leaving the girl's form like a corpse, with the head resting against the shoulder of her friend, immediately took control of Dr. Steel, and in every possible way required, proved it to be herself; she then, through that manly form, turned in a jovial way and laughed at the position of the seemingly unentranced body and its limp condition, with a pleasant jest at the friend who supported it. She soon, however, returned to her own proper control, and seemed to enjoy the trick she had played, in the control of the gentleman.

After a few moments she called to the hired woman to follow her, and they left the room. Soon she returned clad in an old-fashioned way, with gown, cap, cape, and spectacles, leaning on the arm of Charlotte as if bowed down with many years. Not one trace of the girl could be seen save in the youthful skin of the face. Taking a seat in the old arm chair, she began to talk as an old lady of olden times might be supposed to do, representing herself to be the grandmother of Charlotte, giving her name, inquiring after all the relatives, old and young, asking by name for those belonging to families the girl could have known nothing about. She said she died of a cancer near the right eye and temple; called for tepid water and soft cloth, which being furnished, proceeded in the most natural manner to bathe and dress the cancer. She called for food and ate it, apparently without teeth, smoked after it, as she used to do, because her food always hurt her if she did not. She asked for knitting work, and she found fault because the knitter did not know how to knit. She next asked for mending and other things to do, looked at the fabric of the ladies' dresses, asking the prices. She looked out at the windows, remarked how pleasant a place it was, and so continued for a full hour, never for a moment showing any sign of deception, but appearing to be a veritable, honest, experienced domestic old lady. Numerous other personations might be described, but this is sufficient.

During her stay at Mrs. Roff's her physical condition continually improved, under the care and treatment of her supposed parents and the advice and help of her physician. She was obedient to the government and rules of the family, and, like a careful and wise child, always kept in the company of some of the family, unless when visiting the nearest neighbours across the street. She was often invited and went with Mrs. Roff to visit the first families in the city, who soon became satisfied that the girl was not crazy, but a fine, well-mannered child.

The manner in which she acted for a considerable time after coming into Mr. Roff's family was very strange to many. Sitting down to the tea-table on one occasion, Mrs. Roff asked: "Now, Mary, what shall I help you to?"

She answered: "Oh, nothing, I thank you, ma, I'll go to heaven for my tea."

Suiting the action to the word, off she went into a quiet trance, or "to heaven," as she termed it, and so remained till the family had eaten, when she returned to her normal state. Being again asked she said she had been to tea, and the question was put: "Mary, what do you eat, and how do you eat it?"

Her answer was: "Oh, ma, if I could tell, you could not understand it."

And thus for some time she only ate in that way, except a very little occasionally, to pacify the anxious family. As her system became in better condition she ate more freely, and for many weeks toward the last she ate, drank, and slept as a healthy person should.

As the time drew near for the restoration of Lurancy to her parents and home, Mary would sometimes seem to recede into the memory and manner of Lurancy for a little time, yet not enough to lose her identity or permit the manifestation of Lurancy's mind, but enough to show she was impressing her presence upon her own body.

On being asked, "Where is Lurancy?" she would say, "Gone out somewhere," or, "She is in heaven taking lessons, and I am here taking lessons too."

On Sunday, May 19th, at about half-past four o'clock p.m., Mr. Roff and Mary were sitting in the parlour, and Henry Vennum, Lurancy's brother, was in the sitting room, with another room and hall between. Mary left control, and Lurancy took full possession of her own body. Henry was called in and she caught him around his neck, kissed and wept over him, causing all present to weep. At this juncture Mr. Roff was called and asked Lurancy if she could stay till Henry could go and bring her mother (she had expressed a desire to go and see her father and mother). She said "No," but if Henry would go and bring her, she would come again and talk with her. She immediately left and Mary came again. When Mary was asked where she had been, she replied, "I have seen Doctor Stevens, and he looks as well as ever again."

Mrs. Vennum was brought within an hour, and on her arrival, Lurancy came into full control, when one of the most affecting scenes ever witnessed took place. Mother and daughter embraced and kissed each other, and wept until all present shed tears of sympathy.

On the morning of May 21st, Mr. Roff wrote as follows: "Mary is to leave the body to-day, about eleven o'clock, so she says. She is bidding neighbours and friends good-bye. Rancy is to return home all right to-day. Mary came from her room upstairs, where she was sleeping with Lottie, at ten o'clock last night, lay down by us, hugged and kissed us, and cried because she must bid us good-bye, telling us to give all her pictures, marbles, and cards, and twenty-five cents Mrs. Vennum had given her, to Rancy, and made us promise to visit Rancy often. She tells me to write to Dr. Stevens as follows: 'Tell him I am going to heaven, and Rancy is coming home well. She says she will see his dear children in spirit-life; says she saw him on Sunday last.' . . . She said last night, weeping, 'Oh, pa, I am going to heaven to-morrow, at eleven o'clock, and Rancy is coming back cured, and going home all right.' She talked most lovingly about the separation, and most beautiful was her talk about heaven and her home."

Mrs. Alter writes: "When the day came, and the angels told Mary that Lurancy was coming to take full possession of her own body, it seemed to make her feel very sad. She went to the residences of Mr. L. C. Marsh and Mr. M. Hooper to say good-bye, telling them the angels had said the body was cured, and Lurancy was coming to go home and live with her parents again all well. She said: 'I feel sad at parting with you all, for you have treated me so kindly; you have helped by your sympathy to cure this body, and Rancy can come and inhabit it.'"

This shows that the angels can help the children of earth. Mr. M. Hooper, a pious Christian gentleman, who loved Mary for her sweet influence in his family, came into the room and asked if she would like to sing with him and his good wife? She said: "Yes, I am so sad; but when I go to heaven all tears will be wiped away, and I shall be happy."

After singing, they all knelt down, and Mr. Hooper made an affecting prayer, saying, "If it can be that an angel is



in our midst, and about to leave us and go and join her own in spirit-life, will God in his goodness allow her to bear a message of love to my own angel father and loved ones, who may, for all we can see, be hovering around our household at this moment."

When eleven o'clock came she seemed loth to go or to let Rancy come back. Mrs. Alter started to go home, and Mary started with her. When in the yard, Mrs. Alter said, "Mary, you have always done as you said you would, but as I don't understand these things, will you please let Lurancy come back just now, and then you can come again if you want to." Mary said, "Yes, I will," and she kissed mother and sister good-by.

A voice said, "Why, Mrs. Alter, where are you going?" Then, in a breath, "Oh, yes, I know; Mary told me!"

On the way they met Mrs. Marsh and Mrs. Hooper, who were the nearest neighbours, and Mary's favourite friends; Lurancy did not seem to know them, but remarked, "Mary thinks so much of these neighbours." Then, turning to Mrs. Alter, with whom Lurancy had been but slightly acquainted two years ago, she said, "Mrs. Alter, Mary can come and talk to you nearly all the way home, if you want her to, and then I will come back."

The change was again made, and Mary said, "I love to be with you so much."

The final change now took place at the time predicted, and Lurancy stated that she felt as though she had been asleep, yet she knew she had not. On reaching Mr. Roff's office, she addressed him as Mr. Roff, and asked if he would take her home, which he did.

May 22nd, Mr. Roff wrote to me as follows: "Thank God and the good angels, the dead is alive and the lost is found. I mailed you a letter yesterday at half-past ten o'clock a.m., stating that Mary had told us she would go away and Rancy return at eleven o'clock the 21st of May. At half-past eleven o'clock a.m., Minerva called at my office with Rancy Vennum, and wanted me to take her home, which I did. She called me Roff, and talked with me as a young girl would, not being acquainted. I asked her how things appeared to her—if they seemed natural? She said it seemed like a dream to her. She met her parents and brothers in an affectionate manner, hugging and kissing each one with tears of gladness. She clasped her arms around her father's neck a long time, fairly smothering him with kisses. I saw her father just now (eleven o'clock). He says she has been perfectly natural, and seems entirely well. You see my faith in writing to you yesterday morning instead of waiting till she came."

The *Watseka Republican* says:—

The meeting with her parents at the home was very affecting, and now she seems to be a healthy, happy little girl, going about noting things she saw before she was stricken, and recognises changes that have since taken place. This is a remarkable case, and the fact that we cannot understand such things does not do away with the existence of these unaccountable manifestations.

The *Danville (Ill.) Times*, in speaking of this case says:—

Mr. and Mrs. Roff are Spiritualists, and stoutly maintain that their daughter's ability to penetrate closed books and letters in the manner indicated was imparted by the inhabitants of an unseen world. We have no fixed opinion as to whether Spiritualism is false or true. Certain it is that occurrences are upon record which are hard to explain upon any natural hypothesis but those attributable to spirits' aid. Let those say who know, for we do not. In spite of all opposition, Spiritualists have increased in numbers; nor are they confined to the illiterate classes, but embrace poets, scholars, and statesmen. Let us hope the unharmed truth will early assert a glorious reign, and illuminate the darkened understanding of men.

The *Iroquois County (Ill.) Times*, under the head of "Mesmeric Mysteries," and in reference to Lurancy Vennum, says:—

Mr. and Mrs. Roff kindly offered to take charge of her until her mind should change, and she should become well again. She went there in February, and remained till about three weeks ago. Since then she has been Lurancy Vennum, and is healthy and full of intelligence. . . . It was hard for even the most sceptical not to believe there was something supernatural about her. If she was not prompted by the spirit of Mary Roff, how could she know so much about the family, people with whom she was not acquainted, and whom she had never visited? . . . No stranger would have suspected her of being the victim of disease, though her eyes were unusually bright. . . . There are yet numberless mysteries in this world, though science has dissipated many wonders, and philosophy has made plain many marvels. There is much that is unaccountable in the action of Spiritualistic mediums, and they do many

things that puzzle the greatest philosophers. Sceptical and unbelieving as we are, and slight as our experience has been, we have seen enough to convince us that Spiritualism is not all humbug. The case of Lurancy Vennum, a bright young girl of fourteen years, has been the subject of much discussion in Watseka during the past year, and there is a good deal in it beyond human comprehension.

On the 25th of June she wrote a letter to me by the consent of her friends saying among other things:—

DEAR DOCTOR,—I am feeling quite well to-day. I was up to Mrs. Alter's to-day; she is very well at present. This afternoon I called at Mr. Roff's office, and had quite a long talk with him, but of course it was about the loving angels that you and I love so well. Let them twine around your neck their arms, and press upon your brow their kiss. . . . Well, Doctor, you have many dear friends in this city who love you much. I saw Mrs. M—. She said she would have died if it had not been for you, and you know about Mrs. I—. We know you saved her life. . . . Kiss your loving wife for me, and tell her we shall all meet in heaven if not on earth. . . . I shall visit Mrs. Roff to-morrow. . . . I shall have my picture taken, and send it to you in my next letter. I get up early and take the morning air. I should like to have you write a line to me.—Your friend, LURANCY VENNUM.

This letter, written in pencil, is very different in its make-up and penmanship from those written by the same hand, signed by Mary Roff, and gives evidence of another mind.

Since penning the foregoing article, the writer has received the following letter from the mother of Lurancy, through the politeness of Mr. Roff:—

Watseka, Ill., July 9th, 1878.

DEAR FRIEND,—Mary L. Vennum is perfectly and entirely well, and perfectly natural. For two or three weeks after her return home she seemed a little strange to what she had been before she was taken sick last summer, but only, perhaps, the natural change that had taken place with the girl. Lurancy has been smarter, more intelligent, more industrious, more womanly, and more polite than before. We give the credit of her complete cure to her family, to Dr. E. W. Stevens, and Mr. and Mrs. Roff, by their obtaining her removal to Mr. Roff's, where her cure was perfected. We firmly believe that had she remained at home she would have died, or we would have been obliged to send her to the insane asylum, and if so, that she would have died there. Several of the relatives of Mary Lurancy, including ourselves, now believe she was cured by spirit power, and that Mary Roff controlled the girl.—MRS. LURINDA VENNUM.

On the 10th of July Mr. Roff writes:—

DEAR DOCTOR,—Mr. Vennum is out of town, but I have often talked with him, and I know his opinion, often expressed, that Lurancy and her mother would both have died if we had not taken the girl; he gives all credit to yourself and us for it. He believes it was spirit agency that did the work. Lurancy is in perfect health, and "much more womanly than before" (so her mother says). She says she used to romp and play with her brothers, and with the horses. Now she is steady; you can hardly imagine how the dear girl loves those who saved her. She sends you a letter to-day, but thinks it a little strange you have not answered her last letter.—Yours, &c., A. B. ROFF.

On the evening of the 16th of July, 1878, in the parlours of Asa B. Roff and his wife, we, the undersigned, met and listened to the careful reading and consideration of the foregoing narrative, and declare it to be entirely true and correct in every respect; and further, that now after eight weeks of home life, Lurancy Vennum remains well and sound in body and mind.

ASA B. ROFF,  
ANN ROFF,

THOMAS J. VENNUM,  
LURINDA VENNUM.

Watseka, Iroquois Co., Ill., July 8th, 1878.

Mrs. Roff writes to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago):—

I furnished Dr. Stevens with all the material facts in the case, except such as were within his own knowledge. The history of the Vennum family (and Lurancy's condition up to the time he and I went to see her, June 31st), I obtained from the members thereof and the neighbours intimately acquainted with them. The narrative, as written by Dr. Stevens, is substantially true in every part and particular, yet the half has not been told, and never can be; it is impossible for pen to describe or language portray the wonderful events of that memorable fourteen weeks the girl was at our house. The material facts of the case can be substantiated by disinterested witnesses, whose veracity cannot be questioned, and whose evidence would settle any case in a court of law. I refer you to Robert Doyle, Chas. Sherman, S. R. Hawks, Lile Marsh, J. M. Hooper, and their wives, and to Mrs. Mary Wagner, formerly Mary Lord, all residents of Watseka. As to "collusion," "arrangement," or "ourselves being deceived," that is simply impossible, as you will see if you carefully read the whole narrative over again. Let those who doubt or disbelieve the "strange, mysterious, and wonderful story," call to mind Lurancy's condition at her home last January, surrounded with all the kind care of parents, friends, and physicians, everything done to alleviate her suffering and perform a cure that human minds and hands could possibly do, yet growing continually worse (if that were possible), given up by her physicians, her friends, without a ray of hope, the insane asylum ready to receive her, a condition terrible to behold! Then view her condition from May 21st until

to-day, over three months, a bright, beautiful, happy, healthy girl, and then tell me what produced the change. The narrative furnishes the facts; account for them if you can on any other hypothesis than power exercised through or by the spirit of Mary Roff having control of Lurancy's body.

I am now sixty years old; have resided in Iroquois county thirty years, and would not now sacrifice what reputation I may have by being a party to the publication of such a narrative, if it were not perfectly true. If any should desire testimonials of my standing, Col. Bundy has some to use as he deems best.

Watseka, Ill., Aug. 23rd, 1878.

#### EPILEPSY AND SPIRIT INFLUENCE.

BY S. B. BRITTON, M.D.

I WILL briefly define the nature of *cataplexis*, or cataplexy. In this disease sensation and all the voluntary faculties and functions of mind and body are suddenly arrested. The organs of involuntary motion usually continue their functions; the heart and lungs moving in ordinary cases, the former with an accelerated action and diminished power. It is also characterised by unusual rigidity of the muscles. The body and limbs, though stiff and statue-like, may be moved by the effort of another, and they retain the posture in which they are left, however unnatural and uneasy the position. The particular expression on the face at the moment of the attack is liable to remain. The paroxysm varies in the degrees of intensity in different patients; and the time that may transpire before the restoration to the normal condition is altogether uncertain. In profound states of *cataplexis* all outward signs of life sometimes disappear; the processes of the animal chemistry cease, and the trance may continue for weeks. In this state of suspended animation many persons have been buried alive, or before the spirit had severed its connection with the body.

I have neither the time nor space to attempt an exhaustive treatment of the subject, much as society needs a complete philosophy of its material facts and essential laws. My exposition of the causes and aspects of these forms of disease must be general. I do not propose a critical classification of the symptomatic phenomena, whether physical or psychological; nor is it my purpose to consider the means and methods to be employed in the treatment of the same. It is rather my present design to call attention to a profound but much neglected subject, which, however, most deeply concerns the public welfare. Beyond this, I desire to show that the abnormal conditions and startling phenomena under consideration may and do result from causes resident in both the material and spiritual worlds. Even when an attack of either epilepsy or cataplexy is precipitated by purely organic conditions and physical causes, the subsequent state and its phenomenal aspects are very likely to be complicated by the play of psychological forces and the interposition of spiritual visitors.

It is natural that the spirits whose lives on earth were cut short by either acts of violence or the supervention of disease should have a desire to continue the career that terminated prematurely. In like manner, all who are conscious of having neglected their opportunities in this world must desire to finish up the incomplete work of this rudimental life. Those who have committed great wrongs on earth may be forced back by a law of the moral constitution, or from an irresistible impulse to undo the mischief of their hands—to the scenes of the ruin they have made. Such spirits—reviewing the records of their lives, imperishable for ever in the memory—earnestly seeking relief from ignorance and unhappiness, may seize on any poor, helpless mortal in the hope of deriving some satisfaction from a temporary renewal of the former relations. Filled with recollections of time wasted—a life madly sacrificed, or at best disorderly and profitless—they are liable to derange the body and mind of any delicate subject who may willingly or otherwise yield to their influence. In all this we are not, as a rule, authorised to infer that the spirits are maliciously disposed. It may suffice that they are ignorant and clumsy, to account for the disorderly results of their influence. Should a common tinker attempt to manipulate a fine chronometer, he would be sure to derange its action. The man

who has never handled anything more delicate than chain cables could never tune my lady's harp. An ignorant mesmerist, with strong passions, an unsuitable temperament, and unbalanced brain, might derange and upset the nervous system of a sensitive girl, and so may an ignorant spirit, who has not yet recovered from the similar imperfections of the life on earth.

The careful reader of the New Testament will have observed, not only cases of vital and mental derangement—corresponding in all their essential features to the foregoing analysis of epilepsy and catalepsy—were of frequent occurrence, but, also, that they were invariably ascribed to the agency of demons or spirits. Among the Greeks a demon was not always regarded as an evil spirit. The word was not understood to either express or imply anything in respect to his moral qualities. The ancients believed in both good and evil demons, or spirits of men. When, therefore, we translate the word into English, and call the Demon of the Greek Scripture a *devil*, we neither change his nature nor acquire a right to defame his character. We cannot make a good spirit evil by giving him a bad name. Those only who produced unhappy effects were characterised as “unclean spirits;” by which we may understand spirits wanting intelligence and a high moral purpose. It was an important part of the business of the early Evangelical teachers, under the apostolic commission, to cast out the spirits whose influence was detrimental.

The fact cannot be disputed that the different classes of demons referred to by the early Greeks embraced “the disembodied spirits of the dead, without respect to their moral qualities,” and they appear to have been “the favourite sources of information.” The distinction between two general classes is clearly made in the following passage by a learned author:—

“There is also a second class of demons, namely: the souls of those who having lived meritoriously have departed from the body. Such a soul I find called in the ancient Latin tongue *Lemur*. Of these Lemures, he, who having obtained by lot the guardianship of his posterity, presides over the house with a quiet and placable superintendence, is called the household Lar. But those who, on account of a vicious life, having obtained no happy seats, are a sort of vagabonds, or are punished by a kind of exile, and who inflict idle terrors upon good men, but more real evils upon the wicked—this kind is commonly called *Larvæ*.”—*Apo-catastasis*, p. 89.

The narratives of the Evangelists contain many references to the agency of spirits in the transfiguration of mortals, and in modifying human feeling, thought, and conduct. For the time being, and as long as the spirit maintained the ascendancy over the medium, the former often governed the volition and action of the latter. As I am treating the subject in its relation to certain forms of disease, I shall make my citations from the Christian Scriptures with a special view to the illustration of that relation, and the power of spirits to damage the organic action of mind and body. I will here introduce examples which will exhibit their demeanour and show the manner in which they handled their subjects. It is related that while Jesus was teaching in a synagogue in Capernaum, that there was a man present who had “an unclean spirit.” The medium while under this influence was inclined to be noisy. He discovered the name and character of the Teacher, and in a declamatory style insisted on being let alone.

“And Jesus rebuked him saying, ‘Hold thy peace and come out of him.’ And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried out in a loud voice, he came out of him.” (Mark, chap. i., 25, 26.)

When Jesus was coming out of a ship in which He had just crossed the sea of Galilee:—

“Immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains. . . . He had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones.”

This spirit was rather boisterous in his recognition of the

man who was about to exorcise him. While the man was under the influence of this spirit, Jesus asked for his name, whereupon the spirit "answered, saying, 'My name is Legion; for we are many.'" (Mark, chap. v. 2-9.)

It is recorded that as Jesus descended from the mountain, after His transfiguration, a man brought his only child to Him, whose case is thus described:—

"And, lo a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly cried out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him. . . . And as he was yet coming the devil threw him down, and tore him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child." (Luke, chap. ix. 38-41.)

The following is a very accurate description of the general phenomena which accompany an attack of the disease known as epilepsy:—

"And one of the multitude said, 'Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him he teareth him, and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away'. . . . And when he saw Him, straightway the spirit tore him; and he fell to the ground and wallowed, foaming. . . . 'And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him'. . . . Jesus rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, 'Dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.' And the spirit cried and rent him sore, and came out of him; and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, 'He is dead.'" (Mark, chap. ix. 17-26.)

It would seem from this description that the paroxysm was followed by a state of suspended animation. It is to be observed that this is not usually the case in epilepsy. The convulsion is followed by great general prostration—clearly enough indicated in the Evangelical description by the words, "and pineth away." In all ordinary cases the respiratory movement continues, and the process of the aeration of the blood goes on with only partial interruption. During the continuance of the paroxysm, as a rule the respiration is heavy and difficult, while the heart's action is quick and strong, but not rhythmical; the systole and diastole occurring at irregular intervals.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

#### BILLY'S ROSE.

THE following lines by "Dagonet" are quoted from *The Referee* newspaper by permission of the proprietors of that journal:—

Billy's dead and gone to glory—so is Billy's sister Nell;  
There's a tale I know about them were I poet I would tell;  
Soft it comes, with perfume laden, like a breath of country air  
Wafted down the filthy alley, bringing fragrant odours there.

In that vile and filthy alley, long ago one winter's day,  
Dying quick of want and fever, hapless, patient Billy lay,  
While beside him sat his sister, in the garret's dismal gloom,  
Cheering with her gentle presence Billy's pathway to the tomb.

Many a tale of elf and fairy did she tell the dying child,  
Till his eyes lost half their anguish, and her worn, wan features smiled;  
Tales herself had heard haphazard, caught amid the Babel roar,  
Lisp'd about by tiny gossips playing at their mothers' door.

Then she felt his wasted fingers tighten feebly as she told  
How beyond this dismal alley lay a land of shining gold,  
Where, when all the pain was over—where, when all the tears were shed—  
He would be a white-frocked angel, with a gold thing on his head.

Then she told some garbled story of a kind-eyed Saviour's love,  
How He'd built for little children great big playgrounds up above,  
Where they sang and played at hop-scotch and at horses all the day,  
And where beadles and policemen never frightened them away.

This was Nell's idea of heaven—just a bit of what she'd heard,  
With a little bit invented, and a little bit inferred;  
But her brother lay and listened, and he seemed to understand,  
For he closed his eyes and murmured he could see the Promised Land.

"Yes," he whispered, "I can see it—I can see it, sister Nell;  
Oh, the children look so happy, and they're all so strong and well;  
I can see them there with Jesus—He is playing with them, too!  
Let us run away and join them, if there's room for me and you."

She was eight, this little maiden, and her life had all been spent  
In the garret and the alley, where they starved to pay the rent;  
Where a drunken father's curses and a drunken mother's blows  
Drove her forth into the gutter from the day's dawn to its close.

But she knew enough, this outcast, just to tell the sinking boy,  
"You must die before you're able all these blessings to enjoy.  
You must die," she whispered, "Billy, and I am not even ill;  
But I'll come to you, dear brother—yes, I promise that I will."

"You are dying little brother—you are dying, oh, so fast;  
I heard father say to mother that he knew you couldn't last.  
They will put you in a coffin, then you'll wake and be up there,  
While I'm left alone to suffer in this garret bleak and bare."

"Yes, I know it," answered Billy. "Ah, but sister, I don't mind,  
Gentle Jesus will not beat me: He's not cruel or unkind.  
But I can't help thinking, Nelly, I should like to take away  
Something, sister, that you gave me, I might look at every day."

"In the summer you remember how the mission took us out  
To a great green lovely meadow, where we played and ran about,  
And the van that took us halted by a sweet white patch of land,  
Where the fine red blossoms grew, dear, half as big as mother's hand."

"Nell, I asked the good kind teacher what they call such flowers as  
those,  
And he told me, I remember, that the pretty name was rose.  
I have never seen them since, dear—how I wish that I had one!  
Just to keep and think of you, Nell, when I'm up beyond the sun."

Not a word said little Nelly; but at night when Billy slept,  
On she flung her scanty garments, and then down the stairs she crept.  
Through the silent streets of London she ran nimbly as a fawn,  
Running on and running ever till the night had changed to dawn.

When the foggy sun had risen, and the mist had cleared away,  
All around her, rapt in snowdrift, there the open country lay!  
She was tired, her limbs were frozen, and the roads had cut her feet,  
But there came no flowery gardens her keen hungry eyes to greet.

She had traced the road by asking—she had learnt the way to go;  
She had found the famous meadow—it was wrapped in cruel snow;  
Not a buttercup or daisy, not a single verdant blade  
Showed its head above its prison. Then she knelt her down and prayed.

With her eyes upcast to heaven, down she sank upon the ground,  
And she prayed to God to tell her where the roses might be found.  
Then the cold blast numbed her senses, and her sight grew strangely  
dim;  
And a sudden, awful tremor seemed to rack her every limb.

"Oh, a rose!" she moaned, "Good Jesus—just a rose to take to Bill!"  
And as she prayed a chariot came thundering down the hill;  
And a lady sat there, toying with a red rose, rare and sweet;  
As she paused she flung it from her, and it fell at Nelly's feet.

Just a word her lord had spoken caused her ladyship to fret,  
And the rose had been his present, so she flung it in a pet;  
But the poor half-blinded Nelly thought it fallen from the skies,  
And she murmured, "Thank you, Jesus!" as she clasped the dainty  
prize.

Lo that night from out the alley did a child's soul pass away;  
From dirt and sin and misery to where God's children play.  
Lo that night a wild, fierce snowstorm burst in fury o'er the land,  
And at morn they found Nell frozen, with the red rose in her hand.

Billy's dead, and gone to glory—so is Billy's sister Nell;  
Am I bold to say this happened in the land where angel's dwell:—  
That the children met in heaven, after all their earthly woes,  
And that Nelly kissed her brother, and said, "Billy, here's your rose?"

FIRST SCOT—"Fat sort o' minister hae ye gotten, Geordie?"  
Second ditto—"Oh! Weel, he's no muckle worth. We seldom get a  
glint o' him. Sax days o' the week he's enveeseble, and on the seventh  
he's encomprensible."—*Punch*.

EMOTIONAL ECCENTRICITIES.—The London correspondent of the *Cambridge Express* says:—"The latest sensation is the expected arrival in town of the Shakers. I say 'in town,' for Hendon is essentially a London place of amusement. The ignorant fanatics, who imagine Mrs. Girling to be a prophetess, are probably quite unaware that they are coming to Kingsbury Common to be made a public spectacle. They probably see in the proprietor of the Welsh Harp a miraculous deliverer. However, they will probably entertain no religious scruples against getting a living by being looked at; and no doubt if Mrs. Girling does not take the precaution to limit the numbers of her followers, she will receive a large increase of proselytes, who are quite willing to indulge a native propensity to laziness on the same terms. No doubt thousands upon thousands will turn out to see this exhibition of religio-mania upon a grand scale. This kind of thing is growing popular. Is there not already a settlement of heathen with a grand 'joss house' of their own, which forms one of the great features of a more favourite resort than Hendon? and has not London lately been swarming to see a Negro 'Revival' exhibited upon the stage? Religious dissipation is no longer satisfied by rushing from the Tabernacle to St. Alban's, Brook-street, or from Westminster Abbey to the Hall of Science. Something more pungent is required to suit the taste of the age. Any enterprising person who would import a few Mormons with a large number of wives would ensure vast profits."

## THE SPIRITUAL POSITION OF MISERS.\*

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

WEALTH may be made a great blessing, but its possession very often proves a great curse. It may be legitimately used to promote the comfort and happiness of its possessor, and of others, and it may be employed in ministering alone to selfish and sensual gratification. By others again it is hoarded for its own sake, and becomes a weight upon the soul which sinks it to the very lowest depths of degradation. Of these—misers—the most pitiable of men, Professor Robert Hare, in a lecture on Spiritualism delivered in New York many years since, said:—

“Prudent, thoughtful, honest men, who do not choose to live houseless, without clothes, nor upon the sweat of other men’s brows, turn from the paths of amusement, of sensual enjoyment, from the love of literature or science, or from the observation and investigation of nature’s beauties and miracles in order to get, through wealth, the power and honest right to indulge. But while pursuing this great object, in the first instance only as a means of attaining other objects, good or bad, they grow old in the chase, their passions burn out, while avarice originates as it were from their ashes, not, phoenix-like, to replace one parental being, but a horrid monster, having nothing in common with a plurality of progenitors but the selfish, ardent love of money, unmitigated by any redeeming aspiration. A being so actuated, or in other words a miser, would certainly find it as difficult to reach a higher sphere in the spirit-world as it would be for a camel to get through the needle’s eye. As swine accumulate fat to bequeath to those to whom they leave their carcasses, so the avaricious accumulate wealth to hoard until it can no longer be retained. They die with an immense amount of negative sin, since all their omissions to do good which is within their power are carried to their debit in the spirit-world. Their poverty in the spirit-world will be proportioned to their ill-used wealth in this temporal abode. When this is well brought home to mankind there will be less avarice, and fewer of those crimes which arise from selfish cupidity or ambition.”

There is something so grovelling in the social and moral habits of a miser that he is generally shunned by all excepting those whose interest or duty connect them with him. The late Duke of Brunswick was an illustration of this fact. Though possessing great wealth and a royal lineage, he was, through the miserly propensities and practices which seemed to constitute and represent his very life, universally despised and generally shunned by the nobility of Europe. After attaining old age death at last overtook him—we may here well say, the enemy death—and the scene presented during his last moments was as hideous as his life had been unlovely. From an account in a public journal of the circumstances attending his death I extract the following: “That picture from Geneva is dreadful which shows him gasping for breath, with starting eyes, and his wig pushed back from his forehead. The death-sweat furrowed his painted cheeks, and the colours smeared his pillow as he struggled for air. By his side, indifferent to his anguish, and eager for the relief from unspeakable humiliation which his death alone could afford, sat his mistress—young, reckless, and beautiful. His attorney, a blunt Englishman of substantial figure and inexpressive face, played with his watch chain, and busied himself, while the old wretch lay dying, with calculating the extent of his responsibility. It was in this way that the diamond Duke finished his reckoning with the world, which had long been indifferent to his existence.”

The miseries of this unfortunate man commenced with his earliest cravings for wealth, followed him through life, attended him in death, and where is he now? We know where his heart is—that it is with his lost earthly treasure: “For where your treasure is, there will be your heart also.” This truism applies equally to embodied and disembodied spirits.

How is it possible for any reflecting mind for a moment to entertain the idea that by the magic process of churchly absolution, or of an hour’s repentance, the very nature of this man could have been changed, so that he would be

fitted for the pure and holy enjoyments of heaven equally with the loving and blessed soul who had followed the example of Jesus, and devoted the energies and strength of his life to the cause of charity and benevolence? Even if the miracle could be wrought, it would only raise doubts in our minds of the justice of God.

Spiritualism disposes of cases like this more rationally. It teaches that under all this load of sin and darkness there existed a divine element, a spark of Deity that a whole life of sin and error could not extinguish, and that when he passed the portals of death he gravitated to a place where the conditions surrounding him would sooner or later permit and assist him to view himself as he is, and as he has been; and with this knowledge acquired will come the desire for improvement, and from this desire earnest efforts, and through these, with the assistance of sympathising angels, he will surely emerge from the evil that overshadows him, and will then rise to a higher plane, where he will acquire further strength and light and be enabled to ascend, step by step, the ladder of progression.

The sinner not only violates the commands of God, but he transgresses the laws of his own being—“But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate Me love death. . . . His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.”

His own sins do hold him. He is not followed by the vengeance of an angry God, but is in the toils of his own iniquity, and it is only by escaping from these that he can rise through better resolve and better conditions to a state of happiness.

The unhappy condition of a spirit who in this life passed with superficial observers as a prosperous, contented man, was made evident to me in a *séance* with Mr. Foster, Sept. 10th, 1870. Besides myself there were present three ladies, relatives of mine. One of the ladies inquired of the spirit of her uncle, Charles —, whether his will was as he desired it to be, and the answer was “No.” I then inquired who was concerned in defeating his intentions, and the reply came—“The one you have in your mind.” The person I had in my mind was Henry —. Without alluding to the correctness of this answer, I asked if the spirits present would request the presence of Henry —, and after the delay of a minute or two it was announced by raps that he was there; but the medium said he was impressed to say that the other spirits did not like his presence, and the medium himself showed signs of uneasiness. I inquired if he was happy? The answer was, “No; very unhappy,” and an urgent request from the other spirits that I would ask him no more questions.

Charles — deferred making his will until his last illness, and selected as his executors two old acquaintances. One of these, Henry —, wrote his will from his dictation, but from one of its provisions being so directly contrary to what was known to have been his declared intentions during that same illness, it was thought by some that it was not written as he directed. What confirmed this suspicion was that the other executor, who had no part in the transaction, declined to act, and even declined any further recognition of this executor as an acquaintance. Both executors are deceased, and evidence of fraud in the management of the estate has since come to light. Thus it is literally true that “there is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.”

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OH, the grave! the grave! It buries every error, covers every defect, extinguishes every resentment. From its peaceful bosom spring nought but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave, even of an enemy, without feeling a compunctious throb that he should have warred with the poor handful of dust that lies mouldering beneath him?—*Washington Irving.*

TO SAY that the reflective mind is not lifted to a higher plane of thought and aspiration by an assured sense of continuous life is an absurdity. As well might it be said that a man who expected to live only a week, would make the same provisions for his life that he would if he expected to live a century. Spiritualism regards man not only from the side of his limitations, but of his possibilities. “Why dost thou wonder, oh, man,” says Isidore, “at the height of the stars, or the depth of the sea? Enter into thine own soul, and wonder then!”—*Sargent.*

\* Extracted from Crowell’s *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*.



## EXPERIMENTAL SPIRITUALISM.\*

BY C. CARTER BLAKE, DOCT. SCI.

I PRESUME that every one present is more or less a Spiritualist, that is to say that he believes that sensation, on certain occasions, may take place without the ordinary channels of perception. I presume, also, that some feel an interest in the manner in which the scientific examination of form-manifestations, or what are called materialisations, may take place. If there be such inquirers, and the fact of our assemblage here to-night is a sufficient *raison d'être* for my theory that there is a numerous body of them, it behoves us to inquire what are the forms which have been so often seen, and so much more often described by various observers.

I may, in the first place, for all convenience of argument, presuppose that some of the forms which have appeared on so many occasions are genuine. All the numerous cases of fraud which have existed will be passed over by me. That such cases have been more or less frequent is within the scope of our experience; but the probability that their number is on the decrease is a fact on which every one may now congratulate himself. I have not, therefore, to give you any descriptions of the future life (if such there be for all souls), but rather to give you a description of a spring-balance; I have no messages from any brighter land, past, present, or future, to give you, but rather information (I trust exact) respecting the management of a weighing machine; and while I disclaim any idea that the facts which I shall bring to your notice have any moral bearing whatever, I merely claim that they are apparently exact. Experiment in Spiritualism has often been passed over in favour of the emotional part of the subject. If I have nothing particularly sensational or remarkable to bring before you—

"Non de vi, neque cæde, nec veneno  
Sed lis est mihi de tribus capellis,  
Vicini queror has abesse furto."

(Martial, Ep. vi. 19.)—

I trust that the precision of some of the facts may be an excuse for their common and simple nature. What has been termed by one of the most eloquent masters of the science, "a central dogma of our faith," is perfectly unaffected by the purely dynamical results which I shall notice. The "egotism of the affections" has little to do with these experiments, and they have small relation with the "demand that our dead should be given back to us, not that we should go to them, but that they should come to us." We have not, therefore, to consider such results; and any interest which any person may feel in his own dead, or if his sympathies extend over humanity, any one else's dead, may be gratified according to his own volition. No desire to communicate with, or honour the memory of our ancestors appears to have the slightest appreciable effect on a pencil attached to a spring balance. Still less can any person who watches the experiments I am about to describe in detail derive any conceptions of the state of the soul after death from what appears to me to be a very elaborate weighing machine. No less "fear of death," which appears to be a condition through which all mankind must and will pass, can be possessed by the person who pursues the weighing machine experiment with care, than by he who may be the follower of any creed as to the destination of the soul whose body may be weighed at the price of one penny at the adjacent railway station. Yet, as the man who has ascertained his weight takes his ticket away with the consciousness that one (at least) physical fact is true, to the extent of the veracity of the scales, so the preservation of records like the present may tend to serve as factors on which some future person may make a probable theory as to the transcorporeal action of the human body. I will now, as briefly as I can, describe the machines which have been used by the committee of the British National Association of Spiritualists. I make especial reference to the columns of the *Spiritualist* for May 3rd, June 7th, and September 6th for the present year.

[The lecturer here described the apparatus in detail.]

Such, therefore, was the apparatus on which a number of successful experiments have been worked out, and of such

nature will be the improved apparatus with which the liberality of Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Parksfield, Didsbury, Manchester, has provided the Research Committee. The psychic who has been employed in all cases is Mr. C. E. Williams, and I am (at this time especially) bound to record the honesty with which he aided the members of the committee in their search after facts, and to place also in evidence the proofs that even if he had been in any way inclined to deception, it would have been physically impossible for him to have produced some of the results which have been recorded. Experiments were, prior to the great experiment with Mr. C. E. Williams on the 5th April last, made by Mr. W. H. Harrison, to see what records were produced by making various sprawling and violent motions on the machine; also by moving about with one leg off the machine and another on it. Mr. Harrison "did not find it practicable to artificially produce Mr. Williams's manifestation of April 5th, 1878, at 8.52½ p.m., when the spirit gave a heavy musical box to an observer, who was seated 12 ft. 3 in. from the front of the cabinet; while this was done there was a quivering weight on the machine of never less than 28 lbs." The fact that when this experiment took place there was a weight at all in the cabinet is sufficient to dispel the theory that it was possible for Mr. Williams, in the guise of "Peter," to be lifting bells and moving boxes of some weight at a distance of 12 ft. 3 in. from the spot where his body recorded a weight of 28 lbs., which weight is greater than that which could have been produced by any portable article which the "psychic" could have secreted and placed in the cabinet whilst he himself was capering about the room. This theory, therefore, involves that of a creation of weight to the extent of 28 lbs., *quod erat absurdum*. Further, on the assumption that Mr. Williams's normal height is somewhat less than six feet, it would be impossible for him to elongate his person to a length of 12 ft. 3 in. With a view, however, that we shall be able precisely to estimate the value of this experiment, I shall read you Mr. Harrison's notes of the *séance*, from the *Spiritualist* of May 3rd last:—

Mr. Williams took his seat on the weighing machine at 8.7½ p.m., the self-registering apparatus gave the diagram shown in Fig 5, and the following is from my record:—

- 8.7½—Medium entered cabinet.
- 8.9½—Strong shudders of medium.
- 8.10—Light put out.
- 8.15—Peter's voice heard.
- 8.17—Medium sighing and moaning.
- 8.17½—Peter entered into conversation.
- 8.18½—Thread holding cabinet doors broken.
- 8.19—Peter said he didn't do it.
- 8.19½—Peter talked till 8.22½.
- 8.23—Medium made shivering noise.
- 8.24—Peter asked for remnants of fire in the grate to be raked out. Done by Dr. Carter Blake.
- 8.24½—Peter talking till 8.25.
- 8.28—Medium shuddered. Peter talked.
- 8.29½—Medium shuddered.
- 8.30½—Peter drew open curtains of his cabinet.
- 8.32—Peter said he was outside.
- 8.33—Medium shuddered.
- 8.33½—Peter: "Can you see me?" Answer: "No."
- 8.34—Peter talking.
- 8.35½—Musical box set going by Peter's order.
- 8.37—Mr. Barrett: "Peter says he is outside the cabinet."
- 8.37½—Peter: "Does any one intimate I'm not outside!" Mr. Harrison: "No. Only known facts are stated." Peter: "That's right. Be scientific."
- [8.38—Light seen, and a head eighteen inches from cabinet.
- 8.39—Peter outside cabinet, touching Mr. Barrett.
- 8.40—Peter said he was still outside.
- 8.41—Peter talking. Light seen.
- 8.42—Illuminated head three feet from cabinet.
- 8.44—Peter talking, and gave a bell to Mr. Newbould near the other cabinet. Gave it into his hand in the dark.
- 8.45½—Light one foot from cabinet.
- 8.46—Illuminated face seen one foot from cabinet. Peter talked till 8.49—Peter said that he was out of the cabinet, and that he had put the musical box on the floor of the cabinet. [Immediately before this he had seized the musical box with both hands and had carried it away. The box had previously rested on Mr. Barrett's knees.]
- 8.51—Peter said that the box was outside the cabinet.
- 8.52—Musical box floating outside cabinet, as usual in a dark *séance*.
- 8.52½—The sitters said that Peter was "right outside." He gave the musical box to Miss Kislingbury.]
- 8.54—A light seen one foot from cabinet. A face seen twice by Dr. Carter Blake and others.
- 8.56—Peter talking.

\* Read at the meeting of the Marylebone Society of Inquirers into Spiritualism, Sept. 24th, 1878.

- 9.0—Peter said he was outside cabinet.  
 9.3—Peter said he was gradually subsiding: Medium shuddered.  
 9.4—Peter said "Good night" to everybody in turn.  
 9.4½—Threw out paper tube.  
 9.5—Medium coughed.  
 9.5½—Medium spoke.  
 9.7—Medium left the cabinet.

On this *séance*, one fact may be noted which is rather of interest to those who are students of Theosophy than to the others. Certain persons who do not claim to be "mediums" or psychics are occasionally able, either voluntarily or (perhaps) involuntarily, to produce manifestations, which some call "spiritual," on their own account. The method used is known to themselves, and has been known to "adepts" for several thousands of years. It is very curious that at 8.38, during this *séance*, such an experiment was commenced by one person, and carried on without intermission till 8.52½, precisely the time when the greatest manifestations took place. Similar experiments have been often repeated, and agree in showing that the action which brought forth "Peter," and made him perform his unseemly gambols, was not at that moment an action merely proceeding from the medium himself, who knew nothing of the experiment, and that one person, at least, in the circle had control over this fourteen minutes and a half of experiment. It may, of course, be a mere coincidence; but it is curious that the lines observable on the diagram during the period which I have marked with a bracket should be so different from those of any other part of the *séance*. The vehement vibratory motion of the pencil, coupled with the extraordinary diminution of the weight of the "psychic," seem to indicate that some other force was at action than that which was evolving some "spirit" from the body of Mr. Williams, or in any way according to his volition. Mr. Harrison, whose careful description and philosophical interpretation of the nature of these phenomena, leaves nothing to be desired in its purely scientific and exact method, has admitted that during this time, "from 8.39 to 8.56, the weight of the medium was constantly altering; sometimes he weighed about 30 lbs., at other times about 60 lbs., but his weight was constantly changing, as if some vibrating force were acting upon him all the time." Possibly the nature of this force is that for which we seek. Some attention should be paid to the nature of the long thin lines in this diagram, which appear prior to 8.38 to have been frequent, but which undoubtedly merely represent jolts, or oscillations in the apparatus. The new machine will doubtless make these lines a little less frequent. I must again call your attention to the time 8.52½, when a box was given to a person present at the *séance*, as at that precise moment there was a pull on the weight of the psychic, which has drawn a vertically straight line, which, however, does not come down to zero by 28 or 30 lbs. It is evident, by this registry, that something at that moment was inside the cabinet.

The termination of this *séance* is not the less remarkable. Although the experiment of which I had made mention terminated at 8.52½, the "vibratory force" exercised continued its action until 8.56. Of this I venture to offer no explanation, as the apparent discrepancy between the appearance of the contour lines in the diagram and those towards the termination of the experiment is to me inexplicable, except on the theory that the "loose forces" generated during the experiment, which had come into action precisely at 8.38, when Peter's light had come out, required three minutes and a half to settle down.

I next proceed to notice the *séance* which was held by Mr. G. C. Joad and Mr. Harrison with Mr. C. E. Williams alone, and quote Mr. Harrison's record of it, at the same time that I hand round diagram No. 6.

[Extract read.]

The value of this experiment chiefly consists in the recorded fact that while a body which appeared, to use the words of Mr. Joad, to be moving about "clad in ordinary dark male costume," a weight existed in the cabinet of 35 lbs. on the machine, being 7 lbs. greater than that in the experiment of the 5th of April. The nature of the weight so left requires some examination, and those who have had far greater experience of form-manifestations than the past twenty-two years have afforded me suggest that some

examination should be made by critical observers, at the moment when the so-called "spirit" is about, of the psychic's body. Let me here protest against the thoroughly unscientific and brutal habit of seizing the "spirit" and solving a dynamical question by a game at fisticuffs. Nothing has ever occurred from such a method of procedure (except in the Liverpool cases) but confusion. It is not the "Dasyu," or temporarily vitalised, imitation form, that requires in such circumstances to be examined and its position recorded, but the medium or "psychic" himself. Ordinary eyes and ears aided, if necessary, by scales and weights, will be sufficient to watch the course of another human being, and the "spirit" may be left to follow its own devices. It may be safely averred that, between this world and the next, room enough can be found both for ourselves and for any materialised "spirit" form to pursue our respective careers unchecked by interruption.

The great advantage, and it is one on which I cannot insist to you too strongly, of experiments carried on in the method of the present, is that we are free from the complications which often arise through the conduct of enthusiastic advocates of any theory whatever. There can be no preconceived opinion, no fixed idea, no *arrière pensée* in a weighing machine. A machine of itself has no prejudice, and can only record the variations which its own unbiased pencil can note. The value, therefore, of a series of deliberate records like the present can be estimated by its probable effect on those persons who are outside the ranks of Spiritualism. When reasonable men (and I would fain hope that many of those who are opposed to us in personal feeling may possess habits of thought not on the whole inferior to those of the London costermonger, who has the habit of weighing his goods, whether truly or falsely, at least with precision) perceive that Spiritualists exist, whom no tediousness of experiment, no weary watching and waiting in the dark, no repeated failures, can daunt in the careful pursuit of an investigation which may prove of interest to the lovers of truth. The habitual scientific man is perhaps slow to express his ideas, and his habits of thought are not such as may conduce to readiness in didactic utterance. Still those men, who

Among the wicked, have dared to stand at bay;  
 Who alone have borne the heat and the burden of the day;  
 By an evil generation for a scorn and bye-word named,  
 They have set their faces like a flint, and will not be ashamed,

have some reason why they should bear testimony to others. There is no reason why any stranger, no matter how prejudiced or how ignorant, should not be able to examine the experiments we have made, and are making; no reason why he should not repeat those experiments by himself at his own cost. The results of themselves may attract investigators, if they are gifted with a patent scientific spirit. Above all, the advantage which such experiments as these possess above the loose test conditions which so often are given, ought to convince scientific observers of their purity as well as of their exactitude.

My time alone will preclude my allusion at length to another experiment, which appears to be of the highest value. If the wires of a deflecting galvanometer are attached round the wrists of a "medium" during a cabinet *séance*, an apparatus has been used by Mr. Harrison which projects two bright spots on the wall of the room, which spots, so long as they continue to be fixed, are of themselves proof that the psychic, to whose hands the wires are attached, cannot in any way move from his seat without the fact being noted on the wall. Such experiments have in past time been successful, and they may probably in the future lead to some good results.

These experiments, therefore, which have been recently carried on have had the effect of increasing our stock of knowledge, of making more certain the conclusions to which many have been led from other grounds, and of giving at least some certain facts which will show to the outside world that we at least have the consciousness that we do not "do our work negligently." If those minds who can only be convinced of the truth of an experiment by its constant repetition, and who are willing that the facts of Spiritualism should be taken out of the domain of the wonder-seeker, and rendered as simple as a telephone or a steam-engine, are in

any way disposed to admit that there is something in our science worth careful inquiry and scientific investigation, your time at least will not have been wasted in listening to some at least of the facts I have had the honour imperfectly to bring before you.

## Poetry.

### BIBLIOLATRY.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

BOWING thyself in dust before a book,  
And thinking the great God is thine alone,  
O rash iconoclast, thou wilt not break  
What gods the heathen carves in wood and stone,  
As if the shepherd who from outer celd  
Leads all his shivering lambs to one sure fold  
Were careful for the fashion of his crook!

There is no broken reed so peer and base,  
No rush, the bending tilt of swamp-fly blue,  
But He therewith the ravening wolf can chase,  
And guide His flock to springs and pastures new;  
Through ways unlooked for, and through many lands,  
Far from the rich fields built with human hands,  
The gracious footprints of His love I trace.

And what art thou, own brother of the clod,  
That from his hand the crook wouldst snatch away  
And shake instead thy dry and sapless rod,  
To scare the sheep out of the wholesome day?  
Yea, what art thou, blind, unconverted Jew,  
That with thy idel volume's covers two  
Wouldst make a jail to coop the living God?

Thou hear'st not well the mountain organ-tones  
By prophet cars from Hor and Sinai caught,  
Thinking the cistern of these Hebrew brains  
Drow dry the springs of the All-knewer's thought;  
Nor shall thy lips be touched with living fire,  
Who blew'st old altar-eals with sole desire  
To weld anew the spirit's broken chains.

God is not dumb that He should speak no more;  
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness  
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;  
There towers the mountain of the Voice no loss,  
Which whoso seeks shall find, but he who bends,  
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,  
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore.

Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,  
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of stone;  
Each age, each kindred, adds a verso to it,  
Texts of despair or hope, of joy or moan;  
While swings the sea, while mists the mountain's shroud,  
While thunders' surges burst on cliffs of eloud,  
Still at the prophet's feet the nations sit.

—Religio-Philosophical Journal.

### JOHNSON AND BYRON ON SPIRITS.

THAT the dead are seen no more, I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent testimony of all ages and all nations. There is no people, rude or unlearned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience could make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it with their fears.—Johnson.

I morely mean to say what Johnson said,  
That, in the course of some six thousand years,  
All nations have believed that from the dead  
A visitant at intervals appears;

And what is strangest upon this strange head  
Is, that, whatever bar the reason rears  
'Gainst such belief, there's something stronger still  
In its behalf, let those deny who will.

—Byron.

## Correspondence.

[Great freedom is offered 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. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

### THE LAW OF "THE PERSISTENCE OF VISION" VERIFIED.

SIR,—After reading Mr. Cogle's letter in *The Spiritualist* of September 29th, I hung up an old straw hat against the wall, and, as I fully expected, after gazing at it while I counted thirty or forty, and then looking at the light paper, or, better still, on the ceiling, there were floating before my eyes discs of light of different degrees of brilliancy; and such will be the case, I think, with almost any one who tries the experiment.

Now I, unlike Mr. Cogle, fully accept, and have long accepted, the spiritualistic theory, but I do not think it has anything to do with the question before us. The principle is, I think, explained in a book published about fourteen years ago by Griffith and Farran, St. Paul's Churchyard, called *Spectropia*; or, *Surprising Spectral Illusions, showing Ghosts Everywhere and of any Colour*, with illustrations by J. H. Brown.

As an easy illustration, let any one draw a death's head, for instance, on white paper, blacken all the bone parts, leaving the hollow of the eyes, nose, and mouth white, look fixedly at it while you count thirty, as described, and then look on the ceiling, and a death's head will appear on the ceiling. To quote Mr. Brown's book:—

"Turning the eye to the ceiling, the sky, or, better still, to a white sheet hung on the wall of a darkened room (not totally dark), and looking rather steadily at any one point, the spectre will soon begin to make its appearance, increasing in intensity, and then gradually vanishing, to reappear and again vanish; it will continue to do so several times in succession, each reappearance being fainter than the one preceding."

The writer further tells us:—

"The duration and vividness of these impressions on the retina vary greatly in different individuals, and can be procured from almost any object. A person may, after looking steadily, and, as often happens, unconsciously for a short time at printed or painted figures on paper, porcelain, &c., see, on turning the head in some other direction, a life-sized or colossal spectre (the spectre appears larger the greater the distance of the surface against which it is seen), and there can be little doubt but that many of the reputed ghosts originate in this manner.

"The retina is so admirably constructed that it is susceptible of different impressions of colour by these different vibrations, except in the case of a few individuals who are either blind to all colours, or who are blind to only one or two colours.

"When we look steadily at a red object for a few seconds, that part of the retina on which the image impinges begins to get less sensitive to vibrations producing red, but more sensitive to those producing blue and yellow; so that, on turning the eye away from the red object, and permitting a little white light to enter it, that part of the retina which received the red image will, in consequence of its diminished sensibility to that colour, and its exalted sensibility to blue and yellow, be able to perceive the two latter colours best, and by their mixture will give rise to a green image of the red object. The same thing will be observed with all the other colours, the secondary image or spectre always appearing of the complementary colour to the object from which the impression is obtained." In the figures illustrating this book, as they would in all other cases, a black figure, when turned from, and fixing the eyes on the ceiling, looks light in colour; white appears dark; orange, light purple; light purple, orange; and, as has been shewn, red becomes green, &c., &c.

W. R. TOMLINSON.

### ERRATA.

SIR,—I find that either your printers or myself have made some errors in my letter of last week, which materially alters the sense. After the words "charges brought against me" should be a comma, and after the words "I declare most solemnly" should be a full stop.

The words "was interfered with" should stand "was not interfered with." In the last line but one, instead of the word "immediate" should stand "unenviable." This, you see, alters the complexion of the case.

CHARLES E. WILLIAMS.

61, Lamb's Conduit-street, Sept. 27, 1878.

SIR,—My brother, whose mention of my case in last week's *Spiritualist* is my best introduction to you, tells me that more than one of the scientific men interested in psychological phenomena would like further details regarding the matter. These I shall be most pleased to furnish, either personally or by letter, both in the interests of truth and also out of gratitude for the great relief afforded me by Mrs. Loomis.

I am allowed to mention the experience of a friend of mine. Occupying, as she did for ten weeks, the bed next to mine in the hospital ward to which I was consigned, I was witness to her terrible suffering from an obscure internal complaint. She underwent in the hospital one of the most painful operations known to science, yet left it worse than when she entered it. Three weeks ago she wrote to me, in a most despairing mood, saying that after attending the hospital for some time as out-patient, her medical adviser, an eminent surgeon, told her that her life depended upon her undergoing another operation similar to that which had already so largely drawn upon her powers of endurance. I urged her, by my own experience of hospital treatment, and by my own conviction of Mrs. Loomis' power, to consult that medium first. Meantime, I mentioned casually to Mrs. Loomis, when she was mesmerically entranced, that I felt very deeply for a person who had been with me through a painful hospital experience. She made no particular reply at the time, but the next time I visited her, when I was under treatment, she, without any suggestion from me, or, so far as I am aware, any thought upon my part bearing upon the subject, quietly remarked, "I looked up your friend, she is suffering from"—(here followed the diagnosis corresponding in every respect with my friend's account of herself)—"but suffers more from the instruments used to examine her, and the powerful medicines and remedies employed than from the disease itself. She can be relieved by me, but perhaps not entirely cured." Armed with this report, I persuaded my friend, although she was in a most unbelieving and mocking frame of mind, to visit the medium, who, I should mention, hearing that her means were very limited, offered to treat her for nothing. Suffice it to say—not that my friend is cured as yet—but that she has written me a letter of most grateful thanks for the introduction to Mrs. Loomis, and rejoices, if not yet in entire restoration to health, in comparative freedom from pain, and in a firm conviction that Mrs. Loomis thoroughly understands her case. I fear to trespass upon your space, yet must add one word to those—and their name is legion—who ask for a sign. I myself, conscious that my mind might for the moment be so weakened by bodily suffering and many cares, that I might be unduly biased by any direct manifestation of supernatural knowledge (or of knowledge that might appear such), have carefully abstained from putting any test questions.

My husband, however, inclined to regard my recovery as somewhat imaginary, called upon Mrs. Loomis, resolved to test her. Abstracting his watch he substituted for it a silver medal, received by him after the Indian mutiny, and inquired of her what he had in his pocket. After some hesitation, she replied that she could not see at the moment, but would tell him later; and upon her awaking, as my husband jokingly told Mrs. Loomis that the test had failed, her husband said, "See if your control will tell it through your hand." She took up a pencil and wrote, "He has something like a medal, with writing on it, in place of his watch." I am quite aware that this experience may be explained upon the ground of thought-reading, but after all that (though more readily acknowledged than the spiritual hypothesis) is to inquirers like myself quite as difficult of comprehension.

I enclose my name and address for your use in the interests of truth, but not for publication. R.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF INANIMATE OBJECTS UPON CERTAIN MESMERIC SENSITIVES.

IN astronomy, psychometry will do as much as in geology, or more. A first-class telescope cannot be had for less than ten thousand dollars. The labour of a working man's life-time would hardly buy one; and, when bought, he could but faintly discern the outlines of land and water on a planet as far distant as Mars. Tens of thousands possess telescopes as much better than that as sunshine is brighter than candle-light; all they need is a knowledge of their own powers, and a little instruction in the way to make use of them. With these telescopes they can not only see the outlines of land and water, but they can see water, rocks, plants, homes, and people, and watch those people as they follow their daily avocations. A telescope only enables us to see; but the spiritual faculties enable their possessors to hear, smell, taste, and feel, and become, for the time being, almost inhabitants of the planets they are examining. The secrets of our solar system that scientists have sought so earnestly to penetrate are soon to be revealed; and the process by which this is to be accomplished is such a simple one, it seems amazing that we had not previously discovered it.

It must not be imagined that all this can be done without close investigation and careful discrimination. It is quite interesting to watch the progress of a psychometer when getting at the history of a specimen which is familiar to the listener; to see theory after theory thrown down as more and more light is revealed by the psychometric vision. I have known a psychometer to remain in the dark in reference to some important point after even five or six examinations; and where the objects examined are such that we cannot check the statements of the psychometer, or only by the statements of other psychometers, the greatest caution is necessary. For some examinations it is best that the psychometer should know nothing about the history desired from the specimen; but, in most cases, the more highly cultured the psychometer is, the better and more reliable the results. Had Sherman the knowledge of comparative anatomy possessed by Owen of England, or of botany that Gray of America has, his description would be almost infinitely superior to what they are now, and carry conviction, by their harmony with known facts, to the minds of the most sceptical capable of appreciating them.

The parties experimenting need a good knowledge of the times to which the specimen is related, or they may think a psychometer very wide of the mark when his descriptions are the very truth. Many statements given in this volume I only discovered to be true after careful examination of authorities; and many things stated, that I regarded at the time as extremely improbable, proved to be in complete harmony with known facts.

Psychometry will enable us to appreciate a class of people who have never yet had justice done to them. I refer to the sensitives, the "odd people" of the world, who see what no one else can discern; who dislike persons and places, though their friends may be perfectly satisfied with them, and can give no reason for their dislike. Some of them feel uncomfortable in a railway carriage unless close to an open window, and are liable to faint in churches or crowded halls. Some cannot sleep well unless their heads are to the north; and copper or brass affects them unpleasantly. Such people are endowed by nature with a more active condition of the spiritual faculties; and they can, as a general thing, readily develop into good psychometrists, who will, before long, fill a very prominent place in the intellectual advancement of the race. The lunatic asylum has imprisoned some of the best of these, in consequence of their extreme sensitiveness, who, by judicious treatment, might have been the noblest pioneers of science.—*Prof William Denton, in the "Soul of Things."*

#### MRS. EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN.

THE following details of the career of Mrs. Hardinge-Britten are from the *Bendigo Advertiser* (Australia) of July 17th, 1878:—In a large and compendious work, entitled *The History of Modern American Spiritualism*, of which Mrs. Britten as the author may be justly proud, she claims that she was converted to the "new faith" some twenty-one years ago, and that although she yielded to conviction only, after a long and well-fought battle with the theological prejudices of her early education, she found in the phenomena of Spiritualism a clue to those mysteries of somnambulism, clairvoyance, and "ghost-seeing," to which she had all her life been subject. Destined as a child to the operatic profession, she acquired some reputation as a composer, but her chief successes were achieved in the "somnambulist condition," when she could play, sing, and compose, with a facility and power totally at variance with her ordinary state. Mrs. Britten being an enthusiast in the faith which she now professes, devoted herself exclusively to its propagandism from the time when she became con-

vinced of its reality, and some eighteen years ago gave her services free to the public of New York, in the capacity of what is generally termed "a test medium." During this period she assisted Professors Hare and Mapes and Judge Edmonds in their investigations, aided in the formation of several Spiritualistic societies, organised choirs, composed spiritual music, wrote numerous tracts and pamphlets on the new philosophy, edited weekly a periodical entitled *Christian Spiritualist*, and conducted what was claimed to be a very high-toned monthly journal entitled the *Western Star*. During the great American war, Mrs. Britten became a warm partisan of the Union cause, devoting so much of her time and service to the benefit of the Sanitary Fund that the *New York Herald* of 1865 credited her with the amount of 20,000 dollars, raised by her lectures alone, in behalf of the Union soldiers. During the last election of Abraham Lincoln, Mrs. Hardinge-Britten, at the earnest solicitation of the Union party of San Francisco, undertook to become its orator, and travelled throughout the State of California as the champion orator of the cause in favour of Lincoln. Her extraordinary powers of oratory and irresistible pleadings were then, and still are, acknowledged to have been mainly instrumental in procuring the large majority which that State accorded to the Republican cause, and there are many of the "old Californians" who still speak in terms of glowing enthusiasm of Emma Hardinge as the "California Heroine" of that stupendous struggle. Mrs. Hardinge-Britten has long devoted herself to the laudable effort to found country retreats for poor outcast women, and besides her absorbing attention to her "favourite heresy," she has found time to labour for many of the popular reforms of American and English civilisation. For the last few years Mrs. Britten has been honourably noteworthy for her open and determined opposition to the inroads of what are known in America as the "social freedom" doctrines, whose advocates claimed in some way to associate themselves with the cause of Spiritualism, and the *San Francisco Morning Call* gives Mrs. Britten high credit for redeeming it from the odium of any such association. Mrs. Britten comes to these colonies flushed with triumph from a series of brilliant successes achieved in her last San Francisco engagement. Being a member of the New York Theosophical Society, and an associate of divers other societies for the study and practice of what she terms "Spiritual Science," Mrs. Britten founded in San Francisco a select private society for the study of occultism, in which, as she alleges, she is sustained by many of the leading judges, lawyers, and scientists of the city. On her departure for Australia some two months since, her numerous friends and admirers presented her with a splendid jewel of emblematic significance, commemorative of the society she had founded, the exhibition of which in the shop of the manufacturer created much curious speculation and interest. To sum up, all that can be learned of Mrs. Britten's past career is as strange and phenomenal as the doctrine she professes, but of her intellectual powers, and her singular control over her audiences, the public of Sydney will now have an ample opportunity of judging for themselves. It is asserted by those who have attended the addresses she has already delivered in this city, that for eloquence and impressiveness they are unsurpassed by any utterances to which they have ever listened, and evince the highest tone of culture and oratory. Mrs. Britten has come to these colonies under a special engagement to lecture in Melbourne, where subscriptions were sometime since raised to bring her from America. She arrived with her husband, Dr. Britten, by the last San Francisco mail steamer, en route direct for Melbourne, but being interviewed on the day of her arrival in Sydney by a few gentlemen to whom she was known by fame, she has been induced to remain for a fortnight, and after the conclusion of her engagement in Melbourne, is pledged to return and fulfil an engagement of several weeks in Sydney.

#### THE FEAR OF DEATH.

(From "Heaven and Hell," Blackwell's Translation.)

MAN's real life is in the soul; but, while he remains attached to externals, he sees life only in the body; and, therefore, when the body is deprived of life, he fancies that all is over, and abandons himself to despair. If, instead of concentrating his thought on the outer garment of life, he directed his thought to the source of life, to the soul which is the real being, and which survives the change of its outer clothing, he would feel less regret at the idea of losing his body, instrument of so much annoyance and suffering; but, for this, man needs a moral strength which is only acquired by him gradually, and in proportion as his spirit advances towards maturity.

The fear of death, therefore, results from insufficient knowledge of the future life; but it also denotes aspiration after a continuance of existence and anxiety lest the destruction of the body should be the end of our career: it is, therefore, evidently due to a secret desire for survival that is really existing in the soul, although partially hidden under the veil of uncertainty.

The fear of death diminishes in proportion as we obtain a clearer anticipation of the future life; it disappears entirely when that anticipation has become a certainty.

The wisdom of Providence is seen in this progressive march of human convictions in regard to the continuance of our existence beyond the grave. If the certainty of a future life had been permitted to man before his mental vision was prepared for such a prospect, he would have been dazzled thereby, and the seductions of such a certainty, too clearly seen, would have led him to neglect the present life, his diligent use of which is the condition of his physical and moral advancement.

The fear of death is also kept up by merely human causes, which will disappear with the progress of the race. The first of these is the aspect under which the idea of the future life has hitherto been presented; an aspect which sufficed for minds of slight advancement, but which could not satisfy the mental requirements of intellects that had learned to reason on the subject. The presentation, as



absolute truth, of statements that are both irrational in themselves and opposed to the data of physical science, has necessarily led reflecting minds to the conclusion that such a presentation must be unfounded and erroneous. Hence have resulted, in the minds of many, utter scepticism in relation to the reality of a future existence that has been presented under an unacceptable aspect, and, in the minds of a yet greater number, a half-belief, so strongly tinged with doubt, as to differ but slightly from unbelief. For the latter, the idea of a future life is, at best, but a vague hypothesis, a probability, rather than a certainty; they wish that it may be so, and yet, notwithstanding that desire, they say to themselves, "But what if, after all, there should be nothing beyond the grave! We are sure of the present; let us busy ourselves with that. It will be time enough to take thought for a future life when we have found out whether that life really exists."

"And besides," say the doubters, "what, in fact, is the soul? Is it a mathematical point, an atom, a spark, a flame? How does the soul feel? how does it see? how, and what, does it perceive?" The soul, for most people, is not a positive and active reality, but a mere abstraction. Those whom they have loved, but from whom they have been separated by death, being reduced, in their thought, to the state of atoms, of a spark, or of gas, seem to be separated from them for ever, and to have lost all the qualities for which they formerly loved them. Most people find it difficult to consider "an atom," "a spark," or "a gas," as an object of affection; they fail to derive satisfaction from the prospect of being themselves converted into "monads," and seek to escape from contemplations so vague and cheerless, by restricting their thoughts to the interests, pursuits, and enjoyments of terrestrial life, which offers them, at least, the appearance of something real and substantial. The number of those who are swayed by considerations of this kind is very great.

#### HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

THE following certificates of cures effected by Mr. Omerin, the healing medium, have been handed to us for publication:—

SIR,—I must thank you very heartily for having quite relieved me from the great pain I suffered in my neck, which prevented any movement of the head. I am now quite cured of it. At the same time I think it a duty to state that the Polish lady whom I had the honour to introduce to you is, through your wonderful treatment, thoroughly cured of the headache from which she suffered so long. As I feel deeply indebted to you for having cured me and the lady, accept my best thanks, and believe me, sir, yours very truly,  
COUNT CALCAGNI.

31, Wide Gate-street, London, E.C., September 5th, 1878.

A young girl in my employment for many years was often subjected to headache. On many occasions she was compelled to leave off work on account of her sudden illness. Just as she was taken ill last time Mr. Omerin came in to see me, and he said he could cure her of her complaint. I saw myself that he only passed his hands across her forehead a few times, and she was instantly cured. She has not suffered from that complaint since, and he treated her about eight months ago.

W. LEVY.

#### THE INSPIRATIONAL POWERS OF RAMA BAI.

COPIES of *The Behar Herald*, of August 13th and August 20th, sent us from Bankipore by the last Indian mail, contain some interesting particulars about one who is apparently an unrecognised medium. The editor says: "The more we learn of Rama Bai, the more wonderful appear to us her attainments in Sanscrit and her power and readiness in composing Sanscrit verses. We learn from the *Brahmo Public Opinion* that on Friday last she paid a visit to the Roy's of Hatkhola, at their residence in Shovabazar-street. All the Pundits of Calcutta and its suburbs were invited on the occasion. The lady was accompanied by Pundit Mahesh Chundra Nayayaratna. On taking her seat she was asked by Pundit Tara Nath Tarkavachaspati to explain a *sloka* from Bhagbut, which she did satisfactorily. Then Pundit Ajit Nath Smritiratna, the celebrated logician of Nuddia, asked her to compose a *sloka*, of which he gave her the latter half of the last line." She then composed some lines of poetry in Sanscrit in seven minutes to include it. After this Pundit Sharoda Churn in the same way asked her to compose a *sloka*, giving her, in Sanscrit, the last half of the last line, viz., "This is not the business of a woman;" and a Sanscrit verse was composed in five minutes, setting forth—"My speaking much in an assembly of Pundits who are very learned may be considered as the delirious ravings of a shameless woman, and people may say, 'this is not the business of a woman.' Then she recited some passages from *Bhagbut*, and some verses from *Sruti Adhya*. The recital of these difficult passages, coupled with the sweetness of her intonation and elegance of her pronunciation, filled the crowded audience with admiration." The editor further says, in another article:—"Rama Bai, the fair Maharatta scholar, is the heroine of the hour. Her rare attainments in Sanscrit have taken the Calcutta public by surprise. In recognition of her merits substantial rewards are now being given to her

by several gentlemen of the metropolis. She lately paid a visit to the Rev. Dr. K. M. Banerjee, and had the honour of meeting the Honourable the Chief Justice in his company. Sir Richard Garth was so much pleased with her performance that he gave her a *nuzzur* of Rs. 20. She paid a visit to the Paikpara Rajas on Sunday, the 11th instant. They gave her a donation of Rs. 125." To those who know how severely women are kept down in India, these facts will seem very remarkable.

#### THE ABNORMAL CALCULATING POWERS OF THE LATE MR. BIDDER.

THE funeral of Mr. George Parker Bidder, C.E., the celebrated calculator, took place on Wednesday in last week, and was attended by Sir Jas. Elliott, M.P., Mr. Froude, the officers of H.M.S. *Britannia*, and numerous other gentlemen. Commenting on the deceased the *Globe* remarks:—

Mr. Bidder was born in 1806, and consequently he had completed his 72nd year. He attributed the first stimulus given to his genius to passing the door of a blacksmith's shop which stood opposite to his father's, in which, when old enough, he was, in his own words, "raised to the dignity of being allowed to blow the bellows." In his address to the Institute of Civil Engineers in 1860, he tells how he answered some questions in arithmetic put by the old blacksmith, the answers to which were checked by the old gentleman's nephew, who chalked them up to see if he was right. "As a natural consequence," he says, "this increased my fame still more, and, what was better, it eventually caused halfpence to flow into my pocket, which, I need not say, attached me still more to the science of arithmetic." We all know how George Bidder, the calculating boy, was one of the wonders of the age when he publicly exhibited his wonderful talents, and many of us probably have read the story how old George III. and Queen Charlotte would have him at Court and listen in wonder to him. Eventually he was withdrawn from the public and educated at Edinburgh through the kindness of a friend, and afterwards embraced the science of engineering under Henry Robertson Palmer, who was the founder of the Institute of Civil Engineers. During the latter part of his life, he was consulted by the Government constantly on pressing and important matters, and had practically retired from everyday work. With him has gone one of the long memories which nothing escaped, and one of those counsellors and advisers from whom a valuable opinion could always be obtained. He lived to see his eldest son become one of the leading barristers of the day, and his second son a double first-class man at Oxford. In his address to the institution in 1860, in concluding his wonderful lecture on calculation, he accuses himself of irritability of temper, but those who knew him best will always bear in mind that, though somewhat brusque in manner occasionally, there never was a more staunch or true friend. During his connection with Stephenson, Mr. Bidder was sometimes required to give evidence as to railways before committees of the Houses of Parliament. "What is the share capital of such a railway company?" would be asked him, and he would reply to the question from memory. Then he would be asked for various results, involving generally half a page of figures, and he would have them ready without the use of a pencil. "How do you do it?" a friend once asked him. "I don't do it," he replied, "I see it."

MESSRS. WILLIAMS AND RITA AT AMSTERDAM.—Mr. A. J. Riko, of the Hague, says:—"The party who exposed Williams and Rita are respectable, trustworthy men, who only wished to obtain security against the mixing up of cheating with genuine phenomena by the mediums in question. The *seance* was held at the house of Mr. Daniels, who has been for some time convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, and who witnessed Slade's phenomena, and others. Mr. Terpstra, who caught the mediums, is a gentleman who has also for years been acquainted with the subject, and has witnessed many interesting phenomena in the home circle. Mr. Krabbé is an upright truth-seeker in Spiritualism. I know him personally, and answer for him as for myself; his wife is highly mediumistic, and through her phenomena are very often obtained. Old Mr. Van Maurik is convinced of the phenomena fully, and his son, Justus, is also a Spiritualist. In short, all the persons connected with the matter are trustworthy and respectable folks, who would not be found ready to undersign falsehoods on any account."

## SPIRITUALISM IN PARIS.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

PARIS, TUESDAY.

A FEW nights ago the Baron Du Potet introduced me to the Mesmeric Society of Paris, 20, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, where eighty or ninety people had assembled to witness some experiments. The method of procedure was more sensational than at similar meetings in England. Instead of merely giving counters to the sitters to gaze at, till some of them threw themselves into the somnambulist sleep, a white disc, the size of a cheese plate, was chalked upon the centre of the oaken floor. A "magic" ring was then drawn with chalk round the disc, at about the distance of a yard, and outside the ring, in the direction of the four corners of the room, mysterious letters were chalked. The observers sat all round the room close to the four walls, and were told to gaze steadily at the white disc or "magic mirror," which was then mesmerised by the operator. Some of those who gazed at it gradually assumed a fixed expression of countenance, and were evidently passing into the somnambulist state; the mesmerist then drew a straight chalk line from the feet of these sensitives to the white disc in the centre of the room. I was aware that in a few minutes some of these persons would have rushed to the disc, just as sensitives are drawn in England to the platform by a "biologist," as he calls himself, but on the occasion now under notice, the mesmerist and his assistants had a counter attraction in the shape of the presence of their honorary president, the Baron Du Potet, and they seemed to be much more desirous of listening to a speech from the lips of the man upon whom the mantle of Mesmer has fallen in the present generation, than to continue their usual experiments. Consequently the experiments were abruptly broken off, and the company then listened to a few remarks on mesmerism by the Baron Du Potet, who is now in his eighty-fourth year, but is as lively and active as a younger man.

This society of mesmerists in Paris was founded about six months ago, under the honorary presidency of the Baron Du Potet. The other officers are M. Angerville, acting president; M. Donato, secretary; and M. Métayer, manager. A journal called *La Revue Magnétique Internationale* reports its proceedings; it is published fortnightly, and is edited by M. Durville. I notice that it unfortunately misuses the words "electricity" and "magnetism," in applying them to psychic phenomena, for if anything is scientifically proved beyond doubt, it is that electricity and magnetism are not the forces at work in the production of the said observed effects.

The French newspaper *La Liberté* announces that the Countess d'Anvers, who died last week at Rome, had lost her reason in consequence of attending Spiritualistic *séances*, and taking up the idea that everybody wanted to poison her, consequently she starved herself. Is this true? Rumours to her disadvantage were some years since circulated against her which were proved to be false.

## PUBLIC MEDIUMS.

WE have received the following letter from J. G. Meugens, of Penge:—

"SIR,—Without wishing to express any opinion about the *séances* in Holland that have lately been discussed in your columns, I feel it incumbent on me to state that I have been at several *séances* at Mrs. Woodforde's circle, when Mr. Williams was the medium, and I am ready to affirm that the manifestations on those occasions were genuine beyond the shadow of a doubt. Whatever may be the case now, I am as certain of the absence of fraud then as I am of my own existence.

"I think it the duty of all who have held sittings with recognised mediums to say whether they have been satisfied with their experiences or not, and as I leave next week for India, I wish to testify before I go to the extreme pleasure and satisfaction I have experienced during my sittings with Mrs. Woodforde. The first time I sat with her she gave me an accurate description of my mother in the spirit-world, although she did not know that I had lost my mother, as I was speaking to her at the time of my mother as living, and she could have no idea that the one I spoke of as my mother was my step-mother. She further gave me particulars about a brother of mine in the spirit-world, who passed away in infancy before I was born, and also of one of my spiritual watches there, giving me a name I never heard of before. I confess that I did not receive this latter fact until on three separate subsequent occasions it was confirmed through different channels, and through mediums who could have had no knowledge of what Mrs. Woodforde had told me. I regret that time does not admit of my sitting with her for development as a medium, which is her speciality.

"I have also had *séances* with Mr. Fletcher and Mrs. Loomis, and received from both of them tests sufficient to convince any sane man of the truth of Spiritualism.

"I wish to put on record my indebtedness to Mrs. Woodforde, Mr. Fletcher, and Mrs. Loomis, for the uniform kindness, courtesy, and consideration I have received from them in pursuing my investigations."

September 28th, 1878.

## EMANATION.

(From Ella Dietz's "Triumph of Love.")

Out of the depths of the Infinite Being eternal,  
Out of the cloud more bright than the brightness of sun,  
Out of the inmost the essence of spirit supernal,  
We issued as one.

First essence electric, concentric, revolving, subduing,  
We throbb'd through the ether, a part of the infinite germ,  
Dissolving, resolving, absorbing, reforming, renewing,  
The endless in term.

Through forms multifarious onward and ever advancing,  
Progressing through ether from molecule to planet and star,  
Forms infinitesimal revealed by the sunbeam while dancing,  
Controlled from afar.

Then part of the elements swayed by invisible forces,  
The spirit of flame interchangeably water and air,  
And matter more gross, still moulded by stars in their courses,  
To forms new and rare.

Part of the salt of the sea—of the fathomless ocean—  
Part of the growth of the earth, and the light hid within,  
The Boundless and Endless revealed in each varying motion  
Unknown yet to sin.

The breath of all life, harmonious, ductile, complying,  
Obedient lapsed in the force of the Infinite Will,  
Untiring, unresting, incessant, unknowing, undying,  
Love's law we fulfil.

Spirit of growth in the rocks, and the ferns, and the mosses,  
Spirit of growth in the trees, and the grasses, and flowers,  
Rejoicing in life, unconscious of changes or losses,  
Of days or of hours.

Spirit of growth in the bird and the bee, ever tending  
To form more complex its beauty and use thus combined,  
Adapted perfection, the finite and infinite blending,  
One gleam from One Mind.

Thus spirally upward we come from the depths of creation,  
The man and the woman—the garden of Eden have found,  
And joined by the Lord in an endless and holy relation  
Ensphered and made round.

The innermost law of their being fulfilling, obeying,  
The King and the Queen, perfected, companioned, are crowned,  
The Incomprehensible thus in expression conveying  
Its ultimate bound.

Obedience still is the law of each fresh emanation,  
The prayer to the Father, "Not my will, but Thy will be done,"  
Then deathless, immortal, we pass through all forms of creation,  
The twain lost in One.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. J.—Two of the interesting paragraphs you sent have not yet been printed, because you have not introduced the name of the journal from which you extracted them.

MR. W. H. HARRISON will have returned to London from France by next Monday, and letters for him may now be addressed to 38, Great Russell-street, London, as usual.

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London: W.C. *Spiritualist Newspaper* Branch Office.

Printed for the Proprietor by BEVERIDGE & Co., at the Holborn Printing Works, Finsbury, Rents, High Holborn, in the Parish of St. Andrew above-Bar and St. George the Martyr, London, and published by E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, E.C.