

# The Spiritualist,

## AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

[REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER.]

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# The Spiritualist Newspaper.

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

VOLUME NINE. NUMBER THREE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, AUGUST 18th, 1876.

## UNION AMONG AMERICAN SPIRITUALISTS.

FROM a report published in another column, it will be seen that the present attempt of American Spiritualists to unite is founded upon a different basis to that which has been acted upon in Great Britain; that is to say, in America the bond of union is to be of a religious nature, whilst in England the alliance is founded merely upon the acceptance of the facts, leaving every man free to form his own opinions. In the United States, those who do not agree with the programme laid down by the organisation will be forced to remain outside its ranks; thus, it will be seen that in Great Britain organisation has been planned upon a broader basis. Nevertheless, any organisation is better than none, for without union, strong and effective and continuous work cannot be done. The programme drawn up at the Philadelphia Convention is rather of an orthodox character, the result of which will certainly be discord to some extent. A second and unavoidable source of contention, incidental to all organisations, will soon be experienced when the division begins between those who object to organisation at all and those who appreciate orderly united effort. The more emotional and uneducated Spiritualists will be found to be averse to organisation, whilst those of a more critical and intellectual nature will quickly appreciate its advantages. All the Spiritualistic newspapers in the United States are of course in favour of organisation and united friendly action, and not one of them has made any attempt to sow dissension. Among the active workers in the attempt to establish an organisation in America are Mr. Robert Dale Owen, Dr. Eugene Crowell, Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten, and Mr. J. M. Peebles; also Mrs. Tappan, who has seen so much of the advantages resulting from united action in England.

## TORRES-SOLANOT ON ANCIENT SPIRITUALISM.\*

THIS important and learned work, the author of which was lately the President of the Spanish Spiritualist Society, deals with many of the highest anthropological and Spiritual subjects. Much of the work is devoted to the correlation of the doctrines of the Brahmans with those of the modern Catholic Church. Thus the Brahmanic legends of Adima and Heva are associated with those of the Mosaic creation; the diluvial legend is found in the Vedas; the stories of Abraham, Moses, and much of the legend of the history of the Jewish temple are found to bear close analogies to the records found in Sanskrit writings. Of course, as Mr. Beal has very well pointed out, the difficulty is to ascertain whether the Jews copied from the Eastern writings, or whether the descendants of Nestorians conveyed to Persia and Thibet somewhat of the traditions of Christianity. The Thibetan sculptures of Buddha (if we may suppose them genuine) which Professor Leitner brought from Thibet, seem to prove the second theory, and we can see little in the assumed analogies between these religions which might not be the result of an imperfect remembrance of Christian writings.

The author's analysis of various religious systems is singularly exact and precise; and he looks forward to Spiritualism as the means by which, after the decease of Christianity, man may be raised to the level of the intellectual Buddhists and Brahmans. He evidently considers Burnouf to be an authority; but, happily for the sense of his argument, does not quote Inman. The book is eminently readable, even to those to whom the subject is new. Since, however, the congresses of Orientalists, which have taken place nearly everywhere, the subject is a little hack-

neyed, and its immediate connexion with Spiritualism, though far more important than even the author considers, is not apparent to all.

## THE CLAIRVOYANT POWERS OF ELISHA.\*

BY EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.

MANY instances are related in the Bible where the faculty of clairvoyance was exercised, and there is no difficulty in recognising it as the same spiritual faculty that many now possess.

Among these instances in the Old Testament, is that narrated in the 5th chapter of 2 Kings, where Naaman, after being cleansed of the leprosy through the mediumship of Elisha, and having departed from the prophet's habitation, the servant of the latter, thinking that as Elisha had refused compensation, he himself would levy tribute, ran after him and taxed him for a talent of silver. Upon his return,

"Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said *Went not mine heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?* Is it a time to receive money? . . . The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever."

It is plain here that Elisha perceived the act of the servant through his spiritual faculty, or clairvoyantly, and this is the meaning of the words, "*Went not mine heart with thee when the man turned again from his chariot,*" and it would be difficult to attach any other meaning to them.

In the next chapter, the 6th, when—"The king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, "In such and such a place shall be my camp," Elisha clairvoyantly, or by spirit impression, was informed of the intention of the Syrian king, and warned the king of Israel,

"Saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place, for thither the Syrians are come down. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was troubled for this thing, and he called his servants and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king, but Elisha the prophet that is in Israel telleth the king of Israel *the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber.*"

In the same chapter, we find that a detachment of the troops of the enemy suddenly appeared before Dothan, they being sent to capture Elisha.

"And when the servant of the man of God (*Elisha*) had risen early, and gone forth, behold a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots, and his servant said unto him, Alas, my master, how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed and said, Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, *and behold the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*"

Elisha being a clairvoyant prophet or medium, perceived this heavenly host who had come to his assistance. They probably were the spirits of Israelitish warriors, who, though disembodied, yet continued to take a deep interest in the success of their mortal kindred, and who were present to render every assistance in their power; this power I fully believe to be often exercised in war, and sometimes with such effect as to determine the issue of battles. As to the young man, Elisha probably laid his hand upon him, and as where persons possessing the gift of second-sight touch others, the latter often become temporarily clairvoyant, so in his case he

\* *El Catolicismo antes del Cristo. Por El Vizconde de Torres-Solanot. Third edition. Madrid.*

\* From Crowell's *Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism*. Vol. II.

perceived this host of spirits who otherwise would have remained invisible to him.

In the latter part of the same chapter we have another instance related of his clairvoyant power. Samaria, where Elisha then was, being besieged and in great straits, the king of Israel became enraged against Elisha, for the reason that he had been directed by Elisha's advice, and sent an officer to arrest him.

"But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him, and the king sent a man from before him, *but ere the messenger came to him he said to the elders*, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head?"

Passing to the New Testament, we notice the case of that pious and noble martyr Stephen, as related in the 7th chapter of Acts. Surrounded by his bigoted persecutors, gnashing their teeth in their rage, he

"Being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."—Verses 55, 56.

Stephen here had a clairvoyant view of the spirit world, and of Jesus, and probably of some other glorious and perhaps ancient spirit, whom Stephen mistook for God, as Swedenborg and others have since done.

#### COACOOCHIEE'S VISION.

Coacoochee, or Wild Cat, was a friend of Osceola in the old Seminole war. He appears to have been one of the aboriginal Spiritualists, for he claimed communication with all the dead of his tribe, and especially with his twin sister, who preceded him to the spirit-world. The following is from the lips of Coacoochee:—

"She died suddenly. I was on a bear hunt, and seated by my camp-fire alone. I heard a strange noise. It was something like a voice which told me to go to her. The camp was some distance, but I took my rifle and started. The night was dark and gloomy. The wolves howled around me as I went from hammock to hammock. Sounds often came to my ear; I thought she was speaking to me. At daylight I reached her camp; she was dead.

"When hunting some time after with my brother Otulkee, I sat alone by the side of a large oak. In the moss hanging over me I heard strange sounds. I tried to sleep, but could not. I felt myself moving, and thought I went far above to a new country, where all was bright and happy. I saw clear water, ponds, rivers, and prairies, on which the sun never sets. All was green; the grass grew high and the deer stood in the midst of it looking at me. I then saw a small, white cloud approaching, and when just before me, out of it came my twin sister, dressed in white and covered with bright silver ornaments. Her black hair, which I had often braided, hung down her back. She clasped me around the neck and said, 'Coacoochee, Coacoochee.' I shook with fear. I knew her voice, but could not speak. With one hand she gave me a string of white beads; in the other she held a cup sparkling with pure water, which she said came from the spring of the Great Spirit, and if I would drink from it, I should return and live with her for ever.

"As I drank she sang the peace song of the Seminoles and danced around me. She had silver bells on her feet, which made a loud noise. Taking from her bosom something, I know not what, she laid it before me, when a bright light streamed far above us. She then took me by the hand and said, 'All is peace.' I wanted to ask for others, but she shook her head, moved her hand, stepped into the cloud, and was gone. The fire she had made had not gone out. All was silent. I was sorry that I could not have said more to her. I felt myself sinking until I came to the earth, where I met my brother Otulkee. He had been seeking me, and was alarmed at my absence, having found my rifle where he last saw me asleep. I told him where I had been, and showed him the beads. These beads were stolen from me when I was in prison at St. Augustine. At certain periods of the moon, when I had these beads, I could see the spirit of my sister. I may be buried in the earth, or sunk in the water, but I shall go to her and live with her. Game is abundant there, and there the white man is never seen."

#### ORGANISATION AMONG SPIRITUALISTS IN AMERICA.

The following is the official report of the proceedings of the National Conference of Spiritualists assembled in Philadelphia, July 5th, 1876:—

Pursuant to a "Call to Consider the Organisation of Christian Spiritualism in America," published in the *Banner of Light*, and *Spiritual Scientist*, the Conference met July 5th, 1876, in Circle Hall, Philadelphia.

The meeting was called to order at 10 o'clock a.m. by J. E. Bruce, of Massachusetts, who read the "Call," and moved that Rev. Samuel Watson, D.D., of Tennessee, take the chair.

The organisation of the Conference was completed by the appointment of J. E. Bruce, secretary, Dr. H. T. Child, assistant secretary, S. P. Kase, treasurer, with the following list of vice-presidents: Pennsylvania, Rev. Cyrus Jeffreys, Mrs. Grace Parkhurst, Dr. Henry T. Child. New York, Eugene Crowell, M.D., Rev. J. H. Harter, J. W. Seaver. Massachusetts, J. Hamlin Dewey, M.D., E. Gerry Brown, Dr. Main. New Hampshire, George S. Morgan, Mary Reed. Vermont, A. E. Stanley, Mrs. M. S. Townsend. New Jersey, Hon. J. M. Peebles, A. E. Newton. Ohio, Hudson Tuttle, J. Murray Case, D. Winder. Indiana, Robert Dale Owen, H. Haight. Illinois, Cora L. V. Tappan, Dr. E. C. Dunn, Dr. J. S. Avery. Missouri, Rev. A. J. Fishback. Kentucky, Judge L. R. Spurrier, Prof. J. R. Buchanan, M.D. Michigan, Mrs. A. A. Whitney. Delaware, Dr. Marshall. District Columbia, Dr. John Mayhew, George White. North Carolina, John MacRae. Alabama, C. Barnes. Louisiana, Dr. J. B. Cooper. Tennessee, Gen. Smith, Annie C. T. Hawks. Arkansas, Dr. J. A. Meeker, R. H. Righten. Texas, Mrs. S. A. Talbot.

J. E. Bruce, of Massachusetts, moved the following resolution—"That the time is come for the organisation of Spiritualism in America." After full discussion, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Hon. J. M. Peebles, of New Jersey, moved that a committee be appointed to present to the Conference a Declaration of Principles embodying the idea, or ground of organisation. A committee of nine—six men and three women—was appointed by the chair. It was also moved that a committee be raised to draft a form of constitution for local societies.

The Conference then adjourned till three o'clock to await the report of its committees.

The afternoon session was opened with prayer by the President, Dr. Watson. Minutes of the morning session were read and approved.

The committee on Declaration of Principles being called, reported the following statement, which, after being freely and critically discussed, was, with but some slight verbal alteration, unanimously adopted:

#### PLATFORM.

*Preamble:* We, Spiritualists of America in Conference assembled, conscious of a deep religious nature in man, with its wants, its moral duties, and its sacred obligations, conscious of a future existence made more clear and tangible by the present ministry of angels and spirits—believing, also, that the genius of true Spiritualism, with its convincing demonstrations of immortal life, is in consonance with the teachings and spiritual marvels of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, and feeling the necessity of a religious organisation, free from an unbelieving atheism on the one hand, and on the other from all creeds that tend to cramp and trammel the human soul, hold that the time has come for associated effort and action.

#### STATEMENT OF AIMS.

While we seek after all knowledge, scientific, moral and spiritual—while we study to know the truth and dare maintain it—our immediate objects are to organise local societies upon a financial and religious basis; to cultivate love and charity; to become mutual helps in uniting our scattered forces; to stimulate religious effort; to strengthen faith in God, protect and support worthy mediums, and to encourage and promote purity of life, thus setting examples before the world worthy of their following.

#### DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES.

We recognise in Jesus of Nazareth the spiritual leader of men, and accept His two great affirmations of love to God and love to man as constituting the one ground of growth in the individual, and the only and sufficient basis of human society.

The committee on form of constitution for local societies reported the following, which, after due discussion, was unanimously adopted:—

#### CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SPIRITUALISM IN —.

*Preamble.*—We whose names are hereunto affixed, wishing to be united in our labours and prayers for the better promotion of spiritual growth and the orderly development of human life in our own persons, and also for the promotion and development of the same in the souls and lives of others, do hereby adopt and subscribe the following Constitution as the basis of our government:—

ART. I. NAME. The corporate name of this body shall be the — Society, for the advancement of Spiritualism in —.

ART. II. Sec. 1. MEMBERSHIP. Membership in this Society shall be without distinction of sex.

Sec. 2. Any person may become a member by subscribing to the Constitution, and contributing not less than one dollar annually to the support of the Society.

Sec. 3. No person who is not a contributing member shall vote on the affairs of the Society.

ART. III. OFFICERS. Sec. 1. The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Clerk, Treasurer, and Collector.

Sec. 2. The officers of the Society shall qualify in accordance with the statute in such cases made and provided.

ART. IV. GOVERNMENT. Sec. 1. The Government of the Society shall be vested in an Executive Board, consisting of five members, who, being duly sworn, shall, with the aid of sub-committees, manage, direct, and be responsible for all the business of the Society.

Sec. 2. The President, Vice-President, Clerk, and Treasurer shall be added to the Executive Board, and shall sit as *ex-officio* members.

Sec. 3. The President of the Society shall preside over the deliberations of the Board, and appoint, subject to the approving vote of the Board, the sub-committees of the Society.



Sec. 4. The Board shall immediately upon its appointment proceed to complete its organisation by the appointment of a Secretary, who shall keep a fair and full record of all its proceedings.

Sec. 5. The following Sub-committees shall be annually appointed:—

1. A Health Committee. Embracing the laws of health and disease and the care of the sick.

2. A Committee on Education. Embracing the theory of human life, together with the practical modes of its development; and charged also with the supervision and control of the Sunday-school, with power to determine (a) the method of instruction. (b) Who shall teach. (c) What shall be taught. (d) To provide through books, maps, and oral teaching such instruction for teachers as may be necessary to fit them for their work. (e) To draw an order upon the Treasurer of the Society for the expenses of the school, subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

3. A Committee on Social Life. Embracing the organisation of the social element in the Society, in accordance with the principles of the sciences of man and of society and the extension of these principles to the community, the commonwealth, and the nation.

4. Committee on Reforms. Embracing the true method of such changes in social, economic, and civic life as the evolution of the time brings to the surface of society.

5. A Committee on Spiritual Life. Embracing whatever pertains to worship and the development of spiritual life.

Sec. 6. The Sub-committees shall, at the end of each fiscal year, and two weeks previous to the Annual Meeting of the Society, make full report, in writing, of all their doings to the Executive Board.

Sec. 7. The Executive Board shall meet on the first Mondays in January, April, July and October, or at the call of the President, through a notice from the desk, whenever business demanding attention shall require it.

Sec. 8. Five members of the Board shall constitute a quorum, but a less number may adjourn.

Sec. 9. The Executive Board shall, at each Annual Meeting of the Society, submit a report, in writing, of the entire work of the year, whether done through the Board or the Sub-committees.

ART. V. MEETINGS. Sec. 1. The Executive Board shall direct the Clerk to call an Annual Meeting of the Society, agreeably with the ——— statutes, to be held at such time and place between the ——— day of ——— and the ——— day of ———, as they may elect.

Sec. 2. The fiscal year of the Society shall commence on the ——— day of ——— in each year.

Sec. 3. The Executive Board shall call, upon requisition in writing, signed by five members, such other meetings as the state of business may demand.

ART. VI. ELECTIONS. The officers and Executive Board shall be elected annually by ballot, and shall serve till their successors are elected.

ART. VII. QUORUM. Seven members shall constitute a quorum, but a less number may adjourn.

ART. VIII. APPEALS. In a case of dissatisfaction with the action of a Sub-committee, appeal may be had to the Executive Board, and thence, if satisfaction be not had, to the Society in lawful meeting assembled.

ART. IX. AMENDMENTS. Amendments, alterations or additions to this Constitution may be proposed in writing at a legal meeting, but shall lie over seven days before action shall be taken thereon.

Sec. 2. A two-thirds vote of members present at a legal meeting shall be required to pass an amendment.

It was next moved that a committee of three be raised, to prepare an address to the people, to go out with the declaration which this conference sends to the country.

It was voted that the committee be authorised to prepare and print the address as part of the minutes of the conference.

The conference then voted that a committee of twelve be raised, divided into groups of threes, selected from the respective sections of the country—north, middle, west, and south—empowered to oversee the work of local organisation; and also empowered to call, at such time and place, in the year 1877, as may seem to them fit, a delegate convention, composed of five delegates from each society which shall be formed within the year, and of such other persons, in places where there are not enough to form a society, as may signify their sympathy with the movement, and apply to the committee for credentials, which convention shall have for its main business to decide the question of a permanent national organisation, and to transact such other business as may come before the convention.

Considerable discussion took place respecting the name of the new movement. But a hearty and unanimous agreement was reached that this was a question which ought to go over for final settlement to the Delegate Convention next year. And it was voted that this body, for the present, take the provisional title of "The National Conference of Spiritualists."

After passing a vote that a copy of the minutes of the Conference be sent to all the Spiritualist papers in the country, and thanking Mr. Bliss for his kindness in the use of the hall, the Conference adjourned to meet at the call of the committee of twelve.

Names of the committee: James Edward Bruce, M.D.; J. Hamilton Dewey, M.D.; E. Gerry Brown; Rev. Wm. Fishbough; Eugene Crowell, M.D.; E. P. Miller, M.D.; Rev. A. J. Fishback; E. C. Dunn, M.D.; J. S. Avery, M.D.; Rev. Samuel Watson, D.D., with two other names for the South, which Dr. Watson shall select.

All communications respecting the movement in general should be addressed to the chairman of the committee of twelve, J. E. Bruce, Newburyport, Mass.

Localities wishing to form societies, or societies wishing to notify the committee of the fact of their organisation, etc., will take notice that J. H. Dewey, of Boston, Mass., is chairman of the committee for New England; Rev. William Fishbough, Brooklyn, E.D., N.Y., is chairman for the Middle States; Rev. A. J. Fishback, Webster Grove, Mo., is chairman for the West; and Dr. Samuel Watson, Memphis, Tenn., for the South.

J. E. Bruce, Secretary.

Mr. W. H. HARRISON will leave London for Scotland and the North of England towards the close of this month.

## WHAT IS RELIGION?

DR. SEXTON, in the course of a lecture preached at Swindon, said:—  
What is religion? This is a very large question, and one which has been the source of endless controversies. Yet, after all, probably the answer to it may be compressed into a very small compass. We have it in the two great commandments of the Lord. Love to God supremely, and love to man as an outcome of the love to God. If a man does not love his brother, neither does he love God. The word religion is derived from two Latin words, which mean to bind again; and therefore, signifies the re-binding man to God, from whom he has broken loose. This binding is by cords of love. The purpose of religion is two-fold. First, that men should be good; second, that they should give God the glory for their goodness. All religious symptoms that fail of this are deficient in the essential feature of true religion. Nor is this rule established by an arbitrary arrangement on the part of God, but flows by an irresistible necessity from the constitution of his nature and our own. It is the essence of love to wish to give something of its own to another. God is Love, Perfect Love, Infinite Love. Therefore, it is His desire to give of Himself to man. From this divine desire man was created at first that he might receive the divine love, appropriate it to himself, and live by it as of himself. This love is the love of goodness, and, therefore, in proportion as a man loves goodness, does he answer the purpose for which he was created. The primary purpose of religion is to make man good. Selfishness is the opposite of good. Now, to attribute to self that which comes from God is both selfish and unjust. The second purpose of religion, therefore, is to make man acknowledge that he owes all his goodness to God. If the ancient religions are examined in the light of this grand truth, it will be seen how utterly deficient they are, and how, while they vaguely point the way to the glorious consummation which was to come, they themselves fall far short of the true ideal. This principle will also form a test to which we can bring the various Christian sects, with a view to ascertain how far they are in accordance with the true religion.

## THE LATE MR. RYMER, OF EALING.

(From the "Harbinger of Light," Melbourne.)

THE following biographical notice, from the *Bendigo Advertiser* of the 16th May, of Mr. J. S. Rymer, of Sandhurst, formerly of Ealing, London, England, will, no doubt, be read with interest by many of our readers here and in England, to whom the departed gentleman was so long and favourably known. Mr. Rymer became a sincere Spiritualist many years ago in London, and remained so during his life in this world, though nominally a member of the Church of England. His funeral took place on Tuesday, the 17th May, and was attended to the place of sepulture at the White Hills Cemetery, by a very numerous cortege of all classes of the community, by whom he was much beloved for his many sterling good qualities. All the solicitors of the city walked in procession behind the hearse from the residence of the deceased to the cemetery. At the Church of England, the service for the dead was read by the Rev. W. R. Croxton, and by the same rev. gentleman at the grave. A lady Spiritualist sent a beautiful bouquet of flowers, which, by the hands of her husband, was placed on the coffin, and, as was said by a gentleman present, was "a touching tribute of respect to one who in this life was always spoken of as an honest man." The following is the notice referred to:—

"The hand of death has again made itself felt in the ranks of the old identities of the district; year by year are some of these old familiar and kindly faces taken from us, and laid low and cold in their last earthly resting place. We have with great regret to announce the death of one of the oldest legal practitioners of this city, Mr. J. S. Rymer, who expired on Sunday night at his residence, White Hills, at the ripe old age of sixty-nine. The deceased gentleman has been suffering from ill-health during the last few months, his affliction being an attack of erysipelas, to which he finally succumbed. Mr. Rymer was a resident of nineteen years standing, and, as a solicitor, had a very extensive and lucrative practice, which he lately shared with his son. When the deceased gentleman first arrived on Bendigo it was to represent the firm of Klingender, Charlsey, and Rymer, of which he was a member. After some time he withdrew from the firm, and started practice on his own account, and his high-class abilities, legal attainments, and extensive experience, gained in England, speedily won for him numerous clients. In London he was a member of a very influential firm of solicitors, who conducted an extensive equity and Parliamentary agency business. The deceased gentleman was widely respected for his undoubted honesty. One of his characteristics, by which he gained so many friends and clients, was the thoroughly disinterested and honest advice that he always tendered to anyone who consulted him; and often has he refused accepting a retainer in a case to which he saw no good defence, counselling his clients to settle, and thus save their pockets. Such men and actions are a credit to the profession. It was because the fullest trust and reliance could be placed upon Mr. Rymer's integrity, and also upon his clever knowledge of the law generally, that his practice grew to such dimensions, and the firm of Rymer and Son became so much respected. The deceased gentleman was of a particularly happy and genial turn of mind, and relished a laugh and joke, even though at his own expense, with the zest and good humour of a thorough Englishman and a gentleman. His companionship was of the pleasantest and most enjoyable kind, and as a friend he was warm-hearted, true, and sincere. During his long years of residence in this city he made many friends, and won the esteem of all with whom he came in contact, and it will be with sincere regret that these will learn that the good-natured, kind-hearted, and honest old gentleman is now numbered with the dead. Mr. Rymer some years ago took a deep interest in spiritual phenomena,

and published a work on the subject. He leaves no widow, but a grown up family of three children to mourn the loss of a good father. At the City Court yesterday, Mr. Cogdon, the police magistrate, as chairman of the bench, expressed his sorrow at hearing that Mr. Rymer was dead. He felt sure that he had but echoed the sentiments of all the magistrates who were in the habit of sitting on the bench when he said that he learned the sad intelligence with extreme regret, and felt the loss that the bar had sustained in the death of so able and upright a gentleman. Mr. Brown, Mr. Motteram, and Mr. Ellis, on behalf of the profession, also gave utterance to their deep regret. Many were the private expressions of sorrow, too, that the court *habitués* made; on all hands it was seen that the deceased gentleman was held in high esteem; and, indeed, any person who knew Mr. Rymer well could not but feel that his death has left a void which will not easily be filled."

#### SPIRITUAL LECTURES IN LIVERPOOL.

MEYERBEER HALL, in the above town, continues to receive intelligent and respectable audiences, to listen to Sunday lectures on Spiritualism.

Last Sunday afternoon Mr. Samuel Pride made some interesting remarks, by way of a "lesson," on a recent discourse by the Bishop of Manchester, pertaining to the "Prince of Darkness." This was followed by Dr. Hitchman's lecture, entitled, "Is Spiritualism of the Devil?" in the course of which he advanced the opinion that Satan is really the personification of an idea—a bodily demon, representing the principle of evil, being an Asiatic conception, derived by ancient Jews from Persians. In like manner death is personified as a grim skeleton, with a crown on its cranium, and a dart in its metacarpal bones, illustrative of universal despotic rule, and final conquest of old mortality. Minerva is the synonym of Wisdom, Mars of War, Cupid of Love, Bacchus of Wine, Venus of Beauty. Hell itself is personified as a huge monstrous dragon, whose gaping jaws are wide enough to swallow the planet Earth, together with the inhabitants thereof; in short, in all the sacred scriptures throughout the civilised world there is the same conception of a universal wicked spirit, which embodies in its own special personality all the evil, hatred, malice, uncharitableness, cruelty, and wrong of every nation under heaven, yet known in different countries by various names. Even so in the pantheistic idolatry of ancient classic literature, human passions and virtuous sentiments are personified, as deities of victory, benevolence, and justice, overcoming, like angels of love and mercy, pestilence, famine, and crime, which latter are often represented as living, veritable, personal devils. Religious mythology, with all its compounds of fear and ignorance, the lecturer affirmed, must give way to a science of man, that is based on the veracity of nature, against which superstition will contend in vain.

Mr. Thomas Lunt has added much interest to the Sunday services, in the afternoon, by his masterly performance of some choice selections of sacred music, by eminent composers.

Last Sunday evening Mr. John Priest took for the subject of his discourse, "Catholicity; or, the Quality of being Liberal." He pointed out that the study of nature, when properly pursued, does not lead the catholic philosophical mind to arrogate to itself the right of "designing" the spiritual universe, or criticising, by gratuitous assumption, the possible or impossible of natural revelations, and the why and the wherefore of all things spiritual. In the legitimate search for truth, the philosopher of catholic heroic soul will not be guilty of pride, folly, or shame, but walk humbly, devoutly, and tentatively.

THE British Association for the Advancement of Science will meet this year at Glasgow, and the proceedings will commence on Sept. 6th, under the presidency of Dr. Andrews, of Belfast. Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace will preside over the anthropological department. A good gathering is expected. The inhabitants of Glasgow and neighbourhood have subscribed no less than £6,000 towards the expenses.

A SCENE AT A GRAVE.—Last week an estimable old lady, Mrs. Potter, passed to spirit-life, strong in the orthodox faith, as were the entire family, except the wife of a son who resides in Boston. As a matter of course, their pastor was called upon to officiate at the funeral, and did so by reading a chapter in the Bible, and making a prayer at the house, after which the immense concourse proceeded to the cemetery, where, when the mourners were arranged around the grave and the coffin about to be lowered into the earth, Mrs. Jennie Potter (the person mentioned as the wife of the son residing in Boston) was controlled, and while in the entranced state addressed the friends and relatives of her whose material body lay before them, in such words of eloquence, tenderness, and love, as to strike not only those more immediately addressed, but the entire assemblage with amazement, and, too, such sweet words of comfort to those so sorrowfully in attendance. The unfeigned interest of none seemed so great as that of the pastor, who, after the coffin had been lowered, when asked to "pronounce the benediction," remarked simply, "I feel that I can add nothing to what has already been said," when slowly, silently, and apparently confounded, those assembled moved away satisfied at least, that what they had heard was not solely the production of Mrs. Potter, the medium, but from a higher source, and entitled to grave consideration. This was shown after the return of the friends to the house, when this company of church members asked the medium to form a circle and allow the spirit friends further conversation with them who had never before believed such to be a possibility. Mrs. Potter complied with the request, and the mother, whose earthly form had just been interred, came and spoke most convincingly.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

#### THE BRAVO CASE.

As set forth by the *Daily News* and *Standard*, great dissatisfaction prevails at the recent verdict in the Balham case, and it is not to be wondered at that the Judges of the Court of Queen's Bench should have hesitated to grant an order for a second inquest, or that, in the recent Government Proclamation offering a reward, it should be set forth that a coroner's jury called it "murder," instead of describing it as murder in unqualified terms. A fair verdict would have been that Mr. Bravo died of poisoning by antimony, but how administered there was no evidence to show. Stupid people are in the habit of forming strong conclusions on insufficient evidence, as if they were bound to come to a decision under the circumstances, and the present is a case in point.

Dr. Gully, one of the most kind-hearted men that ever drew breath, and who never saw Mr. Bravo in his life, has had his name dragged into the matter, simply because he once or twice accidentally met Mrs. Cox out of doors some time ago, and performed a good-natured act or two at her request.

The *Daily News* has published the most sensible comments on the subject. *Vanity Fair* recently published a likeness of Dr. Gully, accompanied by the following article:—

"There is not in the medical profession so remarkable a man, or one who has had so notable a career in such original paths, as Dr. Gully. He was born sixty-nine years ago, in Jamaica, and being sent to Liverpool, to Paris, and to Edinburgh, he worked with great determination and industry through the schools, and at twenty-one was proclaimed a Doctor in Medicine. He at once went to London, and struck out a line of his own by applying himself to the literature of his profession rather than to obtaining an immediate snug practice in it. He edited the *London Medical Journal*, and published many original articles, as well as translations of French and German medical works. But the ordinary grooves could never hold a man like him. He soon convinced himself of the new doctrine of hydropathy, and at thirty-four he was established in Malvern as one of its most promising apostles. For years he practised the treatment with much success and great accession of reputation. He was also devoted to phrenology, while his ordinary system of medicine was homœopathic; but what made him the man of influence he soon became was rather his very agreeable presence, his polished manners, and the charm of his companionship and converse, enriched with the stores of a large and varied experience. Added to all this, he possesses a strong will and great force of character, and being also an easy-going man of the world, his society has always been much in request by all who knew him. The connection of his name with the sudden death of the husband of one of his friends has doubtless caused him as much pain as it has brought surprise to the large circle of acquaintances who had learnt to honour and respect him."

"ANIMAL PARASITES AND MESSMATES."—The work with this title, by P. J. van Beneden (H. S. King and Co.) forms Vol. XX. of Messrs. King and Co.'s "International Scientific Series," and certainly abounds in curious information, though the reading of it hardly tends to increased peace of mind. We rather think we were the happier before we were informed, as we are here, that as no animal is free from parasites, so man himself affords hospitality to "some dozens of them." It is much more likely than not, it seems, that we, and the bulk of our readers with us, are nourishing "some *Acari*, of the genus *Simonea*, in the membrane of the nose." Our brain, our ears, our eyes, our blood, lungs, spinal marrow, nerves, muscles, and bones, all afford convenient abodes for these odious little inmates, to dwell in and prey upon us at their leisure. To avoid them is impossible, as we take them in the animal food we swallow and the water we drink. The author assures us that the vast majority of them don't do us the least harm—in fact, we are rather the better for them than otherwise; but still the reflection that we cannot keep ourselves to ourselves, do what we will, is extremely uncomfortable. By "Messmates" the author denotes those creatures which, fixing themselves either in the organism of or in close vicinity to some neighbour, help themselves to a share of his food, in distinction from the parasite, which gets its living out of the very substance of the animal to which it clings. In spite of the unsavoury nature of much of the information here furnished, and a certain diffuseness and want of arrangement in communicating it, the book may be read with profit by any one who does not mind being made occasionally to feel "creepy."—*The Echo*.

A MISSOURI PRODIGY.

A GREAT deal has been said and written about the great mathematical prodigy, "Reub." Fields, who lives at Fayetteville, Mo., says the *Warrensburgh Democrat*, and the more that is known of him, the greater wonder he becomes. He does not possess the simple rudiments of a book education—does not know a letter or figure from sight—and yet can solve the most intricate problem in an instant, or can perform a calculation in less than a minute that would require an hour by the ordinary modes. For instance: We gave him the day of the month and the year of our birth, and he told, in less than half a minute, our age in seconds, minutes, days and years. Give him the day of the month and the year of any event, however remote, and he will instantly give the day of the week.

We spent two hours with him last Saturday, and notwithstanding we have often talked with him and seen him display his wonderful gifts, yet we always find something new in him.

We placed a column of figures upon a paper, equal in length to the columns of an ordinary-sized ledger, and called them off to him in rapid succession, and when the last number was called, he gave the sum without a moment's hesitation. He did not see the paper, and would not have known a character on it if he had. One hour later he repeated those numbers in the exact order in which we called them to him. We then began at the bottom, and would call two or three numbers correctly, and then one incorrectly, and he would correct us by giving the proper number.

More mysterious than this to us is the fact of his ability to give correctly the time of the day or night whenever called upon, without any reference whatever to a timepiece.

In this town the timepieces are all regulated by railroad or St. Louis time. If you ask "Reub." the time he will say: "I am 15½ minutes past one; if you have railroad time you have so and so," giving the exact difference between sun time and railroad time.

Another remarkable fact is that he gives the exact time of his locality. If he is in Washington city he gives Washington city time; if in San Francisco the time there. He cannot possibly do these things by any method of calculating the passing time, for he will give time as accurately when waked from sleep at night as if it were daylight and the sun shining.

There seems to be nothing too great in numbers for his mind to grasp, and yet nothing too small. He can tell what the interest of one cent. would be in three seconds at the rate of 10 per cent. per annum as readily and as easily as we could tell the interest on a dollar for one year at the same rate per cent.—*Spiritual Scientist* (Boston, U.S.)

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THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED.—The distinguishing features of Mohammed's teaching were love for man and loyalty to God, and what has been called his intense egotism was only an appreciation of his glorious mission. Despising carnal weapons, yet, like Christ, he, in moments of wrath, hurled withering invectives against his opposers, and like Him he taught humility and sublime charity. His virtue was above reproach. His devotion to Cadizah is an Eastern proverb. He never frequented the wine shops or looked on the amusements of the vulgar. He was fond of children, visited the sick, was gentle, humble, and kind. He always waited on himself, mended his own garments, milked his own goats, and never struck anybody in his life. When asked to give a curse, he said, "I have not been sent to curse, but to be a mercy to mankind." Once when unkind to a beggar a verse of the Koran reproached him—"Use no violence in religion." He disdained the life of a hermit, yet imitated the simplicity of that life. He never tasted wine, and his hunger was appeased with a scanty allowance of barley bread, with milk and honey on rare occasions. His ordinary diet consisted of dates and water. It must be admitted that the character of Mohammed underwent a great change after the hegira. The persecuted reformer, begging a hearing for the inspirations received in the solitude of the cave and the waste, was received by the people of Medina with open arms. His scattered disciples in Abyssinia resorted to his standard, the covert ones at Mecca rallied around him, and he became a chieftain at the head of an army able to enforce his doctrines. He maintained an austere simplicity. When he preached he leaned against a palm tree, not indulging himself in the luxury of a chair pulpit. The ambassador from Mecca was astonished by the respect and reverence paid him by the faithful. "I have seen," said he, "Chassees of Persia and Caesars of Rome, but never did I behold a king among his subjects, like Mohammed among his companions."—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

On Tuesday evening, last week, a Council meeting of the National Association of Spiritualists was held at 38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C., under the presidency of Mr. Alexander Calder. The other members present were Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. D. H. Wilson, Mr. R. Pearce, the Rev. W. W. Newbould, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. A. Joy, Mr. E. D. Rogers, Mrs. Rogers, Mr. Glendinning, and Miss Houghton.

In the absence of the secretary, Mrs. Carter Blake performed the duties of the office, and, at the beginning of the meeting, on the motion of Mr. Rogers, she was instructed by the Council to prepare a report of the proceedings to be presented to the Correspondence Committee. Mr. Joy seconded this motion.

Several new members were then elected.

A letter from Mr. Martin Smith was read on the subject of the Prize Essays, and resigning his appointment on the Correspondence Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Rogers, Mr. Algernon Joy was appointed a member of the committee in the place of Mr. Martin Smith, and the consideration of the rest of Mr. Smith's letter was deferred till the next meeting.

The Chairman read the report of the Correspondence Committee. It set forth that at a meeting of the committee at which Messrs. Dawson, Rogers, Bennett, and Calder were present, a resolution was passed expressing the opinion that it was an act of discourtesy on the part of Mr. Harrison to write a letter to the Council, and to publish it before they received it.

The letter was then produced, but not read. It set forth that it would be published in advance, in order to give the Council time to discover and record the alleged inaccuracies in a report in *The Spiritualist*.

Mr. Rogers then made a speech relating chiefly to personal matters; in the course of it he admitted there was no error in the newspaper report in question, but complained that the remarks made by himself and Mr. Bennett about the abolition of Mr. Joy's honorary secretaryship had been omitted.

Mr. E. T. Bennett moved that a short report of the proceedings of the Council be drawn up monthly, printed upon the agenda, and circulated among the members of the Association.

This was seconded by Mr. Joy and passed unanimously, Mr. Fitz-Gerald remarking that the contents of the Minute Book ought rather to be printed, and not a version of the proceedings drawn up by a committee.

Mr. Bennett said that if Mr. Rogers felt any annoyance from remarks made about him in *The Spiritualist*, he hoped that he would feel, from his unanimous election as vice-president, that there was a general feeling of confidence in him on the Council. He then embodied this remark in a formal resolution, which was passed.

The revision of the rules and constitution was then proceeded with. It was agreed that it was better to abolish the proxy system of voting, and that every member should give in his own vote at elections of members of the Council.

The rule prohibiting payment to members of Council for services rendered to the Association, was attempted to be abolished, but after a division was retained by a small majority.

A discussion took place about making a rule of one of the bye-laws, enforcing members of the Council who had foreign diplomas, to place the name of the town or college whence such diploma was obtained, after the indicating letters in any printed document of the Association containing their names.

Mr. Rogers spoke against the incorporation of this with the rules, and said that even as a bye-law it would never work, and had not been enforced in the past.

Mr. Joy was against the transformation of this bye-law into a rule, although he had been requested to move that the transformation be made. He thought that it ought to remain a bye-law.

The proposed addition to the rules was accordingly not made.

After the transaction of some minor business the proceedings closed.

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THE ARGUMENT OF DESIGN.—These religious people see nothing but design everywhere, and personal, intelligent interference in everything. They insist that the universe has been created, and that the adaptation of means to ends is perfectly apparent. They point us to the sunshine, to the April rain, and to all there is of beauty and use in the world. Did it ever occur to them that a cancer is as beautiful in its development as is the reddest rose? That what they are pleased to call the adaptation of means to ends, is as apparent in the cancer as in the April rain! How beautiful the process of digestion! By what ingenious methods the blood is poisoned so that the cancer shall have food! By what wonderful contrivances the entire system of man is made to pay tribute to this divine and charming cancer. See by what admirable instrumentalities it feeds itself from the surrounding quivering, dainty flesh! See how it gradually but surely expands and grows! By what marvellous mechanism it is supplied with long and slender roots that reach out to the most secret nerves of pain for sustenance and life! What beautiful colours it presents! Seen through the microscope, it is a miracle of order and beauty. All the ingenuity of man cannot stop its growth. Think of the amount of thought it must have required to invent a way by which the life of one man might be given to produce one cancer. Is it possible to look upon it and doubt there is design in the universe, and that the inventor of this wonderful cancer must be infinitely powerful, ingenious, and good?—*Col. Ingersoll*.

## A MATERIALISATION SEANCE WITH DR. SLADE.

BY WM. H. HARRISON.

THIS evening Dr. Slade was kind enough to invite me to an experimental materialisation *séance* with him. He does not sit for these phenomena, except on rare occasions, because they exhaust his vitality too much.

He had no cabinet, unless a common table may be dignified by that name. He placed his light little wooden rectangular table, size about five feet by four, with no cover, three feet from one corner of the room, first turning the table upside down to show me that there was nothing concealed underneath it. The gaslight was turned very low, but all the objects in the room could be seen in outline. Dr. Slade also was in full view, as he sat by my side, with his hands on mine, waiting for spirits to appear. We were sitting on one side of the table watching the corner of the room opposite us, for there, Dr. Slade informed me, the spirits were likely to materialise. After waiting for about five minutes, a full-sized human figure gradually rose in the corner. It was covered, all but the face, with white drapery, and there was not light enough to distinguish the features. The form, which I could see from head to waist, remained in the corner of the room, nearly motionless, for a minute or two, after which it sank down until the view of it was cut off by the further edge of the table. I then asked for "more light," in order to see it better, should it rise once more. Dr. Slade accordingly turned up the gas a little, and at the same time told me not to move in the slightest degree; he also was disinclined to move himself to turn up the gas, as he had an impression that absolute stillness on our part strengthened the conditions favouring the appearance of the form.

A second time it rose, and on this occasion I was able to see that the face was that of a woman, with beautiful features, so far as the dim light would allow them to be seen. There was not sufficient light to enable me to see whether the features were flexible and living, or whether the apparition was some representative or symbolical figure, manufactured and materialised by spirits unseen at the *séance*. From past experience I have every reason to believe that spirits sometimes exhibit forms without life in them in the way just mentioned. Perhaps at the next *séance* there may be light enough for me to be able to state whether these forms are living or otherwise.

One thing was perfectly clear, namely, that Dr. Slade had nothing to do with the production of the form which I saw; he, like myself, was a passive spectator. He stated that he knew the spirit, and that she was related to him.

38, Great Russell-street, August 10th, 1876.

## MESSAGES AT A SEANCE WITH DR. SLADE.

BY C. CARTER BLAKE, D.D. SCI.

I HAVE been asked to state the nature of the "intelligible" messages received by me at the *séance* with Dr. Slade described in the last number of *The Spiritualist*.

The first, as I have stated, was from "Allie."

The second was "J. R. O'N."

To my question—"Does that mean John Reynolds O'Neil?" written by me on the slate, which was afterwards turned down, and invisible to Dr. Slade, the answer in writing was:—

"Yes, 133 is Charles F. Crokats."

The above are the real names and indicate those of War Office fellow-clerks of mine in 1859. Mr. O'Neil, M.A., of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, died on July 28th last. There was a strong resemblance between his peculiar handwriting and that on the slate.

A NEATLY-PRINTED little pamphlet by Mrs. Weldon, containing particulars about her Orphanage, can be had gratis on application to Mr. W. H. Harrison, 38, Great Russell-street, London, W.C.

On Sunday, August 6th, Mr. J. J. Morse gave two addresses at the hall of the Newcastle Society of Spiritualists in Newgate-street, Newcastle, that in the afternoon on "The Mission of Spiritualism; its Nature and Value." Mr. J. T. Rhodes presided. In the evening the subject was the "Workshops of God," and Mr. T. P. Barkas presided; on the platform was Mr. W. C. Robson, who, before the address, read the leading article from *The Spiritualist* of Aug. 4th. The address itself was one of the best given through the mediumship of Mr. Morse.

## SPIRITUALISM IN CONTINENTAL EUROPE.

NO. II.

BY EMILY KISLINGBURY.

Wimille, Pas de Calais, Aug. 11th.

IN consequence of the high westerly winds which have prevailed on this coast during the past week, it has been impossible for us to make any of the distant excursions which Miss Blackwell had planned for my visit; but one has only to go outside the door to feast one's eyes on a landscape of varied and ever-changing beauty. The hilly and broken nature of the ground gives that most charming feature of a variety of middle distances, presenting a vivid contrast of colour, according to the crops grown, and endless gradations of light and shade. From almost every point the sea forms the horizon, the deep blue of which, bounded by the gray line of the English cliffs, added to the clearness and brilliance of the French sky, provides an exquisite setting to the landscape. Then the greatest charm of all is the almost preternatural stillness of this spot, which seems created on purpose for the refreshment of weary brains and tired-out human nature.

It is evident, however, that on brains or souls not yet awakened to activity, solitude has a stupefying effect. The Madame who drove me from Boulogne in her *equipage*, and who may be about fifty years of age, has not yet seen the sea at Wimereux, and until Miss Blackwell began to give her commissions in Boulogne, she had never been but in one single street in that town, though she has driven there every week for years past to sell the produce of her little farm. The children in the few cottages about here have most of them never seen the sea, except from a distance, although it is only about a mile off; and a ploughboy to whom Miss Blackwell once pointed out the beauties of the sunset, seemed to think the sight beneath his notice, though all very well for wonder-seeking travellers and foreigners like ourselves.

During the rough weather outside I have been wandering pleasantly, and, I hope, profitably, in the gardens of the Spiritist philosophy with Allan Kardec, and am beginning to find my way up and down the two volumes Miss Blackwell has translated, and *La Gènesè*, which is the last of the series, and exceedingly beautiful, being a summing up of the ideas imparted from various sources during the long investigations of the writer. One most striking feature in Allan Kardec's writings is the minute foreseeing of the manifestations which were later to be developed, and of the difficulties, moral and physical, which would attend them, as we are at present beginning to realise. This is more particularly observable in the *Mediums' Book*, which was written in 1861, eight or nine years after the *Spirits' Book*. The great value, however, of the Kardec writings is, in my opinion, that they set forth as the aim of his doctrines, the moral elevation of man—an aim which I once fondly hoped was to be achieved by what we understand as Spiritualism, but which experience shows that mere phenomenalism will never accomplish. When I come personally among the followers of Kardec in Paris, I shall be better able to judge whether any good moral effect is being produced by the beliefs which his philosophy inculcates; certain it is that a good moral tone prevails in all the books and journals connected therewith that I have as yet seen. I believe, also, that both in America and England many "righteous souls are vexed," and many faithful workers are becoming heart-weary, on account of the irregularities which the pursuit of phenomenal Spiritualism seems rather to have caused than to have checked.

I regret to find that no other correspondent of *The Spiritualist* has taken up the question mooted by me of the fact of transformation as against materialisation. A very interesting case bearing upon this subject is cited in the *Mediums' Book*, page 133, which is too long for me to quote now, but which I recommend to the attention of your readers.

I leave this charming place and my kind and pleasant hostess next week, when, after spending a few days at St. Valéry-en-Caux with the family of Prince Wittgenstein, I shall go on to Paris, where Madame Leymarie will arrange for me to visit her husband in prison, and where I hope to



gain much information as to the past history and present state of the spiritual movement in France.

I am writing the last part of this letter in Miss Blackwell's little cabin on the sands at Wimereux, where we have been spending the day. Miss Blackwell says she wishes she could send to the National Association of Spiritualists sketches of their secretary walking barefooted across the wet places on the sands, and dabbling in the sea at low water, carrying the canvas shoes, embroidered in gorgeous colours, with hempen soles, which are the only possible and proper *chaussure* (only to be translated by foot-gear) for this country.

#### WASHINGTON IRVING ON COMMUNION WITH SPIRITS.

AMONG those who have testified to their longing for the consolation which the belief in angelic guardianship brings, and to their high appreciation of the beautiful truths which underlie it, was Washington Irving, and it is in this language his desires found utterance:

"I am now alone in my chamber. The family have long since retired. I have heard their footsteps die away, and the doors clap to after them. The murmur of voices and the peal of remote laughter no longer reach the ear. The clock from the church, in which so many of the former inhabitants of this house lie buried, has chimed the awful hour of midnight.

"I have sat by the window and mused upon the dusky landscape, watching the lights disappearing one by one from the distant village; and the moon rising in her silent majesty, and leading up all the silvery pomp of heaven. As I have gazed upon these quiet graves and shadowy lawns, silvered over and imperfectly lighted by dewy moonshine, my mind has been crowded by 'thick-coming fancies' concerning those spiritual beings which

"——— walk the earth  
Unseen both when we wake and when we sleep."

"Are there, indeed, such beings? Is this space between us and the Deity filled up by innumerable orders of spiritual beings, forming the same gradations between the human soul and divine perfection that we see prevailing from humanity down to the meanest insect? It is a sublime and beautiful doctrine inculcated by the early fathers, that there are guardian angels appointed to watch over cities and nations, to take care of good men, and to guard and guide the steps of helpless infancy. Even the doctrine of departed spirits returning to visit the scenes and beings which were dear to them during the body's existence, though it has been debased by the absurd superstitions of the vulgar, in itself is awfully solemn and sublime.

"However lightly it may be ridiculed, yet the attention involuntarily yielded to it whenever it is made the subject of serious discussion, and its prevalence in all ages and countries, even among newly-discovered nations, that have had no previous interchange of thought with other parts of the world, prove it to be one of those mysterious and instinctive beliefs to which, if left to ourselves, we should naturally incline. . . .

"In spite of all the pride of reason and philosophy, a vague doubt will still lurk in the mind, and perhaps will never be eradicated, as it is a matter that does not admit of positive demonstration. Who yet has been able to comprehend and describe the nature of the soul; its mysterious connection with the body; or in what part of the frame it is situated? We know merely that it does exist; but whence it came, and entered into us, and how it operates, are all matters of mere speculation and contradictory theories. If, then, we are thus ignorant of this spiritual essence, even while it forms a part of ourselves, and is continually present to our consciousness, how can we pretend to ascertain or deny its power and operations, when released from its fleshy prison-house?

"Everything connected with our spiritual nature is full of doubt and difficulty. 'We are fearfully and wonderfully made,' we are surrounded by mysteries, and we are mysteries even to ourselves. It is more the manner in which this superstition has been degraded, than its intrinsic absurdity, that has brought it into contempt. Raise it above the frivolous purposes to which it has been applied, strip it of

the gloom and horror with which it has been enveloped, and there is none in the whole circle of visionary creeds that could more delightfully elevate imagination or more tenderly affect the heart. It would become a sovereign comfort at the bed of death, soothing the bitter tear wrung from us by the agony of mortal separation.

"What could be more consoling than the idea that the souls of those we once loved were permitted to return and watch over our welfare?—that affectionate and guardian spirits sat by our pillows when we slept, keeping a vigil over our most helpless hours?—that beauty and innocence, which had languished into the tomb, yet smiled unseen around us, revealing themselves in those blest dreams wherein we live over again the hours of past endearments? A belief of this kind would, I should think, be a new incentive to virtue, rendering us circumspect, even in our most secret moments, from the idea that those we once loved and honoured were invisible witnesses of all our actions.

"It would take away, too, from the loneliness and destitution which we are apt to feel more and more as we get on in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, and find that those who set forward with us lovingly and cheerily on the journey, have one by one dropped away from our side. Place the superstition in this light, and I confess I should like to be a believer in it. I see nothing in it that is incompatible with the tender and merciful nature of our religion, or revolting to the wishes and affections of the heart.

"There are departed beings that I have loved as I never again shall love in this world; that have loved me as I never again shall be loved. If such beings do even retain in their blessed spheres the attachments which they felt on earth; if they take an interest in the poor concerns of transient mortality, and are permitted to hold communion with those whom they have loved on earth, I feel as if now, at this deep hour of night, in this silence and solitude, I could receive their visitations with the most solemn but unalloyed delight."

THE *North of England Review* of August 4th contained an excellent portrait of Mr. Skipsey, of Ashington, Northumberland, also lengthy extracts from *The Spiritualist* concerning his powers of clairvoyance.

PICNIC OF THE NEWCASTLE SPIRITUALISTS.—On Monday, Aug. 7th, under the auspices of the Newcastle Spiritualist Society a picnic was held in the grounds of Mr. W. R. Armstrong, at High Cross Lodge, Elswick-lane, near Benwell. This scene of the gathering is in the extreme western suburb of the town, situated on the brow of a hill overlooking the valley of the Tyne; southward may be observed the Team Valley, leading towards Durham, with Ravensworth Castle on the right; and on the west are uninterrupted views of Tynedale, with its hills and vales for miles. The weather was all that could be desired, with a soft westerly breeze and a grey sky, pleasant for out-door exercise, without being too warm; the consequence was that about one hundred and fifty persons were attracted to the place. The vinery and greenhouses were inspected; there was boating on a small lake, and swings for the children under the trees. At tea-time the visitors began to assemble on the croquet-lawn, when their attention was arrested by the unexpected arrival of a photographer's van, containing Mr. Mendelson, of Oxford-street, Newcastle, with two assistants. These, in a short space of time, soon grouped, first the committee and mediums, then as many of the general company as possible, so that some lasting memento of a pleasing meeting will hereafter be obtainable. Tea over, Mr. J. J. Morse addressed the meeting, with Mr. W. C. Robson in the chair. Mr. Morse observed that twelve months ago he had his first experience of out-door camp-life in America among Spiritualists, and he hoped that next year the society would—encouraged by their present success—hold a meeting on a still more extended scale. After an address in the trance condition on "Life's Four Seasons, their Uses and Lessons," Mr. Nicholson proposed, and Mr. Mould seconded, a vote of thanks to Mr. Armstrong for the free use of his beautiful grounds. This was heartily accorded. Mr. Armstrong, in acknowledgment, said that he was only too happy to be able to do something that would in some measure compensate for the benefit to him of the great truths of Spiritualism. He had investigated the subject for some years now, and it had engaged his attention night and day. Mr. H. A. Kersey, in proposing a vote of thanks to the chairman, said that he stood there a living example of one of the uses of Spiritualism, for, in November last, he was suffering from rheumatic fever and inflammation of the lungs at the same time. He was attended by two of the most eminent medical men in Newcastle, and was given up by them. Then his sister, who was a medium, took the case in hand, and, acting solely under the direction of spirit guides, was enabled to restore him to his present state of health; he, therefore, felt it to be his bounden duty to do all he could for Spiritualism. A vote of thanks having been passed to the chairman and to the ladies, another hour or so was spent on the lawn, in the cool breezes and evening moonlight, and thus terminated a happy day, unalloyed by the slightest mishap or inharmonious action of any kind.

## Poetry.

## THESE TWO.

They stood together in the sun;  
His glory shone around them both.  
Two, did I say? nay, they were one  
By holy word and plighted troth.  
A strong firm arm about her prest;  
A tranquil light on sea and shore;  
A golden head upon his breast—  
A maiden smiling—nothing more.

A little churchyard on the hill;  
A heavy cloud o'er sea and wave;  
A deathlike silence, sad and still;  
Green turf above a new made grave;  
A black-robed figure kneeling there,  
A blissful dream now past and o'er,  
A golden head bowed low with care—  
A maiden weeping—nothing more.

CAROLINE A. BURKE.

## A LYRIC OF THE GLEAMING SICKLE.

BY J. T. MARKLEY.

Hail, genii of the sheaves!  
Once more ring musical the holy blades!  
A nation's bread, fire-hued, on groaning glades,  
Cerean beauty leaves!  
Work on! ye god-called, song urged, sun lash'd swains  
Brown Autumn's affluent yield is on the plains,  
Sweet days and cool calm nights,  
The rare companionship of faithful moons—  
That follow playfully unmoistened noons—  
These be the tokens of the harvest-tide!  
Each field, earth's heiress! witness! lover! bride!  
Here labour is half love,  
And merry-hearted toilers grumble not  
Or frown upon their lot;  
The seal upon their work is from above,  
What rapture! hallow'd sweat! united glee!  
Quaint snatches of the psalms that used to be,  
The majesty of labour drunk with song,  
The weak arm willing, and the willing, strong;  
What pleasing mystery!  
A world supported by the breasts of hills,  
As children helplessly  
Turn to the blue-veined, snowy fountain rills  
Of mothers' paps, which feed  
Dependents in their need.  
Bless'd be those hills! which bear, in amber trail,  
Rich corn, awaiting punishment of flail!  
Thrice bless'd Cerealia—feast of yearly good  
Warm bursts of plenty where the spring plough stood!  
Be this an August birth?  
Or is it not green beauty's ripening day  
Of age and fruitful worth?  
No more with April's laughing suns to play.  
'Tis now the gleaming sickle time,  
The glad thanksgiving bells may chime;  
The proud and smiling farmer gathers in  
What toil has sown, and toil can only win;  
E'en Ruth, the hopeful gleaner, lingers at the gate,  
Nor must the softly hooded maiden, empty wait!

Peterborough Advertiser.

## Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers.]

## ART MAGIC.

SIR,—Through the courtesy of an English friend, I have been favoured with two copies of your journal, each containing letters which I can simply characterise as abusive of the work which I have recently edited and published entitled *Art Magic*. Truth to say, I find nothing in either letter which would induce me to waste time and postage in answering; but there are in this country several readers of *Art Magic*, who, like myself, feel indignant at the reiteration of these senseless and abusive letters, and who urge me, in the interest of truth and justice, to put in a protest against this illiberal method of treating a work which has excited the highest admiration and praise from hundreds of its readers, both in this country and in Europe. I am entirely prepared for all the bitterness which theological bigotry could vent on this work, nor can I wonder that those who deem their idols are assailed by the unanswerable truths put forth in *Art Magic*, should avail themselves of any excuse they can find to denounce it; yet I am somewhat surprised that so high toned and valuable a journal as *The Spiritualist* should lend its columns to such merely illogical denunciation as that which appears in the issue of June 14th over the signature of "John Rouse." Mr. John Rouse's opinion of *Art Magic* is, "that it is a mass of antiquated rubbish." To those who adjust their methods of thinking by Mr. John Rouse's opinion, no doubt this is a piece of valuable information. The same high authority states that he has "read all that the book contains in other works." Now, it is not for the sake of combating Mr. John Rouse's opinions or statements—neither of which materially affect me—that I now write, but as straws will tell which way the wind blows, so this great critic's opinion furnishes me with a text for an inquiry which many others, besides myself, are disposed to make. It is this: Will any of the great savants of my own country, those, for instance, who can find nothing new in *Art Magic*, inform me what constitutes the real

value of a book? Might an ignorant individual like myself presume to inquire of the John Rouses of literature, whether it is the novelty of the statements made, or the manner of their statement, which attaches the stamp of merit to a work?

If it be the former, then "Mother Goose," and all the new ideas which pervade fairy tales and one-syllable legends, should be more highly esteemed than Shakespeare, Byron, Goethe, and Schiller, none of whom are especially distinguished, that I can learn, for putting forth new ideas, although they have acquired some reputation for incarnating old and familiar ideas in super-excellent forms. With my very limited powers of critical analysis, I am unable to discover any difference in the substance of the historical facts recorded by Peter Parley and Macaulay, yet somehow the manner of the two records seems to differ, constituting the one the historian of ten and twelve year old readers, and the other an authority even with the contemporaries of Mr. John Rouse.

In my early years I was in the habit of attending the church services of my own country, but I never remember anything particularly original falling on my listening ears, even when the utterances proceeded from the consecrated lips of Deans and Bishops, yet what orthodox individual would gainsay the value of the sacred platitudes I then heard, because they were not especially new or original?

I presume Mr. John Rouse is too devoted a Bible student to have forgotten that "there is nothing new under the sun;" poor Thomas Hood would have added, except "Christian Charity;" still, I, in my ignorance of all that has ever been written on such subjects, deemed that the mode in which the author of *Art Magic* had brought together in one grand prospective view the records of ancient magic, their origin and progress, explaining and illustrating them with mediæval mysticism and modern spiritual science, might form a record worthy even of the attention of such enlightened and universally informed Spiritualists as Mr. John Rouse.

Nay, more; in my misapprehension of the vast expanse of knowledge which Spiritualists of the "Rouse" type have attained to, I had deemed, as I stated in the editor's preface to *Art Magic*, that "the sublimity of the sentiments, the grandeur of the intention, and the high-toned philosophy which pervaded this noble work," might make amends for the absence of that startling novelty, far more discoverable in a Christmas pantomime than in the ethics of John Stuart Mill or Thomas Carlyle. As to the chances that the Spiritualists of this generation will become lunatics through the study of *Art Magic*, I can only say with all sincerity, it is a great pity but what they would try the experiment. Some few hundreds of the subscribers to *Art Magic*, who are as yet outside of the lunatic asylum and likely to remain so, consider my friend's work of such immense value that despite the stringent conditions he has laid down for limiting its publication, they have informed me they are almost disposed to risk all consequences, and issue another edition, for that, in their opinion, this work sent broadcast over the world would do more to hinder many Spiritualists from acting as if they ought to be in a lunatic asylum, than any publication of the age. To set Mr. Rouse's anxious mind at rest, let me state that the author of *Art Magic* is not only an accomplished magician himself, but a thorough "adept" in all the magical arts he describes, and yet some hundreds of people almost as well informed as Mr. Rouse, deem what they term his "magnificent work" a pretty good proof of his sanity. As to me, his humble follower, friend, and editor, although I have only seen, and learned, and practised, enough to be assured "there are more things in heaven and earth" than you, Mr. Rouse, dream of in your philosophy, I am still not quite mad enough to underrate the value of *Art Magic* because it has not attained to the impossible discovery of something that Mr. Rouse does not know already. I can only say those who know everything that is in *Art Magic* had better set themselves seriously to work to apply their knowledge; they would then correct some of the idolatries to which my countrymen are addicted in their forms of worship; they would improve their unscientific apprehensions of Spiritualism by the new, clear, and scientific suggestions laid down in *Art Magic*, and they would certainly find their very narrow views of Spiritualism considerably enlarged by the author's broad, reverend, and exalted ideas of spiritual existence throughout the universe. As a concluding piece of advice to your correspondent, Mr. Editor, permit me to suggest that when he essays the office of a critic—"those butchers of human character, whose chief delight is to exercise their carving knives upon the bodies of slain reputations, without regard to qualification for the act of dissection." Vide author's preface to *Art Magic*, page 8)—he might take a valuable lesson in the art from one of the best, most philosophical, and highly informed writers of which our ranks can boast, namely, "M.A. (Oxon)," who, in his recent critique on *Art Magic* in *Human Nature*, says—with all that modesty which belongs to true merit—"I know my own ignorance of the subject too well to venture on any theorising. . . . The book covers far too wide a surface for me to deal with it exhaustively, and I foresee that the author will anathematise me with all those arts in which he is such a proficient, for my ignorant and imperfect treatment of his book." Again, this true gentleman and learned scholar says—"One says rudely, 'It is a Yankee sell; there is nothing new in it!'" "M.A. (Oxon)," goes on to say, "I can only say there is a great deal that I believe to be true—a great deal that was new to me; a great deal, moreover, that I believe to be very necessary for the world to know." Not necessary, of course, for critics who, having read it all through, can see nothing in it "but a mass of antiquated rubbish;" but necessary—O most profound and all accomplished student!—for poor ignoramuses like me; not wholly despicable in the eyes of "M.A. (Oxon)," and some four or five hundred of the best informed Spiritualists of America—including the learned linguist, scholar, writer, and traveller, Dr. G. L. Ditson, from whom I am just now in receipt of his views of *Art Magic*, in which he concludes in these words—"Would that I had such a friend as its author! I am profoundly moved by it; it throws light into the very depths of nature; it opens new worlds of thought, and I feel like veiling my face

before its exalted views of the source of life, light, and beauty." Promising Mr. John Rouse another work from the pen of the author of *Art Magic* on which to exercise his power of critical analysis and acumen before the said author or I (still his editor) retire into that lunatic asylum to which our studies ought to condemn us, I am, Mr. Editor, yours faithfully,

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN.

118, West Chester Park, Boston, Mass., America.

#### SEANCES IN NEWCASTLE.

SIR,—By the advice of our spirit friends we have formed a select circle, limited to ten, at the house of Mr. Petty, Suffolk-street, Newcastle. The phenomena through the Pettys are of the most convincing and startling nature. We took advantage of Newcastle race week, and the consequent general holiday, to hold a pic-nic in the beautiful grounds and garden of Mr. Armstrong, at Elswick, and, after enjoying ourselves to the fullest extent, we returned and met at Mr. Petty's, where we had a *séance* for the materialisation of spirit forms. The manifestations were truly wonderful. A visitor saw the spirit of his wife, with her infant in her arms. I saw my wife and aged mother. Let no man tell me I was a dupe, or that these were but hallucinations of an unbalanced mind. Could I, who had known my dear mother, not recognise her form, and that no ordinary one? She was many stones heavier and several inches taller than the medium, William Petty, aged eighteen. I have had the good fortune to witness some grand physical phenomena, but never such as of late.

On Friday night last we had a most successful *séance*. The cabinet was just an iron rod, with curtain stretched from wall to wall, forming the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle. There was nothing in this cabinet but a banjo, a bell, and a paper tube. The mediums were all outside. Those present were Mrs. Petty, Wm. Petty, Joseph Petty, W. S. Robertson, Mrs. W. S. Robertson—all mediums; further, there were Mr. Petty, Mr. Lee, and myself. We sat for physical manifestations in the light, and soon we heard the voice of John King, congratulating us on the harmony of our circle. A great deal depends on harmony. Presently the banjo was played, the bell rung, and other pleasing little things took place. After a recess of a quarter of an hour we sat for materialisations, all of us outside the cabinet. After a short time we could see the—may I call it "the aura"?—collect on the floor, near the middle opening of the curtains, and assume the dimensions of a full-grown figure, very white, but wanting in definition. Suddenly Wm. Petty was controlled, and took his chair into the cabinet. Then we had the pleasure of seeing and hearing John King; so distinct were his features that I should know him again were I to meet him; the light was such that we could see the time by our watches. He showed himself several times, and remained in sight for two or three minutes together. He was asked to show his medium at the same time as himself. He had done this on many occasions, and we thought it unnecessary for him to do it again, as it was at the expense of power. However, he showed his medium, with himself alongside, and remained in full view for six or seven minutes, answering questions.

One afternoon the Pettys called at W. H. Lambelle's, South Shields, to tea. I arrived at Shields by the five o'clock train from Newcastle, and we had a *séance*, at which several materialised spirits appeared.

JOS. ROBERTSON.

Dunston, Gateshead.

#### MORE ABOUT "S. J. SABEL."

SIR,—In your issue of August 4th, a letter from G. Wiese, speaks of a man named Sabel as having been present at "several of my *séances*, and also at one in which many others took part, when a light was struck, and it was discovered that Mr. Home had deceived them, by means of wires and other mechanical appliances." I beg to state that I never met a Mr. Sabel, and that the whole story is a groundless fabrication, and a most unmitigated falsehood. Such an incident never occurred, either with Mr. Sabel or any one else.

D. D. HOME.

Clarens, Switzerland, August 8th, 1876.

#### FIRST STEPS IN SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—I once wrote you a letter describing my position as investigator, after satisfying myself of the genuineness of various startling phenomena, which had been ascertained to be "facts," and I now proceed to show (for the benefit of brother inquirers) how I can reconcile evidences of deception that have occasionally accompanied these phenomena, with a belief that any portion is genuine. Further, I shall have to show grounds for believing in spirit influence at all, after having, as I believe to be the case, ascertained that the spirits themselves are in some cases no more to be relied on than their mediums.

I have enumerated most of the usual physical manifestations, which I have seen occur under convincing test conditions, so that I have no longer a doubt as to the possibility of their genuineness, apart from all trickery or deception. I have, however, found nearly all the same manifestations produced by deception, often through the same mediums, and by the spirits professing to be the same through whom genuine phenomena have occurred, and in some cases deception has been mixed up with truth (when test conditions have been relaxed) in a manner that has seemed needless, and has been certainly bewildering on account of its apparent objectlessness, for if (as an example) a genuine materialised spirit hand can be shown during one part of a *séance*, why should the hand of the medium be substituted at another time (during trance) to produce the same effect, and yet this has been often observed by most investigators who have got beyond their first sittings.

Sometimes the medium will, while unconscious or controlled, attempt some absurd and palpable act of deception, which he could not be silly enough to do in a normal state, and except the strictest conditions are kept up, it is notorious that in any public or mixed *séance*, where the mental conditions are not thoroughly harmonious, few manifestations can be relied on as being the result of what is called "spirit power."

It seems, therefore, that these spiritual gifts, whether on the part of the medium, or the unseen intelligence acting through the medium, or even direct and apparently without human agency, are by no means necessarily of a high, truthful, and noble character, and that neither those who prompt the communications from "the other side," nor those who are made the medium of such communications on this side, are always ennobled or elevated by such mysterious powers. And here, I think, is the first great stumbling block and obstacle preventing Spiritualism at present from taking firm hold of the educated masses, and at once occupying that grand position claimed for it by its apostles, and to which it would be entitled if no such obstacles to the reception of its truths as I have pointed out existed. Though disappointed, however, at the human fallibility exhibited by the teachers of Spiritualism, I am not so utterly dismayed as to lose all hope in the prospect of finding "light," and think I have a glimmer already in satisfying myself that a most unmistakably genuine unseen intelligent force exists outside our own senses, and that it can be communicated with, and can communicate with us, independently of our own wishes or thoughts. This is the first true step in spiritual knowledge, and is worth all the trouble and doubts that can possibly have been expended in learning it. From the vantage ground thus gained we can calmly look both backwards and forwards, so as to try to see what we have left, what acquired, and what we can discover opening before us. In a few words, we have left some rather dense bits of ignorance and bigotry behind us; have arrived at the point of admitting that we do not know all the laws that can operate on matter; and that what our blind and scientific ignorance pronounces to be impossible, is nevertheless an actual fact of daily occurrence. Having thus gained one first glimpse of knowledge of the "impossible" it behoves us to open our minds as well as our eyes, and try another "child's" step towards possibly discovering a little more of what our wise men say cannot be, simply because they have not found it out, but which we know is, and must be, because we have found it to be!

As regards the prospects opened up, these will depend greatly upon individual capacity to receive a new kind of knowledge, which may be found to conflict very much with old teachings and prejudices. As, however, nothing but facts, well vouched for and proved, ought to be acknowledged, I do not see anything to alarm the inquirer in such further pursuit of knowledge, and the chief point we have now to address ourselves to discover (after admitting the truth of some superhuman intelligent force) is the origin and capabilities of the new element.

That it is of a "spiritual" nature, according to our ordinary meaning of the term, no one can deny, as intelligent effects are produced without any visible means; but must it necessarily follow that our departed friends, or brethren from the human race, are the immediate or even suggestive actors in these new phenomena? This, I think, is the great problem to be solved, and more light is required on this point than I at present possess to enable me to offer any conclusive proof in an affirmative sense. I see nothing, however, to interfere with such a belief, except our ordinary, and, I think, very irrational ideas, on the subject of the other life. We hold that after death some great change occurs in the spirit or soul, either of an eminently elevating or unspeakably lowering tendency: in other words, that we immediately enter heaven or hell, and we are consequently surprised that our departed relatives or friends should professedly communicate with us in a tone not directly indicative of either condition, but generally partaking very much of the frivolous nature of this life, or perhaps even showing a slightly inferior mental plane from that we had been accustomed to accord them in our earthly appreciation.

I see, however, no incongruity in the possibility of these peculiarities tending rather to prove, than to disprove, the reality of such intercourse with our friends departed. Why should there be a sudden exaltation of the spiritual (mental) nature of an ordinary (and perhaps very ordinary) human being, merely because he or she has slipped off this mortal coil? We are told "as the tree falls, so shall it lie," and the very foundation of Spiritualism, and natural religion, is that "we must reap as we sow." What right have we, therefore, to suppose that our ordinary humanity (in its mental phase) shall appear in an extraordinary disguise immediately it has become a spiritual body? It appears to me that identity would be much more difficult if such a change did occur, and it can be no logical proof of failure of identity because our friends profess to communicate in very much the same style as they were accustomed to use in their earthly life.

While, however, I fail to see the force or reason of the objections generally urged against the genuineness of spirit communications because they are not of the transcendent character expected (unreasonably, I think), I am not prepared offhand to admit their truthfulness, but maintain that we must still search and watch, not blindly ignoring evidence when we can obtain it, nor yet stupidly shutting our eyes and minds to the reception of truth, merely because it does not reach our self-erected standard of excellence.

The mere fact, now sufficiently proved, that there is a world of powerful intelligences around and about us with capacity to communicate, is a grand discovery, and instead of provoking hostile criticism and obstructive efforts from men who claim to be philosophers and scientists, the discovery ought to enlist their greatest sympathy and energies to further develop the new-born science, before the importance of which nothing that has ever yet been discovered can for a moment stand in interest to the human race, and I only regret that it is left to the few and feeble to search out the great truths that must lie hidden under this new force and intelligence, whatever name it may be called by or disguised under.

W. H.

#### THE CONTROVERSY ON REINCARNATION.

SIR,—I read in the *Spiritual Magazine* for August a review by Baron Dirckinck-Holmfeld of the prize essay written by Miss Anna Blackwell, and I appeal to any impartial Spiritualist to say whether this review

does not call for more criticism than an essay which has been awarded a prize.

Not having yet read the Prize Essay, I do not know how much of it is occupied with the subject of reincarnation; but from the Baron's criticism one would be disposed to think that it treats of little else. The reviewer states that he was as surprised to see that Miss Blackwell had gained the prize as *he would have been had a blind person gained it for the best treatise on the progress of pictorial art.* This is the kind of argument this writer has made use of all along. Is it not substituting foregone conclusions for impartial reasoning on such a subject? This piece of sentiment is followed by an irrelevant disquisition on the disqualifications of the female mind. In the enumeration of these disqualifications the Baron shows a great want of appreciation of the great change on this subject that has taken place in modern thought, and appears, as may perhaps be thought natural on his part, to fail to perceive the superiority of mind of Miss Anna Blackwell.

Baron Dirckinck-Holmfeld not only authoritatively condemns reincarnation, without vouchsafing any arguments or reasons for doing so, but pits the whole of his mental strength (also in the shape of sentiment) against such scientific minds as Darwin, H. Spencer, Hœckel, Tyndall, Huxley, and the host of scientific evolutionists, for he hesitates not to condemn the modern results of scientific research, and "unconditionally rejects these would-be fundamental pillars of modern science."

One cannot help feeling surprised that a man who condemns the philosophy of reincarnation and the allied scientific doctrine of evolution all in one breath, does not found a school of philosophy and science of his own, assisted possibly by the tenants of the "temple of intelligence," and "spiritual truth and wisdom," some of whose names I suppose are "Kibosh," "Annie," and the spiritual dictators of the eminently philosophical work, "Angelic Revelations," *et hoc genus omne.*

The writer of the review "was the first to discover that reincarnation was artfully insinuated by Jesuitism to combat Spiritualism on its own ground"—a discovery which, being entirely false, is not exactly akin to the discovery of gunpowder, and it is charitably to be hoped that this is not the only discovery the writer has made.

The writer, therefore, shows the breadth of his conceptions—

1. By misappreciating the mind of a writer whose essay, among other competing productions, has been awarded a prize, notwithstanding a strong sentiment still existing in England against a doctrine enunciated in it.

2. By making a discovery which has no foundation whatsoever in fact.

3. By misappreciating the great change that has taken place in modern civilized thought with regard to the disqualifications of the female mind, emphatically pronouncing for these disqualifications in the course of the review.

4. By expressing his sentiment *only* against the belief in reincarnation—and what will be considered hastier by many persons?—expressing it likewise against the most brilliant results of science-evolution (Vide Hœckel's *History of Creation*).

5. By occupying over eleven pages in a magazine with sentiment instead of reason.

Reincarnationists could well afford to offer a heavy premium to any one who could discover in any of Baron Dirckinck-Holmfeld's writings a genuine argument, not tinged with sentiment, against the doctrine of reincarnation professed generally on the Continent, also to a great extent in North and South America, and rapidly gaining ground in England.

B. P. J.

SIR,—Mr. M. A. Cantab has in *The Spiritualist* of June 30 (p. 309), tried to invalidate some of my remarks in your paper about the reincarnation theory. Allow me a few lines to answer him. I especially wish to prevent his singular misconception (in the final part of his article) from entering into the minds of your readers. In a few lines I had stated my opinion that the Brahminical theory of transmigration was merely a crude sensuous perversion of a primitive true doctrine, according to which evil-doers, after leaving the natural world, would, in a spiritual future, or in hell, be left to the animal propensities of their ill-used self-hood, expressing the particular quality of their lusts. When looked at in a superior light, they might even show themselves in animal forms, corresponding to their interior passions, though they might, among themselves, externally appear in a human shape, perhaps more or less distorted. By the example of Mr. Cantab we see how easily such a true doctrine could, in the interest of the corrupted system of priestly rule, be falsely interpreted as teaching the transmigration of souls into terrestrial animals.

Truth teaches that man, as to his "proprium" or self-love, if left to his own nature, is nothingness, darkness, cold, and only divinely animated when in his mental organisation he receives life, light, and love exclusively from God through the spiritual world.

The animal kingdom represents the various forms of selfhood, both in its natural state and when spiritualised. As far as man follows an egotistical path, rejecting regeneration or the free control of his animal nature, he is left to his proper will, or to his animal cupidities of self-hood.

Buddha, or the mythical, traditional personification of reason, tried to restore true religion, and to reform the Hindoo perversion. Though the faith in divinity and immortality never was totally extinguished, the Lamas, or priests, succeeded in their revival of materialistic corruption. Their transmigration theory prevails even now in Africa. It is no wonder that the corruption reappeared in mere external Christianity when its internal principles perished. So it did in French, or rather Rivals, reincarnation. The Jesuits succeeded in turning obnoxious Spiritualism into an absurdity, which might be made to favour their system of domination by superstition. Mr. Cantab ought to read a

passage in Addison's *Spectator*, p. 408, quoted by Mr. Gorman in his admirable *Christian Psychology*, p. 440. He would then learn how a sound British rationalist, nearly two centuries ago, looked on the theories which since have made such an inroad into science and among mankind generally.

If the reincarnationists venture to object that the old transmigration doctrine teaches that men become animals, while the evolutionists contrariwise suppose animals to become men, and that their sublime reincarnation makes even adult men to be re-born as natural infants, I answer that evolution in a life of liberty of necessity involves the possibility of descending into animals just as well as of ascending. Reincarnation is nothing but continued evolution, essentially founded on materialism, which identifies and compounds spiritual action and phenomena with self-acting matter, making them altogether natural. It upsets divine order, by making what is superior subservient to what ought to be subordinate.

It is useless to enter into a discussion with Mr. Cantab about the falsity of his arguments for believing in successive reappearances of the same individual on the same natural platform, to be compatible with our rational Christian notions of personal immortality and real moral responsibility. His conclusions are fixed, admitting of no controversy. Everybody else can easily see that such belief is merely a supposition, founded neither on externally discernible facts, nor on reason, nor on a revealed Divine Word, which teaches a directly opposite doctrine of unavoidable judgment after death. This contradiction by revelation is why Christianity is not admitted by reincarnationists, or only in a distorted form of superstitious perversion.

Ask the millions of living men whether any one of them knows of ever having been another person, and he will answer, "No." Ask the billions of conscious spirits, if you are able to do so, and they will deny such a fact, except you meet one of the Kakodemons who rejoice in leading people astray, and who, as Miss Blackwell pertinently has it, "are only the reflex of the perversity of the medium." In this she is right, just as in some other few remarks, which display her truly feminine aspirations. But we meet among reincarnationists everywhere imaginary doctrines, which, as Mr. Gorman rightly says about the theories of the Huxleys, Wallaces, Darwins, Maudsleys, and other naturalists, "are ingeniously, but perversely interwoven with a number of dogmatic assertions, destitute alike of scientific value, common sense, and refined feeling."

Mr. Cantab says that not only in dreams, but by intuition when awake, an intimation of an interior state has been experienced. It is always Pythagoras who is alleged as having fancied himself to have been in the Trojan war. We know how easily he may have been in the state, if the report is true, in which he could believe himself to be the spirit who had manifested to him, perhaps only in a dream; nay, he may have been obsessed by such a spirit. The article of Mr. T. Robinson, following upon that of Mr. Cantab, explains fully such a state of obsession. I thank this gentleman for having presented to the public the antidote to the reincarnation poison, even in the same cup. I fully believe that the reincarnationists interiorly are the prey of such obsessing, false spirits, and in that state their persuasions are scarcely to be shaken. But what we can do is to warn Spiritualists that they may keep aloof from the labyrinthical mazes. C. DIRCKINCK-HOLMFELD, Pinneberg, Holstein.

#### THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN OF SPIRITUALISTS.

SIR,—My theory is that, till a certain age (say ten years old, for the sake of compromising the affair), the children of the rich and the poor should be brought up together in class and on the same principles. I know people will shout when they read this, and imagine I must be a dangerous demagogue-ess; but, perhaps, when they have read how I propose to train all children, they will be pacified.

In the first place, I start by proposing that there should be a *crèche* in every street. If there are two or three public-houses, why should there not be as many *crèches*? According to people's incomes, they should be made to pay towards the support of the *crèches*. The children should be fetched in the morning, and taken home at night; they should all, while at school, be dressed in the same uniform; they should all be thoroughly washed and cleaned, and taught, as early as possible, to do all washing, cleaning, and dressing of each other and of themselves.

Little beds should be laid all round the room, for babies almost from the birth, and for children as old as four years. Some children continue to want to sleep much later than others; some are more inattentive and fidgety than others. Instead of reprimand or punishment, the most diplomatic thing to do is to treat the sleepy and the inattentive children alike, and to send them to bed from eleven A.M. till one P.M. daily. If there were fifty children in one *crèche*, besides the head nurse or teacher, there should be an attendant to every fourth or fifth child. There's the fetching of the children, the cooking, the cleaning, the babies to look after, the washing; and then there's the watching of and the attending to the children in class during lessons. The head teacher should not be interrupted by being obliged to make a remark to a child for inattention oftener than can be helped. The overlooking of the clothes would be another part of these ten attendants' work. The uniform dresses would naturally be made by them; they might as well see to the children's own clothes,—a tape or a button is often wanting, and it is not much, while they are about it, to encourage the tidest mothers in their work by helping them and showing interest in their children.

The babies are soon taught to leave off squalling, unless they are ill, A separate room might be easily added to the *crèche* for sick children, and thus housewives' duties might be considerably lightened. A great deal of work gets badly done, because it is more than it is possible for one person to get through. It is very evident that it is impossible, as a rule, to get decent servants. All they think of is eating and getting



dressed by four o'clock in the afternoon, going out as often and staying out as late as possible. My system of education would save us from our dependence upon servants. If the mistress of the house likes household occupations, and is wise enough to head the work of dusting, cleaning, cooking, &c., she naturally has her nose everywhere, is sharp with the servants, who, after all, are obliged to listen to her and to be kept in order by her. Servants end by liking to be disciplined, and take more interest in their work as they get taught to go through their day systematically. They prefer a mistress who spends her day among them; they grow to prefer cleanliness to dirt, order to disorder, management to no management at all, and end by almost forgetting to be dainty and lazy. Some ladies may think that, having once drilled the servants into this most enviable state, they may safely indulge in other occupations. Cruel deception. However good, however honourable, however Christian the occupations of the "missus," the servants gradually slip back into their old habits of uneducated slovenliness, dirt, and greediness; they get *dressed* as soon as they can, they spend their money on their dress as fast as they can, they slip out as often as they can, they stay out as late as they can, and scamp all their work. They do not care for their mistress's nagging, unless she can be at it from morning till night. Her intellectual and educated pursuits prevent this; and all I can say (from experience) is, that if a mistress does not look after her house herself, no one else will, unless another educated lady will do so, devoting herself for the sake of the superior or intellectual pursuit or accomplishment the mistress of the house should be engaged in.

GEORGINA WELDON.

Tavistock House, Tavistock-square, W.

#### EXTRAORDINARY SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA IN THE LIGHT.

SIR,—Dr. Monck has been holding light *séances* in Derby and surrounding localities almost daily for the past seven weeks, and, as I have had the pleasure of attending over forty of them, I write to offer your readers just a glimpse of my never-to-be-forgotten experiences with this remarkable medium.

Allow me to commence by stating: 1. That Dr. Monck has at all these *séances* sat in the light—sometimes gaslight, at others broad daylight, but always in a good clear light. 2. He sits with one side of his body towards the table, with one hand and arm on it, while the other hand and arm are placed on the top of his chair back, and his legs and feet not under the table, but outside in the open (the same as his hands), in full view of all the sitters throughout the *séance*, during which he remains perfectly passive and motionless. 3. Being constantly on the move through the country, he, as a rule, has no rooms of his own for *séances*, and therefore holds them in rooms provided by those who engage him. He has always done so during my now extensive experience of his mediumship, and I find that his willingness to do this produces a most favourable impression on sceptics. 4. At the forty odd *séances* I have attended he has invariably manifested great readiness to permit the application of the most stringent tests and rigorous investigation desired by investigators. 5. The phenomena at each of these *séances* have not only been wonderfully varied, definite, and convincing to large numbers of absolute sceptics attending them, but have likewise been always promptly evolved, thus enabling me to say that at Dr. Monck's *séances* "a wealth of the most astounding phenomena are to be depended on as certain, notwithstanding any amount of what are generally termed ill-conditions, such as the sceptical element present in strong force, the state of the weather," &c.

I think these facts should be known to the intelligent readers of *The Spiritualist* as I gather from recent reports and letters therein that a general impression prevails that "there is no native English medium who can secure pronounced phenomena in the light with any degree of certainty under unfavourable conditions." I will now, as briefly as possible, glance at the phenomena I and my friends witnessed last night at Mr. Ford's, 27, Uttoxeter New-road, Derby. The medium sat, as I have described, at one side of the table, the rest of us at two other sides, while opposite the fourth unoccupied side, and five feet from it, an empty chair was placed. The two gas jets were, at the medium's request, turned on at the full. As soon as we sat down the chair ran up to the table a distance of five feet. Each of us now rose, closely examined the chair, and thoroughly satisfied ourselves that its movement was entirely and absolutely independent of any act of the medium's. The chair now repeatedly moved backwards and forwards several feet, was suspended at a height of two feet from the floor, then turned upside down so that the legs were uppermost, and it then floated on to the middle of the table and off again several times. Two chairs were similarly moved up to the table from a like distance, one of them rose and hooked its back on to the back of the other, and both then rushed rapidly about in an open space of six feet by four for several minutes without being disconnected. They then separated, and one went under the table, and, by request, placed a leg in the hand of each of us, and perfectly imitated the act of shaking hands.

Direct writing on a slate held under the table is common at the doctor's *séances*, I need, therefore, only describe the following instance, which appears to me by far more wonderful. I deposited my pencil and a piece of paper on the table, and while the doctor leaned back in his chair, so as not to be in contact with the table, and held his hands above his head, we all saw the pencil rise and write a lengthy message on the paper. This has occurred several times, and I have preserved the papers. We also had writing given under the test conditions suggested by Dr. Wyld in last week's *Spiritualist*. We signed our names on a sheet of blank paper, which we nailed up in a box, tied the box up with tape, knotted the crossings, and sealed the ends. In a few minutes we opened the box, and found a long written communication on the paper. Of course a pencil had been placed in the box. These are but a few of the many equally astounding marvels that occur with unfailing certainty at each of Dr. Monck's *séances*.

G. H. ADSHEAD.

Derby.

#### OPEN AIR SERVICES IN LEICESTER.

SIR,—Sunday, the 30th of August, was what you may term a red letter day with the Spiritualists of Leicester, and will not soon be forgotten, for we then made our first attempt at holding open air services, and with decided success. We had arranged previously to hold a picnic party in the vicinity of Woodhouse Eaves, a delightful spot, displaying the grand handiwork of nature and nature's God. Sunday morning came with as bright prospects of a fine day as we could possibly have expected, the sun pouring forth its rays overhead, and a nice sharp wind blowing as if to subdue the heat. At half-past eight the company began to make their appearance; all appeared to have put on their best faces, so as not to be behind with the weather, and we were in exuberant spirits. At nine o'clock we started. Our drive lay through some of the finest scenery of which Leicestershire can boast. On our way we called at Quorndon to greet a spiritual friend. Arrived at Woodhouse Eaves, we put up our horses, and began to think about the inner man. Then we had a ramble over the rocks and among the ferns for about three-quarters of an hour, and returned to the service. Our Quorndon friend was voted to the chair. We had an address from one of our controls on vegetarianism; but some of us think that vegetarianism will not suit everybody. After the address our chairman gave us a lecture, in the course of which he made quotations from the Scriptures, showing the relationship of the greater part of the Bible to Spiritualism. The afternoon service was not so much of a success as the evening, although we got on very well considering it was our first attempt at open air controlling of trance mediums. At the evening service many strangers were present, and fine addresses were given on the fact of a future existence, and of the possibility of the spirits' return to the sphere in which it had spent its days in the body. We concluded the service by singing the doxology. The company seemed well satisfied.

Should any mediums be passing through Leicester at any time, we shall be very happy to see them at our rooms in Silver-street on Sunday mornings at 10.30, evenings at 6.30; Thursday evenings at 8.30. I hope the time is not very far distant when we shall be able to send you accounts of meetings more valuable than this one; but this one is not to be laughed at, as it is a step in advance.

W. J. CATTELL, Secretary.

155, Syston-street, Leicester, Aug. 9th, 1876.

#### HOW DO SPIRITS CONVERSE?

SIR,—Referring to *The Spiritualist* of July 21st I find some quotations from Swedenborg, wherein he says that "the speech of a spirit flows first into the man's thought, and by an internal way into his organ of hearing, and thus moves that from within," by what we should term a reflex action. Hence the sound of the voice from the organ of sound or sonorous body, just as a drum might be struck from without or from within, and the same sound be produced. But in another extract referring to spirits out of the body, he says, "The spirits then come into their veriest sensitive life, and can speak and hear." Then why should not the spirit within the body hear the spirit outside, without the intervention of the material organ? I knew a somnambulist, the cousin of Thackeray, who used to hear beautiful music, just as in our dreams we have wonderfully distinct visions; so that we have three kinds of perception: 1. In the ordinary way; 2. By the action of a spirit, and 3. As originating from the mind itself. In the last case it may equally be a reflex action from the organ of the sense in an inverse way. But in any case it is the spirit or inner self that hears or perceives, since the perceiving or hearing must be inseparable from that which hears and perceives, though by an illusion it is referred to the organ of sense or to an external and objective source. The voice of the spirit is heard; one would like to know whether it seems to come from some being at a distance, as in the ordinary case of hearing a person speak, or the thunder heard as if it were really in the distant clouds.

I should think that a spirit might inspire a whole company at once if all were sufficiently sensitive—just as with Goethe's grandfather, who inspired all present with the same clairvoyance as himself. I do not think we can define a limit to a power of this nature, but each would hear a separate voice, just as with our ordinary perceptions; and no one can be aware of the hearing or thing perceived by another, though we may recognise a common source to all our different impressions, in respect to any sound or object. Each percipient having a different impression from a common source was the great objection to Berkeley's system, and which was not got over by referring all to a supernatural cause—all agreeing that they saw the same object, as in looking at St. Paul, for instance. God might influence all alike, as a spirit might, but then the objective fact, common to all, would not be St. Paul, but God. And we should indeed be "of such stuff as dreams are made of." "Yea, all which it inherit shall dissolve, and, like this insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind." The whole world, and even the percipients themselves, "melted into air—into thin air." Such-like is the dream of the consistent idealist—only we never do find them consistent.

Boulogne.

HENRY G. ATKINSON, F.G.S.

#### A SEANCE WITH DR. SLADE.

SIR,—I have just returned from a visit to Dr. Slade. In addition to phenomena similar to those recorded by Serjeant Cox in your last issue, I was favoured with the following crucial test.

I had provided myself with two small slates—bound with wood, and closely fitting the one on the other—and a piece of ordinary slate pencil.

On my requesting that a message might be written on my own slates, Dr. Slade immediately assented, and, biting a small piece (the size of a small pea) off my pencil, he inserted it between the slates, and with one hand (visible all the time) he held the slates under the table between us, his other hand resting upon my hands on the table. In about a minute writing was distinctly audible, and on removing the upper slate some

illegible scrawl was found on the lower slate. On repeating this experiment, the following message was found written on the upper side of the lower slate:—

"Is this any better?"

Through an inadvertence this message was washed off—instead of the illegible sentence. This led me to request that another message should be written, which I might carry away with me. The pencil was again inserted, and the slates, instead of being placed *under* were put *upon* the table directly in front of me. Dr. Slade then placed his left hand over my two hands on the table, and the tips of the fingers of his right hand on the top of the slates immediately before me on the table. All this was, of course, plainly visible in broad daylight. Under these conditions writing was soon heard, and on the lower side of the upper slate was found plainly written

"Let this be proof."

W. W. CLARK.

Dorking, August 15th, 1876.

#### EXPERIENCES OF AN INQUIRER.

SIR,—I read Mr. Blackburn's letter containing the account of his and Miss Blackburn's *séance* at 61, Lamb's Conduit-street, with much pleasure, and I quite agree with his concluding remark, viz., that "Every right-minded man (may I be allowed to add "woman" also?) should investigate such strange and most wonderful phenomena as now present themselves in all parts of the world." Surely a movement that is spreading and progressing so rapidly must be sent of God for some wise purpose, which many of us are not yet able to understand.

"Truth is stranger than fiction." Some weeks ago a cousin of mine from Dublin came on a visit here, and several of his private friends who are not Spiritualists, along with himself, formed a circle, and obtained very good manifestations; he therefore felt anxious to investigate during his visit. I accompanied him to three *séances*, and the last was with Mr. Williams. On that evening John King floated about the room, going twice near the ceiling. He asked the gentleman who was sitting next to me if he observed his lamp, also if he would like to touch it; this he then did. He next came opposite to me—when I thought I would embrace the first opportunity I ever had of conversing with what appeared to me to be a materialised spirit form, unless my eyes deceived me considerably, and I assure you I made good use of them on that occasion, thinking I would endeavour to detect anything that looked the least suspicious. I said, "I have frequently heard, read, and talked about you, John King." He at once replied in a very loud, deep voice, "You see me now." And, truly, it was a beautiful sight.

Although the first two *séances* I attended were very good, I could not help feeling a little sceptical, and thought that the materialised form resembled the medium. My cousin thought differently, and on reflection I felt convinced that it could not possibly have been the medium. I attended another *séance* the previous evening, when Mr. Bullock was securely tied in a bag, and his hands were tightly fastened behind him. When in this position he asked for a ring, and one was produced by Captain James, who was present. It was an ordinary curtain ring. On the bag being removed the ring was found tightly encircled round the wrist of the medium. This ring was examined by all present. On the second evening it still remained, and was perfectly tight. Mr. Bullock's materialisations were in the light, which I consider a great advantage.

In conclusion, I beg to say that I am an investigator, deeply interested, at the same time I regret extremely the frivolity usually manifesting or presenting itself at *séances*; but really people, as a rule, are drawn by the ridiculous, and the greatest absurdities seem to "take" the most. To my mind, what is called modern Spiritualism, is strictly in accordance with Scripture, as so very ably and plainly shewn by Mr. Theobald. I strongly advise all who are able, to read *The Spiritualist* of June the 14th. I believe that the physical manifestations are sent to show the power of spirit over matter; in fact, to teach us that matter is comparatively nothing and spirit everything, and to lead and prepare us for far more profitable revelations which are ready to present themselves to those who seek in an humble and inquiring spirit.

In the course of our *séance* with Mr. Williams, the spirit "Peter" would persist in saying he wanted us to sing "Twinkle, twinkle little star," and he immediately filled the room with most beautiful luminous stars.

I could say much more about my short experiences. People seem to forget that we live in a world of progress, consequently they look with great suspicion upon every thing new. Things that have eventually turned out the greatest temporal blessings to mankind have been thus received by them in the first instance. Certainly progression in a spiritual direction must be the right one. We greatly need spiritualising to counteract the evil influence of this materialistic age, and, as I have before remarked, I believe the present to be simply a preparation for other phases of spirit power, of a higher and far more elevating nature.

I have frequently read in the spiritualistic papers most gratifying letters, written by working-men, explaining how they have been led by Spiritualism to take a deep interest in religion, and thereby entered the right path, when strict orthodoxy, as taught in many churches, failed to influence them. "A tree is known by its fruit." MARIANNE.

Kensington, August 1st, 1876.

#### SPIRITUALISM AND INVESTIGATORS.

SIR,—The letter you publish in this week's *Spiritualist* from Mr. Massey suggests to me the propriety of writing a few interrogatory remarks, with the request that you will kindly publish them. Mr. Massey speaks somewhat slightly of the "fourth estate," and suggests that newspaper editors are scarcely worth convincing. I think the contrary. Has Mr. Massey not frequently come across puffing paragraphs about conjurors and illusionists? Does he think that such

"items of news" would be deliberately passed for publication if the editors of the papers in which they appear knew the paragraphs were entirely misleading? Do not ridicule and satire do more harm and more retard the progress of anything than honest discussion? Have not newspaper editors in the provinces always deemed Spiritualism fair game for their feeble jokes? Does one journalist in five hundred know anything of Spiritualism? I think if these questions are fairly answered, one duty will be pretty clear as the duty of the leaders of Spiritualism—to give the editors of our local press the opportunity of learning something of the "facts," leaving them to form their own theories. Some few have been attracted by the novelty of the so-called "phenomena" to investigate, among them the writer. But it is very expensive; and I will honestly say that my pocket will not allow me to engage professional mediums, nor to seek for those facts which Spiritualists declare are the convincing proofs which shall change public opinion from "against" to "with" them. If the National Association of Spiritualists, or some kindred society, were to organise special circles for investigators, and supply test mediums in our large provincial towns, inviting the editors of the provincial newspapers to see for themselves, they might depend upon honest reports of what might be seen or noted, which would perhaps make people think differently of the new faith. To a certain extent I have inquired, and am puzzled; but prudential reasons (trade is bad) prevent me going further. Yet, I may suggest, without claiming for the honourable class to which I belong more power and influence than it possesses—that the conversion to Spiritualism of one newspaper editor is not to be made light of. Scientists would not hold aloof if once, through the press, Spiritualism became fashionable. I enclose my card, and am truly yours,

A NEWSPAPER EDITOR.

Mrs. CORA L. V. TAPPAN has been delivering lectures in New York during the past three weeks, and is engaged there until the end of this month.

At the meeting of the Newcastle Society of Spiritualists last Sunday evening, Mr. J. T. Rhodes read Mr. G. T. Green's Essay on "The Probable Effect of Spiritualism upon Society," Mr. Hare presided. On the same occasion Mr. H. A. Kersey read Mr. Serjeant Cox's account of his *séance* with Dr. Slade.

NOVEL INVENTIONS.—The *Times* correspondent, reviewing the Philadelphia Exhibition, speaking of the Patent Office, says—"One genius is said to have wanted a patent for a machine to bore through the earth; another for an apparatus to make spirits of the rapping kind visible to mortal eyes." Should this patent be a success, we may not want a Fakir after all to illustrate the marvels of occultism.

MR. BLAKE, of Grainger-street, Newcastle, has on hand two specimens of the photographs taken at the recent picnic near that town. One which may be termed the "committee group" is excellent, and contains the portraits of Miss Fairlamb, Mrs. Fairlamb, Mrs. Petty, Mr. J. J. Morse, Mr. Armstrong, sen., the Misses Nicholls, Mr. D. Richmond, of Darlington, and most of the active workers in Spiritualism at the present time in Newcastle and district, so it may be interesting to Spiritualists at a distance. The other one contains a general group; the faces are smaller and in many instances are not so good, but this picture is more interesting to local workers in the movement.

CHINESE GHOST STORIES.—Animals, also, have their ghosts. A resident at Canton, named Ling, had a very intelligent monkey, which, having been severely whipped for some mischief, became sulky, refused food, and died. Shortly after, the monkey's ghost began to haunt the house. Food placed on the table mysteriously disappeared, and strange annoyances took place. At length a fire broke out in the house unaccountably, and Mr. Ling shifted his residence. But the monkey's ghost still followed and persecuted him, until, as a last resource, he took a room in the Temple of the Five Hundred Worthies. The monkey ghost did not dare to face the gods, and left him in peace. Mr. Ling was still residing in the temple last year.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

TO HEAVEN AND BACK.—One of the most unusual circumstances was witnessed in this town one day during the week, and has caused no little amount of conversation and surprise. A lady who had been suffering for some days in bed, and was expected to breathe her last every moment, was being watched by a number of kind friends and some members of her family. On Tuesday morning she seemed to grow very feeble, and between 7 and 8 o'clock stretched her limbs out to their full extent, and gave a sigh. It was generally thought that she was dead, and the woman who was to lay her out was sent for. In the meantime an attempt was made to take the rings off her fingers, which was done at a request made by herself on a previous occasion. Some trouble was experienced in removing one of the rings, and the second one could not be got over the knuckle joint. During all this time there was not the slightest sign of breathing nor pulsation—in fact one of the nurses present, who had many years' experience, had no doubt about her being dead. After a further lapse of time the poor woman opened her eyes—her limbs still remaining motionless. She gave a heavy sigh, and exclaimed, "What, on earth again?" Some of them said, "Yes, we are all here." She then told them of a number of things she had seen, in a strong distinct tone of voice. She said that she had been to heaven, and had seen some magnificent things. Had spoken to some of the angels, who had told her that earth was ordained for people to remain on for a short time only. She had seen the Lord, who was arrayed in great splendour, and had also seen a number of persons whom she had met on earth. The description given by her was certainly a most extraordinary one, and she seemed to wish her time would come, so that she might return to the place where she thought she had been to. She was for a considerable time in this state, and when she awoke all those who were in the room were completely surprised.—*Burrangong Chronicle* (Australia).

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