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Tuesday, 8th.—Finance Committee at 6 p.m. COURT MEETING at 6.30 p.m.
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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

No. 347.—VOLUME FOURTEEN; NUMBER SIXTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, APRIL 18th, 1879.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

MR. WILLIAM TEBB, well known to many of the readers of these pages, has been grievously persecuted by the St. Pancras Guardians, because he conscientiously refuses to allow a child of his to be vaccinated. Into the disputed question whether vaccination is good or bad we do not enter, but there should be no prosecution in police courts of individuals who, after careful research, come to the conscientious conclusion that vaccination is an evil. On *a priori* grounds it may be asserted that the original scheme of creation was not so faulty, that human beings thenceforth could not pass through their allotted three score years and ten without having diseased matter from a diseased calf put into their blood. Moreover, some doctors in extensive practice do not believe in it, although they have plenty of facilities for knowing the results. Children are quite commonly killed by it, or rather by erysipelas following the operation, but the latter alone is mentioned in the medical certificate of the cause of death. Anti-vaccinators should tell parents everywhere to refuse to accept such certificates, and insist upon the alteration of the words to "died of erysipelas brought on by vaccination," and if the doctor refuses to insert the whole truth, should lodge information with the proper authorities as to the untrustworthiness of the certificate. This line of action would alter somewhat the present statistics on the subject.

The Government might permit non-vaccination under suitable restrictions, and order a register to be kept of unvaccinated persons. Time would then prove whether they were more subject than others to small-pox.

The evil aspects of vaccination are probably exaggerated by the opponents of the operation. We knew a lady who sometimes vaccinated herself for amusement, and never seemed to be any the worse for it; if it did no good, it seemed to do no harm.

A neat little newspaper, entitled *The Vaccination Inquirer*, has just been started. It is published by Mr. E. W. Allen, of 11, Ave Maria-lane, London, and contains, among others, a most interesting article by Mr. William White, displaying a considerable amount of literary research into the early history of vaccination. Mr. White says that Cotton Mather, of Boston, Massachusetts, had been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, and selections from his correspondence appeared in *The Philosophical Transactions*, No. 338, 1714. He adds that:—

"Cotton Mather is one of the marvels of biography—a choice specimen of Puritanism developed without check. He was a man of boundless energy and incessant industry, of intense piety, and unlimited self-confidence; and thus, without hesitation, he set himself to extirpate witchcraft, shrinking from no atrocity, until the frightful Salem tragedy of 1692 shocked the colony into mercy and common sense.

"Mather was just the sort of character to be impressed with Timoni's description of the short and easy way with small-pox; and he who had hanged warlocks and witches with sublime assurance, was not likely to have scruples about inoculating the community when inwardly satisfied it was for the public good."

Mr. White, who has seen much of the Salem Chapel kind of people, and knows something of the narrow-minded tyranny of their petty organisations, adds:—"The audacity and tyranny of conscientious conceit are proverbial," and states that the zealous Cotton Mather had to wait before he could inoculate anybody. After he had inoculated several, he recorded some of the awkward results in the following words:—

"I cannot learn that one has died of it. Five or six have died upon it, or after it, but from other diseases or accidents; chiefly from having taken infection in the common way by

inspiration before it could be given in the way of transplantation."

Mr. Cotton Mather, F.R.S., who wrote as frequently and as learnedly about spiritual mediums or psychic sensitives as Dr. Carpenter has done, also gave the public the following interesting scientific information in *The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*:—

"Dr. Leigh, in his *Natural History of Lancashire*, counts it an occurrence worth relating that there were some cats known to catch the small-pox, and pass regularly through the state of it, and then to die. We have had among us the very same occurrence.

"It was generally observed and complained that the pigeon-houses of the City continued unfruitful, and the pigeons did not hatch or lay as they used to do all the while that the small-pox was in its epidemical progress; and it is very strongly affirmed that our dung-hill fowl felt much of the like effect upon them."

Mr. Tebb has been fined again, and again, and again for the non-vaccination of his child, and three or four of the St. Pancras Guardians are specially notorious for forcing on the repeated prosecutions. Have any of those guardians themselves not been vaccinated, and forgotten the circumstance in the excess of their medical zeal? If Mr. Tebb could only have one of them ordered to be vaccinated, and if by a happy coincidence of circumstances he should chance to barely escape death from disease brought on by the operation, it would be a capital advertisement for the anti-vaccinators, and the over-authoritative persons who rule in every local "westry" would have a warning before their eyes of the bad effects of too much medical orthodoxy.

Since the foregoing has been in type, we have heard that the prosecutions of Mr. Tebb for the non-vaccination of his child have ceased, by the non-appearance in Court of both plaintiffs and defendant over the hearing of the thirtieth summons, and after Mr. Tebb had paid £200 in fines and costs. The local newspaper is in a state of indignation, raising the cry of one law for the rich and another for the poor. Whether Mr. Tebb be right or wrong in his medical unorthodoxy, he at all events has been fighting for both rich and poor for freedom of action (not necessarily without restriction) according to the dictates of conscience, over a subject respecting which many honest and intelligent men have differences of opinion based upon research.

THE INVESTIGATION OF SPIRITUALISM IN HOLLAND AND ELSEWHERE.

BY A. J. RIJKO.

A MEDIUM has developed at Amsterdam in a private family. He obtains the playing of instruments and the usual physical phenomena in ordinary evening lamplight. The instruments lie on the floor under the table, all join hands, and answers are given on the tambourine, or some of the instruments rise between the sitters, till they are over the table.

At Rotterdam they also now obtain interesting physical phenomena, which they will try to develop farther; the manifestations are obtained without a cabinet, and in the light, the *desideratum* of every Spiritualist. At the Hague, a few weeks ago, a small circle of young men from one of the academical preparatory colleges met to form a circle. They at once obtained such phenomena that they intend to carry out a system of permanent investigation. I give these examples to show my English brethren that the Dutch are not discouraged in the study, and appreciate the sympathy so often expressed in letters from so many earnest, true English Spiritualists.

Spiritualism is an interesting subject, but more difficult

to deal with than any other. It is the most weighty, but, at the same time, the most dangerous study of all; and, truly, not everyone calling himself a Spiritualist is a Spiritualist. Let us confess that our cause has no greater and more dangerous enemies than (1) the impostors, (2) the enthusiasts in our midst. The number of American exposures of late is really disgusting. Take, for instance, James, with a complete collection of Indian and other dresses and accessories to represent faces of old men and young girls hidden on his person. Spiritualists should investigate in such a way that the conditions make these narratives impossible in future. Did the Fox girls lose their mediumship by repeated testing at every *séance*? No. Did the celebrated Mrs. Hollis lose her wonderful power when she submitted with the utmost willingness to be tested time after time by Dr. Wolfe, and many others, knowing that it was asked, not out of mistrust, but in the real and well-understood interests of our cause? Her power increased, and the manifestations became stronger and more convincing at every sitting. Did Miss Cook lose her power by submitting to the repeated tests of Mr. Crookes? Not at all. And Home? The same.

But why accumulate such examples? Spiritualists capable of efficiently prosecuting their study can easily find a large number of mediums who will submit to tests, real tests, as often as asked for, if applied with kindness, and those are the pioneers of progress. But we know we have good and true-hearted mediums with us. How good and true, indeed, was the behaviour of Mrs. Simpson in America, who undertook a journey to a sceptical newspaper editor with the express desire to be tested, and came out triumphant! So it seems the Spiritualists have it in their power to stamp out fraud, by discouraging the application of conditions which make it easy.

A few remarks as to the enthusiasts in Spiritualism; they, for the most part, are the cause of scientific men being so reluctant to take the study in hand. You will easily recognise them. They speak of the "Divine powers" of mediums; they fall down in ecstasy before every trance speaker, although he or she may occasionally utter the greatest nonsense or scientific rubbish (as Professor Denton pointed out lately); they indignantly refuse admittance to their circles to honest investigators who want the real article, and not the imitation, and constitute that body which defends cheats with such explanations as "the spirits did it."

Let us freely and honestly confess that the utmost care is necessary in order to investigate without danger. One cosmogony from the spirits contradicts flatly another, and decided proofs of spirit identity are very seldom obtained; and even honest and scientific trials to establish the identity of "spirits" manifesting in different places meets sometimes with complete failure; in short, we have so many things still to learn that we should act prudently and honestly. Spiritualism never can form a new religion; it ought to be considered a science highly interesting but difficult, and to be kept pure.

SPONTANEOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA AND DIVINATION.

BY ELIZA BOUCHER.

THE widespread belief that certain individuals of our race have been and still are endowed with the gift of prophecy and the power of divination, has existed in all ages and among all "sorts and conditions of men," from the unlettered peasant to the philosopher, and from Catherine de Medicis to the servant girl who invests her last sixpence with the fortune-telling gipsy at the back door. All adown the ages have existed professed prophets and seers, from the "rapt Isaiah" of the Hebrews and the priestesses of Delphi, down to Zadkiel, Lilly, Mother Shipton, and their humbler followers of the present day. Some years since I had heard of the fame of an astrologer in this neighbourhood, but had never been able to meet with any trustworthy information respecting his powers. However, I at last happened to meet with a recent convert to Spiritualism who, in his younger days, had chanced, with a companion, to have consulted this astrologer, and he thus described the interview they had with him:—

On entering the room the seer mounted a sort of pulpit, or reading desk, and my friend began to ask questions. "Wait a moment," replied the former, "I'll tell you something about the past; you will then be able to form an opinion as to my capabilities for foretelling the future. In such a year you met with an accident." "What kind of an accident?" questioned my friend. "An accident to limb," was the reply. He was correct. In that very year the querent had lost a finger. Turning to the gentleman who accompanied my friend, he warned him against "going north." The advice was disregarded; the young man went north, and was ruined.

The Hon. Grantley Berkeley, from whom I have so largely quoted, casually mentions a non-professional astrologer named Varley, who attended his sister as a professor of drawing. He forewarned some gentleman that on a particular day he would meet with an accident. The gentleman, to avoid the fulfilment of the prophecy, remained in bed until evening; thinking all danger over he then came downstairs, but the Fates seemed too strong for him, for he accidentally fell over a coal-scuttle, severely spraining his ankle. The above facts are simply valuable on account of the trustworthiness of the witnesses to their truth.

An immense number of similar narratives must be collected before any theory can be founded upon them; and I cannot help expressing my satisfaction that so able a man (judging from his writings) as Mr. Massey has commenced the study of astrology with a sincere desire simply to test its truth or falsehood, and I earnestly hope that all who forward him data will abstain from anything so unfair as an endeavour to trick or test his capabilities—remembering that he only assumes the character of a student, not an expert, and that he is working for the good of all.

I now proceed to give your readers two strange cases of prevision. The first I met with in the life of the Rev. J. Russell, which came out in *Bailey's Sporting Magazine* for 1877 or 1878. The kindhearted and jovial subject of the memoir, who is still living, has been during his life a great friend and patron of that interesting race, the gipsies, whose gratitude towards him was unbounded. When the old gipsy king died, "Parson Jack," as he was affectionately and familiarly termed, was requested to perform the service at his burial; he consented to do so, on condition that the camp, after the ceremony, did not (as he considered) break the Sabbath by removing from the locality on the Sunday. They promised compliance, and the remains of their king were decently laid to rest beneath the green sod of the churchyard. The next morning, however, Mr. Russell found that his wandering friends had broken their word, so, riding up to the camp, which was again pitched at some distance, he mildly upbraided them with their breach of faith. The explanation given was, that they had been driven to this act of apparent faithlessness by the threats of some farmer of the neighbourhood. Whilst this conversation was being carried on, a handsome young gipsy woman, apparently in perfect health, came up and accosted the clergyman in these words, "Good morning, Mr. Russell. The next you bury will be myself!" The young propheticess was correct. On the following or second Sunday (I have not the magazine by me to refer to) he was again called upon to repeat the hopeful words of the Burial Service over the grave of the old king's daughter, the same fair young Ishmaelite whose strange words had arrested his attention at the entrance of the tent only a few days previously. No wonder the reverend gentleman from that time inclined to a belief in the occult power of the gipsy tribe.

The second narrative of prevision or foreboding is still more remarkable. I found it, as I have so many other interesting accounts of strange phenomena, in Grantley Berkeley's *Life and Recollections*. Having the volume by me, I copy it *verbatim*:—

"A labouring man on a farm not far from Ashdown-park, one day was ordered by his master to dig some potatoes in the garden, where there was a hive of bees. He went to work, but ere he had been long occupied, a bee flew angrily at him and stung him on the back of the neck. The man raised his hand to rub the part, but in an instant found

himself with scarcely strength enough to crawl to the farm and to his fellow servants, when he sank senseless into a chair. The nearest surgeon was sent for, and by the administration of brandy the patient recovered. The crop of the year was then lifted. Autumn and winter passed, spring and summer succeeded, and autumn came again; the haulm of the potato crop had died, and once more in that identical garden, and in the presence of the same hive, the same labourer received an order to raise a crop of the then present season. Under an unaccountable sensation of depression and dread, yet reluctant to tell his master that he would disobey him, the labourer went to his fellow servants and declared that into that garden to dig potatoes he could not and would not go, for, if he did, 'that bee would be sure to come out and kill him.' They laughed at his fears, and set before him what they termed his folly in risking by his disobedience a good place under a kind master on so childish a superstition. He hesitated, but at length yielded to their advice; but with an immense effort to overcome his dread, left the kitchen, and, taking up a prong, set to work to fulfil his master's orders. Scarce thrice had the prong pierced the covering ridge and disclosed the harvest that clustered beneath, than a bee, or 'that bee,' did come forth, and again in the same spot on the neck the man was stung. Once more he tottered to the kitchen and fell insensible into the same chair. The same medical advice was at once sent for, but this time the surgeon was not at home. The people at the farm lost their presence of mind, and did not administer brandy, or there was none at hand. The consequence was, the poor fellow's forebodings were realized. He then and there died from the sting of the insect."

Albion-villa, Fremantle-square, Bristol.

"THROUGH THE GRAVE AND GATE OF DEATH."

BY J. A. CAMPBELL.

What the wond'rous story? what the tale of glory?

Echoing through the earth;
Sweet flowers with gentle breath,
Mighty mountains thundering,
Tell me? waiting, wondering—
In harmony replying

A death and yet a birth:
He conquered death by dying,
Our King has conquered death!

Tearful mother, keeping watch o'er your baby sleeping.

Hushed all it's laughing mirth
Drawn it's last tiny breath;
With long and bitter aching,
Thy heart seems near to breaking.
There comes a soft replying—

Not death, but only birth:
He conquered death by dying,
Our King has conquered death!

Martyr in prison cell, he wished his country well,

In time of want and dearth,
"By patience, friends," he saith;
They would not hear him speaking,
Each bent on his self-seeking.

A nation is replying:
His death has been our birth:
He conquered death by dying,
Our King has conquered death!

Teacher so worn and weakly, treading the hard earth meekly,

What was thy teaching worth?
Ending in shameful death:
Teacher of gain through loss,
It finished in the cross!

But angels are replying:
Nay, was it not a birth?
He conquered death by dying,
Our King has conquered death!

A WELSH GHOST STORY.

A STRANGE ghost story (says the *Birmingham Gazette*) comes from the Principality. There is a friendly society at Pontardawe, in the Swansea Valley, among whose rules is one that the funeral allowance on account of a deceased member shall not be paid in cases of suicide. One of the members recently died by his own hand, and the club accordingly refused to pay the death money. For this reasonable and just refusal the members are now complaining that they are subjected to serious persecution from an unseen and, presumably, a ghostly agent. The manifestations began on a recent Sunday, when one of the officers, returning home over a lonely road, was assailed, as he asserts, by the spirit of the late member, who, failing to obtain a satisfactory reply to his demand for the money, in a somewhat unspiritlike manner assailed the unfortunate man, and actually "tore his clothes to ribbons." Such, at least, was the account he gave, in tones of horror, at the first public-house he came to after this terrific encounter. But the ghost does not appear to have been satisfied with this demonstration. On the following Tuesday evening, whilst the members were assembled in the lodge room, the usual knocks were heard at the door as of a brother seeking admittance. The door was opened, but no one was to be seen. The members, however, are all very certain that they heard the voice of the deceased utter the words: "Pay my widow my funeral money, and then I shall be at rest." The meeting precipitately broke up, and the members are now puzzled to know what to do with such a determined deceased brother.

There may possibly be more foundation for the above narrative than jocular newspaper remarks would imply. In some recent spiritual outbreaks at Cookstown, near Belfast, the clothes of a boy were often torn into ribbons by an unseen power before the eyes of the spectators. Mr. Capron's book on *Spiritualism: its Facts and Fanaticisms*, details somewhat similar incidents in the family of the Rev. Dr. Phelps, and men who have died a violent death are best able to produce strong physical manifestations afterwards.

SEANCES IN GLASGOW.

(To the Editor of "The Spiritualist.")

SIR,—Mrs. Mellon, physical and trance medium, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, has been on a visit to Glasgow for about a week, during which time she has given several "Materialisation or form séances." I attended two, and must say for myself I have no doubt of her medial powers, leaving to others to assent or dissent to this statement, just as it may please them. The first séance I attended was on Saturday evening, at the Spiritualists' Association Rooms, 164, Tron-gate. It commenced promptly at eight o'clock. The twenty sitters were arranged in a semi-circle in front of the cabinet, which was formed of a pair of large tapestry curtains suspended to a line, which ran across a corner of the room; thus two sides of the triangular cabinet were formed of solid masonry, and the third, of the tapestry curtains already mentioned. The cabinet was without platform, and its floor the floor of the séance room. The séance room is in the fifth story, and is inaccessible from the outside, except from the top of the building, or else up a very long ladder. To give you a faint idea of how long, the room is only "ten stair up," as everybody "kens" who had to do the climbing. Of course the cabinet was fully examined by the visitors, and the medium herself came in for very close scrutiny. It was understood that Mrs. Mellon was quite willing to sit under test conditions or not, just as the sitters might wish—a fair proposition. I signified my intention to thoroughly secure the medium in such a manner as to eradicate any dangerous symptoms of Bishoppophobia, should any appear in the visitors, or patient expectants. A gentleman proposed a vote of confidence in the medium, that no tests should be required, that the medium should go into the cabinet, and that the sitters should use their own judgment concerning the manifestations, should any occur. This was seconded and heartily agreed to. Mrs. Mellon passed into the cabinet, the lights were lowered and finally put out except one, and that was a prepared one, which gave a sort of scientific, dim, religious light

of violet hue over the now expectant and hushed visitors. Manifestations took place in the following order, the light being sufficiently good to let me see my watch:—

8.5. Medium in cabinet.

8.6. Raps were heard, alphabet asked for, singing demanded.

8.10. All present were engaged in singing "Shall we gather at the river."

8.13. Singing interrupted by a movement of the curtains; they open at the centre; a something white darts out and in two or three times, and then disappears; on its reappearing we observed it to be a head, evidently a human head, draped à la Turk, and with something like a beard on its chin; the head opened its mouth and spoke to us in "braw Scotch," and hoped that we "were a' vera weel," to which there was a general chorus of "yes;" the head seemed grateful, nodded and bobbed, then disappeared.

8.23. The medium was heard sobbing, or making that peculiar sound which seems to be the invariable prelude to a sensitive passing into the trance condition; presently a voice was heard, which the initiated at once recognised as "Cissey," a little negro girl who controls the medium. "Cissey" addressed several persons by name, individuals whom she had known before at former sittings, or else who were known to the medium. She (the control) announced that the conditions were not very harmonious, or she and "Geordie" would try and appear at the same time; should they fail or "use up the power" in the attempt, they would try again next morning, when she hoped the conditions would be better. In the meantime she would do all she could to "satisfy the folkses."

8.30. The medium's voice was heard describing the making up of the little psyche, who had just controlled. While the medium was speaking inside the cabinet a small figure draped in white appeared at the opening; it was about three feet high, and bowed several times in reply to some questions that were put to her by persons she seemed to recognise amongst the sitters. The mannikin then withdrew within the curtains.

8.45. Raps were heard asking for more singing; the "Old Hundredth" was forthwith immediately launched to the usual doleful and unhappy tune.

8.55. The head of the "departed Scotchman," whom I have now learned is "Geordie," reappeared, this time accompanied with more shoulder, confidence, and voice. He "cracked" rather freely in the "barbaric dialect of the dwellers on the banks of the Clyde," and signified his intention to stand out amongst us, which he did. The outline of his figure was like that of a woman. He seemed to discard those vulgar unmentionables generally worn by men; his limbs were undraped, but by nature adorned, showing his understanding to be substantial enough, although not exactly of that configuration we would expect in an Apollo Belvedere. He (Geordie) invited a young lady to come to him. The invitation was accepted; he examined a locket which was suspended to a chain that hung around her neck; he looked admiringly into her face, and then implanted a rather percussive kiss upon her cheek. "Geordie" then gallantly conducted the object of his attentions to her seat in the front row of sitters.

At the conclusion of the *séance*, I ventured to ask Miss — some questions as to the appearance of the face and form of "Geordie" when seen, as in her case, in such close proximity. In reply, Miss — observed, "The face was that of an old man, deeply wrinkled or furrowed; the skin was of that peculiar yellow which frequently accompanies biliousness; large, heavy, dark eyebrows, and beard of the same colour." I asked her if the kiss were that of a man or a woman, to which she naively replied, "Not having had any experience, I cannot say." I ceased to "interview" her. "Geordie," after cutting some capers, retired. We continued "to sit and sing ourselves away"—not to "everlasting bliss"—but for ten minutes longer, when we heard raps to the effect the "power was exhausted," and the *séance*, which had been an hour and a half in duration, was brought to a conclusion.

On Sunday morning, at 11.15, the *séance* room was filled with the old *habitués* of the Sunday morning circle: there were only three strangers present. The "conditions" were

evidently better, as manifested in the good spirits and faith of those present, and both seemed equal to all the demands that should be made upon them by spirits seen or unseen. By tacit consent all the visitors were willing to abide by such "conditions" as should be laid down by the "controls" of the medium, and, in the words of the conductor of the *séance*, "take what came." The circle being arranged, the medium entered the cabinet at 11.30. The lights were a little higher than on the previous night, and the *séance*-lamp, with its "weird and holy light," was at my back. It shone over my head directly upon the curtain forming the front of the cabinet, more especially upon the opening. The controls are to endeavour to produce two forms, therefore we are all attention.

11.31. The medium has scarcely been seated inside the cabinet when a form appears at the opening, solemnly bows, and disappears; we are informed it is the daughter of a gentleman present, not recognised.

11.40. The head bobs out and in, as if testing its ability to stand the extra light. It seems satisfied. Then we see the head and bust of an appearance "like unto that of a man," but, mystery of mysteries, without any legs or visible support. He (the head—"Geordie") becomes at once at home with his auditory, speaking in a clear and happy manner to all. To the question, "Where are your legs?" he answers that he's "no made them up." He talks about his experiences in and out of the mortal coil, "at home and abroad," and chatted about his experiences in spirit-life. To my mind his observations were more like speculations than a description of reality. Materialistion phenomena are so stupendous, that we can afford to wait for more thorough information concerning those eternal realities, or that life beyond the horizon of our physical vision than these objective beings seem able to convey to us. As it is, we see indications of a law, not yet fully understood, by which the mentality of the "forms" is bounded by the intellectual and ability of the sensitive in whose presence they are able to manifest. In saying this, I have no wish to disparage the remarks "Geordie" made during his remarkable stay in our midst, but rather to point out "a truth or fact connected with this form of manifestation."

12.5. "Geordie" retired into the cabinet, and at 12.8 came out boldly into the centre of the circle, but this time not "half made up," but in full form. He is, I judge, a head taller than the medium. He is happy—quite at home; he comes within two feet of me, and attempts to play the piano; his essay at "calming the savage breast" is a failure, noise, not music, being the result. He rejoices, however, in the attempt. He is now standing in front of the piano, and looking steadily in my face; his features are mobile and natural; he looks a very solid ghost; his face wears a playful smile; his skin seems a little pinched and wrinkled for an old man some seventy years in the "Land of Nod." He has an excellent set of teeth, evidently not supplied recently by a dentist; his heavy eyebrows somewhat shade the clear piercing eyes underneath; he has a large dark beard. "Geordie" cuts some merry antics, and explained that he had been an athlete and clown in earth-life. He is reminded it is Sunday morning; he jokingly replies that he will endeavour to be "nair circumspect" out of deference to "the hypocrisy of the age." He then advises a lady to "get to a nunnery;" and as the lady is the least likely of any present to take such a step, the joke is thoroughly appreciated. I might state that before "Geordie" perpetrated this joke he had been giving us a reading from the ghost scene in *Hamlet*. Geordie retired: shortly afterwards another figure appeared, dressed as a bride adorned for her wedding; her face looked as if chiselled out of purest marble; she did not speak, but moved her arms and put back the curtains, as if to give us a full view of her form. Her name was "Jessie," the unrecognised person who came out at the beginning of the *séance*. While this figure was standing in the front of the cabinet the curtains were much shaken behind her, and "Cissey," the little negro control of the medium, suddenly appeared at that portion of the cabinet farthest from where I sat, and was fully recognised by those sitters nearest her. With the exception of two or three persons close to me, the two living figures or beings were seen by those present at the same time. I only saw something

white where the second figure was said to be. "Jessie" retired, and a voice claiming to be "Cissey's" announced "dat she was tumming;" immediately a little figure, about three feet high, appeared at the opening. The negro features were quite marked and distinct; she stepped out to a chair placed about two feet from the opening of the cabinet, dragged it back to the cabinet, answered a few questions by raps, and retired. Raps came to "light up," and the *séance* was then brought to a close. The conclusion I have arrived at is—in the words of an Irish friend of mine, no doubt a descendant of Socrates—"What I know is very little, but what I don't know is immense." J. COATES.

Edinburgh.

OPENING SERVICES AT STEINWAY HALL.

THIS elegant hall was opened to the public for a lecture on "Spiritualism" on Sunday, April 6th, and a large audience assembled to listen to Mr. J. William Fletcher's opening address. These addresses will be continued at Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, every Sunday evening until further notice. Last Sunday, after the usual services, Mr. Fletcher gave an address, of which the following is a brief sketch. He entitled it "The Origin and Destiny of Spiritualism."

As we witness the manifestation of power and force which are so varied and wonderful in the world about us, and as we see the varied forms of life, each embodying within itself some distinctive purpose, we are almost forced to question, "Whence comes this power?" Has it always existed? Although the action of spirit is plainly demonstrated, yet mankind, in general, are so ignorant of the law that they stand before each recurring manifestations, vainly striving to solve the vexed question, and, through their want of knowledge, allow the vast resources of spirit to remain unemployed and unused, thereby losing a strong lever to effect grand results. Whence the power of spirit? We find that spirit began when God began, and dates its birth from the beginning of time; that which is called the Spiritualism of the present day is only the action of the same spirit which we trace through all ages of the past, varying in degree and power as the development and unfoldment of the human race differs in the various stages of the world's history. In early times the power manifested itself, and the people of that time saw the action of spirit in their very midst: saw cities swept away, and nations overcome, and never realised there was any purpose in it, or that they were witnessing the demonstration of a truth which should some day revolutionise the world. But they looked upon the facts in wonder, and never sought the underlying lesson that these phenomena contained; for there is not a single event that makes up human life but has some intent, some purpose beneath it. Solomon never uttered a grander truth than when he said, "There is no new thing under the sun." There is more in the flower than the colour; there is more in the bird than its plumage; there is more in the child than its form: there is the indwelling spirit endeavouring to manifest itself, and that which you perceive is but the outward expression of the power within; and it is this action of spirit which in early times was called a miracle, because it seemed so far away from any known law the people failed to comprehend it. It was simply uncultivated soil, an unexplored country; it might be called Force, without an intelligence to direct its proper use.

The first great spiritual manifestation we find is evidenced in the life of Jesus; through all the ages before His birth the possibilities of the spirit existed the same, but never until His eyes opened upon the world was a purpose so clearly manifested. And when you look back and think of those wise men whose hearts had been moved by the prophecy given them, who believed and trusted in the coming of the Messiah, who journeyed on, with only one thought and one faith, what a lesson of humility and trust it should teach us! What unseen spirits must have guided their thoughts and quickened their hearts with courage and faith! What loving hands must have guided their footsteps lest they should stumble and fall, while they, with Godlike faith, waited through the long weary hours of the night for the rising of the star, and when at last the world was filled with its holy light, with what delight they rushed forward to carry the glad tidings of a Saviour's birth, and to bear their offering of peace and love and lay it at the feet of the Holy One! They found the Messiah, the long looked-for Messenger from on high, but a sleeping child in his mother's arms, a fresh, sweet bud on the tree of life.

Think you that the little infant, even in those early days, caught no shadow of the coming time? that the vision of Calvary, the weary night in Gethsemane, and the horrors which followed, made no impression upon the infant Jesus? Yes, even in fancy, the shadows of the coming future were already falling around His young life, and as years roll on He becomes wholly mastered by the demand of the time, and through His life the light of Divine truth was thrown. From the hour of His birth to the hour of His death, He was the embodiment of the great power of the spirit-world, which dates itself back to the beginning of all things, co-existent with God Himself. We find the early manifestations of spirit-power teaching no lesson, suggesting no truth, and, therefore, ending where they began; on the other hand, in the life of Jesus there was a complete embodiment of spiritual intelligence; it was the power of God revealing itself to the world, and unto mankind. Still further on we find the power of the spirit embodied in the lives of two little children, and never since He of old confounded the wise men in the temple, has there been such a visitation from the spirit-world as came of late to those little girls far away at Hydesville. It was no

stately palace, no grand cathedral, but a simple cottage home, containing a quiet family, unto which the Spirit of the Lord had come. It was no palace, no cathedral, but only a manger in which a Saviour was cradled.

When the question was first asked, "Where are those whom I love better than my life?" echo only answered, "Where?" But the voice of the spirit, through inspired lips, tells you, "They are not lost, but gone before, and that they wait your coming over yonder."

Spiritualism dates from the beginning of time, and has manifested itself among all classes of people and all races of men. It is not ancient or modern Spiritualism we are gathered together to celebrate, but an influx of power from God which adapts itself to our every demand. It is the hand that has ever been beckoning mankind up the heights of time; it is the voice crying out in the night, "Come up hither." Is there any good that Spiritualism can do? Is there a lesson it can teach? A great many people will tell you they believe in Spiritualism; but you ask them what they mean by Spiritualism, and they will tell you that they have seen a table dance, heard a rap, seen a spiritual form flash before their vision for a moment, or received a communication from their friends. They *believed* in Spiritualism. A person might be and do all this, and yet be miles away from Spiritualism. It is not enough that you witness and realise certain effects which may occur. They of themselves are as nothing, unless they lead to a higher result—unless you are inspired to live a truer and holier life. If Spiritualism only presents phenomena, which tickles the fancy for a time, it has failed to accomplish its mission in the world. Unless Spiritualism stirs your heart as it was never stirred before; unless it brings to you grander impulses and higher aspirations, a broader charity and a diviner thought, you have not understood its true import. Neither man nor woman can, in the light of Spiritualism, harbour an unkind thought towards any person living; and it is not for you to say, "That is all very well, but it is not my Spiritualism." When you have true Spiritualism in your hearts, the discords and contentions which now disgrace our cause will have been blotted out for ever; you will love each for the possibilities which God has given. The great object of Spiritualism is to harmonise the whole world. Jesus said, "I come not to bring peace but a sword;" and truth is ever a sword in the side of error, which, sooner or later, will let out the evil nature which retards our progress. So, for a time, Spiritualism may bring seeming discord through divergence of opinion; but as its only aim is toward the truth, the ultimate condition must be peace and harmony. Spiritualism is the hand that tears down the curtain, and leaves each to stand upon his own manhood, calling upon you all to act upon the dictates of your own hearts, and not to be governed by what society may say or sages teach. The destiny of Spiritualism is to teach men and women to be themselves, so thoroughly that they always have a reason for what they do, and are prepared to meet the consequences. If men and women are governed by honest motives they have nothing to fear. We find science and religion crossing swords; science telling you that religion is foolishness—religion exhorting you to beware of the snares and wiles of science. And yet each is endeavouring to make the world better, and it is the destiny of Spiritualism to unite and harmonise one with the other. Science is only one avenue toward Truth's mighty temple: each truth gained, no matter in what way, is added to the grand total for general acceptance; it is a very mistaken idea that we can get too much truth and knowledge. The only freedom we can truly enjoy comes through the truth. "The truth shall make you free." Yet there are many who find error so easy that they say, "I believed just as my father believed before me; it was good enough for him, it is good enough for me." But are you prepared to say that you will do as your father did in everything else? Has the present generation done nothing for you? It has brought us many inventions and improvements, and, as the mind is now more fully developed, a clearer understanding of the powers around us. There is a grander development of truth than your fathers could understand, and you are called upon to live a better life than even your fathers did. When we are next told that science is the enemy of religion, we reply that science and religion are twin sisters, children of a common parent, and that he who ranges one against the other has quite mistaken the import and value of each.

There is one evil blacker than all else, which broods over the people; a sin so fearful that it takes the heart-blood of the strongest and best, and casts its long dark shadow over many happy homes, while ruin and desolation follow in its train. Everywhere it is welcomed, everywhere it is courted, and everywhere it is the viper that brings discord to every threshold it crosses—and that sin is slander. He who slanders is worse than he who murders, for he takes the dearest prize of all—reputation and good name. The time will come (God hasten the day) when the true Spiritualist would no sooner think of uttering a word of slander than of taking his own life. Join your hands together, and register a vow never to speak of another save in kindness and charity.

What is the destiny of Spiritualism? It is to bring each human soul to the light of God's love, to help each heart to say, "Our Father," and realise that He is the Father of the highest and lowest alike. To gather all the nations of the earth together, one government on earth, as in heaven. Then we feel that we shall all have a part in whatever of joy or sorrow there may be in the world. From out the host the cry comes, "What shall I do to be saved?" "Be thyself, live out the conditions of the life," is the answer wafted down from the spheres. "Peace and goodwill towards men," sang the angels. "Peace can never come till Justice is done," saith the oracle. "Do unto others as you would be done by," saith the ancient teacher. "Do right, whether it is as you would be done by or not," saith the voice of the spirit. "Conquer self, and thou shalt rise above all things." The blessed spirits tell you that you hold the future in your own hands; that the Spiritualism shall be just what *you make it*. There is One in the world, a bright-faced child, who shall bring glad tidings from the

world of the Unknown. Lo! the Comforter has come, and is in your midst, and you know it not. Ere long His voice will be heard, and His power felt. Live truly, so that when the day and hour come for His presence to be made known, you may be deemed worthy to work with Him.

After the lecture several tests of spirit-identity were given to entire strangers, and were recognised to be correct in every particular.

THE LATE M. PIERART.

BY F. CLAVAIROZ, CONSUL-GENERAL OF FRANCE AT TRIESTE.

THE valiant champion whose last work, *The Primitive World*, I noticed a short time ago, has been struck down by death. It was, alas, so to speak, the last flame bursting forth from the soul of this apostle. He corrected the proofs upon his bed of suffering, where my hand pressed his. M. Pierart succumbed to the malady with which he had been afflicted for several months, but of which he had hoped to be cured. The cause of Spiritualism has suffered a great loss; but God raises up messengers as it pleases Him, and takes them away when He considers their mission accomplished. Progress is not arrested because a combatant falls in the strife. Others, as yet unknown, perhaps, will seize the weapon fallen from his hand, and the work will go on under the controlling eye of Providence, whose ways are inscrutable to man. Without being in any way discouraged in our aspirations, our regrets follow beyond the grave those whom we have known and loved, and whose courage has sustained us in our efforts in the struggle. He whom we have just lost is stamped with the seal of brave soldiers of the truth. Born in a humble condition, he valiantly made himself what he afterwards became. His parents were honest cultivators of Doulers, and M. Pierart received his first education at the College of Avanes; he afterwards entered the grammar school of Douai, which he quitted with the diploma of teacher; he at first occupied himself as instructor at La Bassie, and subsequently became professor at the College of Maubenge. While there he was chosen by Baron du Potet to be his secretary, and they worked together several years. In 1858 he founded *La Revue Spiritualiste*, at which time it required courage to propagate the new facts which had opened up an unknown field for speculation concerning the soul. His magazine reported the psychological phenomena which began, in the first instance, in America, and it was continued by M. Pierart until he substituted for it the *Concile de la Libre Pensée*, which was stopped in 1873, in consequence of clerical influence. Afterwards he resumed his spiritual labours by publishing the *Benedictin de St. Maur*, which he continued until the last. It is not only in the investigation and treatment of spiritual phenomena that M. Pierart has shown the power of his ardent soul, which was so captivated by all that is great and generous, for he published a great number of historical works. No labour was too great for him when what seemed doubtful required investigation, and no consideration ever caused him to hesitate to divulge what he considered to be true. An indefatigable worker and careful investigator, history and archæology attracted him as much as mesmerism and the occult sciences. He penetrated the arcana of Druidism, and studied the origin of the most ancient religions. His style—always precise, clear, and enlightened by a kind of clairvoyance—gave to his words a real authority. No one had more knowledge than he of the deep mysteries of the past, and death came upon him just as he was preparing to publish the result of his investigations. M. Pierart has for twenty years fought for the cause of Spiritualism, loved by all who knew him, and appreciated by all who read him. His death will leave a great gap, and the work he has left undone will be difficult for another to accomplish. His faith supported him in his earthly struggle against poverty, and the deceptions, and even the secret persecutions by which he was beset. He was preparing to crown his efforts by founding a society where disciples of the spiritual philosophy might work together for the propagation of truth. It was a holy idea of his; let us hope that another apostle will carry it out. As for Spiritualists, who know that death is only a transformation, we believe that Pierart's soul will be with us and continue to interest itself in a cause which so occupied him during his earthly sojourn, and that if it be possible

for him to do so, he will impress his thoughts on minds that believe in the communion which unites spirits and mortals in a religion of love.

AN "ABSOLUTE TEST" MATERIALISATION SEANCE.

BY CHARLES BLACKBURN.

IN most of my letters to you I have advocated the adoption of two classes of *séances*, viz., the dark ones, in which tables, chairs, guitars, musical boxes, handbells, and other articles are knocked about; also spirit hands produced. This class is most convincing to the inexperienced, and to those scientists who declare such things to be impossible except by trickery. A few *séances* of this kind have the tendency to awaken the mind to belief in the reality of some new power or force, because any of the sitters can hold both hands of the medium, and make sure she or he does nothing whatever. Thus he becomes prepared for a much higher phase, viz., that of seeing a "materialisation" *séance*, in which a little light is admitted, sufficient to enable the sitters to see each other in the room, distinctly; and it is necessary to observe certain conditions, or we cannot get a materialisation at all. In America and other places many impostors have been before the public, imitating and personating materialised spirits, and it has cost me long investigation and care to arrange that my medium, Miss Cook, should be kept away from doubtful mediums and other influences which might be detrimental to her development, so that good spirits alone would attend her; and I think now that is established.

My last *séance* for materialisation was with Miss Cook, on 31st March, at No. 4, Bloomsbury-place, London, in the presence of six witnesses whose names are below, and who can be seen and interrogated by the Press, or scientific men or sceptics, any day. I arranged for the medium to give me a test *séance* in a house she had never sat in before; nor did the undersigned, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, previously know I intended calling to bid them good-bye. We found that some friends had just called on them, but they kindly assisted at forming a cabinet in a corner of the drawing-room with two crimson curtains on a string, and we lowered the gas so that we could all see each other well; then placed a low chair inside the curtains, and the medium took off her hat and jacket. She had on a tight-fitting black silk dress, and she placed herself in the low chair, whilst we six sat in a half-circle around the drawn curtains. Mr. Fletcher sat at the left-hand corner of the cabinet curtains, whilst I sat at the right. In three minutes Lillie, the spirit, all in white raiment, visible to all, appeared, opening the two curtains. I said, "How quickly you have come." She replied, "Yes, I've been waiting, and shall only give you a short test *séance*." I replied, "Well, then, come to my corner." She came, and then took my two hands with her two warm hands, and said, "What test would you like?" (Observe, her face was no mask, but flexible, living features, and as solid as any human being's.) I replied, "I should like you to allow Mrs. Fletcher to go inside whilst I hold you here, and let her feel if the medium be seated in her chair." She replied, "Yes, she can go." Now, Mrs. Fletcher instantly went inside and said aloud, "The medium is in her chair, and I have my hand now on her head." Mrs. Fletcher came to her seat, and Lillie quickly said to me, "You have had hold of me all the time. Are you satisfied?" I said, "Most certainly; but allow me to vary it a little by my taking Mrs. Fletcher's place and she taking mine." She said, "You can do so." We changed places, and I saw Mrs. Fletcher holding both the hands of the spirit and talking to it, whilst I put my left arm behind the curtain and felt the medium's warm head. Then I got inside, and with my right hand I felt her face and neck, and saw the spirit in white still held by and talking with Mrs. Fletcher. My right hand at that moment was seized violently and flung aside by the medium, who said, "Don't touch me." I retired to my seat, and Lillie said, "Now I must go, and I hope you are thoroughly satisfied?" I replied, "Yes, it is a genuine materialisation."

We slowly added more light, and the gentlemen entered the cabinet, but found no spirit or white soft (jaconette)

drapery, only the medium in a drowsy state, in a black dress, expressing the hope we had had a good *séance*.

Witnesses { MAJOR-GENERAL MACLEAN, E.I.U.S., 14, St. James's-square, London.
GENERAL RIDEOUT, New York, U.S.A.
COLONEL MORTON, Boston, U.S.A.
MR. AND MRS. FLETCHER, 4, Bloomsbury-place, London.
CHARLES BLACKBURN, Parkfield, Didsbury.

THE GRASP OF AN UNSEEN HAND.

BY E. FORTESCUE INGRAM, M.R.C.S.E.

KNOWING well the interest which attaches to phenomena occurring through the mediumship of the celebrated Katie Fox, I think it but right that I should acquaint you with the following remarkable phenomenon which took place the other evening.

In order that you may properly understand, I must take you back to a short time before Christmas, when one Sunday evening, in my own room, Mrs. Jencken (Katie Fox) kindly gave me a *séance*, and among other phenomena which then took place, a piece of white card about the size of an ordinary playing-card, previously marked at the request of the invisibles themselves, disappeared suddenly from the table on which it was placed, nor could any trace of it be discovered after the sitting was over. From that day till quite recently circumstances have arisen which have prevented our having another *séance*, and the existence of the card was almost forgotten.

On Wednesday evening, April 9, 1879, I called in the evening to see Mr. and Mrs. Jencken, and was quietly smoking a cigar and talking on a variety of subjects, when the raps commenced loudly and forcibly. Through the usual method of the alphabet we were requested to lower the gas and sit at the table. Having done this, they requested us to place pen, ink, paper, and blotting-paper under the table, which we accordingly did.

I will now describe the conditions under which we sat. The room is a large one, with folding-doors dividing it. In the one half were we, sitting at the table, with the gas turned down, but with the fire burning cheerfully. The folding-doors were open, and in the other half stood a moderator lamp turned full on.

The table was an ordinary oval one. On my left sat Mrs. Jencken, on my right Mr. Jencken, he and I still continuing our conversation and cigars. At the request of the spirits we all placed our elbows on the table, so that each could see the other's hands, which were not joined. After sitting for a few minutes, we heard the scratching of the pen and a noise as if some one were writing rapidly. I was now told to place my hand under the table, which I did without any handkerchief over it, and a hand as warm and natural as any I ever clasped gave me not what I expected—namely, a message written on the sheet of paper we had placed there—but the identical piece of card, recognised by private marks corresponding with marks left on the sheet from which it was cut, that had been taken away some four months ago, and now returned closely written over on both sides. During the whole time we sat, twenty minutes perhaps, all elbows were on the table, and all hands clearly visible by the light of the fire in this room and of the lamp in the other. As the message was of a private character, and as I fail to see any good that would be done by publishing it, I forbear.

Chelsea Infirmary, April 15, 1879.

"WORDS MADE FLESH."

BY J. A. CAMPBELL.

THE Word, the Blessed Divine Reason, warmful and lightful; embodied for us poor dwellers in a *form world*, in flesh, in stars, in living green of oak and daisy; or in the reflected images of such things carved in marble instead of incarnated, and painted on canvas instead of on ether, all of it is "Holy Scripture written for our learning" by the Mighty Artist, and by the little ones His sons, while we still see "through a glass darkly."

Will those who consider as sacred the spoken, or painted, or written word of man send us their own *spirits* (materialised in things they have done themselves, or things which others have done, and which they reverence) for the help of our Cambridge Society, pro-

vided they are really interested in us or in our work—*how* bodied forth I do not care, so that we may joy in the expression of some *reality*? From pictures painted for the sake of "high art," or books or letters written for the sake of talking, we hope to be delivered; but by the kind thought and true work of those who do not "possess their life in vanity" we desire to be vitalised and surrounded. Our rooms are at No. 6, Market-street, Cambridge.

SPIRITUALISM IN EDINBURGH.

A SMALL assemblage of persons interested in Spiritualism gathered last night in the Upper Odd Fellows' Hall, Forrest-road, to hear Mr. J. J. Morse, London, who designates himself as an "inspirational trance medium." The meeting was conducted by Mr. James Coates, a Glasgow Professor of Mesmerism, who explained at the outset, as did also the medium himself at the close of the address, that Mr. Morse professed to speak under the influence of a spirit who had guided him for about ten years. The audience were requested to hand up to the chairman, in writing, subjects on which it was proposed that the medium should speak, and about thirteen such subjects were proposed. The Chairman, assuming that the audience would wish to hear Mr. Morse on subjects bearing upon Spiritualism rather than any others, began by putting on one side topics not having such bearing. Ultimately the voice of the audience was expressed in favour of a subject suggested by Dr. Bowie—namely, "The Soul, in its Origin, Progress, and Future Destiny." The medium, who spoke throughout with his eyes closed, addressed himself without hesitation to the theme thus presented to him, and delivered to an appreciative audience, with much fluency and elocutionary power and effect, an argument setting forth the Spiritualistic view of the origin, progress, and destiny of the soul. Referring, in the first place, to what he described as the present contest to the death between the churches and the scientists on this question of the human soul, he claimed that the modern Spiritualist was the only person who had the courage or the effrontery, whichever it might be, to say, "I know that there is a soul, for I have held communion with it." Modern Spiritualism was the only principle which could hold out a hand to reconcile the opposing parties. The churches sought to explain the origin of the soul by a miracle without evidence, and the scientist declined to accept that for which no evidence was adduced. The Spiritualist supplied that which was wanting, and grounded his belief in the soul and its immortality on evidence as well as argument. He affirmed that along with, and side by side with, the physical development, there had been a spiritual development; and that, just as in the beginning the elements of all existing forms of life were present, so it followed that the essences that to-day influenced them were then also present. The essence of all life was the Spirit of God working through and by all forms of being—through an envelope of matter, if they would. The order of evolution was from motion to form, from form to sensation, from sensation to intelligence, and from intelligence to spirituality. Then, as to the progress of the soul, it presented, in this world, every possibility of advancement, and must finally, by its innate nobility, subjugate every adverse circumstance. Its destiny, further, in the future, was a destiny of eternal progression for all. Dr. Bowie, in thanking the medium for his address, said it was such as went far to impress him that a great deal of what he had heard said against Spiritualism was thoroughly untrue. There was not a professor in the University, in either divinity or arts, that would allow such an assembly as that to select a subject such as that, and venture his reputation in delivering an address upon it on the spur of the moment. (Hear, hear.) He wished to explain that the lecturer was a total stranger to him.—*The Scotsman*, April 10th.

Correspondence.

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

ERRATA.

Sir,—It distresses me greatly to be obliged to ask for corrections, rendered necessary probably by my unreadable handwriting. Will any one who thinks it worth while alter with their pen these things in my little poem, printed in last Friday week's *Spiritualist*? In the first verse the marks of quotation ought to be at either end of the *third* line, whereas they stretch in the printed copy to the middle of the fourth; there is no *s* at the end of the word *give* in the second verse, and the last is sheer nonsense, because my *F*'s and *T*'s are so much alike; a good lesson for me. I wrote it thus:—

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

Truly the day of judgment comes speedily for scribes when their work passes through the press. A hopeful young poet had written this line descriptive of the fate of a "heretic" whom he honoured,

"See the pale martyr with his sheet of fire,"

and the line was printed thus—

"See the pale martyr with his *shirt* on fire."

There are troubles worse than mine, and I am beginning to write slowly enough and roundly enough to enable me to defy legions of printers' devils.

J. A. CAMPBELL.

MR. W. H. TERRY, of Melbourne, writes that Dr. Slade is about to leave Australia for New York, *via* San Francisco.

A MEMBER of the Theosophical Society asks us to state that on the arrival of Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky in Bombay they received a public reception from their friends there.

SPIRITUALISTIC EXPERIENCES IN THE HOME CIRCLE.*

BY MORELL THEOBALD.

EXACTLY twelve months ago, by the courtesy of the Editor of the *Christian World*, I was writing a series of letters which were intended to establish the facts of Spiritualism, and in which I intended to trace the growth or development of the phenomena from their alphabet, as found in the first tiny rap or movement of a small table, to the full, free, and easy—I might almost add natural—communication between us and the inhabitants of the spirit world by means of direct writing and *vis à vocè* conversation sustained by the hour together. My object was to do so from experiences confined to the home circle, which, to my mind, are more trustworthy than those derived from public mediumship. But, alas! *in medias res*, my plans were snapped asunder, my purposes were broken off by the stern intimation from the Editor, "Here all communications must cease." Why? Were they flagging? Did no interest attach to the subject?

Flagging! The trouble was he had so many communications that he did not know which to choose for insertion, and he invented, to my infinite disgust, a sort of summary or analysis of letters sent to him on the subject. The summary read very much like an auctioneer's list of lot 1, lot 2 and 3, and so on. The *soul* was gone, for you felt that the facts were being handled by ignorant hands. (I use the word ignorant in no bad sense.)

But other reasons were at work: the very interest excited the animosity of those who should be the first to welcome spiritual truths from whatever channel they come. Priest and prelate

With raving shrieked against the creed.

Scientists scoffed at the undignified exposition, although a few days before a learned F.R.S. had, like a bantam, shouted "Cock-a-doodle-doo" through the newly-discovered telephone in order to test its reality. I know which was the most undignified exposition, if the notion of dignity is for a moment to be admitted into the research.

In a meeting of Spiritualists I need not be so careful to establish the first rudimentary manifestations of Spiritualism; but, I think, what is of the greatest necessity from every point of view is to give accurate, unexaggerated facts. I propose, therefore, to-night to take up my correspondence with the *Christian World* where I left it, and to continue my narrative of Spiritualism in the home circle.

It is now ten years ago, when at our daily meals as many unseen visitors manifested their presence and interest in our family life as there were spirits in the bondage of the flesh. Our "little group" of children in the spirit world, by the despised raps (each one known by his individual rap), joined in conversation at nearly every meal, or moved the table about, especially when the cup

That cheers, but not inebriates,
Waits on each,

and when we "welcomed peaceful evening in." And with them came their elder guides and guardians, seen by some, heard by all.

At this time I made the acquaintance of my good and much-esteemed friends Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, and seeing there was so much in common between us, it is natural to expect in our joint investigations unusually good (startling, shall I say?) manifestations of spirit power; together with that most difficult result, spiritual personal identity.

It is rather remarkable that our children, who had become so accustomed to free and happy communications with their spirit friends by means of raps, physical movements, and even sight, should, as soon as the voice was added, have manifested feelings of fear, and, I may add, a timidity which to this day precludes the resumption with them of many forms of mediumship. Is not the hint thus clearly conveyed that the despised alphabet of Spiritualism is necessary? "I have many things to say unto you," many truths to convey, "but ye cannot bear them yet."

One Saturday evening, after having had during tea spirit raps continually upon the table and around the room replying intelligently to questions, and endorsing various parts of our family conversation, we sat down around a heavy dining-table. Our party comprised Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, my sister, F. J. T., myself, my wife, and four children. Our unseen but ever active spirit friends directed us to read the twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians (on Spiritual Gifts), and then to offer a short prayer. We invariably at set *séances* commenced with a short prayer. Lights were then put out by direction, and the cool spirit breeze very soon was felt by all in the circle, as also very strong and delicious perfumes, as of violets. Our little boy soon said, "I see a beautiful spirit with a bowl containing four different-coloured waters! Now she's throwing some over us," and immediately we discovered a different scent, an aromatic one, followed by others. We sang some little part songs with the children; then spirit lights appeared, seen by all. Small pure lights sprang from the table, rocket-like, leaving a thin trail of light in their course upwards.

Stars floated about the room, which suggested to the children to sing "Twinkle, twinkle, little star;" upon commencing which a large bluish one floated about and twinkled to the song. At the end we asked for a greeting for each of the little ones, when a shooting star darted from the centre to each little face in turn. A very faint whisper of a spirit voice was all we could obtain at this sitting, so the children, with some little disappointment, but yet with glad hearts, went to bed. On opening the folding-doors into the adjoining room we found perfumes strong even there.

After supper we sat again—the five adults only. After the production of lights and perfumes again in profusion, we heard the card-board tube, which we had placed in the centre of the table, tapping against the ceiling. A cooler breeze came, followed by vibration of the table and atmosphere, and suddenly the spirit, addressing F. J. T., said in a clear

voice, different to any human one, and giving me the impression of a voice without chest force,

"Good evening!" F. J. T. started, at which the spirit said (more softly), "I thought you were so brave?"

F. J. T.—"So I am, but you came so suddenly."

Spirit—"I'll be more careful another time. You have friends here to-night. Introduce me."

Upon this being done, we all in turn had a most interesting conversation for over an hour. During this time one of the servants came into the adjoining room to make up the fire, and heard much of what transpired. I mention this to dispel the idea of delusion on our part.

I asked if the children might sit on another occasion.

Spirit—"Better not; it frightens children."

M. T.—"But ours are accustomed to *séances*. Will you come and talk to them to-morrow evening for a short time?"

Spirit—"I'll try. It's getting late. I must go. The tube is rather clumsy."

We promised a lighter one; and I asked him to touch me with the tube before he left. The spirit then said—"Good night, friends," and the tube was thrown from above and hit my shoulder as requested.

The following Sunday evening all who were present on the previous evening sat, with the addition of my wife's sister and her two servants. I had previously provided paper on which to take notes as well as I could in the dark, and from their help the following is written. The passages of Scripture to which we were directed by the much-despised table raps were remarkable; viz., Ezek. ch. viii., 1st to middle of the 3rd verse; ch. xi., half of 1st verse; and ch. x., 1st to 4th verse. Our first sitting was rather unsuccessful.

Ezekiel viii. 1-3:—

1. And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord fell upon me.

2. Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins, even downward, fire; and from his loins, even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber.

3. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the Spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God . . .

Ch. xi. part ver. 1:—

Moreover, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me unto the east gate of the Lord's house . . .

Ch. x. ver. 1-4:—

1. Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

2. And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the chernub, and fill thine hands with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight.

3. Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

4. Then the glory of the Lord went up from the chernub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.

But after perfumes in profusion, and fainter lights than on the previous evening, the spirit came. His voice was much weaker, and he commenced speaking with more caution. As soon as he had established a freedom with the children, and said one or two funny things to make them laugh, he suddenly, in a loud voice, turned to little Nelly, who was laughing, and said, "Little Nelly." She is naturally very shy and timid, and it was too much for her to be so addressed by a strange voice. She began to cry.

The spirit-voice, turning to F. J. T., said, "There! I'm sorry; but I told you so. I must go." And we broke up the *séance*, the little girl's timidity being, however, a powerful proof of the reality of the voice, and of its being distinct from Mrs. Everitt's, with whom she was now on the best terms.

The next sitting, after supper, was the most interesting. It was protracted, and I can but briefly indicate the kind of conversation which transpired. Our nurse was the only addition to the five first named.

The spirit appeared again after the perfumes and cool breeze, with a full voice before Mrs. Everitt was entranced, so that at first we heard her voice, distinct from his, which to me was very satisfactory, and disproves the theory of ventriloquism, were that theory admissible, when only intimate friends, whom you could trust, were present.

He first said how sorry he was to have frightened little Nelly. He was going to give her little spirit-brother's and sister's love, and tell her about them. He told us much of their happy home together, in a beautiful house situate in a garden: told us of some spirits with them known only to us, and not to the medium: spoke of my mother as a very beautiful spirit; and, at our request, went away for a minute to see what they were doing, during which time another spirit spoke. His voice and accent were entirely different, and suffused with playful humour.

The first spirit on returning spoke of my father and mother, and their surroundings; after which I asked about the raising of Lazarus, and had an interesting conversation upon that subject.

He then spoke of the ministering spirits who were watching over us and assisting us in a hundred ways, and referred to our assisting those in a lower sphere to rise by reason of unconscious influence which ever emanated from us.

The spirit then offered up a short prayer, invoking a blessing, and praying for our influence to be kept pure. Much of this has already appeared in *The Spiritualist*, so that I have curtailed it here.

I was silent at the close of this *séance*, and thinking with some degree of perplexity of what had occurred, and how real and near the spirit-world is, when we heard a rapid but slight tapping on paper,

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

similar to the click of an electric needle. It was some direct spirit-writing being produced, and in five seconds the paper was dropped upon the centre of the table, with a message which I now have, and which it would be an impossibility to copy under as many minutes.

It read thus, and was a reply to my mental inquiries:—

You seem to be puzzled at our close proximity, but as regards your spirits you are living in our world. You only require your material body to move with in this your material world. Remove your atmosphere, you are then present with us. By giving us the conditions we are joined with you; in fact, we make a part of yourselves. We influence you to do and say things that you believe are from your interior selves. By-and-by we shall be able to make ourselves visible to you, so that we form part of your family. You are now the medium of earth and heaven.

I have brought this piece of writing for your inspection to-night, as also two other pieces, much longer, consisting of over five hundred words, which were also written under test conditions in a few seconds—a physical impossibility, for it has taken me about half an hour to copy each of them.

On the 6th July, 1871, at supper time, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt being present, knocks, heavier than usual, came upon the table and floor, and conveyed the wish of our spirit friends that a party of eight Spiritualists (named) should go together to Penzance for a trip. This visit was thus organised, and to that visit I will presently refer. But three days after this occurred rather a noteworthy *séance*. First with the children, at which some good counsel was given to them from a little spirit sister Louisa. I may note, in passing, that when this sister first came, and gave her name, it was a complete mystery to us. We thought not of the first little stillborn one which nearly cost the dear mother's life, but which, had it lived, was to have been called "Louisa." Had it lived! She *claimed* life, and demanded her name to be registered in the Family Bible; and now she dictated this prayer for the children—beautiful in its simplicity:—

Good Jesus, my tender Shepherd, keep Thy little lambs this day from evil thoughts. O hold me in Thy arms and bless me; then I can in my turn do good to other poor little doers who do not know, as we know, of good spirits around.

And under the table, on a small scrap of blank paper I had placed there with a pencil (on spec.), were the words "We will come again."

As soon as the children had retired, and we had taken out the extra leaf from the dining table which had been put in for the children's sitting (for Mr. and Mrs. Everitt's were added to this party), we nearly closed the table together, and covered it and the aperture with a tablecloth. Immediately little fingers were busy moving the cloth up and down, and as we put our hands near they took hold of our fingers, and playfully tapped our hands.

We were then directed to put out the light. This was immediately followed by a spirit voice in whisper. It was the first time my grandfather had spoken; he said, "You want too much at once!"

Very likely, for it was difficult to curb our wishes for tests and proofs in those fascinating and successive openings of varied spirit power.

Mrs. Everitt was nervous, and I jokingly said, "Ye fearful saint, fresh courage take," and in an instant she was entranced, and John Watt was quietly talking to my wife, who was outside the circle and lying on the sofa at the wall. This chat was confidential, but it revealed his intimate knowledge of every family fact.

John Watt then addressed us all, told us my father had written a message on the paper, and we might light the candle and see. Sure enough there it was; not much, certainly, for it was only these words, but it was dear, because no mortal hand had written it, but one whom death had made beautiful:—

My dear Children—I will come as often as I can and talk to you.

Mrs. Everitt, on awakening from her trance, described spirits she had seen in the spirit-world, including John Watt, who only said to her, "Ye fearful saint, fresh courage take," and passed on! She had also seen my father, who was away part of the time while she was speaking with the others, and said on his return, "He had been singing out of tune, so that Morrell might recognise him!" My grandfather also said he had been singing. This confirmed the first part of the *séance*, which had commenced with singing, and during which we had distinctly recognised these two voices, and I had remarked upon my father having made the same mistake in singing one part of the tune as he invariably did in earth-life, and for which we had often rated him.

At this *séance* an old nurse of ours was present, who saw distinctly the spirits present, and described their appearance. None of these had she seen in earth-life, excepting Louisa, the little stillborn one, whom she now described as different to all the others, and in appearance a beautiful girl of thirteen, with dark, flowing hair.

I come now to the visit of eight Spiritualists together to Cornwall, as had been planned by the spirits, and from which unusual manifestations might be expected. And they came.

I must be as brief as possible here, for the time at my disposal would be inadequate to tell of the continual stream of spiritual communion which literally flowed in from our first start at seven o'clock in the morning of Saturday, Aug. 5th, 1871, and continued unbroken for a whole fortnight, day and night.

My wife was in her chamber with our last boy, three weeks' old, and on more than one occasion manifestations occurred there (in Hendon) and in Cornwall at the same time, the spirit telling me what was transpiring; which was verified subsequently, *ad literatim*.

Starting at 7.40 a.m., we eight just filling a first-class carriage, the despised raps all over the carriage and on the articles of luggage indicated the presence of our spirit friends. In the long tunnels scents filled the carriage with their refreshing odour, and spirit-lights flitted about as though in sport.

The difficulty of finding a lodging together was solved by these unseen guides, who audibly directed Mrs. Everitt to go on, and on, outside Penzance, until we almost began to distrust them. But our

faith saved us, for after walking on to the small fishing village of Newlyn, we found one old rambling house with ample accommodation for us all.

Here, night after night, we had *séances* with the spirits, the room filled with sweet odours and spirit-lights; every morning at the breakfast-table raps greeted us and directed us to read our morning portion; and every night, on retiring to rest, spirit-raps resounded in each bedroom which we occupied. On one occasion, in dressing, Mrs. Everitt's ring was taken, to be returned to her washing-basin in two pieces some days after: it had become so tightly embedded in her finger that it could not be removed, and was returned thus to prevent its further use. At the first sitting, with doors closed and shutters closed over the outside of the window, I was asked to sing, and on concluding my song a pebble was put into my hand and another dropped into the lap of one of the others. At another sitting, a strange, heavy knock came all over the room, and a strange spirit came to ask us to pray for him; but it was months after before we found out by his re-appearance at my own home circle who he was; and I forbear, for the sake of the living, to tell all that strange tale, which I verified in every particular. His next appearance, I may mention, was to tell us he had progressed and risen to a higher sphere; this came through the trance mediumship of one of my sons, who had never heard of the first occurrence.

On another evening the spirit was seen both by Mr. and Mrs. Everitt at the same time, while they sat on the beach, but as a further confirmation they were both touched. Sitting at the Land's End, with the wild waves rolling around us, Mrs. Everitt had several psychometrical visions induced by placing pieces of rock upon her forehead, sometimes so vivid and repulsive as to make her recoil and even shriek out. Some of these I have published, and these, with many other wonderful facts, have been "exposed" in a learned way by the *West Briton*, who referred them to our own delusions.

Was it a delusion when eight of us saw a hamper of provisions walking about the inn floor at Pumarads Head while the waiter was getting the cloth laid, and knives and forks spread for dinner, followed by raps on the table, walls, shutters, and hamper, while dining? And could we imagine that we felt a strong kick beneath us when sitting on a woodland bank, apart from one another? Or could one have so rapped or kicked another while sitting on *terra-firma*? Yet these are the daily incidents of our holiday life during those sixteen days; and, as I look through my diary, some of the daily incidents read so strangely, though in their occurrence they came and fitted in so naturally, that I cannot, without giving all the surroundings which led to them, recount them. That is here impossible.

A very interesting case of spirit-identity occurred in the September following. One Sunday evening my wife and I, with three children, were sitting alone. We had sung that charming hymn of Lynch's, beginning—

I have looked above me,
Saying, as I stood,
Shall I ever love Thee,
Even as I would?

when knocks came so freely on the table as to become confusing. In the midst one of the children was entranced, and began to speak for the different little spirits who had been rapping. After family chit-chat the influence perceptibly changed. My boy assumed, instead of his former lively gait, that of a demure, sad adult. She said her name was Sophia, and I immediately coupled her in thought to a sister I had lost of that name. But questions and answers did not tally. I was puzzled. I asked her age. It was sixty-three, which at once dismissed my juvenile sister. After a few other questions I thought I knew who it was; it was a relative my boy had never seen, nor even heard of.

I asked a question relating to an incident no one present knew—tragic in the extreme. My boy at once sobbed violently, and, fearing consequences, I begged the spirit to calm herself, and to send my mother through the lad, as her influence invariably sweetened and removed all troubles.

My mother then came. She knew nothing of what had transpired, but, on being told, she asked me pointedly whether *that* was not test enough of spirit identity, for my faith often wavered. I said, "Yes; but may I ask a still further test?" "Yes," I said, "Tell Sophia to go over to Fanny, and write me a message to-night through her hand." Next morning my sister Fanny came in. She said she had a most strange experience last night. She was sitting with Mr. and Mrs. Crisp, expecting a message for them, when a new influence came, and a spirit who had never written through her hand had insisted on writing one for me, and there it was! It related to the tale of sorrow which had clouded her earth life, calling it her hell of memory, from which she sought to rise.

In this case, as in many other Spiritualistic experiences I could relate, you will see that there are several phrases acting one upon the other, of such sort that if any one might be accounted for by reference to the imagination or brain cerebration, so many combined forbid such an explanation, and leave only the Spiritualistic theory to account for them satisfactorily.

In fact, I see no other theory to account for the one strange fact I recorded in *The Christian World*, in March, 1878, when in full lamp-light, in the presence of all our own family and servants, and before them *only*, the leaf was taken clean out of my dining-table, which, without mortal touch, was first unlocked and extended for the purpose.

About this time (1872) we removed to a new house, which I had been building, and we shall not soon forget the marvellous exhibitions of spirit-presence which greeted us in our new home. We were told by raps, slowly spelt out, to "have a dedication of the house as soon as convenient," and, meantime, our bells were frequently rung by unseen hands at all times of the day. On one occasion it was an amusement to the servants and children to stand under the row of bells and see one

after another ring, when we knew no one was near or at the other end. The ringing usually came on Wednesday evenings, and when my wife and I were at the week-day service.

Good Friday was fixed for our special sitting, and our good friends Mr. and Mrs. Everitt came from town to be present with us. We were directed by raps to read Ephesians 6th chap., which I did until stopped by these spirits at the end of the eighteenth verse. This was, then, the children's *séance*. The dining-table had been pulled out, and the cloth placed so as to cover a vacant space of about six inches. Here continually little fingers from below pushed up the cloth, and took our hands as we placed them there in turn; in the dark each one was touched by gentle, warm spirit hands, and the spirit spoke gently to the children before they retired to rest.

Later the adults sat, and a distinctly different rap to any we had before heard came; it sounded like metal upon metal. This was succeeded by a new spirit voice—that of a dear friend lately passed away. Then our three little unseen children spoke, one after another. We asked why the bells rang.

"Because," the spirits replied, "we wanted the door open."

Again we sang, and a new voice joined with us, and we retired to the drawing-room, having first looked at a paper we had left on the table for spirit-writing, but there was a blank.

While chatting round the fire, raps came again, and told us to return to the dining-room, where we should find some direct writing; and there we found these words plainly written:—

"Unity, peace, love, and harmony dwell here. We, a loving band, surround you. May the peace of God the All-Father be with you for evermore."

This was written *after* we had left the room, and turned down the lights, and before anyone had returned to it.

It is difficult to select instances of spirit presence at this time, for they were perpetual, and entered as naturally into our everyday life as did the presence of any of the family.

To the children, childish messages and incidents were perpetually occurring, at all hours of the day, and to all, sympathetic greetings and advice in our daily engagements.

Our friends Mr. and Mrs. Everitt soon after came to live next to us; and, apart from the many interesting sittings they had for more public enquirers, we may say that our communion was sweet, and, to us, intensely interesting. It was at two of these sittings we had the direct writing I have brought for your inspection to-night.*

But this paper on "Spiritualism at Home" would be incomplete did I not refer to instances of healing in which we were interested; they shall be brief. The Zouave Jacob came to see us when he was in London in 1870 or 1871, when my wife was a confirmed invalid, and had been for two years lying down and unable to walk. He calmly looked at her, touched her where the internal mischief lurked (we had told him nothing) and from that moment strength returned slowly until she was perfectly well. I need only add, last summer we had many walks of ten miles at a stretch and hope to have some again this year. My sister went to him with a whitlow; as he touched it it healed, and she came away with her glove on. In about three years after I had built my house at Hendon I was myself seriously ill. Every day I had neuralgia in the stomach, constant and excruciating pain, and I had to give up all attention to business. I could not latterly walk the length of my own garden, and no medical treatment was of any permanent avail. My brother, who was my medical man, met Miss Godfrey at my house for a clairvoyant examination, and in it, to my great dismay, after discovering the disease, she prescribed mesmerism, and to remove off the clay soil to one of gravel. I must leave Hendon at any cost. Then I felt it to be impossible. I was on my back, powerless, and utterly helpless. In her mesmeric sleep she said that *she* could cure me probably, if she could only get to me daily. "But," she added, "that is impossible."

However, it resulted in her kindly coming to me every Saturday until Monday, during which period her hands were upon me, as the invisibles directed, three and four hours at a time for, say, five or six times in these three days.

The effect was simply marvellous, and in three or four weeks I was pretty well again; she has since, on any threatened return of this painful malady, invariably removed it after one or at most two sittings. I feel grateful to Miss Godfrey, and commend her confidently to any invalids. But during her mesmerism at Hendon our invisible friends were always about us, knocking on the couch, or chair, or floor, and more than once spoke to me through her, and described the *modus operandi* of this vital force.

Long as Miss Godfrey sat over me she was never exhausted, but felt spirit hands passing influence through her to me, and my feeling was as if drinking in the elixir of life. Nor did the feeling of imbibing vital force leave me for some time after she had ceased to touch me.

Sometimes she was entranced during the operation, and then my father, or some other spirit, spoke to me words of which she was entirely unconscious. Once my father said:—

Glad to see you on the road to health, and getting out of this place, pretty as it is. It is almost a pity to go before the lads come home from school; but remember wherever you go we shall go with you. Remember, many as you have on earth to love you, you have as many here. We take turns as guardians.

These little bye conversations were most interesting, and it is probable that any Spiritualist engaging Miss Godfrey for healing would be almost reconciled to suffer while having thus the "gates ajar."

The experiences in Spiritualism I have thus briefly recounted extended over many years; and although I am aware I have (from anxiety to condense) very imperfectly recorded some of the facts, I have been extremely careful—as I always have been, for I transcribed

them regularly into a diary kept for the purpose—to understate rather than exaggerate these marvellous phenomena.

Surprising as these phenomenal exhibitions of Spiritualism are, I feel, like my friend Mr. Stainton-Moses, that we cannot rest there. And that suggests: the object of this Association is to follow up facts carefully; to substantiate these facts accurately, and, if we can, upon a scientific basis—although, in the present state of both religious and scientific thought, this is not an easy thing to do. Both sides ignore their very existence, although, with such an array of facts before them, it is difficult to understand how that can be done; hence again, I say, the object of this Association is to substantiate *facts* before attempting to account for them. It is not our object, I submit, to raise these phenomena into a religion, and to bow down and worship them. Nothing has tended to do so much harm to this Association, in my opinion, as has the clamour to accept Spiritualism as a new religious teaching, and before we have intelligently collated facts.

I will not be so bold as to assert that Spiritualism will not become a divine Evangel to the world, as it has been to many an individual soul who was as—

"An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

Spiritualism may be, and probably is, the only avenue through which some can approach to the spirit of worship; but it is after all only an avenue, leading up to the inner shrine of the soul; where God's shekinah is the holy of holies, and *there* we worship and come forth to work again with a glory which transfigures our future life.

The business of this Association is to present to the world an accurate and indisputable succession of facts, so collated that only one theory, and, as we think, the spiritual theory, will account for them. It is not our business to associate them with all the miserable feelings after truth—some exploded long ago, others doomed to be absorbed by fuller light—any more than it is with Christian life itself, which in the outset of this Association was ostracised, I now begin to fear, unwisely. For if I want to search in the dark for anything, do I not take with me the lamp that I have? And I am not sure that we, as an Association, would not have been wiser to incorporate ourselves with the lamps of God's truth, which we already hold (some of them, I grant, need trimming), rather than pauder to that materialism or Atheism which is diametrically opposed to the truths we are seeking to establish.

I know the constitution of this society would have been totally changed; and instead of advancing hand in hand we should of necessity have had coteries of the varied characters, now associated as a curious medley group. If all religious thought could be excluded, and we could go on a scientific basis, well and good; but the very nature of our inquiries leads us on into the domain of religion, where

Tot homines—tot sententias!

We started on a mission of research, declaring we would advance with the lamp of science only. How far it has been successful let the pages of *The Spiritualist* testify.

I may not inaptly quote here from a writer in *Fraser's Magazine*, in September, 1877:—

Let science come forward in its due time and proper rank—a rank decidedly lower than it now lays claims to. Let those pursue their quests, and good luck to them; but let them know their place. When we long for music a lecture on acoustics will not serve. I tell you, gentlemen, science *alone* can deal with nothing rightly. Science by herself misconceives and misinterprets everything. It finds matter and mechanism everywhere because it has no means of finding anything else. It searches for life, and cannot find it—can find no principle of vitality. It searches for God, and cannot find Him. Can you by searching find out God? The poet, the artist, every healthy child sees the physical world far truer than you do.

But if this Association is to continue a success, as to a certain extent it certainly has been hitherto, and to continue the really good service it has already done, it will be by a steady, persistent following up of its researches as a body, and by collecting authentic records from our individual members. This latter experience will be especially valuable to us, because we know that the best facts, the best tests, and the most sacred records can be thence produced, while probably the experiments of our Research Committee will have most weight with the scientific mind.

Years ago the cry was for facts—facts—facts; and to-day there is still the same cry, if we are to convince the *outside world*. Whether that is really so necessary as some of you appear to think I begin to doubt; and I incline rather to keep our treasure safe, and to dig deeper in the same quarry, to see if we can come upon the perennial spring which washes up to us so much gold. To do this we may perhaps be wisest to return often to the home circle; follow up our quests *there*, illumined by *all* the individual light we already possess; and, returning to the rallying point formed by this Association, tell one another, and one another only, where the new light has led us. I have a shrewd conviction where that will be, for

There's not a path we tread
But leads us up to God.

As flame ascends,
As vapours to the earth in showers return,
As the poised ocean toward the attracting moon
Swell, and the ever-listening planets, charm'd
By the sun's call, their onward pace incline,
So all things which have life aspire to God,
Exhaustless fount of intellectual day—
Control of souls.

Nor is the care of heaven withhold
From sending to the soil external aid;
That in their stations all may persevere
To climb the ascent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the Life divine.

* See *Spiritualist*, Oct. 1, 1873.

THE THIRTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF MODERN
SPIRITUALISM.

On Sunday, March 30, services under the management of Mr. J. W. Fletcher, were held morning and evening in the Cavendish Rooms, London.

In the evening there was a full attendance.

Mr. H. Greene, who presided, gave a short address, and stated that thirty-one years ago the manifestations at Hydesville formed the first step towards placing proof of man's immortality upon a scientific basis.

Mrs. Nosworthy stated that that was the first time she had attempted to speak in public since the departure to the higher life of her father, the late Mr. George Thompson. She felt like a child picking up shells by the side of the ocean of knowledge, and she had first been drawn to Spiritualism by its religious teachings. Previously she had found truer responses to the religious aspirations of her heart in the writings of the poets than in the dogmas of the pulpit, although the preachers were good and sincere men. She subsequently examined the phenomena, went to Miss Lottie Fowler's *séances*, and at last a medium developed in her own family; her daughter, a little child nine years of age, became a trance medium, and with dramatic power and an inspired tongue, told of the lives of spirits in various conditions. A clergyman asserted that the child had been reading Dante's *Divine Comedy*. In the first place, the book was not in the house; in the second, the child could not have understood it had it been; and in the third, the clergyman's theory (to which he adhered) made her little girl out to be excessively wicked, so she quitted his church. The greatest teaching of Spiritualism was that of the necessity of cultivating the individual spirit.

Mr. Thomas Shorter, after a brief reference to the departure from earth-life of Mr. George Thompson and Mr. William Howitt, said that he would not speak against physical manifestations or scientific research, but was more in favour of the moral and religious aspects of Spiritualism.

Mrs. Andrews then delivered an address, which was published in last week's *Spiritualist*.

Mrs. Fletcher made a few remarks, and Mr. Fletcher read some letters from Spiritualists in foreign countries.

"To the Spiritualists of London and England I send you greetings of grace and goodwill, of peace and pleasant memories. God and the good angels bless you all.

"The advent of modern Spiritualism, demonstrating a future existence and kindling the soul's purest affections, was a momentous event in the world's history. It is well to commemorate it in all lands and under all skies; for though local in origin, it is cosmopolitan in spirit and fraternal in tendency.

"Communion with the spirit world is now an established fact. It is this, and more: it spans the whole realm of mental science, philosophy, and religion. It meets the soul's demands; its inspiration is continued, and its influence exalting.

"In a true religious Spiritualism the method is (or rather should be) constructive, and the purpose, to educate humanity for that future progressive existence which stretches in increasing loveliness along the measureless eras of eternity. Spiritualism being the universal solvent, the key that unlocks the mystery of the ages, and the truth that robs Death of its Sting, and the Grave of its Victory, must necessarily prosper. Were it the subject of destruction it would long ago have been slaughtered, killed outright in the household of its professed friends.

"But it lives, and is moving on like a giant to complete victory. Recently the Rev. Charles Beecher published a large volume under the telling title, or heading, *Spiritual Manifestations*. He frankly admits the reality of the phenomena. The book is having an extensive sale. I met the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher last autumn at a *séance*. Last week I gave three lectures in a Baptist church, Kirtland, Ohio, the Baptist minister taking a part in the services, and the Baptist choir discoursing excellent music. I mention these as items—as little straws telling which way the religious current is drifting. Possibly it may interest you to know that the Rev. Mr. Flower, pastor of the Christian Church Alliance in Ohio, and editor of the *Independent Age*, has come out a decided Spiritualist; two-thirds of his church members have followed him; they denominate themselves Christian Spiritualists.

"What is greatly needed in the ranks of American Spiritualists is more unity of action—perhaps it may be summed up in the word organisation; I repeat it, organisation upon a broad, national, religious basis, with calm, candid, well-balanced souls for officers.

"There is in all lands need of a better understanding of the purposes and moral sanctities connected with the spiritual philosophy; a clearer apprehension of the duties and obligations of life; a more heartfelt encouragement to genuine mediums; a keener discrimination relating to the status of controlling spirits; a more earnest appeal to the religious nature, and a more thorough consecration of heart and soul to the interests of truth. I am full of hope, full of faith, and aflame with love for the heavenly principles of Spiritualism. Through you I send kind remembrances to the Spiritualists of London; I am in debt to several for their excellent letters; remind them that delay is not neglect. Often do I come to them in spirit, never forgetting my friends.

"May your anniversary prove not only an enjoyable, but a morally and spiritually profitable occasion. "J. M. PEBBLES.

"Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., March 13th, 1879."

Letters from various gentlemen who had been invited to speak were read by Mr. Fletcher, including the following post-card from Mr. Enmore Jones:—

To Mr. FLETCHER:—I have not attended any of your Sunday services, because I consider they are only a business advertisement dodge.

Spiritualism can never thrive while camp followers talk religion for dollars, and set up meetings for that purpose. J. E. J.

March 20, 1879.

"This," quietly added Mr. Fletcher, "is from one who calls himself a Christian Spiritualist."

Mr. Jones's note was received with a shower of hisses from all parts of the crowded hall.

The soirée at Cavendish Rooms on Wednesday, April 2nd, was largely attended, every ticket being taken, and was of an entertaining nature. The first part was devoted to instrumental and vocal music, several artistes taking part, among whom were Mme. Schneegans, Mrs. Weldon, Miss Elene Webster, Miss Dicksee, Mr. Earnest Tietkens, Signor de Lora, and others, whose efforts elicited warm marks of approval. At 9.30 the floor was cleared for dancing. Supper was served in the rooms below. Altogether the entertainment was a happy ending to the thirty-first anniversary, and Mr. Fletcher's efforts were highly appreciated. The assistance of Miss Leslie Younge, Mrs. Maltby, Miss Dollie Maitland, and others, conducted not a little to the success of the entertainment.

OBITUARY.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

Sir,—At half-past three to-day there passed away in London one of the most remarkable women it has been my lot to know, during fifty years, on two continents—Mrs. Rebecca Leaf, of 43, Albion-street, Hyde Park.

For many years she has been an invalid, but she had lived so long in delicate health, being over sixty years of age, that I hoped she might remain with us for some years longer. She had a sound, brilliant, and truly Catholic mind. She had broad, deep, and delicate culture, and she kept pace with the foremost of our time in knowledge and appreciation. She had faith, hope, and charity in superlative degree, but most she excelled in charity—the love that united her to our Lord and all His creation. The "Strong Son of God, Almighty Love," was her Father, her Brother, her Infinite Lover.

Many hearts are bereaved this day; our beloved and revered friend has gone within the veil. We shall see her no more till we wake with her in the summer land. Her place can never be filled. Into her large, warm heart we could pour every sorrow. To her calm, and yet brilliant mind we could reveal every idea and every fact, however recondite, that had relation to use.

Never have I met any one with a more tender tolerance for all. To her humanity was always growing, under the care and culture of a Heavenly Father, and though she saw that freedom of will seemed to lead to destruction, she saw also that the soul limited by punishment was redeemed and saved by the ministry of suffering born of sin. Always she saw the Father, and the Father in the Son, reconciling the world unto Himself. The paternity of God was her supreme idea. She saw that as a Father He gave Himself in His Son, that the world through Him might be saved.

Our friend had knowledge beyond what is the portion of even the favoured few, but her wisdom was greater than her knowledge. She was beautiful, brilliant, beloved. Who shall take her place? To whom can we speak personally, and particularly universally and theologically, as we could speak to her? She could understand fully when we could only give the shadow of an idea. She was one of those earnest and fervent Spiritualists who would prove all things, and hold fast what is good.

There is one way that we may mitigate our sorrow for our great loss. We may reflect on the infinite beauty into which she has entered. We may come into our own hearts and sit quietly in our great love, and feel the emanations of sweetness and light that will breathe from her blessed spirit through all our being. What the higher, inner, and real life is to our glorified friend we shall thus know each in our measure. And let all of us who love her in the true holiess of love promise her, in the silence of all flesh, to be faithful unto our own souls, as she was faithful; to cultivate the divine charity till there shall be always in our hearts the *cultus* that shall make us temples of the living God. And may we pray that she will be near us, in some measure, as she is with the child of her heart, who is an extension of her own being; and with this one upon whom is found her love without limit, may many of us who are also bereaved be permitted to sympathise—till all our loss shall become gain through Him who has loved us, and given Himself for us.

MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

32, Fopstone-road, Earl's Court, London, S.W., April 2nd, 1879.

BRITISH MUSEUM LECTURES.—As on previous occasions, Dr. Carter Blake will take a class round the Galleries of Antiquities and Natural History of the British Museum, on Thursday, April 24th, Monday, April 28th, and Thursday, May 1st, from 11 to 1 p.m. Supplementary discourses will be delivered, it is said, by Professor Owen, C.B., F.R.S., in the Natural History Department; by Mr. W. Carruthers, F.R.S., Keeper of the Botanical Department; by Mr. Samuel Birch, LL.D., on "Egypt;" and by Mr. St. Chad Boscawen on "Assyria."

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.—The readers of this journal in India greatly desire a visit from a good physical medium, yet Mr. Eglinton is about to return to England, and Dr. Slade to New York, without going to Hindustan. The reason is that East Indian Spiritualists have neither any organisation nor any local centre in which their general wishes, and their names and addresses, are known; consequently no medium can ascertain beforehand whether he will have sufficient engagements to warrant his passing through the country. The offer of brief engagements along the northern shores of the Mediterranean would facilitate the visit of English mediums to India.

A HYMN FROM THE RIG-VEDA.

"1. In the beginning there arose the source of golden light. He was the one born Lord of all that is. He established the earth and this sky. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"2. He who gives life, He who gives strength; whose command all the bright gods revere; whose shadow is immortality; whose shadow is death. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"3. He who through his power is the one King of the breathing and awaking world. He who governs all, man and beast. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"4. He whose power these snowy mountains, whose power the sea proclaims, with the distant river. He whose these regions are as it were His two arms. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"5. He through whom the sky is bright and the earth firm. He through whom the heaven was established, nay, the highest heaven. He who measured out the light in the air. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"6. He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by His will, look up, trembling inwardly. He over whom the rising sun shines forth. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"7. Wherever the mighty water-clouds went, where they placed the seed and lit the fire, thence arose he who is the sole life of the bright gods. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"8. He who by His might looked even over the water-clouds, the clouds which gave strength and lit the sacrifice. He who alone is God above all gods. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"

"9. May He not destroy us. He the Creator of the earth, or He the Righteous who created the heaven. He who also created the bright and mighty waters. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?"—*Translated by Professor Max Müller.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It is recorded in a book on apparitions that in 1785 a "Major R." and five cadets in Madras were ordered to proceed "up country" to join their regiments. Major R. accidentally lost his life while on the journey by falling into a well, and the five cadets, who did not know of his death, saw his apparition running towards a boat on "the river." Can any of our readers fully authenticate this by giving full names and addresses for publication, for some of the details of the narrative are of considerable scientific value.

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