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LONDON, FRIDAY, APRIL 4th, 1879.

HOUSEHOLD DISTURBANCES BY SPIRITS.

AN ignorant man, who signs himself "An Atheist," has written a letter to *The Pall Mall Gazette* of March 27th, which will tend to increase the prejudices of the populace against innocent people. We will now quote his facts, but omit most of his abuse:—

AT Bottesford, an agricultural village in that county [Leicestershire], dwell a family of the name of Soulby, the father and mother living in one cottage, and the son in another one close adjoining. About a month ago the squire of the parish, whose house is close to these cottages, on coming downstairs in the morning was greeted with an incoherent clamour, in which, however, the words "witches," "possession," "spirits," were plainly audible; and presently he heard further observations relating to calves' hearts with pins stuck into them, drawing blood from the witch, and other kindred remedies supposed to be of sovereign efficacy against the powers of darkness. On making further inquiry this gentleman ascertained that the cottage of the elder Soulby was "bewitched;" and on repairing to the spot found the windows broken, and the floors torn up, and was informed that the spirits had done it. The old man assured him that he had seen a brick rise from the floor, settle "like a bird" on the sofa, and then fly through the window; that a basketful of mangel-wurzel had raised itself from the floor and knocked its head against the ceiling; that a tin saucepan had taken flight from the hob, flown through the window, and, after wheeling about in the air for some time like a swallow, had returned to the fireside; and that as he was coming downstairs he had met a large can of water walking up "step by step," and I suppose without spilling a drop.

With these remarkable depositions in his hands, the squire's next step was to communicate with the police, and found that the rural policeman and himself were agreed as to the real author of the disturbance. But it was useless to reason with the people. The manifestations continued; and every soul in the neighbourhood, except the vicar, the squire, their families, the owner of the cottage, and the policeman aforesaid, believed in their supernatural character. The squire's women-servants were insulted, and told "that something would happen to them" because they had not faith; and the Wesleyan minister called a man an "atheist," and threatened to knock him down, because he refused to see "the finger of God" stretched forth at Bottesford. Crowds continued to collect round the haunted cottage. People flocked from a distance to gaze on the witches' handiwork. One Sunday alone nearly 1,500 people were brought to Bottesford by railway, many of them from Sheffield and Doncaster; and, as wild talk went on about the proper mode of dealing with the witch, who was supposed to be quite well known ("our old Sall," as some people in the crowd were overheard to say), serious apprehensions were at one time entertained that some violent outrage might occur. The people were in a frame of mind in which it would have taken very little to excite them to treat the victim of their suspicions as the butchers and graziers of Cumberland treat the unfortunate Madge Wildfire in *The Heart of Midlothian*.

Another witch, described as an hereditary witch, having in a spirit of professional curiosity come to view her sister's performances, all the bystanders were observed to make the phallic sign, which is supposed to be a protection against the evil eye; and my informant says that there are several most respectable and well-to-do-people in the parish who invariably make that sign when they pass the witch's cottage. To show, further, how prevalent the belief is, and what ludicrous forms it assumes, the gentleman I have named informs me that a farmer in the neighbourhood, occupying upwards of

300 acres, went recently to the local newspaper office to insert an advertisement for "a wise man" to come and "take the witchcraft off him." He had lost several horses and oxen through this evil agency; the witch himself, or, as I suppose we ought to say, the warlock, being a lame old man who turns himself into a black dog and bites cattle. The farmer says that he has *seen* this person turn himself from a man into a dog "frequently."

The squire of course remonstrated with these foolish people. But all he got for his pains was the epithet of "infidel," coupled with the scornful inquiry whether he believed in the Witch of Endor. For all this time the flying pots and pans, the walking pitchers, the dancing bricks, were as manifestly the work of a single human being as if she had been seen to do them. This was a girl of fourteen—the granddaughter of the old couple—who was so far possessed, no doubt, as to be under the influence of that weak and wicked love of notoriety which has caused so many similar absurdities. The marvels were never witnessed except when she was in the house. When she was sent upstairs by herself they immediately began; and one day, when my informant himself was present, and a large box came rolling down the stairs, the marks of her wet boots were visible on the boards from the door to where the box stood. But evidence of this kind went for nothing with the people of Bottesford; to see in "the finger of God" only the dirty footsteps of an idle girl was an impiety but lightly punished by knocking down—the summary mode of dealing with the offence suggested by the pious Nonconformist. All disbelievers in the witch were lumped together as "atheists," the laity being encouraged so to do by the vigorous and godly language of the minister aforesaid; and a prayer-meeting was held in the cottage by a party of "Revivalists," who actually pulled up the brick flooring "to look for the spirits."

Such occurrences as household disturbances by spirits are so common that it is high time that the press persecution of the innocent in relation thereto should cease. Numerous cases of the kind have been published in this journal during the last few years, also in *The Religio-Philosophical Journal* of Chicago, and *The Banner of Light*, of Boston, Massachusetts.

Here is another case to which we have already called attention. It is from the *Daily Telegraph* of February 4th last:—

"A correspondent writes:—The little village of Rochford, near Tenbury Wells, has during the past week been the scene of intense excitement, through some extraordinary 'manifestations' that have displayed themselves at the house of Mr. Joseph Smith, of New House Farm. Weights have been removed, cows have been mysteriously untied in their sheds, and for several days and nights showers of stones fell upon the farmhouse, breaking the various windows to atoms, and dreadfully alarming the inmates. Stones descended the kitchen chimney, doors were rattled and slammed night and day, until the inhabitants came to the conclusion that the house was bewitched. Two police-officers were stationed on the premises, and numerous farmers went in a body to satisfy themselves of the truth of the 'manifestations.' They found stones bounding and rebounding in all directions, and the doors and boards of the barn shaking violently. A boy employed upon the farm (named Rowberry) was several times knocked down with the stones. This youth was sent upstairs, when a terrible disturbance was heard overhead, doors slamming, windows breaking, and a number of unearthly noises. This youth was at once removed from the premises, and the inhabitants of New House Farm have since been at rest from 'spiritual manifestations.'"

The *Graphic*, of March 22nd, records another case as follows :—

Mr. Edward Soulby, a gentleman advanced in years (though apparently somewhat backward in some other respects), asserts that he and his house have been bewitched. The little village of Bottesford, in North Lincolnshire, is the place where this remarkable visitation of the Evil One has occurred. Mr. Soulby's windows have been broken by unseen forces, cans of water have gone upstairs *proprio motu*, kettles have walked round the kitchen, and, finally, a stone slab has risen from the floor and hurled itself out of the window. So, at least, says Mr. Edward Soulby. A girl of eighteen, Mr. Soulby's granddaughter, is the only other resident in this remarkable cottage; but she is protected from Satanic agencies by wearing round her neck a garland of green twigs. The pigs and poultry enjoy a similar immunity, and through a similar precaution being taken. The whole affair is disquieting, but the county has the consolation of knowing that Mr. E. Peacock, J.P., of Bottesford Manor, is aroused, and is on the track of the evil visitant. This gentleman recommends the immediate removal of the girl, and we hope he will see his own recommendation carried out.

The *Times*, of last Tuesday, contains the following paragraph :—

"An Inhabitant of a West-end Square" writes :—"May I ask you to call attention to the following grievance? A few mornings ago my servant was much frightened by a violent blow against a large plate-glass drawing-room window, followed by a shower of glass into the middle of the room, and had any one been near at hand it would have been dangerous. This is the third time in a few months that a similar blow has been experienced, and three large plate-glass windows on different floors have been broken. It appears as if some sharp instrument had made in each case a round hole, and my next door neighbour has suffered in a similar manner. As the police are unable to offer any explanation, I appeal to you, sir, to see if any of your readers can do so."

Although there is no certainty, the details being so meagre, that spirits had anything to do with the hole-punching just mentioned, stone-throwing by spirits before the eyes of the police is so common that some years ago Mr. William Howitt wrote a useful little book full of authenticated cases. Since then, the Irish police at Cookstown, near Belfast, were baffled for weeks by violent disturbances and breakages by spirits, and a boy in the house frequently had some of his clothes cut into strips by an invisible power before the eyes of the observers. At Peckham, a few years ago, stone-throwing by spirits went on for days in broad daylight under the eyes of the police. Scotland-yard was naturally disgusted by the spiritual theory, so a "superior officer" from there exposed the whole thing by—discovering a boy, some weeks afterwards, firing off a popgun, or other direful instrument several miles from Peckham.

In a village near London, in the house of a well-educated man, who does not want too much publicity, intermittent spiritual disturbances have been going on for a long time. They began in this way :—"If you please, Mum," said the servant, "Master Tommy's bat is a-coming downstairs." "What do you mean?" said the mistress, and in walked the bat, vertically on end, taking deliberate steps. Mistress and maid stood upon two chairs to obtain vantage ground over the walking bat. "What does this mean?" said the mistress. "If you please, Mum, I think it's a swift," said the servant; a "swift," she explained, being a kind of lizard, not bird, known in Norfolk, represented in this case by something dark, trailing at the lower part of the bat. A pair of tongs was then applied to the tail of the "swift," the bat pulled one way the tongs another, and the swift proved to be a feather.

Afterwards more serious disturbances began, such as the smashing of windows and moving of furniture under the eyes of critical observers. The disturbances have ceased now for three weeks. These details were given us on the spot last Saturday, and are well known all over the village.

THE VALUE OF SPIRIT TEACHING.*

BY LOUISA ANDREWS.

ON this anniversary of the modern influx of spiritual phenomena, we are naturally led to look back and ask, both for our own satisfaction and as an answer to the question so often put by sceptics, what we have gained through these revelations—what knowledge, and what moral benefit? I have frequently heard objectors declare that returning spirits have failed to give us any real insight into the future life, and that, on all points of importance, we are no wiser than before.

As to the value of these manifestations, in all their varied forms, I feel that the simple fact of spirit existence and return, *once established and acknowledged*, is of inestimable worth. This fact, assuring us of the deathless nature of man, is of incalculable value to those (and they are many) who would scarce "have strength to endure for the life of the worm and the fly." When some learned man, who would be our spiritual teacher, assures us of the continued existence of the spirit after it has left the body, how can we know that the doctrine is true? The sufficiency of the authority on which his creed is founded is itself a matter of question among sincere and thinking men, and much learning and research are required even for the wise discussion of the subject. And, after all, can anyone be convinced by logic of the soul's immortality? It would seem impossible that a firm and satisfying faith should be based on this foundation. Some believe in the future life without effort, never asking, because never needing, proof; they believe simply because they cannot help it, which, if not a very intellectual, is, at least, a very unassailable position. Many think they believe because they have been taught that it is the right thing to do, and swallow faith as they would take some medicinal draught ordered by a physician in whose skill they trust. To a multitude of thinking men and women, however, a blind faith is impossible; and since the fact of immortality cannot be proven by argument, what escape have they from doubt or denial, unless, somehow and somewhere, evidence can be obtained that this belief is well founded? And where is such evidence to be found? Nowhere—if not in Spiritualism. Were nothing revealed to us but this one momentous truth, the "proofs palpable" establishing it would be invaluable. Then, the vivid realisation of this fact of immortality which comes through spirit manifestation; its presentation as an actual, ever-present, all-vitalising truth, is so powerful an influence for good, with all who sincerely desire to rise in the scale of being, that I think it would not be easy to overstate its worth.

Not only in hours of exaltation and meditation is this influence seen; not only in the grief of bereavement, or on the near approach of that change which so many regard with dread, but in the midst of toilsome work, of the petty temptations and irritating annoyances of daily life, is this influence felt. It is, indeed, when crowded upon by wearisome and conflicting cares and duties, and when tempted by the sins which most easily beset us, that we have greatest need to be lifted, in spirit, by the certain assurance and realisation of a life beyond, out of the narrow limits of the day and the hour, even while faithfully working and struggling in the appointed way. The strongest, most absolute faith, and the most exalted conceptions of which we are capable, are not only helpful, but often needful, to the *proper* performance of the humblest duties. Happy indeed are those whose perceptions and convictions—however derived—open to them a boundless prospect beyond the limited horizon of earth, and lift them, in spirit, to those mountain-tops of faith where they may breathe a fresher, purer air, and from which the eternal verities are always visible. Blest is the soul, whatever its earthly environment, that can thus escape from the dusty high-road of life through that gateway of truth which opens on the infinite. The value of such a faith is not in the luxury of idle meditation, but in a life vivified and exalted by it; in the power it gives to drink from eternal fountains *now—for now* is life eternal—as truly as in that dim future of which, in our present state of being, our conceptions, at best, must be vague and but partially correct.

To recur, however, to the statement alluded to before, that we are not taught by spirits anything important in relation to life beyond the grave. It should be remembered that we can, from our present standpoint, comprehend only in a very partial and limited way things appertaining exclusively to another and different state of existence; and the truths which might be intelligible to us we often refuse to accept, because they do not suit our preconceived ideas, and sometimes fail to appreciate, because they appear all too simple and natural to satisfy the demands of an irrational and morbid fancy. But in so far as we can understand the life to come, its nature, and the relation it bears to this, I should say that, far from our having learned nothing from returning spirits, we have learned well-nigh everything which, in our present state of being, we are able to receive and make use of. I have seen autograph letters, enough to fill a volume, written by spirits, under strictest test conditions, upon paper untouched by the medium, and containing descriptions of life, daily life (so to speak) in the other world, which gave as vivid a conception of existence there as it seems to me possible for those still in the flesh to form.

It is true that such full and minute descriptions obtained under such conditions are rare; but none can hold frequent communications with

* An address read last Sunday at the anniversary meeting at the Cavendish Rooms, London.

spirits, seeking seriously and reverently to learn the truth, without finding that much of the mist and cloud has been cleared away which had shut from our sight that spiritual but actually existent and most real world.

Spirits tell us that on entering upon the other life we are neither lifted into supreme blessedness nor cast down into utter misery. We are told that we not only build, while here, the house not made with hands, but mould the very form of the being who is to dwell in it. Every word, and thought, and feeling indulged in here helps to determine what shall be, both in ourselves and our surroundings, there; and that neither here nor hereafter is there any possible escape from the natural law of inevitable result. We are taught that sin cannot be wiped out by forgiveness, any more than poison can be made wholesome and nourishing, or its ill effect averted by repentance for having swallowed it. A man cannot flee from his own shadow; nothing can save us from *ourselves*; and we are *now* making that deathless self either fair or foul, exalted or degraded. As is the character we form here, so shall be, in delightsomeness or desolation, our home in that many-mansioned abode where, day by day, we are preparing a place for ourselves, whether we know it or not. We are taught that always—in the past as now, here and hereafter—the great creative and sustaining Spirit acts through laws which are all-sufficing, and which never need nor can be broken. No spirit, that I am aware of, has spoken of a God visible to the angels, sitting like a King upon a great white throne, and delighting to be glorified by ceaseless hallelujahs and psalms of praise; and they do tell us of an infinite, all-vitalising power; the great central Sun and Fountain of all universes, material and spiritual, whose emanations are forces essential to the existence of everything that is—to the brain that thinks and the heart that loves, to the worlds that revolve in space, to every grain of dust and every blade of grass. They teach us, too, that the acceptable worship of such a Being must be a worship which exalts and ennoble the worshipper. A life of steadfast, upward striving, a heart of tender, helpful sympathy for the weak and the erring, good deeds bravely done, suffering patiently endured, fidelity to truth, and cheerful obedience to divine law; this is worship worthy of our giving and of His receiving. And let none dream that this idea of the great eternal unity brings to the heart no warmth or comfort because it fails to picture a Deity “so definitely that man’s doubt grows self-defined the other side the line.” No, this is not so, for now, and hereafter (only then as we trust with a fuller realisation of its truth) we can say in fullest trust, “Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet. Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”

In telling us of the life beyond the grave, the spirits assure us that we shall there meet and recognise and love the dear ones from whom death only seems to part us here, being bound together in families and societies. We are told that our existence hereafter will be one of progress in knowledge, as well as in virtue; of earnest congenial *work*—in a word, a life of rational human activity and enjoyment: enjoyment, at least, for all to whom such joy is possible; and as none are wholly evil, we trust and believe that none will continue to be utterly miserable; but that ignorance, intellectual and moral, being the road of sin, all will, as they learn to understand and appreciate goodness and truth, become receptive of happiness, in a measure exactly commensurate with the greater or less purity and elevation to which they have attained. Also, are we not constantly assured of the ministering love and guardianship of those gone before; and although this, too, can only act upon us through laws which necessarily limit the power of all created beings, still, must not the knowledge of this ever-present, watchful affection, be a ceaseless joy to all who are striving to do right, as well as a blessed *restraint* of which no one who really believes this truth can ever become unconscious? When we know that by no secretive effort can we hide our sins from loving eyes, which even yet may weep because of our wrongdoing, surely such knowledge cannot but help us to keep our lives and our hearts pure! But is it not dreadful, some will say, to think that *they* should weep whom we have learned to regard as having “done with tears?” Truest thoughts are not always those which, superficially considered, are most cheering and delightful; but can we not understand that, instead of revelling in a selfish, earth-forgetting bliss, the friends who love us on the other side may have a holy work to do for the suffering and the tempted, which may sometimes bring them pain; and that this pain is a thing as much more noble, exalted, and beautiful than any self-centred enjoyment (made cloudless by forgetfulness of, or indifference to, the suffering and the sin of those they loved here), as the highest ideal of goodness and happiness is above the basest imaginings of bliss ever dreamed by man when his higher faculties were all asleep in ignorance? So far from being “no wiser than of old,” I am assured that the conception of the other life has been greatly modified, even in the case of those who have no belief in Spiritualism, by the light cast upon it through spirit-teaching. The little heaven has worked well, and there are now comparatively few who believe in the old orthodox heaven and hell. In demanding from spirits some entirely new and marvellous revelation, we lose sight of the fact that no truth which humanity is prepared to receive can long remain completely hidden. When we talk thoughtlessly of some startling and undreamed-of knowledge which we fancy spirits—if, indeed, they return—might bring to us, we imagine an impossibility. There is nothing conceivable relative to a future state of which some idea, through intuition and reason, has not been formed in receptive and thinking minds; and that which is *inconceivable* would, of course, make no impression, even if higher intelligences should utter it. But what was doubtful has been confirmed, and what was vague, made clearer by spirit-teaching.

For men who claim to be wiser than the multitude, and especially or those to whom *nature* stands for *God*, should not all the ways she opens seem good, seeing that to some precious truth they all must tend?

What though the goal be invisible, and there be labyrinths to be threaded which may bewilder and baffle for a time the philosopher who, striving to follow where she leads, is but a little questioning child after all, and wisest when he realises his ignorance, objecting to nothing which she offers for his investigation, and cavilling at no conditions which *she* imposes. May the truly wise come bravely and humbly to this work; and so, at last, through questioning doubt and faithful seeking, may the truth be brought to light, both matter and spirit standing to all for what they really are, *whatever that may be*.

And in this twofold sphere—the twofold man
Hold firmly to the natural, to reach
The spiritual beyond it—fixing still
The type with mortal vision, to pierce thro’,
With eyes immortal, to the antetype,
Some call the ideal—better called the real,
And certain to be called so presently,
When things shall have their names.

I, Bernard-street, Russell-square, London.

POWERS OF MEMORY.

BY CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

ABOUT twenty-five years ago, when in Bonn, I was greatly puzzled by Prof. Hermann and his clairvoyant boy, who was, by way of preparing for the “occult” part of the performance, balanced, body suspended, apparently against the force of gravitation, on a rod, in the known manner.

The day after the performance I happened to be with the Professor in the same railway carriage, *en route* for Cologne. I said to him (we being alone), “Excuse me, but I must express my admiration for your splendid performance, being myself interested and versed in the science of conjuring. The machinery is the best I ever saw, but the memory of your little boy beats all.” With evident father’s pride, he replied, “Sometimes I am surprised at it myself. Yesterday, on arriving at Bonn from Cologne, he named all the stations correctly—and queer names they are.” After this hint I watched the clairvoyant part at the next performance, and failing to find the key to the mystery at first, I at last found it to be exactly in keeping with Mr. Barrett’s observation, that on returning to the stage he only pointed to things (always about persons), and on simply clapping his hands, the boy quickly said, “Ring,” “Brooch,” “Chain,” and so on. The order of succession I took note of, and found it exactly repeated at the next performance. Subsequently I often tried the game after my own fashion, and placing three cards, as king, queen, and knave, on the table, “mesmerised” a confederate in a remote corner, until he dropped his head in trance; I returned with passes (pretending to mesmerise the passage for *rapport*) to the table, and asked any one to touch one of the cards. Then I asked, “*which*” card is touched, or which “*card*” is touched, and so on, the “subject” knowing by the accent what to reply. We agreed for three rounds only, as the audience would then probably get on the scent. The next turn was to telegraph to each other by the number of words, thus: I asked “Tell,” or “Now then,” or “Which is it,” and with perfect success. But then some clever observers would propose to ask the questions themselves, whereupon my confederate got into violent spasms, out of which I restored him with great trouble, painful to behold, and returning to the normal state, he would innocently ask, “Was there any result?” and being told that some one else wanted to put the questions he volunteered at once to try again, to which I objected, in order not to strain the mesmeric fluid too much. The illusion was perfect. The best thing is to place pretended mediums under test conditions. It would save much hair-splitting.

The gods in bounty work up storms about us that give mankind occasion to exert their hidden strength, and throw out into practice virtues that shun the day and lie concealed in the smooth seasons and the calms of life.—*Addison*.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.—The Swiss Republic has found itself compelled to re-establish the penalty of death. Capital punishment was abrogated some years since throughout the Federation, with the general consent of the people, who, like the Italians, considered the penalty one which Governments have no right to inflict. The consequence, however, was an increase in the crime of murder in all Cantons, so marked that public opinion has undergone a change, and on the 29th inst. the Federal Council voted for re-establishing the penalty by 27 to 15. It should be noted that the great increase of crime was not in murders of revenge or passion, but in murders for plunder, the robber finding that murder increased his chance of escape, without greatly increasing his personal risk. He feared death more than a prolongation of imprisonment.—*The Spectator*, March 22nd, 1879.

FOREST FANCIES.

THE forest dim,
It suits me well,
I love the hymn,
Its heave and swell;
A forest, too, beside the sea—
Each brings its own weird mystery.

And the sighing
Of the trees,
Soothes me, lying
At my ease,
Stretched within the pine-tree shade,
Dreaming of a long-lost maid.

Now, the sighing
Of the sea,
Vainly trying
Witchery—
If it might give back the voice
Which makes the forest dim rejoice.

Voice of Ocean!
Thou art wild,
Deep emotion
Is thy child;
How I love that ocean hymn—
I hear it oft in forest dim.

Beauty liveth, everywhere,
Is the omnipresent One,
When we seek to seize her, there,
Vanished is she in the sun;
But her shadow haunts us ever,
Like that love which leaves us—never.

Beauty! Beauty!
What art thou?
Slave to thee
I ever bow;
But thou treatest me with scorn—
Goddess thou; I, earthly born.

Yet I dare
Seek for thee,
My heart to share,
Mine own to be!
Not for ever shalt thou flee,
But at last be one with me.

Who gave thee
So great a power,
To enslave me
Hour by hour,
That I know no other blisses
But the haunting by thy kisses?

Dost thou rest
Beyond the waves,
Far in the West
Among the graves,
Those islands where the sun unborn
Seems doomed to die, but lo! tis morn?

This we know,
Each setting sun,
Every fading of life's glow
Is but a new life begun;
And Death's glory in the West
Brings newborn day to lands more blest.

Beauty! Queen
Of many forms,
Clad in ever-varying sheen,
Thine the heart that Nature warms,
Thine the voice of wood and wave,
And the low voice beside the grave.

Thine the glance
From eye to eye,
In the sweet trance
When Love is nigh;
Thou livest in each throbbing heart
Of those who love too well to part.

All we love

We owe to Thee,
Queen, throned above
In mystery;

Thou art our God's attractive power,
Thou drawest us upwards hour by hour.

O crownèd Queen of Beauty,
Be thronèd in my heart,
Pleasure robed as Duty
Shall teach me who thou art;
O best-loved of the eternal Jove!
His daughter, whom his creatures love.

Switzerland.

A. J. C.

SPIRITUALISM IN LANCASHIRE AND ELSEWHERE.

(From the Manchester "Spiritual Reporter.")

SPIRITUALISM, as a movement, has much the same sort of ground to travel, the same battle to fight, the same uphill road to climb as most other propoganda. Although different movements have varying principles upon which their charter is framed, yet the fashion in which those principles may be extended to the people is much the same whether in the Spiritual or Church movement.

We have to lecture, argue, debate, write and issue literature, and hold *séances*; so have other movements. Although the line of action differs but little, so much cannot be said of the principles involved. Ours is a new truth, a new revelation that man is progressive in all ages, and during all time, and in so far it is superior to the fallible doctrines as taught by the religious churches to-day.

But in looking back a few years and taking a brief retrospect of how the movement has been built up, it is gratifying to know that success has been consequent upon almost all the schemes for its advancement. None have failed. Although we do not attract people by thousands, yet our progress is sure and solid. A few years ago regular Sunday meetings in the various towns could not be held or supported. It was with great difficulty a good speaker could be engaged, and even if so, it was at a great cost, which usually so crippled those who had taken active part, that they were disheartened in helping on the movement for some time afterwards. The work was done then by fits and starts; there was nothing regular, but probably all necessary for something better and more satisfactory. This has come, the committee sprang into existence, because it was needed. Its work since its commencement has been one of construction, building up temples of freedom and true intelligence, scattering to the people, by tongue and pen, the grandeur of spiritual philosophy. Its work has not been in formulating creeds, or in establishing rules. It is in entire opposition to the least trammel being placed upon anyone. Let all be free. Free to accept the truth as they perceive it; free to believe, free to reject: no cramping, no dwarfing, but the right to know and utter the truth.

The advocacy of the movement during the past few years, as evinced by the Lancashire Committee, has placed the movement in this district in a solid and healthy position. It has eliminated many obstructions usually attending the building up of a new movement. In glancing outside this district we easily perceive much force wasted by combating parties. Disorganised effort has been proved over and over again to be a complete failure, and hence it must have a weakening tendency as regards the position of the movement. To be united does not mean to be orthodox and binding in our principles. Like a thousand voices that blend in harmony, each must be in unison and the whole united. The effect is at once seen. But let a few individuals strike out in opposing strains, how discordant and broken is the harmony. Just so in our movement; although we may be opposed in minor matters yet, to produce harmonious progress it is absolutely necessary we should all stand upon one common basis, each community working out the detail and minor points in the best way it deems fit. The committee has, during its few years of existence, established Spiritualism more as a philosophy than a religion—a philosophy that cannot be enclosed in space or made subservient to party: it being the soul of Spiritualism, embracing the whole sphere of man's existence. It asks for no worship, no bowing to human dictators; it simply desires man to know himself, for all knowledge centres there. Who shall say they have reached the pinnacle of truth, or that the divine individual light can shine no brighter? This philosophy knows no such ultimate. It is idle to say human beings have reached the goal of wisdom. We know none. To our finite minds it is inconceivable. As we gaze at night into the regions of other worlds the thought strikes us, what is there beyond the point of our vision? If we were transported there, would our sight discern more planetary worlds, and again transported, should we reach the end? No, for we cannot conceive a blank. And so in our philosophy; its wisdom extends as far as the eye can reach, and when the vantage ground is gained, more cheering and brighter knowledge is perceptible in the far-off distances. It is pre-eminently superior to religious worship, inasmuch as it seeks to know truth in all its varied ramifications. Error is evil, and must pale and fade before the advancement of truth and knowledge. "More light," cries the wise man, to dispel this gloom of error. "More wisdom" to steer away from the dark channels of evil and ignorance. "Ignorance," said the Stratford bard, "is the curse of God, knowledge the wing with which we fly to heaven;" and in our spiritual philosophy we are continually seeking to know and utter our increasing wisdom. Our movement, then, cannot be measured by length or by breadth. It can only be measured by its principles, which are ever expanding and extending to higher grounds; and in placing them before the world, the

greatest care should be exercised that they are expounded in clear, definite, and concise language.

Our movement is new. It is but a few years ago since it was first known in the district. About twelve years have elapsed since the first public meetings were held and addressed by trance speakers. How rapid has been the advance when we compare our position at present and the short time which has passed since its commencement. Few movements, we venture to say, in which religious principles are involved, have made such rapid progress. It is good evidence in support of those principles.

Since we have now gained a respectable and acknowledged position in the district, it is more necessary than ever that we should try to improve it, and by no means grow lax in our work and advocacy. All should help in the work. Try and do something, if ever so little. Men and women of influence and position should step forward and support the various meetings. True Spiritualism sinks all differences of caste, position, or wealth. Those who can propound our principles from the platform by earnest and well-chosen language, have their duty to fulfil in taking active service, and not to hide their light under a bushel. The young Spiritualists can do much by fitting themselves to take some active work in connection with the movement. Minor differences should all be sunk for the general good. No one can say he is a benefactor who will stickle over a crotchet, or who is a pessimist, and yet advances nothing in place of the structure he pulls down. If Spiritualism do not improve these things, then we are not ready for its enlightened influence; it is necessary to wait till true appreciation comes to our aid. All the world is not ready for spiritual philosophy. It is only the noble and open-minded who can value it at its true worth. In the future, then, let the Spiritualists of every land stand united upon a common base, and from that point all the minor details to spring. We hope, then, to see more real Spiritualism expressed in the work in future. It is the bonnden duty of all to assist in this work, and by so doing not only is each individual improved, but great help and instruction is imparted to others.

MESMERISM.

(From "The Torquay Times," March 22nd, 1879.)

CONSIDERABLE public attention in Torquay has been directed during the past week, by the aid of a series of remarkable exhibitions, to the subject of mesmerism. At various times mesmeric phenomena have attracted the interest of others of the public than those who go to an entertainment to be amused. Some years ago Mr. Stone produced some sensation in the town by the peculiar power he seemed to exert over many of those who submitted themselves to his influence, and the impression he produced by what he said as well as by what he did has remained on many minds ever since. Some devoted much time to a consideration, if not a regular study, of the subject, and the result was that there were more than one local mesmerist who succeeded fairly in exercising the influence which neither they nor those who exercise it to-day can understand or satisfactorily explain.

Again and again scientific men have investigated the subject, and, although they have failed to satisfy themselves that all its advocates claimed for it was true, they certainly were unable to explain the phenomena they witnessed upon any basis consistent with known science. The pretensions which enthusiastic believers in mesmerism make in its name have nothing to do with the inquiry whether that which is called mesmerism can be explained from any ordinary premises. Mesmer himself did not nearly so well understand the subject as do many mesmerists of the present day, and there doubtless was in the thesis on planetary influence, which he first published in Messeburg, in Germany, in 1766, much that was erroneous. He claimed for his theory a heavenly authority, in that he credited the planets and the stars with diffusing through the universe a subtle fluid which acts on the nervous system of animated beings. His claims attracted the attention of nearly the whole medical and scientific world, and so mystifying to ordinary perception were the phenomena he called into being, that it was impossible for science to hold its own in the minds of even the educated classes, unless it condescended to make an inquiry into the new and startling theory.

A committee of physicians and philosophers was eventually nominated by the scientific communities, and in 1784, one of their number, Bailly, drew up a paper, in which he professed to expose the futility of animal magnetism. It did not, however, explain away the peculiarities into which the committee had to investigate; it only threw doubt upon the honesty of the subjects upon whom the influence was brought to bear. The result was that the people did not lose their faith in that which the philosophers could not explain away, and the belief grew as quickly as the presence of mesmerists and the exhibition of their powers would give it an opportunity to spread.

No great consternation was again made by it until 1818, when Miss Harriet Martineau and other eminent persons announced their belief in it. It was then that the Mesmeric Infirmary for the treatment of certain diseases and accidents under mesmeric influence was established. The success of this institution was soon assured by the satisfactory character of the operations performed by aid of the discovered influence. Amputation, and most difficult surgical cases, were treated whilst the patients slept the mesmeric sleep, and in ten years the society was able to announce that Archbishop Whately was its president, and the Earl of Carlisle and Mr. Monckton Milnes (now Lord Houghton) were amongst the vice-presidents.

In 1851, however, Dr. Gregory, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, published his work, *Animal Magnetism*, which is the standard book amongst mesmerists, and which was dedicated by permission to the Duke of Argyll. The result of that publication was a considerable increase, from thinking people, to the number of believers in mesmerism. It is impossible to give even a short

account of Dr. Gregory's argument. But his claims for his theory he submits to the reader's examination by telling him how he may verify or disprove them. "If you try," says he, "the experiment of drawing the points of the fingers of your right hand, without contact, but very near, over the hands of several persons, downwards from the wrist, the hands being held with the palms upwards, and your fingers either all abreast or one following the other, and repeat this slowly several times, you will most probably find one or more who distinctly perceive a peculiar sensation, which is not always the same in different persons." From this beginning he extends the influence until it covers the whole nervous system, resulting in mesmeric sleep, with its consequent remarkable associations. How to produce this Dr. Gregory fully explains in the two methods of Mr. Lewis and Dr. Darling, the first being that of intent gazing of the operator at the subject and *vice versa*, and the second being that adopted by Miss De Montford last week by the subject gazing at a small object in the hand. Whilst under the sleep which these modes of influencing produce, most remarkable phenomena become visible, and these are as useful as they are interesting.

Dr. Esdaille had, in 1851, performed hundreds of painless operations in Calcutta on the natives, who are more susceptible than Europeans, whilst they were under mesmeric power. There are those in Torquay who have seen amputations performed upon mesmerised persons who have not moved a muscle during the operations. It is claimed that "after the operator has succeeded in producing the sleep easily and in a short time, he can, in many cases, produce it by the silent exertion of the will, without any passes, or other process of any kind." The possible developments of mesmerism as recorded are remarkable. Thought-reading, medical intuition, sympathetic warnings, clairvoyance or lucid vision, retrovision, introvision, and prediction are only a portion of these.

But of the many peculiarities in written records of the effects of mesmerism, there are none more remarkable, although most are more useful, than those which Miss De Montford brought before the public during her six nights' exhibitions in Torquay last week. It is not our object to record these, but we express our conviction that whatever was the power exerted, and however astonishing were the results she produced, there was no deception—even were it possible to the extent of the peculiarities shown—by many of the subjects, who did their best to resist her influence, and who are well known in the town. It may be the province of third-rate "scientists" to smile at phenomena they cannot understand or explain, but we cannot but think they would be making a better use of the training their pretensions claim for them if they first witnessed and then investigated some of the remarkable consequences of the mysterious influence which a mesmerist undoubtedly exercises.

CURIOUS RELIGIOUS NOTIONS.

In *Sketches from Shady Places*, by Thor Frednr, published by Smith, Elder, and Co., describing the lives of some of the criminal classes, the following bit of character is not by any means what we should expect to find in the company of thieves and swindlers:—

Another curious personage is —, a man between sixty and seventy, who has also been a long resident in his common lodging-house—one of over fifteen years. He possesses a tolerable income, but leads about the most ascetic life of any man I ever knew. His food and clothing are men in the extreme. He consorts with nobody, hardly ever goes out, receives no visitors, and never reads even a newspaper, but spends his time walking up and down the passages rapt in meditation. Yet he is no miser. He stints and holds himself aloof from the world in deference to his creed. This is quite unlike any other with which I am acquainted, and is evidently the product of the very peculiar mind of him who holds it. Priests, temples, and religious rites he considers superfluities. Divinity he considers just an overruling justice, and nothing more. The future, he believes, will be a continuation of the present—with these differences: there the human senses will be developed to the utmost, thus enabling their possessors to taste the extremes of pain or pleasure. There, too, weal and woe shall not be mingled as here in the lot of the individual; the one shall never be allowed to approach him who is consigned to the other, and the one and the other shall be strictly sensual. In fact, his idea of hell includes all the horrors which monkish imagination ever ascribed it; while his heaven is an exaggeration of that of the Moslem, including every possible gratification of sense.

The strangest part of his doctrine, however, is, that a man's position hereafter is determined, not by his conduct on earth, but by the pleasures he has tasted and the pains he has endured. The latter will, every one, be counted to his advantage in the next world, and the former all to his disadvantage; because, as he reasons, no man can enjoy himself on earth except at the cost, and therefore the pain, of somebody else. So, when a man dies, his joys and sorrows will be summed up by impartial justice, and he will be consigned to his degree of reward or punishment as the balance lies in his favour or otherwise. The holder of this strange faith, therefore, carefully avoids everything that can be called pleasure. He will not touch, taste, or handle in any way anything of the sort. He shuts his ears to music and his eyes to books, painting, sculpture, and even to beautiful scenery. He would not under any circumstances take advantage of a conveyance. Because in none of these gratifications could he dispense with the toil—that is to say the pain—of others. And he is just as careful in abstaining from giving pleasure or the means of procuring it. Thus he has lived for years, and thus he continues to live, about the most miserable and useless person in existence, but also about the most consistent.

Clowns are the veil behind which the face of day coquettishly hides itself to enhance its beauty.—*Richter*.

PSYCHOLOGY IN CAMBRIDGE.

I WRITE to announce to your readers what I think cannot fail to be of interest to them. At length a society has been founded amongst members of this University for the study of psychic phenomena; our method is shortly this:—

1. Practical investigation of alleged facts.
2. Discussion of theories concerning those facts.
3. Examination of the relations of both "facts" and theories to the life-philosophies of the past, and their bearing upon the life-philosophy of the future.

We shall endeavour neither to trespass upon the domain of physical science nor upon that of theology, while remembering that they lie on either hand of us may make us more accurate and reverent, for indeed is not a rational philosophy of life the chiefest need of our time?—some science which shall serve as binding link between anatomy and aspiration: a need that men feel daily more keenly can never be set at rest by dissectional gropings after the secret of life, or schemes of salvation for the unexplainable human soul.

What is this secret thing, this saveable soul? We ascend to heaven, and it is not there; we come back to earth, and find it not. Physiology we know, and pneumatology we have faith in (the noblest of us). Who will give us a psychology?

And so it has come about that truth-lovers everywhere are beginning to understand that if there be truth in these modern miracles, in the chaos of a now fanatical and ignorant young movement may be the distant hope of some future psychological cosmos, and with good heart they go forward, reading the old text-books, praying the old prayers, watching floating musical boxes, and trusting for body, soul, and spirit the larger hope. This is the standpoint of our new society. Of the vast importance of such study in our largest English University I will not speak. We are trying to get rooms to read, think, experiment, and be quiet in, and desire the kind thought of men of good will, who can reach us at 38, Great Russell-street, London. CANTAB.

16, Benet-street, Cambridge, March 31, 1879.

THE "WHITE LADY" OF BERLIN.

THE following paragraph appeared in the *Weekly Times* of last Saturday:—

It may interest those who happen to be learned in Berlin legends to know that, according to report, the White Lady, whose visits always precede the death of some member of the Royal Family, was seen on the eve of Prince Waldemar's death. A soldier on guard at the old castle was the witness of the apparition, and in his fright fled to the guard-house, where he was at once arrested for deserting his post.

Mrs. Catherine Crowe, in her *Night Side of Nature*, gives the following history of this persistent apparition:—

"The ghost, known by the designation of The White Lady, which is frequently seen in different castles or palaces belonging to the Royal Family of Prussia, was long supposed to be a Countess Agnes of Orlamunde; but a picture of a princess, called Bertha, or Perchta von Rosenberg, discovered some time since, was thought so exceedingly to resemble the apparition, that it is now a disputed point which of the two ladies it is; or whether it is or is not the same apparition that is seen at different places. Neither of these ladies appear to have been very happy in their lives; but the opinion of its being the Princess Bertha, who lived in the fifteenth century, was somewhat countenanced by the circumstance that at a period when, in consequence of the war, an annual benefit which she had bequeathed to the poor was neglected, the apparition seemed to be unusually disturbed, and was seen more frequently. She is often observed before a death; and one of the Fredericks said, shortly before his decease, that he should 'not live long, for he had met the White Lady.' She wears a widow's band and veil, but it is sufficiently transparent to show her features, which do not express happiness, but placidity. She has only been twice heard to speak. In December, 1628, she appeared in the palace at Berlin, and was heard to say, '*Veni, judica vivos et mortuos! Judicium mihi adhuc superest.*'—Come, judge the quick and the dead! I wait for judgment.

"On the other occasion, which is more recent, one of the princesses at the Castle of Neuhaus, in Bohemia, was standing before a mirror, trying on a new head-dress, when on asking her waiting-maid what the hour was, the White Lady suddenly stepped from behind a screen and said, '*Zehn uhr ist es ihr Leibden!*—It is ten o'clock, your love!' which is the mode in which the sovereign princes address each other, instead of 'your highness.' The princess was much alarmed, soon fell sick, and died in a few weeks. She has frequently evinced displeasure at the exhibition of impiety or vice; and there are numerous records of her different appearances to be found in the works of Balbinus, and of Erasmus Francisci; and in a publication called *The Iris*, published in Frankfort, in 1819, the editor, George Doring, who is said to have been a man of great integrity, gives the following account of one of her later appearances, which he declares he received just as he gives it, from the

lips of his own mother, on whose word and judgment he could perfectly rely; and shortly before his death, an inquiry being addressed to him with regard to the correctness of the narration, he vouched for its authenticity.

"It seems that the elder sister of his mother was companion to one of the ladies of the court, and that the younger ones were in the habit of visiting her frequently. Two of these (Doring's mother and another), aged fourteen and fifteen, were once spending a week with her, when she being out and they alone with their needlework, chattering about the court diversions, they suddenly heard the sound of a stringed instrument, like a harp, which seemed to proceed from behind a large stove that occupied one corner of the room. Half in fear and half in fun, one of the girls took a yard measure that lay beside them, and struck the spot, whereupon the music ceased, but the stick was wrested from her hand. She became alarmed; but the other, named Christina, laughed, and said she must have fancied it, adding that the music doubtless proceeded from the street, though they could not descry any musicians. To get over her fright, of which she was half ashamed, the former now ran out of the room, to visit a neighbour for a few minutes, but when she returned she found Christina lying on the floor in a swoon; who, on being revived, with the aid of the attendants, who heard a scream, related that no sooner had her sister left her than the sound was repeated, close to the stove, and a white figure had appeared and advanced towards her, whereupon she had screamed and fainted.

"The lady who owned the apartments flattered herself that this apparition betokened that a treasure was hidden under the stove, and, imposing silence on the girls, she sent for a carpenter, and had the planks lifted. The floor was found to be double, and below was a vault, from which issued a very unwholesome vapour; but no treasure was found, nor anything but a quantity of quick lime. The circumstance being now made known to the king, he expressed no surprise; he said that the apparition was doubtless that of a Countess of Orlamunde, who had been built up alive in that vault. She was the mistress of a Margrave of Brandenburg, by whom she had two sons. When the prince became a widower, she expected he would marry her; but he urged, as an objection, that he feared, in that case, her sons might hereafter dispute the succession with the lawful heirs. In order to remove this obstacle out of her way, she poisoned the children; and the Margrave, disgusted and alarmed, had her walled up in that vault for her pains. He added that she was usually seen every seven years, and was preceded by the sound of a harp, on which instrument she had been a proficient; and also that she more frequently appeared to children than to adults, as if the love she had denied her own offspring in life was now her torment, and that she sought a reconciliation with childhood in general. I know from the best authority that the fact of these appearances is not doubted by those who have the fullest opportunities of inquiry and investigation; and I remember seeing in the English papers, a few years since, a paragraph copied from the foreign journals, to the effect that the *White Lady* had been seen again, I think at Berlin."

MUSIC "BEATEN OUT."

BY J. A. CAMPBELL.

"YOUNG GEORGE has been struck down in Afghanistan, and his mother died yesterday, not of grief, but of weariness, in the cancer ward."

The heart is riven, but the brow is calm;
The fount of tears is dry, and none o'erflow;
"Bless, Lord, my boy, and shield his soul from harm:
One long, last kiss"—and then she bids him go.

Go forth to war with devils, not with men;
Go forth to face the conflict and the strife;
First in the battle front for months, and then
For that dear country gives, his all—his life.

And she at home has fought with other foes,
The monsters of disease, and pain, and sin,
Until the call came forth, and she arose,
The Master ope'd the gate and let her in.

His stormy course, and hers more calm,
Each life a prelude to a higher, nobler chord.
Forget her now; they rest from worldly strife;
Each had a conflict—each has a reward.

"PASSED TO THE HIGHER LIFE."—After a long and painful illness, supported with true resignation, expired to-day, at 6 p.m., Girolamo Parisi, aged 82. His children Maria and Paolino, his son-in-law, and daughter-in-law, hereby give the sad notice to relatives and friends.—Florence, 18th January, 1879.

MR. and Mrs. Loomis, of 2, Vernon-place, Bloomsbury, London, intend leaving in two or three weeks time for America. Dr. Wyld informs us that Mrs. Loomis is an excellent clairvoyant for disease, as he has recently tested her powers in this direction. Mrs. Loomis is also a mesmeric sensitive.

CURIOUS COINCIDENCE.—The *Derbyshire Times* states that the elder brother of the late William Howitt (who died at Rome at 3.30 p.m., on Monday) expired at his residence, Heanor, Derbyshire, on precisely the same day and hour. His name was Francis Howitt, and he lived in "the old house at home," which is the subject of one of the poems by the late author.

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

BY ISABEL DE STEIGER.

In reading the lives of great men, we are often struck with the similarity displayed in their sentiments towards some ideas which are now being developed among us; but it is not often that we come upon such a paragraph as that on page 525 in Lewes' *Life of Goëthe*. He says of Goëthe:—"He declared himself in the deepest sense of the word a Protestant, and as such claimed the right of holding his inner being free from all prescribed dogma, the right of developing himself religiously. With reference to the genuineness of Scripture, he (Goëthe) maintained, with the modern Spiritualists, that nothing is genuine but what is truly excellent, which stands in harmony with the purest nature and reason, and which even now ministers to our higher development."

These are the words of Lewes, lately passed from our midst. Can any higher praise or higher truth be spoken of Spiritualism—that we own nothing genuine but what is excellent, and that therefore we stand in harmony with the purest nature and reason, and that this principle of ours, therefore, ministers to our highest development. We are so often accustomed to hear ourselves spoken about by thoughtless lips, even those belonging to wise souls, in so very different a manner, that it is refreshing to hear that our inmost sentiments are after all acknowledged by some few great thinkers.

Here is also another paragraph in Goëthe's own words:—"The mischievous sectarianism of Protestants will one day cease, for as soon as the pure doctrine and love of Christ are comprehended in their true nature, and have become a living principle, we shall feel ourselves great and free as human beings, and not attach special importance to a degree, more or less, in the outward forms of religion. Besides, we shall all gradually advance from a Christianity of words and faith to a Christianity of feeling and action." These are remarkable words, and emphatic with the prophetic gift of the true poet. He speaks, however, of Protestantism in the first paragraph with respect and enthusiasm, as the only means at that time available for a man of true sense and religion to reconcile his religious and intellectual aspirations. At that time Protestantism was still the breathing-place for great minds. In the second paragraph he deplores, however, the sectarianism of the very faith of which he has just rejoiced in being a member, and looks forward to the time when the breathing-place then granted to the aspiring and cultivated souls of the earth would be of far larger dimensions. When Protestantism should become not only Christianity, as understood even by us, but something beyond; and, again, a religion of feeling and of action. Here is a foreshadowing of what we modern Spiritualists now are blessed with; we feel and we act, or we *ought to act*. We no longer simply believe things on the testimony of others, many of whom, having gone to their rest long ago, are therefore not altogether acceptable authority to all classes of minds; but we believe because we feel them ourselves. Our feelings, however, are not worth much without conviction, and without conviction action very seldom follows. We can all enjoy the luxury of feeling, that is, imagining or desiring, but such luxury usually ends in dreams; but conviction of a thing has a different effect, and rouses to action; nay, by force of will, *compels to action*. This, therefore, is the religion that Goëthe prophesied would be the outcome of Protestantism—a more perfect development of its freedom: freedom that has coiled chains round the ignorant, and wrenched away the supports from the unstable ones; for we are not all equally ready for liberty or strong enough to support it. Still, freedom of thought was wanted and prayed for by the great ones of the earth, and freedom was given. The strong should then have supported the weak, but they rejoiced in their own freedom and forgot the others, and so many of the evil results of the Protestant and other reforms arise.

It seems as if we were again on the eve of another great reform, and that is, that this religion of feeling and action is now coming to us because we want it, because we are ready for it. This religion is the one now being developed among us through the great truths of Spiritualism. These truths we are now prepared to receive; we demand more knowledge, and more knowledge is given to us.

Two or three weeks ago there was read, at the British National Association, a paper by Dr. Wyld on *Christian Occultism*, throughout which breathed the spirit of the purest mind and the highest thought, and yet in every word it commended itself to our reason; it told us what the will of man—the soul of man—could accomplish, when placed in unity and harmony with the divine Creator. Then, again, the fortnight after was read a paper on the "*New Era*," by Mr. Calder. This subject brought before us what the result would be on the world in general if the high and pure doctrines of Spiritualism were universally practised. It is needless to say a sort of millennium would ensue. By the millennium we all imagine (whatever it really *may* mean) a time upon the earth when the spirit of evil shall be expunged and nothing but good remain. That is, however, manifestly untrue to Spiritualists; a spirit can never die; therefore we conclude there is no such thing as a spirit of evil. The only evil which is in the world is from ourselves, and our own ignorance; therefore, we would rather say that the millennium will be that dim, but not impossible time, in the future, when all knowledge shall be given to us; therefore when evil, or want of knowledge, cannot then exist.

We all of us feel our religion, and most of us would like to act upon it. I think this is the spirit pervading our ranks, or beginning to pervade them; therefore, the dawn of true Spiritualism is from our midst going forth to awaken the world, and its noble ethics to stir its soul to the centre. Progress and development are our watchwords, and from the day when the chain of communication was first placed on a true basis, down to the present time, it has been one of work and effort. The Spiritualism of to-day has been raised many degrees higher, as one of the motive powers of the world, than it was in its time of infancy, then humbly, plaintively, begging for life. We have all the marvellous phenomena still in our midst, each year so unfolding in beauty and interest as we open our minds to receive them; and we are beginning to have the still more important phenomena among us—I mean, the teachings of Spiritualism. We are beginning to know ourselves, to rule ourselves. "Conquer self! Conquer self!" are words of Mr. Fletcher's still ringing in my ears, and that would surely be one of the greatest conquests on earth, one of the forerunners of our great future.

George Lewes says: "The world is still a-making. The primal energies of life are as young and potent as of old, issuing forth under new forms, through metamorphoses higher and ever higher, as dawn broadens into day."

63, Bedford-gardens, Kensington, London.

A SPIRITUALISTIC RECEPTION.—Last Tuesday night Mr. and Mrs. William Tebb gave a reception to a number of friends at 7, Albert-road, Gloucester-gate, Regent's-park, London. Among the guests present were Mr. William White, author of the *Life of Swedenborg*, Mr. J. C. Earle, B.A., Mr. Thomas Shorter, for many years editor of the *Spiritual Magazine*, Miss Shorter, Mrs. Nosworthy, Mrs. Nelson Strawbridge, Miss Cobbe, Lady Coomara, Mr. Charles Blackburn, Mr. and Miss Beeby, Mr. Farquhar, Mr. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A., Mr. Baker, Mr. Cornelius Pearson, Signor Rondi, Mrs. Lowe, Mrs. Louisa Andrews, Mrs. and Miss Hewetson, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Harvey, Miss Hutton, and Mr. Harrison.

SUNDAY SERVICES AT THE CAVENDISH ROOMS.—Last Sunday morning the service at the Cavendish Rooms, London, was as usual conducted by Mr. Desmond FitzGerald, and after the usual lessons some remarks were made by Mr. E. Harrison Greene, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fletcher, and others, followed by recitations and readings by the members of the Spiritual Lyceum. In the evening there was no regular address, but a meeting was held to celebrate the thirty-first anniversary of Modern Spiritualism. Speeches were made by several prominent workers, among whom were Mr. Thomas Shorter, Mrs. Nosworthy, of Liverpool, Mrs. Louisa Andrews, and Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fletcher. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Greene. Letters were read from Mr. Epes Sargent, Mr. John Wetherbee, Major Thomas Gales Foster, Mr. J. M. Peebles, Mr. Enmore Jones, and others, who could not be present. At the conclusion of Mr. Fletcher's remarks he said that he had endeavoured to procure Steinway Hall, as the Cavendish Rooms were too small for the audiences, but had been refused because of Spiritualism; he, therefore, called upon all to give their names in support of his object, as he was determined never to rest until the prejudice had been conquered. This call was responded to; the lessees of the building have since withdrawn their objections, so Steinway Hall, 15, Lower Seymour-street, Portman-square, has been taken by Mr. Fletcher for one year. It will accommodate about 800 people. A service will be held there at 7.30 p.m. next Sunday.

MAGIC.

MAGIC assumes a more creditable shape than the superstitions which are usually associated with its name; it was knowledge; and many of those whom Naudé has vindicated from the charge, would probably have considered themselves rather honoured than disgraced by the imputation.

The magical colleges of Spain enjoyed a species of classical reputation. In these our western parts of Europe, they appear to have been the successful rivals of Dom Daniel, the great Alma Mater beneath the sea. Toledo and Salamanca and Simancas were alike celebrated or defamed for the instruction which they imparted in unhallowed lore. The schools were held in subterraneous chambers. Martin Delrio had seen the entrance of the awful cavern at Simancas, which was not closed until the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, when the entire subjection of the Ishmaelites rendered it unnecessary to temporise any longer with the powers of darkness. The doctrine delivered at Simancas, however, was not Goetic Magic, or that which is vulgarly termed the Black Art, but the high and pure Theurgy which repels all converse with the evil demon.

Theurgical magic, the magic which seeks its converse with the Power, the Intelligence, and the Angel, might have been first diffused in Spain by the sectaries of the Gnostic doctrines, who appear to have found numerous adherents in that country during many centuries. After the Moorish conquest, it extended its empire. The Castilian was subdued into respect for his hereditary enemies. He bowed to their imaginary wisdom as well as to their real knowledge. Nor did these pursuits fail to find the highest patronage. Alfonso the Wise thus ordered that the book of King Picatrix the philosopher should be rendered into Latin, out of the Saracen tongue. At his command the translation was made in the year of our Lord, 1256, and in the year of the era of Alexander, 1568, and in the year of the era of Cæsar, 1295, and in the year of the Arabs, 556. We are informed by bibliographers that even in the last century very large prices were given for this encyclopædia of magic, by persons who thought it would certainly enable them to evoke any spirit whom they chose. The work, however, has little originality. *Arbatel* and the *Clavicula Salomonis*, both of which are comparatively common books, though less extensive, are nearly as curious in all material points. King Picatrix was a mere compiler, and he confesses, conjurer as he was, that he made the book from the works of two hundred authors, amongst whom we find the honoured names of Abentaria, Empedocles, Queen Folopodria, Tinquiz Zadilair, Zatraç, Mercury of Babylon, Hermes Trismegistus, Alforz, Alpha, Adam, Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates, and the great Geber Abenhayen. Those, however, who have not ready access to the volumes of the before-mentioned sages and magicians, may satisfy themselves with the treatise of Picatrix. It will be useful to the student who, without much research or labour, wishes to acquire a compendious and practical notion of the art and mystery of talismans and astral magic, whilst the general reader may receive it as an authentic record of Arabian superstition. There is no reason whatever to doubt its imputed origin. Many of the magical planetary seals appear to be Cufic monograms, and the whole theory involved by the invocations of Picatrix, and the other tomes of the same nature, is in conformity with the astral theurgy of the Semitic nations. Michael, Gabriel, Samuel, Raphael, Uriel, Zadkiel, and Satiel move in the planets and inform the celestial spheres. They were adjured and bound by holy names; and aloes and sandal wood and fine spices were burned in the censer. Purified by fasting and by orison, clad in white linen, armed with the elemental sword, shielded by the Pentacle of David, the master entered the circle of characters traced on the consecrated ground, and the threatening prayer was read aloud which bound the planetary king to descend from his orb, and obey, or at least assist, the gifted mortal.

The Latin invocations are intermixed with words and phrases in other languages, Greek, and Hebrew, and Chaldee; some there are which cannot be easily recognised, but which may possibly be Egyptian. The Egyptian name of the sun, Φ PH, is often found on the Gnostic or Basilidian gems, which owe their origin to sectaries, whose religious opinions were analogous to the doctrines recorded in the magical

treatises of a much later date. The visionary shapes whom we are taught to evoke in the magical treatises do not belie their historical character. Many of the hideous monsters engraved upon the gems correspond with the description of the genii of the planets. The angel of Saturn may be peculiarly recognised—tall of stature, with an awful aspect, four faces frown around his head; on each knee is seen a human countenance, but black and glaring. His motion is like the tempestuous blast, earth shakes beneath his tread. The talismans of the middle ages always retained a close affinity to their prototypes, and the seals continued to be armed with the imagery of the supposed disciples of Babylon. A very curious talisman ring of this class was lately found near St. Albans, and is now in the possession of Lord Verulam. The gem is a red stone, upon which is engraved a lion grasping the head of some animal; above is a star. The ring is of silver, and two inscriptions in concentric circles surround the stone—*ECCE VICIT LEO. SIGILLVM IOHANNIS DELAVAL.* The characters are of the reign of Edward I. or his successor. The magical figures engraved on the stone are copied from prototypes of much older date; three have been published by Chifflet in his essay on the *Basilidian Gems* (pl. vii.)

An anathema had been denounced against the vain and presumptuous pursuits of magic. When assembled in public, and debating in the college, the doctors allowed of no distinction between celestial and Goetic magic, between the invocation of a good demon and the compact with an evil one. But the restless aspirations of ardent minds would not be obedient to the decree. And many a sound theologian, who exclaimed loudly in the chair against these heresies and errors, would seek a secret communion with beings descending from other spheres. But to justify himself to his own conscience, he endeavoured to fancy that he was not acting in repugnance to the faith and doctrine which he owned. The rites of Christianity were secretly and silently blended with the magical ceremonies of the Eastern tribes, and the spells of the middle ages exhibit a strange confusion of the practices of the Church and the Platonic cabala. The sign of the cross alternates with the pentalpha, and the names of the evangelists are added to the angels of the stars. Holy water, which chased away the demon, also assisted in consecrating the hallowed Lamen and the Periapt. The lustration was in direct disobedience to the ritual whence it derived its power; but with equal perverseness, the sacrifice of the mass was thought to perfect the charm which subjected the thaumaturgist himself to the dread penalty of excommunication, and deprived him of the benefit of the sacrament.

It is somewhat singular to observe how rapidly these abuses gained ground in the ages approaching to the century of the Reformation. Ecclesiastical ceremonies during that period were the invariable accompaniments of magic and demonolatriy. No spell could be cast without a priest; images were baptised in the font, and placed upon the altar for the purpose of striking the victim whom they represented with disease and death. There were few of the magicians of Catharine of Medicis who were not in holy orders. The Calvinists of France owed little charity to Popery, or to the reigning dynasty, and their credulity has sometimes exaggerated the charges, but in the main they are not to be denied. The causes which induced these perversions of doctrine, also converted the saint into a being whose character assimilates with the attributes of the Agathodemon of a classical age; whilst the prayers addressed to the canonized martyr or confessor echo the voice of the magic lay.

Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, the three kings of Cologne, appear as favourites in this system of magical hagiology. Their names were inscribed in phylacteries, which were worn as preservatives against sudden death. But the same names also constituted the potent charm which revealed the fatal hour. It was thought that if, on new year's eve, these names were written with blood upon the forehead, the person thus seeking the painful foreknowledge would see himself reflected in the mirror, under the semblance in which he was fated to expire.

When these orisons, the comfort of fond and doting age, were in the vernacular tongues, they were almost always couched in rhythm, if not in verse, muttered or sung by the crone, and spelt by lisping childhood. The following,

perhaps in the language of the thirteenth century, was used to staunch blood:—

Longes the knyht him understod
To Cristes syde his spere he sette
Ther com out water an blod.
In the nom of the vader astond blod!
In the nom of the holi gost asta blod!
At Cristes will ne driple the na more!

A happy and lucky day was secured in France by a rhythmical invocation, which we notice on account of its relation to another article of popular belief in that country, namely, that whoever saw the image of St. Christopher was preserved during that day from misfortune:—

Seint Jehan et son agnel
Seint Christophe et son fardel
Seinte Marie et sa brasses
Me doint bonne et eureuse journee.

No sanction has been given by the Church of Rome to these "superstitious observances," which, on the contrary, were severely and sincerely reprobated by her prelates. But the corruptions of which Rome approved could not fail to induce others which she condemned; and the boundary between legitimate hagiolatry and forbidden saint-worship was so faint, that such censures would possess but little real influence amongst the uninformed and illiterate vulgar. The feasts of the saints became associated with many magical observances obviously derived from the times of heathenism. Both among the Eastern and the Western nations, the eve of St John, on whose morrow the sun completed his highest course, was deemed the fitting time for those mystic rites which command the evil spirits and give an insight into futurity. In aftertimes the pure and splendid Artemis herself could no longer be addressed by the maiden of France or England; it was therefore necessary that the invocation should take another form, and the "moon was charmed" at the hour when the silver beams of the new-born crescent first shone forth, by the name of Saint Lucia or Saint Agnes.

Love-charms were sometimes dispensed by beldames of no ambiguous character. Philters, in most cases, were evidently poisons, and the persons who dispensed them, though innocent of sorcery, were not undeserving of the punishment of the law. Sympathetic magic compelled the desired object to appear, unwilling, perhaps, and unconscious of the power which attracted him. One of the most amusing episodes in the most amusing of romances is founded upon this belief. Pamphila, ignorant of the deception practiced by her attendant, burns the tresses which she supposes to have belonged to the Boeotian youth. The three wine sacks, whence the hair was cut, become filled with feeling and with life; they rise, they obey the irresistible spells of the Thessalian sorceress, and stumble with blind alacrity through the street, until they arrive at her door. Here Apuleius meets them, and mistaking the goat skins, thus animated, for as many midnight robbers, he attacks them with all the valour of the knight of La Mancha, until his sword has laid them low. It is rather sorrowful than amusing to find that another version of this old story was produced as a charge against the luckless Doctor Fian. Daphnis was also compelled to appear really and corporally at the bidding of Hecate; and the magic of Thessaly, transmitted from age to age, yet lurks by the village fire-side. The task allotted to the *Lynx* is now performed by the "Dumb Cake;" the method of composing it may be found in Mother Bunch. Some difficulty, however, must be encountered in making this charm stand firm and good, as rather a painful duty is imposed upon the three spinsters who blend the ingredients. If they speak one word during four-and-twenty hours, the spell is broken. In Scotland, the stories which are told respecting its effect have all a fatal catastrophe. They tell you that the bridegroom thus conducted by the infernal powers enters the opened door at midnight, and looking earnestly at his intended spouse, casts some weapon on the table, and then vanishes. A marriage, of course, takes place, and the wife must keep the murderous token with fearful care. If she parts with it, his love is lost; and if it is discovered by the husband and according to the story—he always discovers it—then the magical necessity compels him to plunge it in her breast. A moral might be fancied to

lurk in this idle legend. Supposing it to be an apologue—and it possesses as good a right to be so considered as the fables of classical antiquity—an intelligible lesson is conveyed. The bearer is warned to distrust an affection raised by fraud or guile; and to consider that no passion can produce a durable happiness, unless it fairly arises from the heart.

The wily Tregeteur must take his rank amongst the natural magicians. When he played in the hall, and cast the balls in the air, and pierced his body with the innocuous sword, the guests eyed him half with delight and half with horror, nothing doubting that some minor fiend, if not Zabulon himself, assisted in the sport and deceit. Originally, there is no doubt that the juggler was a real magician. In the laws of Edward and Guthrum, the *pygler* is associated with the witch and the murderer, against whom are denounced the pains of banishment or death.* Bodin is loud in exclaiming against the famous Trois Eschelles—he must not be identified with the expert finisher of the law in Quentin Durward—who was guilty of the diabolical trick of slipping the rings from off a golden bracelet, which nevertheless remained entire. It is said that Trois Eschelles confessed that he performed this and other feats of a like nature, at the Court of Charles IX., by the help of an evil spirit, to whom he had sold himself, and he was condemned to die. A pardon was granted; but the juggler relapsed, and was afterwards executed. There is reason, however, to suppose that, like many other sorcerers of the middle ages, his punishment was not wholly unmerited, and that, though he may have been innocent of magic, he understood too well the art of poisoning.—*Quarterly Review*.

A SYMBOLICAL DREAM.

A COMMON hackney coachman had a most remarkable dream not long since, which is as follows:—He dreamt one Saturday evening that he was out with his coach plying for a fare; and, being engaged, had directions given him where to drive. As he was carrying his passengers, he thought he was called to ascend an exceeding steep hill; and when he reached the summit, he found the declivity of the hill still more troublesome. However, with great difficulty he got down, and as he proceeded he arrived at a pair of great iron gates, wide open. When he had passed them, he found himself in an uncommonly dark and gloomy place, in which were vast crowds of people dressed in mourning, all of whom by their countenances seemed in a very pensive frame of mind. Hereupon he stopped, and asked one of the men what place that was. He answered it was hell. Hell! said the coachman, I have had more frightful ideas of hell than this appears to be; if this be hell, I shall not be under such fearful apprehensions of hell, as formerly. Upon this the person informed him that hell was not so much outward as it was inward; and as a proof of this, he opened his waistcoat, and showed him his heart, which was in a flame of fire.

This shocked the coachman to a great degree; but he proceeded to inform him that his case was not singularly shocking, for all whom he then saw were in the same condition; and added, if he would accompany him, he should see worse than that. Here the coachman refused, and in great confusion and consternation attempted to return; but to his surprise the person, in conjunction with the other, caught hold of him, and refused to let him go, except he would promise to come again. After he had used every effort to free himself to no effect, he at last promised, if they would let him go, he would certainly come again at twelve o'clock. Upon this condition they let him depart, and he drove off in haste. When he was got out, he awoke in great horror of mind. He then awoke his wife, and related the whole to her, but she treated it with ridicule, and soon went to sleep again. But the poor man slept no more; and in the morning said he was afraid he should die and go to hell, and desired his wife to seek for some man to go out with the coach that day, for he could not; and refused to eat or drink anything. Hereupon his wife took fire, and used him with rough language; and went among her

* It is probable the English word juggler is derived from the Saxon *jugleþ* and not from the French *jougleur*.

acquaintance, ridiculing his fancy, and said her husband was going to hell at twelve o'clock. This passed on, and the man got worse in his mind, till the clock struck twelve; when his wife damned him, and said, "It is twelve o'clock, and you are not yet gone to hell!" With that he replied, "Hold your tongue, for I am going," and immediately fell down dead. This the person related to the minister, the Rev. Mr. W., who communicated it to me as certain, and subjoined that the wife was then almost in a state of distraction.—*Wills' Spiritual Register.*

THE SECRET OF THE LOGOS.

BY G. WIESE.

The old so-called "Secret of the Logos" has been revealed at last, I am glad to see. When Dr. Wyld first made mention of that mystical term it rather displeased me, for I am no friend of secrecy, and dislike mysterious remarks. Mystical terms, if used by a writer in public, ought always to be accompanied by a brief, common-sense explanation. Unless that is done, they often give rise to useless correspondence and satirical remarks. Everybody feels tempted, as it were, to have a peck at the strange thing. This was the only objection I had to the mystical term, "the Secret of the Logos," which suddenly appeared at the end of Dr. Wyld's letter, like a huge meteor close to the horizon.

Now the veil has been withdrawn from the image of Sais. The picture is striking in its very simplicity and grandeur. All great divine truths are simple; only human devices and fancies are complicated and dark. As far as our poor, plain human words are able to draw a picture of the essence of religious truth, this may be a faithful copy of the original, for what I know. Whether a better one can be drawn by any philosopher or saint I know not, but I doubt it. The truth as to the way of securing the right key is that which "Nathan the Wise," in Lessing's drama, puts forth in his parable of the "Three Rings," representing the three religions, the Jewish, Christian, and Mahometan.

The aspect, form, and garment of truth, as it issues forth from the hands of the Creator, are always beautiful in their simplicity and purity. They are resplendent by a light that dazzles not our bodily, but our spiritual eyes, when gazed at closely. It is only the perverted taste of foolish and degenerate mortals, who busy themselves, as soon as divine truth has descended among them, which covers up its natural form and its garments of celestial beauty, with motley and dirty rags of its own. It puts a mask before its face, so that but few are able to recognise its original form and beauty, and, for fear of losing it, men hasten to imprison it in the walls of their temples. "This is truth," they say, "the Divine Truth, and *we* are the only proprietors and keepers of it. Come and worship in *our* temple, for unless you do so, your soul cannot be saved!" The spirit of truth, imprisoned and treated thus, silently rises and escapes from its dull prison, leaving behind only its disfigured, lifeless form, which remains the object of worship for the thoughtless crowd.

The weary, lonely wanderer in search of truth, on entering the temple, turns his eyes with joyful expectancy. But, alas, perceiving the lifeless figure and spiritless form of worship, he walks out again, silent and sad, murmuring:—"If the spirit of truth ever existed, it must be somewhere else, for it is not here!"

Now, who can tell me whether there is at present a mortal on this earth who is really in possession of the key described by Dr. Wyld? What we have is only a sketch of it; that is all. We may consider it to be a true sketch of the original key, which latter is only to be obtained by a life of almost superhuman work for the purification and elevation of the spirit, whilst it is still imprisoned in its cumbersome mortal coil. In the difference, however, between word and deed, between knowing our duty and doing our duty, "there is the rub." It would be a blasphemous absurdity to fancy or assert that any Church authority, or other mortal being, is really holding the key and able to open the gates of heaven to others, or even to himself. All a man can do, is to strive for it with earnest purpose and perseverance

under every condition and difficulty of life. To do this is plainly our common duty; and it is the purpose of our short earthly existence, which appears to be intended by our Heavenly Father to serve us as a school term. Those who work honestly, with the highest aim in view on this earth, may confidently hope to be admitted to the higher school above when they have finished their term here below, though not one in a hundred millions may reach such a state of perfection as to deserve and obtain possession for himself of the key to the highest realms above. If a man retire into the desert or cloister, living the life of a hermit, guarded against the temptations of the world—conditions which render it comparatively easy to live the life of a saint—will there be sufficient merit in that for gaining such a high reward? I doubt it. Cases are often considerably changed by circumstances.

In mediæval times, when religious fanaticism and cruel persecution were the order of the day, and went hand-in-hand with the rapacity of the mighty; when life and property were unsafe, and the maxim of Christ, "Love your enemies," was actually changed into "Burn your enemies" by the authorities of the domineering Church—retiring into the solitude of a cloister was the only career a person could choose who yearned for bodily and spiritual safety, for purer thoughts, and a purer life. To-day the circumstances are entirely altered, and what was a meritorious act in those mediæval times cannot be considered a meritorious act now. Cloister life began to degenerate gradually when the circumstances which had produced them disappeared. Cloisters became a refuge, in part, for a great number of lazy vagabonds who detested honest hard work, preferring a life of pious indolence and a luxurious table.

What is required from us now is not to retire from the world and live a life of pious contemplation and indolence, with the rather selfish purpose of raising our little selves in preference of the hard work of trying to raise others, but to live a steadfast, active, and virtuous life in the midst of our worldly work and duties, and the worldly temptations surrounding us, in order to give an example to others and act as a leaven in society.

Wiesbaden, February 12th, 1879.

SPONTANEOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA.

BY ELIZA BOUCHER.

WHETHER or not the following account is to be relegated to the realm of remarkable coincidences, or to occupy the far higher ground of a natural phenomenon illustrating the theory of the transmigration of souls, or as tending to show that disembodied spirits can really "possess" the bodies of the lower animals as well as those of man, must, of course, depend entirely on the amount of further evidence forthcoming in support of one or the other of these hypotheses. I again quote from that most interesting work of the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, *My Life and Recollections*, and the student of psychological science must simply relegate the narrative to whichever class he may deem the most fitting for its reception. I shall, however, head my communication as usual, and give the account verbatim:—

"A pet goldfinch had a very pretty mistress, and its affection for her was extraordinary. She had taught the bird to feed from her lips, to sit on her hand, and to sing to her. Indeed, while she was in the room the constant twittering of her little friend filled the place, to some extent interfering with conversation. Attached to all living pets of the kind as I was, I loved this one not only for the sake of its mistress, but for itself, and it repaid me by letting me hear from the lips he loved and fed from, that I was the only man to whom he ever paid the least attention. The lady and myself used to talk much on my favourite theme, the transmigration of souls, and I called her bird a lover from a former world. She combated this idea, and asserted that she lived with him in this, and therefore would insist that the conquest was of the present day, and all her own. . . . After the goldfinch and myself had had time to like each other, the mamma of my fair friend was seized with a sudden inclination to go abroad.

"Before the hour of starting I visited the house to take a

sad farewell. The young lady, the bird, and myself were once more left together. Smiles and silent tears succeeded each other in her sorrowful face, when at last she bade me adieu in the following words:—"I take your view now of my little favourite; it perhaps has had a previous life; hereafter it shall be my "soul." If anything happens to me it shall fly to you to tell you I am gone, and then return to sing above my grave."

"We parted in sorrow, and herself and her bird were certainly absent for nearly two years before I heard of them again. On a hard winter's day, as I sat writing in my study, there came a sudden blow upon the glass of my window, and I thought I caught a glimpse of a large bird like a sparrowhawk gliding swiftly by. Snatching up my loaded gun, which I always kept close at hand, I threw up the window to look for the hawk, but not seeing anything of the kind, my eyes fell on the ground, and there, motionless, with its lovely wings outstretched, I beheld a male goldfinch apparently dead. On picking up the bird, life was extinct. This I attributed to the pursuit of a hawk, as I had known an instance or two before where small birds had killed themselves against glass in trying to escape. The promise of my beautiful friend, when I first possessed myself of the fallen bird, never entered my head; and when the goldfinch came against my window I was writing, and in no mood for melancholy reflections, though I had not ceased to love her from whom I had so sorrowfully parted.

"Not very long after this the news of her early death reached me through the letter of a mutual friend, and by the most strange coincidence I discovered it had occurred on the afternoon of the day, I cannot say the exact hour, on which the goldfinch killed itself against my window. If then the unconfirmed supposition of spiritual communication with the world has anything in it, here there is something for the disciples of the doctrine to lay hold of, for supposing for a moment that the bird was a link in the chain of transformation and transmigration, it came back to me and strictly fulfilled its mission. It announced to me her death, and its spirit returned to sing a requiem over the grave of its beloved mistress."

The work was published in 1865.

Albion-villa, Fromantle-square, Bristol.

WHAT is incredible to thee thou shalt not, at thy soul's peril, believe.—*Carlyle*.

A VISIT TO THE DEAD.—When Ulysses visited the prophet "Tiresias old" in Hades, he met there the shade of Achilles, and said to him, "In life the Argives honoured thee like a God, and now again in thy greatness thou rulest the dead here where thou art." He straightway made answer, "Console me not in death, noble Ulysses! Would rather, that I were a bondsman of the glebe, the servant of a master, or some poor man, whose living were but scanty, than thus to be the king of all the nations of the dead."

A DEFENDER OF THE CHURCH.—The remark is a common one, agreeing with experience, that exceptionally pious people are often capable of dirtier acts in life, and have a lower sense of honour, than ordinary men of the world. One Wilfred de Fonvielle has come forward in Paris, with a book on *How Miracles are Performed Without the Church*, in which he piously flings mud at an innocent man. In defence of the Church, he gives the following as facts to his readers in relation to Mr. Home's *séances*. Mr. Home, and other mediums, obtain their manifestations while both their hands are held, but M. Fonvielle says:—"He began by ordering the lights (the natural enemies of all jugglers, spirits, and wizards) to be extinguished. If people would carry a pocket-lantern to these entertainments, and bring it out at the right moment, they could spoil the calculations of more successful charlatans than Home. When the gas was turned on again magic characters were seen traced on the ceiling, which was far too high to suppose for a moment that it was Mr. Home's hand that had traced them. Nor was it, indeed, with his hand that our spirit had reached so high. He had in his pocket a telescope-pen, which was a *chef d'œuvre* of delicate workmanship. The medium of kings and emperors could refuse himself nothing. In its ordinary state this penholder was no longer than a pencil, but by separating the springs that held it together like those of an eye-glass it grew to the length of a fishing-rod; the rest is easily guessed. Home performed several tricks with the aid of his feet; his shoes were made so that he could take them off and put them on again at pleasure without moving his hands; by this means it was very easy in the obscurity to slip off his shoes and make the audience believe that they were being touched gently by a spirit hand. In the last days of the Empire, he even went so far as to make the Empress believe that she was pressing in hers the hand of the Duchess d'Albe. An aide-de-camp, however, who had his suspicions, laid a trap and caught the impostor at the right moment. The Emperor was angry and Home was discarded. The newspapers made the matter as public as it was in their power to do in those days."

A DAILY PAPER TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM.

OF all the miracles of modern times, that contained in the above heading is the most startling to Spiritualists. The *Times*, because it has a respectable class of readers, is nearly the only daily paper in London which has taken any pains to try to discover and to tell the truth about Spiritualism, and has not descended to misrepresentation and vulgar abuse. The *North British Daily Mail* (Glasgow), of March 15th last, contains the following report of a *séance* :—

So much has been said and done lately regarding the exposure of Spiritualism that a few notes may be of interest as to what the writer witnessed the other night at a private *séance* given by Mr. David Duguid. This gentleman was comparatively unknown until publicly challenged by Mr. Bishop during his recent exposure of Spiritualism. Mr. Duguid has never courted publicity, but at the same time he has always been very willing to give every information regarding his manifestations. The *séance* took place in his parlour, and was attended by ten gentlemen, five of whom were rank heretics regarding all Spiritualistic phenomena. Immediately on Mr. Duguid taking his seat at a small table he went into a trance condition, his eyes closing, and a smile playing on his countenance. A piece of cardboard, about 6in. by 9in., which had been previously examined by the company, was then handed to him. After breathing on it Mr. Duguid made a rough pencil sketch and then picking up his palette and brushes, commenced to paint a landscape with his eyes firmly sealed. To make assurance doubly sure, a handkerchief was firmly bound across his eyes, but he did not appear to be the least inconvenienced by this arrangement, and painted away quite briskly, first rubbing in the sky, and then the faint outline of the distant mountains; next the middle distance, and finally boldly dashing in the foreground with a few vigorous strokes. At the suggestion of a gentleman present the light was put out, but this made no difference, the action of the brushes being quite audible in the darkness, and on the gas being turned on, Mr. Duguid was discovered painting away. After the expiry of half an hour the sketch was complete, and although not of great artistic merit, was still a most remarkable picture to be produced under such peculiar conditions. What in Spiritualistic circles is called a "direct drawing" was then attempted. A common card, coated with iodine, was placed on the table before Mr. Duguid, whose hands and feet were firmly secured with silk handkerchiefs. The gas was turned off, and the company, joining hands, sang the 100th Psalm. During the singing Mr. Duguid's form was dimly seen, and beyond a slight movement of the head, remained quite stationary. After the lapse of about five minutes a rap was heard on the table, and on the gas being lit Mr. Duguid was found sitting as firmly bound as before, and on turning up the card on the table, a nice little miniature landscape was observed, the colours being quite wet and evidently newly painted. Without attempting to give an opinion or explain how such manifestations could be accomplished, we simply narrate the circumstance, of the *séance* as they occurred.

As long as each day comes singly, each freighted with its own load only, people can bear a great deal.—*Rhoda Broughton*.

Will some of our readers oblige us by furnishing the names and addresses of public lecturers on mesmerism, who perform experiments before the observers?

CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON will leave London to-morrow for Trieste, and from Trieste will visit Egypt. He may possibly return to England in the autumn of this year.

ON Monday, April 23rd, Mr. James Campbell will read a paper in connection with Spiritualism, at one of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's evening receptions, at 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, and there will be a large and intelligent body of listeners on the occasion.

M. PIERART.—The death is announced, on February 14th, of M. Z. J. Pierart, at the Druidic House, which he had established at St. Maur, near Paris. M. Pierart was a Spiritualist, and author of several books on religious subjects. He was also editor of the *Benedictin de St. Maur*; his last book was an important work on *L'Histoire du Monde Primatif*. The news of his departure will be received among Spiritualists with great regret.

MIRROR WORSHIP IN JAPAN.

PROFESSOR AYRTON lectured recently at the Royal Institution, his subject being "The Magic Mirror of Japan." In Japan there is, he said, an absence of house walls, interior and exterior, the house consisting of a roof supported on only a few posts, enclosing very little but empty space, and sliding screens alone divide off compartments. Why, in this comparative absence of all that we should call furniture, does one article pertaining to the ladies' toilet—the bronze mirror with its stand—hold so prominent a position? This mirror is usually circular, from three inches to twelve inches in diameter, made of bronze, and with a bronze handle covered with bamboo. The reflecting face is generally more or less convex, polished with a mercury amalgam, and the back is beautifully ornamented with a gracefully executed raised design. Some for the rustic population have also polished letters.

The explanation of the fact that the mirror is almost, par excellence, the entire furniture, is found partly in the elaborate head-dresses of the Japanese ladies and the painting of their faces, and partly from the belief that as the sword was "the soul of the Samourai," so is the mirror the "soul of woman." It therefore constitutes the most valuable of all her possessions, and two mirrors form part of the trousseau of every bride. The characteristic qualities of the mirror must, it is believed, be in accordance with the constitution of the possessor, and "second sight" is resorted to in the selection of a mirror. But why is the mirror so important in the imperial palace, where the court ladies, still preserving the fashion of old days, comb back their hair in the simplest style? Why does the fortune-teller, instead of looking at a girl's palm, regard the reflection in a mirror? Why, instead of referring to the book of the recording angel, does the Japanese Plato bring before the boatman his evil deeds reflected in a mirror? And why does the mirror hold so important a place in Japanese temples? The mirror ranks far higher in Japanese history than has been supposed; it, in fact, takes the place of the Cross in Christian countries.

Professor Ayrton read the myth of the origin of the worship of the mirror. The main points in it are that when the gods alone inhabited the earth, the sun goddess one day hurt her hand with her shuttle, having been suddenly frightened by a practical joke of her brother, the god of the sea. She indignantly retired to a cave. Darkness followed, and the goddess had to be appeased. The wisest of the gods suggested making an image of her more beautiful than herself. The Japanese Vulcan fashioned a mirror in the shape of the sun, and all the gods laughed, and shouted, "Here is a deity who surpasses even your glory." Woman's curiosity could not stand this. The goddess peeped out, and while admiring herself in the mirror was caught and dragged out by a rice rope. The national traditions have it that this sun goddess (Amaterasu o mi Kam), sending her adopted grandson, who was also the great-grandfather of the first Emperor of Japan, to subdue the world, made him three presents—the *maga-tama* (the precious stone emblematical of the spirit of woman), the sword (emblematical of the spirit of man), and the mirror (emblem of her own soul). "Look," she said, "on this mirror as my spirit; keep it in the same house and on the same floor with yourself; and worship it as if you were worshipping my actual presence."—*The Times*.

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1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle. 2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, but the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface.

3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening. 4. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a fitful nature.

5. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first indications will probably be table rattings or raps. 6. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being.

7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits, usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.

8. Should no results be obtained at the first two sittings because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

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