

FROM MATTER TO SPIRIT.

THE RESULT OF

TEN YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN SPIRIT MANIFESTATIONS.

INTENDED AS A GUIDE TO ENQUIRERS.

BY C. D.

WITH A PREFACE BY A. B.

Prof. Boneth (March 56)
accepts as Prof. Morgan's
book (S.P.R. Proc. Vol. IV
p. 26)

Τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ, καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις,
ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται, καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, ROBERTS, & GREEN.

1863.

263. f. 60.
~~250. n. 32.~~



PREFACE.

IT is but now and then that a preface is contributed by one who is not the author : and only now and not then, or else then and not now, that the writer of the preface declares he will not stand committed either *for* or *against* the conclusions of the book. But this happens in the present case. I am satisfied, by the evidence of my own senses, of *some* of the facts narrated : of some others I have evidence as good as testimony can give. I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen, and heard in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things *called* spiritual which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me. But when it comes to what is the cause of these phenomena, I find I cannot adopt any explanation which has yet been suggested. If I were bound to choose among things which I can conceive, I should say that there is some sort of action of some combination of will, intellect, and physical power, which is not that of any of the human beings present. But, thinking it very likely that the universe may contain a few agencies—say half a million—about which no man knows anything, I cannot but suspect that a small

proportion of these agencies — say five thousand — may be severally competent to the production of all the phenomena, or may be quite up to the task among them. The physical explanations which I have seen are easy, but miserably insufficient: the spiritual hypothesis is sufficient, but ponderously difficult. Time and thought will decide, the second asking the first for more results of trial.

We, respectable decemnovenarians as we are, have been so nourished on theories, hypotheses, and other things to be desired to make us wise, that most of us cannot live with an unexplained fact in our heads. If we knew that omniscience would reveal the secret in a quarter of an hour, we should in one minute have contrived something on which to last through the other fourteen. The commonest of all questions is, 'How do you account for . . . ?' and woe to him who, not having an answer of his own, shall refuse to accept that of the querist. So habitual is this propensity that even irony fails to tell upon it: what is the use of quizzing the action of the lungs or the circulation of the blood? In one instance a joke about explanations has been taken for fact, and explanations given of it. Bacon, or Selden, or some such dry humorist, put forth the sarcasm of the old man who took Tenterden steeple to be the cause of the Goodwin sands, because he never heard of the sands until after the steeple was built. Those who should have been hit by this, but were not, accepted the fact, and proceeded to account for it. They put forth that some funds destined for lights or other warnings were diverted to build the steeple; whence of course increase of wrecks. So it would seem that any sarcasm aimed at universal expositors may be but a missionary to the cannibals, one dinner more.

All who have studied the history of opinions will feel

satisfied that the matter is in a right train. Try to balance a level on the palm of the hand with the bubble in the middle : who can do it? Not one in a hundred. The little air-drop is always in extremes : it may stay in the interval for a few seconds, and then comes a tiny unconscious motion which sends it right up to one end or the other. This is a true picture of the mode by which human intelligence deals with conclusions : and this is the way in which we come by all we know in most things. If, being in all other respects what we now are, we had been a cautious, logical, self-knowing set of improved gorillas, content to wait for a decision until we had got what your way-feelers call ground enough, we should have made what we knew four thousand years ago ground enough to sleep upon. But, being what we are, we hunt our arguments, not to arrive at opinions, but to support them. Of the book of nature, and of the book of experience, may be said * what was said long ago of another book, that we search for what we want to find, and take good care to find it. This is our character, and we must not quarrel with it : we have got a great deal by allowing it to have its way, and we may expect more ; one side or the other, or both together, catch a truth and cut its wings ; a hundred years hence it will matter little which.

Those who affirm that they have seen faith-staggering occurrences, are of course supposed to be impostors or dupes.

* *Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque,
Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.*

Which has been translated, and more, as follows :—

One day at least in every week,
The sects of every kind,
Their doctrines here are sure to seek,
And just as sure to find.

To this there can be no objection : a pretty world we should live in if the arrangement did not demand moral courage from those who offer evidence of wonders. For every truth which cowardice has delayed, a thousand falsehoods have been prevented from gaining existence. But there is one mode of treatment which, though not of any ultimate harm as to the matter in hand, is of bad example : the visionaries are reproached for not accommodating their narratives to the swallow of their hearers. In many ways it is intimated to them, in effect, that they ought to have come forward with something less extraordinary, in order that they might have been believed ; as if the object of a story were assent and nothing else. This is a principle of danger, when applied, as it is every day, in our courts of law. The examining counsel draws himself up, and—with that fearful moral elevation which it is given to none but brief-holders to attain—thunders out, ‘ Do you expect the jury to believe . . . ’ Honour to the first judge who shall stop the volley with ‘ Brother Buzfuz ! the witness is to mind his *truth*, the jury will take care of the *credibility*. ’ In the courts of law, I say, this is a dangerous principle : because good or evil, justice or injustice, will be consummated before the court rises. But out of court, in matters of asserted fact or theory, the harm is transient, the good permanent. The man who demands credible story, and makes onslaught upon all that is beyond his power to receive, as certainly either falsehood or delusion, is far more useful than he knows of, though not exactly in the way he thinks of. He takes himself to be separating the wheat from the tares : but God has been kinder to our race than to leave that matter in *his* hands. He cuts everything to the ground : but the wheat of the moral universe has a durable root, which gives growth after growth, each stronger than the last ; while

the tares, though their roots are also pretty tough, have shoots which are weaker and weaker. Hack away then, say we to him, and never stop to look what is before you; your work is judged by quantity, not by quality.

There are some who feel afraid of these gallant slashers, and decline to encourage their laudable propensity by giving anything marvellous in their presence. There is, to many, something unpleasant in the alternative of knave or fool, when invited to select a character for themselves out of the pair. Do those who quail before this option remember how high a compliment they pay to the proposers of it? If they do, and are willing to pay that compliment, there is nothing to be said. But if they be really of opinion that the other parties are little worth minding, and yet feel annoyed, it is because, as very often happens, they do not understand what in law is called the plea to the jurisdiction. Nine-tenths of the positive opinions which are given in conversation or writing are given judicially: that is, the proposer speaks to his conclusion as positively as if it were his office to know the truth; and implies that any opposition is a thing for him to judge of. He is annihilated by being reduced, no matter in how courteous a way, from judge to counsel: but this is what must be done; the jurisdiction must be denied. Some persons pull him off the bench with little ceremony; but this is hard upon a poor fellow who really believes in his own right to decide: the great art is to pull the bench from under him without his seeing exactly how he comes to tumble, and without proceeding to sit upon it yourself. There is but one of the species I am discussing who deserves no consideration: it is the one who passes from party to judge in the course of the process. He begins with confession of a mind not made up; he only wants to hear the evidence; he is quite aware of

the importance of dispassionate inquiry ;—all addressed to a person who is not anxious to make proselytes, nor even to enter on the subject. In this way a statement of testimony is obtained, at the end—it may be in the middle—of which the candid inquirer vaults on to the seat of judgment, and proceeds to pass sentence. Such a judge is an awkward imitator of Joshua the son of Nun ; awkward in the omission of a most material point. My son, said Joshua, give glory, and confess, and tell me, and hide not : and after he had thus wormed out the acknowledgment of hidden treasure, he thundered forth, Why hast thou troubled us ? But in the interval—and the corresponding procedure is quite forgotten by the judge I speak of—he had sent messengers, and verified the statement.

I write, as will be guessed, for and to those who have been staggered either by what they have seen, or by what they have heard and cannot reject. They are very many in number, if we include those who think more than they like to confess. And no wonder : for by one of those epidemic movements which seem to be made for the advancement both of truth and of falsehood, there has been a sudden and general recognition of the existence of phenomena which historical inquiry shows never to have been entirely unknown. When I say *phenomena*, I mean certain *appearances*, which are to be finally knit on either to some truth or to some delusion. All at once, I say, the whole world is made alive to the existence of these phenomena ; and two parties are in conflict about their meaning. The opinions of our race seem to have some affinity with the things which learning calls *crustacea*, and common life crabs, lobsters, &c. The creature is bound in a hard shell, which at certain periods it throws off, and manages to take a good

growth before the new shell is hardened. Our ghost-shell has certainly cracked; but what and how much of growth the notion will get before the new integument is stiff enough for a philosopher, is still to be seen. It adds not a little to the wonder that the epidemic broke out among a people who have the reputation of a dry, practical, unimaginative temperament; *broke out*, I say, for it came on them like the small-pox, and the land was spotted with mediums before the wise and prudent had had time to lodge the first half dozen in a madhouse. And when the infection had crossed the sea, and London and Paris were running after tables in a new sense, no very deep research made it apparent that every one of the new phenomena — I believe literally *every one* — was as old * as history. This very remarkable point is to some an evidence of delusion or imposture; they argue that the old divinations were one or the other, whence the modern phenomena, being of the same character as phenomena, must be of similar source. But it ought to be obvious that the proper way is to settle the modern phenomena first, and to return from them to the old ones; instead of founding a conclusion about the new upon pure assumption as to the old. It would be a very curious thing if in a country in which knowledge of antiquity does not flourish, persons of no information should have hit upon striking resemblances to old forms of delusion or fraud. There

* One of the Fathers, but I have mislaid the reference, speaks of divination *per tabulas et capras*, by tables and goats; an odd association. The word *crepa* would be the legitimate companion substantive of *crepo*, and would mean a crack or rap. But the word is only found in Festus (*teste* Forcellini), who says that *crepæ* are goats, *quod cruribus crepent*. There is enough in this to raise a suspicion that *crepa* did actually exist in what would have been its primitive sense, and that the Father who is cited was speaking of divination by *tables and raps*. There is also *crepus*, for which see any account of the Lupercalia.

are some, of whom I avow myself one, whose minds cannot refuse the belief that the *quod semper quod ubique* has a foundation of reality, open to suspicion that the real fact may have been distorted or misinterpreted. I look for the discovery of the *sea-something*, which shall explain what wondering sailors have called the *sea-serpent*. Mr. Owen and his brethren may be quite right when they announce that this or that description is utterly at variance with all structures hitherto examined: and I hold it most probable that when the sea-something actually comes before them, they will find it harmonising with other animals in its anatomical features. Or if, which may happen, it should turn out to be quite exceptional, what will it be but a water ornithorhyncus, or a marine boomerang? Before the *duck-bill*, which now has the first of the two names, was actually killed and given to the zoologist, he — not the duck-bill, who knew better, but the zoologist — is said to have supposed that some tricky wonder-monger had stuck the bill of a duck upon the neck of a quadruped. What a grand resource is belief in imposture! There are savages, we are told, who fill their stomachs with clay when food is scarce; which clay they vomit when they get a meal. In like manner the civilised man of *non-nescience* — a word I take the liberty of using for *science*, since two negatives make an affirmative — distends his theory-bag with belief in imposture until he can find something to satisfy his appetite. Self-knowledge would do better; this valuable commodity would not only keep the wind out of the receptacle, but it need not be displaced to make room when wholesome aliment comes to hand.

Imposture may be called the Zadok of those whom I describe; *Coincidence* is their Nathan: and this priest and this prophet anoint Solomon Self-conceit king. It is all coinci-

dence from beginning to end. If a man see the image of a friend of whom he was not thinking at the moment, and knew nothing except that he was far away, and if at that moment or close to it that friend should have died—I take a phenomenon of which most non-nescients admit that some of the thousands of seriously affirmed cases are true—it is a *coincidence*. What is coincidence? The falling of two things together. And how did these two things fall together? Why, they arrived at the same time. And how came this about? Because one happened to happen at the same moment in which the other happened to happen. And to what are we to attribute this? To *coincidence*. There seems something very candid about this circular reasoning; this making coincidence to be its own explanation. The truth is that the last assertion means *unconnected* coincidence: but the presence of the adjective strips the theory naked, while the omission hides the tatters of coincidence, the explanation under the respectable garments of coincidence the fact. Accordingly, those who rely on coincidence are not in the habit of reminding their hearers what sort of coincidence they mean.

One of the great pursuits of the world is the study of *evidence*: we are all engaged upon it in one way or another. But, as generally happens when a word goes much about, it picks up more than one meaning in its travels. Accordingly, evidence passes for that which is given and intended to produce an effect, and also for that which *does* produce it: there is the *quod debet monstrari*, that which may properly be tendered in aid of a conclusion, and the *quod facit videre*, that which gives perception of truth or falsehood. The difference, and the fallacies of confusion, are strikingly illustrated in the courts of law. While the case is preparing for trial it is the lawyer's business to collect what he then calls the *evidence*,

the matter which is to be offered to the jury. It is his duty to see that his 'evidence' is *quod debet monstrari*, not only addressed to the points raised by the pleadings, but in conformity to certain rational rules which are laid down. And thus it comes before the jury, who are sworn to give a true verdict according to the 'evidence,' which is now * the *quod facit videre*. So far good; the law must decide what is and what is not fit to be offered as material for evidence. But it may happen that matter slips in which the court would have prevented if it could, but could not, or at least did not prevent. And now comes one of those collisions in which the jury mind rules contrary to the legal mind. If the ghost of the murdered man were to make his appearance in court in a form which no one could possibly attribute either to imposture, optics, or chemistry, and were solemnly to declare that the prisoner was not the murderer, and then to vanish through the roof, the judge would, no doubt, instruct the jury that they must dismiss the respectable apparition from their minds altogether; that even if the spirit had offered to be sworn and to stand cross-examination, there would be very grave doubt whether his evidence could have been received, from his probable want of belief in a future state; but that, as matters stood, it was clearly their duty to take the vision *pro non viso*. To which the jury would reply, if they believed the ghost, by a verdict of *not guilty*. No honest men would ever make believe that they do not believe what they have in any way

* An exquisite proof of the need of the distinction occurred a few months ago. The jury asked the judge whether they were bound to find according to the *evidence* whether they believed it or not. The judge kept his countenance, and told them they were not bound; but he ought to have told them that, in the jury-meaning of the word, evidence is not evidence until it *is* believed.

been made to believe, if they clearly understand what they are doing. This case is only an extreme illustration: I will now state what happened a few years ago. A sued B on a bill of exchange: B's defence was I forget what insufficiency; that he had accepted a bill was admitted. Now the truth was that B had taken up his bill, released himself from all liability, and had the paper in his own hands to prove it. But, strange as it may seem, this circumstance was not pleaded in defence to the action; why, did not appear. Accordingly, there can be no doubt that payment could not either legally or reasonably be put forward on the defendant's behalf. By accident, or as an incident of the defence that *was* made, the bill was actually produced, in a manner which showed that the defendant *had* taken it up, and was the legal possessor of the piece of paper. The jury were instructed to find for the plaintiff; they evidently demurred, and the judge pressed the matter, telling them in effect that they were to pretend to believe they did *not* know that the bill had been taken up. The jury were not to be persuaded, and found for the defendant; the judge warning them that the parties would be put to the expense of a new trial; which I think did not happen.

I hold, of course, that the jury were as fully justified in their verdict as the judge would have been, if he could have done it, in keeping the unpleaded fact out of their way. Though the preceding anecdote is only introduced in illustration of the two meanings of the word evidence, the approval which will be generally given to the verdict turns upon a point which receives very little attention, though all are concerned with it, both in and out of court. What is belief? A *state* of the mind. What is it often taken to be? An *act* of the mind. The *imperative* future tense—I will

believe, thou shalt believe, &c., which has no existence except in the grammar-book, represents a futile attempt which people make upon themselves and upon others. We all know what a horrible chapter of human history has the second person for its heading : the only thing to be said for the actors is that they believed in the first person, which, besides making them think the means they used were competent, gave the honest among them a tendency to suppose that profession might be taken for belief; the dishonest wanted only profession. The judge thought the jury could believe or not, as they liked : that is, he thought they could, by an act of the will, put their own minds into the state in which they would have been if they had not known of the payment. This they could not have done : all that was in their power was to encourage that puzzle-headed — but doubtless, very honest — confusion between belief and acknowledgement which is usually in the heads of those who say, ‘I never will believe’

The attempt to induce others to will a belief or an unbelief is exceedingly common among all sides of all questions. There is no arguing against it : for it is a lurking attempt, unsuspected by those who make it. I go on to something in which those who have thought and read about belief as belief may not be quite hopeless of exciting useful reflection. Let the evidence tendered be what it may, it is an error to suppose it ought to produce the same effect on different persons. It is nonsense to say, Strip your mind of all bias, and make it equally ready for all impressions : you might as well tell a wrongly bent twig to please to put itself straight, that you may then give it another bend in the proper way. It is evidence which must both unbend and bend : it is not in the power of anyone to alter his state by will. A person who

finds another easier to convince than himself calls the other credulous; but when the other is the harder, the first calls him unreasonable. Every one is just at the right point; and all the initial difference between himself and others is *pre-disposition*. What right then has anybody to talk to anybody else about matters of opinion? It would seem that we are to say—that is, if we may coin a new word merely to imitate an old pun—that orthorhopy is my allowance of rope and heterorhopy another person's: that right bias and wrong bias are purely relative terms. An astronomer knows it has been found that people have different knacks of observing: that with the same thing to note, and the same clock to note it by, one person will nearly always be a little in advance of another, and a little behind a third. Nothing can bring them to a habit of agreement; it is their nature: and they call these differences *personal equations*, though to the unlearned *non-equations* would have been nearer the mark. But what if all the world be too quick or all too slow; surely then there is no such thing as correct astronomy: what if the disagreements be in all cases only different versions of *too soon*, or different versions of *too late*. It must be answered that first, there is good presumption that all kinds of human errors take opposite directions: and next that, if not, it would be of no more consequence than if all the clocks in the world were too fast, or all too slow, so long as they keep as close to one another as now. This last may be true enough, but the hopes of humanity must lie in the first: a nice mess we are in if it should happen that all bias is one way, and that what we call *opposite* tendencies lie only in the differences of one kind of tendency. Suppose, to put a case, that all mankind have a bias of credulity which is, one man with another, as 1000; while the most strong-minded, the

pinks and tulips of philosophy, have as much as 999, and poor blind spiritualists only 1001. Think of this as certainly not impossible, and then read the slashing review which 999 wrote against 1001, beginning 'After all the diffusion of education, after all the triumphs of science, in the middle of our enlightened century. . . .' Or take it the other way, let our bias be that of incredulity, in which case 1001 writes as above against 999. Put all these things together and stir them up; the result will be a gradual perception of the meaning and force of difference of opinion, and perhaps a suspicion that the rational point for the time being is somewhere between the two extremes, and that the people who 'don't know what to make of it,' are nearer the true result of the present state of materials than either negative philosophers or positive spiritualists. But, as already hinted, these intermediaries will not settle the question; the disputants must do that: all that the undecided can attempt is inducing both parties to keep the peace, to suspect the existence of their several biases, and to acknowledge that they are supporting their theories, ready made by help of prepossessions, not dispassionately constructing them.

The spiritualists, beyond a doubt, are in the track that has led to all advancement in physical science: their opponents are the representatives of those who have striven against progress. I take for granted that there is a large body of unexplained phenomena. Imposture men and coincidence men I leave to see their king anointed, and to rejoice and say, Long live the king. When navigators first began to make observations with instruments on deck, the self-sufficient called them *star-shooters*, and when a star's altitude was taken would ask *if they had hit it*. When the pendulum was first employed in this country to measure time, the incredulous were more than usually happy in their jests upon the *swing-*

swangs, as they called them. It is likely enough that the first set really believed that the navigators were pretending to hold communication with the heavenly bodies; and that the second set took the regularity of the movements of the pendulum for a succession of coincidences. But there is a higher class of obstructives who, without jest or sarcasm, bring up principles, possibilities, and the nature of things. These most worthy and respectable opponents are, if wrong, to be reckoned the lineal descendants of those who proved the earth could not be round, because the people on the under side would then tumble off. This sect is useful in raising doubts and difficulties, but absurd when it pronounces decisions upon them. It was proper to suspect that the locomotives would, with a flat wheel on a flat rail, refuse to go on for want of friction, the wheels doing what by military analogy might be called *goose-roll*: but it was absurd to affirm this incapacity as existing. When the great engineer said before the parliamentary committee that he expected more than ten miles an hour, the greater barrister—greater for the moment—turned away and said, ‘I will not ask this witness another question.’ The barrister’s* moment is gone: the engineer’s moment is a long future. Any one who chose might collect such a list as would powerfully edify those who can do without, and would not do a bit of good to those who want the warning.

I have said that the deluded spirit-rappers are on the right track: they have the *spirit* and the *method* of the grand time when those paths were cut through the uncleared forest in which it is now the daily routine to walk. What was

* When I say the barrister, I mean the clients who instructed him. The hint is worth giving, for people who know that Garrick would have been one of the last men to give a kingdom for a horse, are apt to think that learned counsel *are* the fools they are paid to be taken for. Are the bar better actors than Garrick?

that spirit? It was the spirit of universal examination, wholly unchecked by fear of being detected in the investigation of nonsense. When the Royal Society was founded, the fellows set to work to prove all things, that they might hold fast that which was good. They bent themselves to the question whether sprats were young herrings. They made a circle of the powder of a unicorn's horn, and set a spider in the middle of it; 'but it immediately ran out:' they tried several times, and the spider 'once made some stay in the powder.' They inquired into Kenelm Digby's sympathetic powder—'Magnetical cures being discoursed of, Sir Gilbert Talbot promised to communicate what he knew of sympathetical cures; and those members who had any of the powder of sympathy, were desired to bring some of it at the next meeting.' June 21, 1661, certain gentlemen were appointed 'curators of the proposal of tormenting a man with the sympathetic powder:' I cannot find any record of the result. And so they went on, until the time of Sir John Hill's satire, in 1751. This once well-known work is, in my judgment, the greatest compliment the Royal Society ever received. It brought forward a number of what are now feeble and childish researches in the 'Philosophical Transactions.' It showed that the inquirers had actually been inquiring: and that they did not pronounce decisions about 'natural knowledge' by help of '*natural* knowledge.' But for this, Hill would neither have known what to assail, nor how. Matters are now entirely changed. The scientific bodies are far too well established to risk themselves. *Ibit qui zonam perdidit—*

Let him take castles who has ne'er a groat.

These great institutions are now without any collective purpose, except that of promoting individual energy: they print

for their contributors, and guard themselves by a general declaration that they will not be answerable for the things they print. Of course they will not put forward anything for everybody: but a writer of a certain reputation, or matter of a certain look of plausibility and safety, will find admission. This is as it should be: the pasturers of flocks and herds and the hunters of wild beasts are two very different bodies with very different policies. The scientific academies are what a spiritualist might call 'publishing mediums;' and *their* spirits fall occasionally into writing which looks as if minds in the higher state were not always impervious to nonsense.

Again, the spiritualists have taken the *method* of the old time. There was a strong head, one Bacon, who laid down a scheme of philosophising which, in England,* is supposed to have been the guiding star of all subsequent successes. But Bacon was great as a destroyer, feeble as a constructor: he could upset, but he could not set up. His plan was to collect all the facts; after which, to use his own expression, sciences would be made as easily as a circle is drawn with a pair of compasses. But no answer has ever been given to the question, What science owed its birth or growth to Bacon's directions how to make a science? Many have profited much by the descriptions which Bacon (Beacon?) has given of error: a few may have profited a little by his expositions of the way to truth. Those who are acquainted with the *build* of the successful sciences can only bring themselves within the pale of the established worship by making *induction* mean other things besides itself. It is universally acknowledged that Bacon's attempt at a discussion of *heat*, on his own plan of

* The Bacon-worship of the continent was much less than that of England, though not small. The reaction is now so strong that it is protested against as excessive by the French *translator of Aristotle*, Barthélemy St.-Hilaire. This was written before I saw Liebig's assault.

setting up, does not come near enough to deserve even the name of a failure. There was another strong head, called Newton, whose opinion of Bacon may be gathered from the fact that he does not, in any one of his works, make any allusion* whatever to Bacon's name, system, or writings. To this Newton we owe, *inter multa alia*, the foundation of our present knowledge of the moon's motion. How did he proceed? By collecting facts? No! by vigorous and rigorous—I had written one of these words, and afterwards could not tell which; but both are true—development of one of the most outrageous ideas that ever was conceived, and trying how its consequences worked. His predecessors had started the notion that dead matter pulls other dead matter; they had an idea that the *pull* of the earth kept the moon at proper satellite distance. Newton trumped their trick with a vengeance: for he made it his hypothesis that *every atom* of matter pulls *every other atom*. I purposely avoid the grand words *gravitate towards* and *attract*: they mean *pull without volition*, or they mean nothing. There are stars in the milky way of which it is now pretty clear that their light takes at least scores, probably hundreds of years to reach us, at the express speed of 190,000 miles odd in a second and no stoppages. Newton laid down as his theory that there is not a particle in the salt-cellar in any one of these stars but is always pull, pull, pulling, at every particle in the salt-cellar on our earth; aye, and in the pepper-box too: our pepper and salt, of course, using retaliatory measures. And he had the impudence to say, *Hypotheses non fingo!* But for all

* Newton, in some of his early optical writings, uses the phrase *experimentum crucis*, which raises a presumption, though by no means a proof, that he had looked into Bacon's writings. If he had really done so, his silence must be intentional.

that, to Newton we owe it, and by aid of this supposition too, that the moon is of use in finding longitude. He himself clearly shows that when he talks about matter pulling matter, he means that matter, no matter how, *does* move and change place as it *would do* if it had all these pulls upon it. Gravity, says he—the cause of these motions—exists and acts, but I have *not yet* found out the cause of it. Many of his followers believe in the *very pull*; and all the early opponents of course took the theory in this sense.

Suppose Newton had merely collected his facts; where should we have been now? A person who knows the lunar theory would smile at the idea of a speculator of 1660 presented with two hundred years of accurate meridian* observations of the sun, moon, and planets, at two remote observatories, and requested to make an inductive astronomy out of them which should give equally accurate predictions for time to come. He would smile again when he remembers the state of meteorology. For many a year have observations been made with all that ends in *ometer*; thermometer, barometer, hygrometer, eudiometer, anemometer, &c. And good has been done by it: but where is our *science*? Who can make the weather of the last three months predict that of to-morrow?

* James II. has had great notoriety as an actual administrator of naval affairs: but few can remember how much is due to Charles II., when they think of the progress of navigation. I hardly know whether this may not be the first place in which the *three royal foundations* are pointedly mentioned together: and of these the second and third were not merely promoted by the *king*, but called into existence by the *man*. First, the *Royal Society*, which by strong pressure induced Newton not merely to print but to *write* the *Principia*. Secondly, the *Royal Observatory*, from which came the few lunar observations which were essential to Newton's work: and no such observations had ever been made before. Thirdly, the *Royal Mathematical School*, attached to Christ's Hospital, for the education of navigators.

He will not have to wait for fame until he can acknowledge it only *per tabulas et crepas*. When Murphy's almanac foretold the coldest day of the winter, the public, as soon as they saw that the day named was colder than any that had gone before, did not wait to try the future, but thronged to buy in such crowds that the police were called in to keep order. The time may come when some weather Newton, with an atrocious theory, and access to one year's observations of some observatory, may point out the direction of progress. Never has any way been made by observation alone. Facts have sometimes started a theory; but until sagacity had conjectured, divined, guessed, surmised — for more choices, see Roget, § 514—what they pointed to, the facts were a mob, and not an army.

Some theory, then, is essential: a bad one may lead to discovery. The Ptolemaic hypotheses improved astronomy. Of the two great theories of light, emanation and undulation, one must be wrong, if not both: but both have added largely to knowledge. The time may come when a step* nearer to the

* At present it seems more likely that *attraction* will drive out *matter*, by and with the aid of *repulsion*. The current of physical philosophy sets towards Priestley's notion that an atom is but a centre of attraction and repulsion, a *terminus ad quem* for a pull, a *terminus a quo* for a push. Well! but surely there is something to be pushed and pulled, to push and pull. Here will arise in due season a dispute parallel to that which is attached to the names of Collier and Berkeley. What a comfort it should be to think that this source never can run dry. Go as far as we may, we shall always be able to raise the question whether we have arrived at the direct action of Deity, or whether we are still in second causes. I speak of this life: of the future state we are informed by some theologians, but quite out of their own heads, that all wants will be supplied without effort, and all doubts resolved without thought. This a *state*! not a bit of it: a mere phase of non-existence; annihilation with a consciousness of it, such as I shall presently allude to. The rapping spirits know better than that; their views, should they really be human impostures, are very, very singular.

first cause shall raise a smile whenever gravitation is mentioned: the time may come when attraction shall be saddled with some contemptuous nickname, say the *pully-hauly crankum*. But this will only be done by the pseudosophs: those who add wisdom to knowledge will be able to remember what this — then to be called — *pure theory* has added to the stock of power. The number 999 of the day, when he writes against number 1001, will twit him with being one who ‘ought rather to have lived in the days of our well-meaning, but blinded, ancestors, who were duped by the notion of matter *attracting* (!) matter.’

The followers of a theory are of two kinds; both equally apt to use it with effect. There are those who hold it tentatively, as consolidating existing knowledge, and suggesting the direction of inquiry: there are those who believe in it as representing the true cause. The first may be the wiser; but the second are likely to be the more energetic. Now the *spiritualists*, so called, meaning all who receive the facts, or some of them, as facts, may be divided into those who believe that the communications *are* spiritual, those who do not see what *else* they can be, and those who do not see *what* they can be. All who inquire further, let them think what they may, will, if they shape their inquiries upon the spiritual hypothesis, be sound imitators of those who led the way in

In spite of the inconsistencies, the eccentricities, and the puerilities which some of them have exhibited, there is a uniform vein of description running through their accounts which, supposing it to be laid down by a combination of impostors, is more than remarkable, even marvellous. The agreement is one part of the wonder, it being remembered that the ‘mediums’ are scattered through the world; but the other and greater part of it is that the impostors, if impostors they be, have combined to oppose all the current ideas of a future state, in order to gain belief in the genuineness of their pretensions.

physical science, in the old time. I do not speak of those who suspect imposture: to them it belongs to invent catch-tests. I do not speak of those who think they can set out with a view of the naturally possible and impossible; they can arrive at their conclusions by pure logic: let them learn *Barbara, Celarent, &c.* with all speed, and set about imitating those of the schoolmen who have made the name of their whole order a by-word. But to those who know the truth of facts, and who do not know what can and cannot be—at least out of the exact sciences—it will appear on reflexion that the most probable direction of inquiry, the best chance of eliciting a satisfactory result, is that which is suggested by the spirit hypothesis. I mean the hypothesis that some intelligence, which is not that of any human beings clothed in flesh and blood, has a direct share in the phenomena.

Take this hypothesis on its own *à priori* probability, and compare it with that of attraction. Suppose a person wholly new to both subjects, wholly undrilled both in theology and in physics. He is to choose between two assertions, one true and one false, and to lose his life if he choose the false one. The first assertion is that there are incorporeal intelligences in the universe, and that they sometimes communicate with men: the second is that the particles of the stars in the milky way give infinitesimal permanent pulls to the particles on our earth. I suspect that most, even among those who have all existing prepossessions, would feel rather puzzled to know which they *would have* chosen, had they been situated as above described.

The simple form of the hypothesis, namely, the cooperation of an intelligence which is not that of living human beings, is far too elementary to be the pabulum of most persons: they could as soon make pure nitrogen do the work of nitrogenised food. We must have something more positive than this.

Accordingly, some will have the phenomena to be, as the phenomena themselves declare, caused by departed spirits; some have recourse to infernal agency. Angels, and such intermediate spirits as fairies, &c., have not, I believe, been called in. I have been told of a hardy speculator who is preparing to give the world the theory that all matter thinks, and that the atmosphere is competent to be the cause of the asserted communications. All this is quite in the spirit of philosophy, as times go. My state of mind, which refers the whole either to unseen intelligence, or something which man has never had any conception of, proves me to be out of the pale * of the Royal Society. I could bring a very long list of names, including some of the most celebrated of our own day, who have made it, some their principle and all their practice, to take all the imaginable causes of a known effect, and to declare, or to act as if they declared, that one of them *must* be. They can no more keep a set of facts uninvested in a theory, than a person of the usual prudence can hold back his money when a mania for speculation is in the market. 'For Heaven's sake,' said the people at the time when the South Sea

* The letters F.R.S., of which everybody knows the English meaning, have two esoteric significations. My more learned reader knows the old distinction between *in re* and *in ratione*. Looking at the *homo trium literarum*, the thief of the secrets of nature, as a follower of natural knowledge, a promoter of man's power over matter, and an augments of the conveniences of life, he well deserves the honourable title of *Fautor Realis Scientiæ*. But when I turn to the mental side of the question, and consider the action of his physics, as presented by himself, upon the mind and thought of man, I see what induces me to think the time must come when one of his predicates will be *Falsæ Rationis Sacerdos*. No blame upon him. To every system its proper time and place. The old schoolmen manured the ground; he has raised a plentiful crop; and the time will come when there will be bread, leavened bread, and plenty for all.

bubble gave birth to offspring like itself, 'let us but subscribe to something; anything is better than nothing at all.'

I hold those persons to be incautious who give in at once to the spirit doctrine, and never stop to imagine the possibility of unknown power other than disembodied intelligence. But I am sure that this calling in of the departed spirit, because they do not know what else to fix it upon, may be justified by those who do it, upon the example of the philosophers of our own day. Some flints are found in what they call the *drift*, curiously cut, and, for various reasons believed to owe their shape to agents different from those which give other flints their multitudinous configurations. These queer-shaped things are tolerably like the tools of savages. The geologists do not hesitate a moment: these are the *works of men*, and the whole history of the human race must shift its basis. And why are these flints the works of men? I can learn nothing but what amounts to this, that the geologist does not see *what else they can be*. He calls in *his* higher power the moment he wants to steady his mind upon an explanation: as to waiting a while for further knowledge, that would not suit the hunger of the theory-bag. At last human remains are found, in positions which favour the supposition that we have got the bones of those who owned the axes, as well as the axes themselves. Does this provoke new inquiry into the epoch of these remains? With a few it may, but not with the many. The rapid arrival at conclusions is as conspicuous among the geologists as among the spiritualists. For reasons above given, both are in the right track.

So soon as any matter excites warm discussion and lively curiosity, attempts at imposition commence. Some forged flints—perhaps also bones—have certainly been put into the drift; and some forged spirits have made their communi-

cations. The philosophical world is of easy belief in fraud: they can credit any amount of skill and ingenuity, provided only that what they cannot otherwise explain, except unpalatably, may be thereby shown to be trick. If it were meted to them in their own measure it would go hard with their characters: but the outer world is not so unreasonable as they are; and of this they get the benefit. I do not wish to be understood as discouraging suspicion; my own admissions show that I ought to stand up for the keenest scrutiny. What I reprobate is, not the wariness which widens and lengthens inquiry, but the assumption which prevents or narrows it; the imposture theory, which frequently infers imposture from the assumed impossibility of the phenomena asserted, and then alleges imposture against the examination of the evidence. And further, when I speak of the 'philosophical world,' I make a reference which needs special explanation, and a good deal of it.

There are four *courts of the mind*, if the phrase may be used. First, for the strict reasoning of the exact sciences, purely mathematical or purely logical, resting on those universally acknowledged laws for which consciousness has only to examine itself. I speak not merely of conclusions which require thought and learning, but also of the assents which all persons give to maxims of common life; whether synthetical, as that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points; or analytical, as that none are left when all are gone. Secondly, for the evidence of the senses to things which are. Thirdly, for the authority of others, as to principles which can be made certain, if true; or the testimony of others, as to things or events which can be known, if they really exist or actually happened. Fourthly, for principles which are presented as more or less obvious,

but not capable of the absolute demonstration of logic or mathematics. The first three courts are peaceable and quiet places of business : the fourth is half the battle ground of the greatest human differences, ambiguity in meaning of words being the other half. I do not include *experience*, which is a compound usually of perception and testimony.

Absolute demonstration, perception by the senses, and the testimony of others (a word which may include *authority*, when properly used), are the three things by which conclusions may be obtained from without. But in each of the three we may be deceived, now and then : and in each of the three we seek the protection of the plural number. A mathematician knows that, when his demonstration is complicated and lengthy, he is glad to fortify himself by another, conducted on a different principle. In matters of sense, there are many cases in which touch, smell, or hearing, are called in to confirm the sight, or *vice versâ*. We all know the overpowering effect of the second witness. And yet in all three cases there may be collusion. The second demonstration may contain the faulty point of the first in a different form ; the two senses may — in mania it would seem they sometimes do — back each other in deceiving the mind ; and two witnesses may be speaking in fraudulent concert. Nevertheless, all deductions made, demonstration, perception, and testimony, are our three supports ; and, in at least ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, neither of them leaves reasonable doubt, when applied to matters within its scope, and when not opposed by one of the same kind, or by one of the others.

It is far otherwise with the fourth court of human knowledge, the principle, the thing which *must* be, the dictum of common sense, what nobody can deny, the impress of nature on our minds, &c. &c. &c. Out of this court comes all phi-

losophy except exact science; all morals except what is founded on belief in human testimony, bearing witness to actual revelation; and no mean portion of all other conclusions. And from this court comes all denial of what I have said about this court. I am speaking of what cannot be established either by demonstration, sense, or testimony: and the fourth court, name it by what name you will, is the giver of law to what I call the 'philosophical world.' I may be supposed to define 'philosophy' as being the handling of all that cannot be proved either by pure logic applied to uncontroverted* postulates, by the senses, or by testimony: there is much to be said for this definition, but here I am only concerned with it as being the best way of describing a world which delights to call itself 'philosophical,' and to which I am ready to concede the name on my own terms. This world must be distinguished, on the one hand, from the very small world which cultivates true philosophy in a manner which leads them towards that *acquired ignorance*, that *docta ignorantia*, of which Nicolas of Cusa—to whom I suppose we owe the phrase—says 'quanto in hac ignorantia profundius docti fuerimus: tanto magis ad ipsam accedemus veritatem.' It must be distinguished, on the other hand, from that very large world, nearly all the rest of society, which the school I speak of is sometimes falsely accused of corrupting. Falsely: for the truth is that *my* philosophers—those of whom I speak—are guilty of no more than methodical cultivation of a propensity of our nature: and we must not describe as part of their crop the weeds which would have grown if they had never handled a spade. They are those who have reduced human

* *Uncontroverted*, not *incontrovertible*. The *undenied* is one thing; the *undeniable* is another. People pass over the first, and fight about the second.

infirmity to a system. They are of every kind of pursuit, and of every kind of temperament: they are not to be judged as a body by those who stand out offensively, and who are a trifle more respectable than the others. Conspicuous among the mass, a minority very considerable in number, and unreprieved by the rest, are the set who do the looking down from a higher sphere, with smiles of contempt and eyes of pity, when they meet with a man or woman who sets their trite saws at naught; the supernal part of whose mission it is to be useful to reasonable persons by accustoming them to the practice of courtesy * under difficulties. These are the brighter lights of the system; the others are more reserved: they hide their candle under a bushel in the company of those who are not afraid of the craft, and remove the covering when they get among their own set, where they back the bites of their bolder comrades, and bite the backs of their opponents. The difference, such as it is, is a distinction: but a Mussulman is a Mussulman, whether sunny or shy.

I should be very loath to say that the whole of this 'philosophy' is ignorance: there is a part of it which is always craving a hearing, and comes recommended by the attribute *quod semper, quod ubique*. We have for instance — to take

* Why do not these people take to writing doctrinal novels? There is a satirist who would be an odious prig if he were to come forward in person, with nothing but his infallible judgments, and his sneers at public men who differ from them. But he joins his own better nature to what would otherwise be insufferable insolence, by putting his opinions into the mouth of a genial parson of the old school, who lubricates dogmatism with port wine, and hates Lord Brougham and a supper of nothing but sandwiches on a common principle. And so he produces what is exquisite reading. His method has the advantage of allowing what philosophy seldom allows, the influence of years upon stiffness of opinion and roughness of manner. Dr. Folliot and Dr. Opimian, as from one hand at different times, are worth comparing together.

the two feelings which the philosophy man takes least note of—the moral sense, as we call it, and the aspiration after a future state, anterior to all discussion about either reason or revelation. Take the notion of a future state: it will bear question whether human beings are capable of conceiving themselves *annihilated*. With many, at least, of those who profess to have no hope, there is a dread of non-existence which, when closely examined, shows that it is imagined a consciousness of it remains. An American spiritualist relates that a friend, of very ‘sceptical principles,’ observed to him, ‘I guess I should not like to be annihilated.’ When asked why not, he replied, ‘I am afraid that perhaps I should regret it afterwards.’ If it be a practical impossibility for a human being to think himself out of existence, this point of structure is matter for very grave thought. But to assert, as even theologians have done before now, that immortality is brought to light by it, without other help, is very grave nonsense.

The positive part of our natural ‘philosophy’ is entitled to examination, as likely to lend strength to conclusions. The negative part is to the full as difficult as the spirit theory. Here we have our possibilities and our impossibilities; our knowledge of what would be the necessary connexion, if only they did exist, of things which we thereupon declare do not exist; and all that comes of filtering the consequences of this philosophy into the ordinary action of life. When examples are asked for, there is a kind of difficulty which demands extreme cases. Take an ordinary instance, and the thing is so common, and done by so many at once, and with such an air of every-day habit, that we hardly see what is done, even when we look, if unpractised in the kind of examination necessary. A person not used to military sights, watch-

ing a whole company at drill, cannot follow the easy and simultaneous movement of the muskets; it is next to impossible to keep the eye fixed on one. But let there be in front what they used to call a *fugleman*, who directs the rest by exaggerating the requisite actions, or—as I once saw—a grotesque urchin who places himself as near as he may, and imitates with a stick; the unaccustomed spectator will soon have light thrown upon the whole business. Now I shall place a fugleman in front of some of the companies, not meaning of course that the cases I point out are anything but exaggerations of what usually happens.

1. A philosopher, far too respectable to be named with the companions I mean to give him, once contended that, on any theory of consciousness except the one he favoured, man would be the 'dupe and victim of a perfidious Creator.' According to this announcement God had a duty towards man before* his creation, the violation of which would have been perfidy, that is, treacherous breach of faith. The reader will be surprised to learn that the philosopher quoted was a Genevan, who also believed that God had foreordained—*i. e.* determined before their creation—that millions upon millions of human beings, designated beforehand, should be punished to all eternity, "to the praise of his glorious justice," as the Westminster confession has it. This instance well illustrates the inconsistency which prevails far and wide among those who find first principles in the fourth source.

* The point of my remark may be illustrated by a very short dialogue which is reported to have taken place between a hero of our literature and a person who desired to be thought of his acquaintance as they came out of church:—"A good sermon to-day, Dr. Johnson."—"That may be, sir, but I'm not sure that you can know it."

2. Jean Meslier, a French parish priest, who died in 1733, aged 55, was a man who performed his functions without reproach or suspicion, and was benevolent to the utmost farthing he could spare from the wants of life. He left a bulky manuscript which he called his *Testament*, all or part of which was printed under the title of *Bon Sens*: it was translated into English in 1826. The doctrine of the work is that there is no God, which is in fact its sole argument. Among the supports of this doctrine is the assertion that 'a universal God would have instituted a universal religion,' that is, would have made all men of one religion. This worthy priest, to whom there was no God, knew how the universe would have been fashioned if there had been one: he looked at the first cause from an earlier point of view.

3. Many years ago, a miserable pot-boy fired a pistol at the Queen. When questioned * about his motive he answered, 'I don't think a woman ought to rule over such a country as this.' The case is extreme, no doubt: but it *fugles* admirably for a very large class of the philosophical principles. Politics and social economy are derived from the fourth court, and morals to match from—Heaven doesn't know where.

4. There was an insurrection of colonies against the mother country which had enough of defensible grounds, but the craving for philosophy based it upon a principle—'We hold this maxim to be self-evident, that all men are born free and equal.' No doubt the fact is true; the slightest experience of new-born infants verifies it. But the erection of the fact into a maxim is a good instance of the way in which bias

* Privately, of course, for our law, though it gives such an object the honours of a trial for high treason, does not condescend to solicit an explanation of 'the principles on which he acted.'

assumes more than is wanted, and does not know what to do with the rest: for philosophy does not allow any part of a 'self-evident' notion to be returned upon her hands. If the sturdy patriots had contented themselves with declaring it self-evident that they must have their own way, they would have given an answer, not only to the claims of Great Britain, but to that awkward question, 'How about the Negro?'

5. Though we have seen something of 'What else can it be?' I add an instance which came to my knowledge many years ago. A certain accusation was contemplated, which turned upon whether goods were or were not, for a time, deposited at ——. 'How can we prove this on oath?' asked one accuser. 'Oh! I'll swear to it,' said another. 'How do you know?' asked the first. 'Why! where else could they have been?' said the second.

Absurd extremes of these and other kinds may enable some, on both sides of the spirit question and others, at least to separate the knowledge of the fourth court,—which takes in all that is neither demonstration, sense, nor testimony—and to take it at a more reasonable valuation than is usual. Our age of the world presumes itself free from reliance on what I have separated from the rest, because it has long known that the preceding age had that very defect. But those who have been much in contact with both see that both have the same features. The development of reasons for this assertion would lead me too far: and the time for it is not come; but it is coming. Other revivals are in progress, besides that of the possibility of communication with higher worlds of thought: among them is the study of those minds which have been on the shelves for a century and a half, covered with dust and nicknames. As this study goes on, it will be accompanied by a comparison which will show that many of the tunes of new

philosophy, though played on another instrument, are the old tunes over again.

I should have been well pleased to have borne equally hard upon both sides of the spirit controversy, but circumstances make this impracticable. The *spiritualist* appeals to evidence: he may have enough, or he may not; but he relies on what has been seen and heard. When he assumes that there is a world of spirits, it is no more than all nations and ages have assumed, and many on alleged record of actual communication, which all who think him a fool ought to laugh at. If he should take the concurrent feeling of mankind as presumption in favour of such a world—a thing which may be known—he is on more reasonable ground than the opponent, who draws its impossibility—a thing which cannot be known—out of the minds of a very small minority. He may be wrong, then, and I hold him too hasty: but his error is one which cannot be ascertained except by further use of his own method; he may work his own cure, if cure be needed. But the opponent philosopher, if *he* be wrong, is obnoxious to all that can be said against wrong reason. He takes a mode in which he can only be right by accident, and in which he can only guard against error by also guarding against truth. Very many may be suspected of the wish to be counted wise by receiving nothing: they know that there are *Candides* in plenty. ‘Oh!’ said that simple youth, ‘le grand homme que ce Poco-curante: rien ne peut lui plaire.’ Those who are inclined to watch anyone of the class, whatever his guiding instincts, will observe the wonderful fertility of his brain; he produces maxim after maxim, mostly negations, and can make them as long as anyone will listen. In many cases his principles have so close a fit that it may be suspected the things they were to apply to were measured for

them. This rate of production is suspicious: as the very old * English song against the clergy says—

Ther beth so manye prestes, hii ne muwe noht alle be gode.

And when a satirist says ‘not all’ we may be sure he means ‘very few.’ If the fourth-court reasoner be wrong, his own maxims can never extricate him. Accordingly, his methods of proceeding have a score of weak points for one which is incident to the plan of looking at evidence, and deciding upon it. I will not call him the *modern schoolman*, because there is one point of difference in his favour, or at least in favour of his deductions. The old schoolman kept close to the meaning of his words, and kept strictly to logic: usually, that is; no rule without exception. Hence a false principle would lead to false deductions. The modern philosopher—I mean the man of the *fourth court*—is lax in phraseology and illogical in inference; consequently, a false principle may end in a true deduction, either by shift of meaning, or error of reasoning. It may be said that he is just as likely to produce false conclusions out of true principles: this diminishes his advantage, but does not exhaust it, if, as may be suspected, his false maxims far outnumber his true ones.

The full comparison of the two ages of the world, the old

* The song, which I casually turned up while this page was in progress, has been the means of extruding a line which I intended for the place. When I have noticed philosophical minds, such as we meet with every day, strong in our ignorance as in triple mail, dealing out a profusion of undeniable principles, and sneering away like omniscience at everyone who ‘can’t see that,’ my admiration of the facility with which they supply the power their Creator forgot to give them often brings into my head—but never off my tongue; manners before everything—a slang line which I suppose is part of a more modern song:—

Go it, ‘ye cripples! crutches are cheap!

and new mediæval—as they may one day be called—is too large an undertaking for a preface. The dispensation which is perhaps at the beginning of its end has selected the weaker points of the old day, and has attached them to the word *schoolman*, which has been made a term of contempt. An age to come may possibly repeat this process; and if it should get hold of *schoolboy*, as the word by which to make the smaller man of the second mediæval period the representative of *his* time, I think equal justice will be done. Should I have life and opportunity, I contemplate a sketch of the affinities and consanguinities of the two periods: and the handling of the spirit-hypothesis, whether in the hands of advocates or opponents, will furnish striking instances.

I began this preface by stating that certain phenomena, which I myself witnessed, had satisfied me of the existence of a real *somewhat* in the things called spiritual manifestations. My reader may desire to hear something about my own experience of these phenomena; and the more, as neither they, nor hundreds of others of the same force but different kinds, have produced either acceptance or rejection of the spirit-hypothesis. With the following preliminary explanation, I will state some things which have happened to myself in general terms.

When a person relates a wonder which he has seen to another person whom he desires to convince, but whose mind is well barricaded by fourth-court principles against the reception of the explanation which the narrator—perhaps on principles of the same kind—desires to advocate, both parties very often proceed in a way which may be well illustrated by difficulties of frequent occurrence in money transactions. The narrator forgets that the things which he has seen and heard are not made visible to the sight and hearing of the receiver of his testimony; the evidence he *offers* is of a secondary cha-

racter, though the evidence he *received* was primary. He tenders a cheque upon a most respectable firm, Messrs. Fact & Co., to an immense amount: and might properly be answered by,—‘My dear friend, I know that your credit is good, as things in general go, but I really must make inquiry before I take so large a cheque as this for value.’ On the other hand, the receiver of the testimony brings a few positions out of his stock of laws of nature, notions of possibility and impossibility, dictates of common sense, &c. &c., on which he desires the giver to conclude that the evidence of his own senses is good for nothing, because it would prove that what cannot be can be, which is absurd, Q. E. D. He tenders a cheque upon *his* house, Messrs. First Principles & Co., and might, with equal propriety, be answered by,—‘My good fellow, I know your credit in that quarter is unlimited; but the truth is, they give unlimited credit to so many, that I doubt their lasting through any twenty-four hours in the year.’ Each of these parties deals unreasonably with the other. Now my reader will understand that I do not make any demand upon him: he will give me credit, if not himself a goose, for seeing that the tender of an anonymous cheque would be of equal effect, whether drawn on the Bank of England or on Aldgate Pump. My thesis is that he has asked of me a specimen of what makes *me* believe in the *reality* of some of the things called spirit-manifestations. Whether or no he shall allow me to have had the ground I say I had, is to me indifferent, and to the question irrelevant. I confess that for a little while I thought I had thrown salt on the tail of an impossibility. I felt what the French call *désorienté*, but fortunately not *au bout de mon Latin*, though the phrases are of the same family. So I went back to the old quiddity-mongers, and fortified myself with *ab actu ad posse valet consequentia*. My state required

so much relief that I had recourse to Aristotle, who says—my reader must excuse translation, it is really too deep—Τὰ δὲ γεγόμενα φανερόν ὅτι δυνατόν· οὐ γὰρ ἐγένετο εἰ ἦν ἀδύνατον. I, it will be observed, had my own senses to preserve from utter confutation: my reader will not require the strong medicines which I prescribed for myself; he has but to set me down for a liar, a dupe, or a hoaxer, and he gets off cheaper than I did.

Ten years ago, Mrs. Hayden, the well known American medium, came to my house *alone*. The sitting began immediately after her arrival. Eight or nine persons were present, of all ages, and of all degrees of belief and unbelief in the whole thing being imposture. The raps began in the usual way. They were to my ear clean, clear, faint sounds, such as would be said to *ring*, had they lasted. I likened them at the time to the noise which the ends of knitting-needles would make, if dropped from a small distance upon a marble slab, and instantly checked by a damper of some kind: and subsequent trial showed that my description was tolerably accurate. I never had the good luck to hear those exploits of Latin muscles, and small kicking done on the leg of a table by machinery, which have been proposed as the causes of these raps: but the noises I did hear were such as I feel quite unable to impute to either source, even on the supposition of imposture. Mrs. Hayden was seated at some distance from the table, and her feet were watched by their believers until faith in pedalism slowly evaporated. At a late period in the evening, after nearly three hours of experiment, Mrs. Hayden having risen, and talking at another table while taking refreshment, a child suddenly called out, ‘Will all the spirits who have been here this evening rap together?’ The words were no sooner uttered than a hailstorm of knitting needles was heard, crowded into certainly less than two seconds; the big needle

sounds of the men, and the little ones of the women and children, being clearly distinguishable, but perfectly disorderly in their arrival.

For convenience I shall speak of these raps as proceeding from spirits—the reader may say that the spirit was Mrs. Hayden; the party addressed, a departed friend, the devil, or what not. Though satisfied that the sounds were made *amosgepotically*,* I prefer the word *spirit*, as briefer than ‘amosgepotic influence.’

On being asked to put a question to the first spirit, I begged that I might be allowed to put my question mentally—that is, without speaking it, or writing it, or pointing it out to myself on an alphabet,—and that Mrs. Hayden might hold both arms extended while the answer was in progress. Both demands were instantly granted by a couple of raps. I put the question and desired the answer might be in one word, which I assigned; all mentally. I then took the printed alphabet, put a book upright before it, and, bending my eyes upon it, proceeded to point to the letters in the usual way. The word *chess* was given, by a rap at each letter. I had now a reasonable certainty of the following alternative: either some *thought-reading* of a character wholly inexplicable, or such superhuman acuteness on the part of Mrs. Hayden that she could detect the letter I wanted by my bearing, though she (seated six feet from the book which hid my alphabet) could

* I present this word as one which will be found very convenient: it may frequently effect a compromise. For example, I have lately heard of some one who declared in an elaborate article that he would not believe the evidence of his senses unless the facts presented were capable of explanation on some (by him) received hypothesis. I could go with him as far as this, that I would not trust my own eyes and ears for anything except what could safely be attributed to an amosgepotic source.

see neither my hand nor my eye, nor at what rate I was going through the letters. I was fated to be driven out of the second alternative before the sitting was done.

At a later period of the evening, when another spirit was under examination, I asked him whether he remembered a certain review which was published soon after his death, and whether he could give me the initials of an epithet (which happened to be in five words) therein applied to himself. Consent having been given, I began my way through the alphabet, as above: the only difference of circumstances being that a bright table-lamp was now between me and the medium. I expected to be brought up at, say the letter F; and when my pencil passed that letter without any signal, I was surprised, and by the time I came to K, or thereabouts, I paused, intending to announce a failure. But some one called out, 'You have passed it; I heard a rap long ago.' I began again; and distinct raps came, first at C, then at D. I was now satisfied that the spirit had failed; and I thought to myself that it was rather hard to expect him to remember a passage in a review published in 1817, or thereabouts. But, stopping to consider a little more, it flashed into my mind that C. D. were his own initials, and that he had chosen to commence the *clause which contained the epithet*. I then said nothing but 'I see what you are at: pray go on,' and I then got T (for *The*), then the F I wanted — of which not one word had been said, — and then the remaining four initials. I was now satisfied that contents of my mind had been read which could not have been detected by my method of pointing to the alphabet, even supposing that could have been seen.

I gave an account of all this to a friend who was then alive, a man of *ologies* and *ometers* both, who was not at all disposed to think it anything but a clever imposture. 'But,' said he,

‘ what you tell me is very singular : I shall go myself to Mrs. Hayden : I shall go alone and not give my name : I don’t think I shall hear anything from anybody : but if I do I shall find out the trick ; depend upon it I shall find it out.’ He went accordingly : and came to me to report progress. He told me that he had gone a step beyond me, for he had insisted on taking his alphabet behind a large folding screen, and asking his questions by the alphabet and a pencil, as well as receiving the answers. No persons except himself and Mrs. Hayden were in the room. The ‘ spirit ’ who came to him was one whose unfortunate death was fully detailed in the usual way. My friend told me that he was ‘ awe-struck,’ and had nearly forgotten all his precautions.

The things which I have narrated were the beginning of a long series of experiences, many as remarkable as what I have given ; many of a minor character, separately worth little, but jointly of weight when considered in connexion with the more decisive proofs of reality ; many of a confirmatory tendency as mere facts, but of a character not sustentive of the gravity and dignity of the spiritual world. The celebrated apparition of Giles Scroggins is a serious personage compared to some which have fallen in my way, and a logical one too. If these things be spirits, they show that pretenders, coxcombs, and liars are to be found on the other side of the grave as well as on this ; and what for no ? as Meg Dods said.

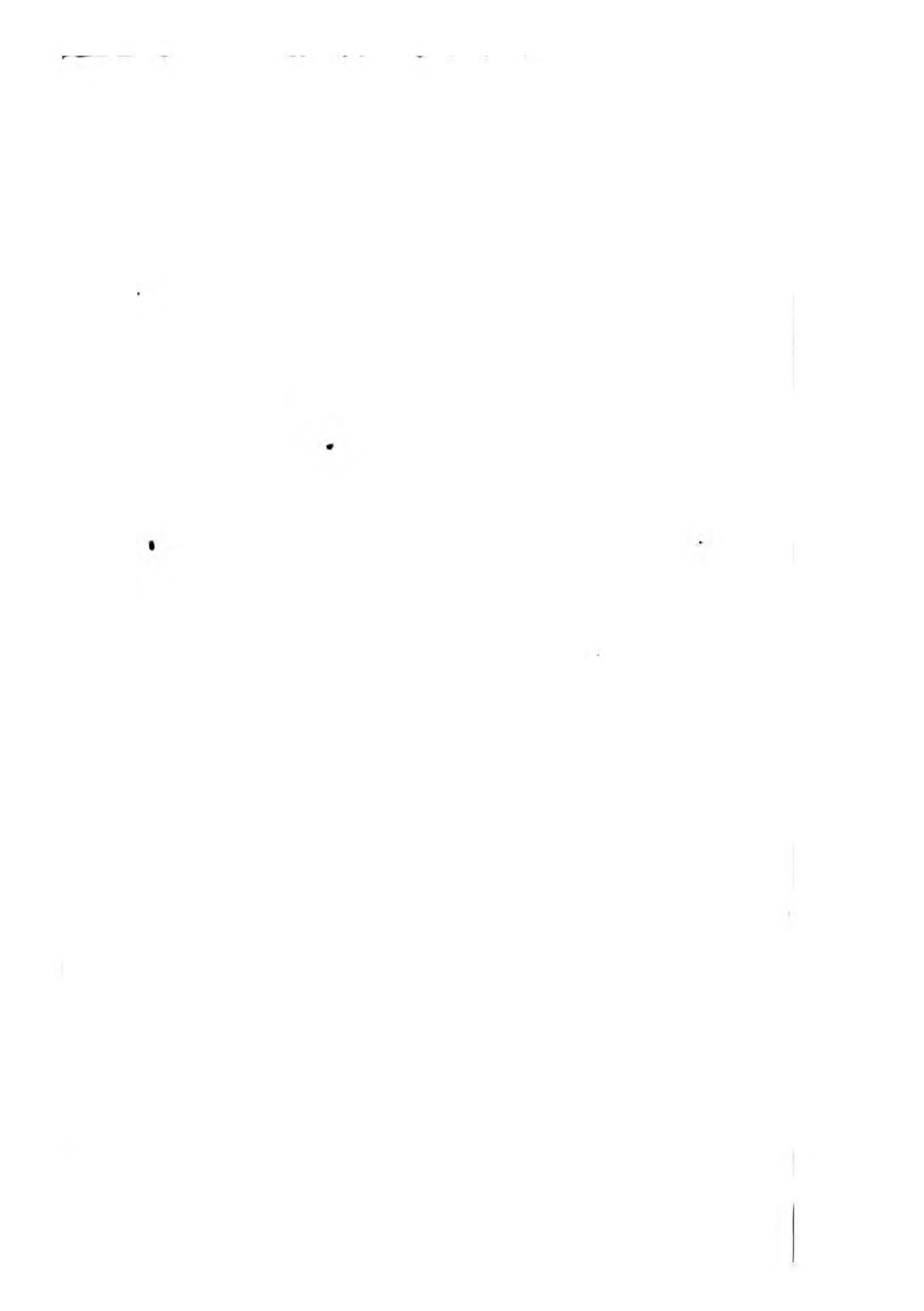
The whole question may receive such persevering attention as shall worm out the real truth : or it may die away, obtaining only casual notice, until a new outburst of phenomena recalls its history of this day. But this subsidence does not seem to begin. It is now twelve or thirteen years since the matter began to be everywhere talked about : during which time there have been many announcements of the total ex-

tion of the 'spirit-mania.' But in several cases, as in Tom Moore's fable, the extinguishers have caught fire. Were it the absurdity it is often said to be, it would do much good by calling attention to the 'manifestations' of another absurdity, the philosophy of possibilities and impossibilities, the philosophy of the *fourth court*. Extremes meet: but the 'meeting' is often for the purpose of mutual exposure, like that of silly gentlemen in the day of pop-and-paragraph duels. This on the supposition that spiritualism is all either imposture or delusion: it cannot be more certainly one or the other than is the philosophy opposed to it. I have no acquaintance either with P or Q; but I feel sure that the decided conviction of all who can see both sides of the shield must be that it is more likely that P has seen a ghost than that Q *knows* he *cannot* have seen one. I know that Q *says* he knows it: on which *suprà, passim*.

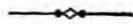
I now give place to the author, with the statement that, though generally cognizant of each other's views, both the author and myself had substantially finished before either set eyes on what the other had written. Between us we have, in a certain way, cleared the dish; like that celebrated couple of whom one could eat no fat and the other no lean.

A. B.

July 1863.



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FROM MATTER TO SPIRIT.

Errata.

- Page xiii, line 1, *for his read his'*
" " " 17, omit the comma
" 26, " 6, *for and was read and I was*
" 109, " 3, " phenomena " phenomenon
" 152, " 9, *after appeared insert substantial*
" 175, " 3, " happiness " a comma
" 224 to 234, *insert marks of quotation throughout*
" 270, line 8, *for then read their*
" 300, " 15, " *World " Word*
" 326, " 18, " at " as at
" 329, " 25, " conclude *read* include
" 330, " 6, " under-growth " undue growth
" 330, " 15, " brains " nerves
" 331, " 4, " classes. *Life, if this is, read* classes, life
" 346, " 16, " *earth. read earth,*

with initials, I hold myself responsible. Where names or authorities are given at length, the evidence must be taken for what it is worth.

When a strange tale reached us, twelve years ago, of noises which had been heard in America, and attributed to spirits, everybody laughed. As the stories

FROM MATTER TO SPIRIT.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY — METHOD OF EXPERIMENTING.

THE following narrative of experiences has been for the most part taken from notes made at the time of the occurrences. For obvious reasons names are suppressed and initials changed, but I have neither exaggerated the marvellous features of any case, nor omitted to mention circumstances by which its marvellousness might seem to be lessened. For the truth and accuracy of all incidents given without names or with initials, I hold myself responsible. Where names or authorities are given at length, the evidence must be taken for what it is worth.

When a strange tale reached us, twelve years ago, of noises which had been heard in America, and attributed to spirits, everybody laughed. As the stories

multiplied, a few persons in England began to think they must have some origin at least, and to wonder why, if spirits could rap in the United States, they did not do so in our own country. Then we began to hear of 'mediums,' people only in whose presence these seemingly fastidious spirits would make their appearance; and at length curiosity was still further excited by the appearance of a medium in London. Mrs. Hayden became the wonder of a day; but people fancied that they could detect imposture, and, though none was ever fairly proved, the interest flagged and the 'medium' returned to America, having sown the seed of a tree the extent of whose growth has yet to be measured. Since that time the experiments have been laughed at, talked of, and tried, with more or less of intelligence and belief; and, though the subject has not yet lived through the ridicule bestowed on every fact new to the world's experience, enough of interest prevails to justify a narrative of experiences, and some conjectures on the truths to be thence deduced.* One thing is certain; if these phenomena are *not* the result of imposture and delusion, the study of them involves questions worthy the deepest consideration of the theologian and the man of science. Whether they have any claim to be considered

* Since this was written Mr. Home's book has appeared. The narratives it contains are far more wonderful than any I can offer here, but they are given with a different object, and are, I believe, perfectly trustworthy.

in the higher point of view, it is the object of the following pages to show.

Some readers may like, while mentally following the course described, to experiment for themselves, and thus, if successful, verify my statements as they go on. To such readers a few directions how to proceed may be acceptable, and with this view I prefix them to my own narrative and conclusions.

There is a general and not unreasonable dislike to paid mediums among those who cannot find out how far such mediums *could* impose upon credulity; hence the question is often asked, 'What can be done to enable us to see these things for ourselves?' To this there is only one answer, 'You must earnestly and patiently try for yourselves.' If any number of persons can be found who will do so, let them, having first secured perfect confidence in each other's good faith and a determination to avoid all tricks or trifling, begin their experiments.

I suppose six or seven men and women—fewer would be enough, more than seven are too many—sitting round a table. If any one of the party is highly nervous or hysterical, that one should not join the circle, at least in the commencement of operations; for though it is likely that the physical condition on which the power of 'mediumship' depends may exist in him or her in a very high degree, yet the consequences might be injurious to health. Children, in my opinion, should rarely be

allowed to join. The causes of this injurious tendency may be guessed at when we arrive at some conclusion as to the agency at work in producing the phenomena.

Among the party of healthy persons ready to form a circle, it is hardly likely that one or more should not possess the organisation necessary for a medium. As far as I have seen, the faculty often accompanies the sparkling dark eyes and hair of what phrenologists call the nervous-bilious temperament. Blue eyes and fair hair are also generally favourable, but great exercise of mediumship is likely to exhaust the more delicate constitution of the nervous sanguine. But though these two temperaments, as well as that having blue eyes and brown hair, are very often found in the strongest mediums, it does not appear that the power depends on any complexion or temperament.

The length of time during which the party sitting round the table should remain with their hands placed on it before abandoning any hope of success, depends on conditions not yet known. In general, the question is settled in about twenty minutes. Then, if any effects are produced, the table will appear to throb or vibrate under the hands as if charged with a kind of electricity. Do not attend to the supposition that this arises only from pulsation at the finger-ends produced by pressure. Let it be so. Further experiment will give rise to further conjecture. Then the table will crack or creak,

and some one will have a theory about the wood getting warm. But if there be more than an average amount of 'medium' power in the circle, the table (which ought not to be a large one) will show symptoms not referable to *heat*. It will begin to move, and unless the party keep to their resolution to take all that comes without argument, much time and power will be lost in such observations as 'You pushed it *then*;' 'No, indeed, the impulse came from the opposite side,' &c.

The table perhaps will move in a circuitous direction, or perhaps will at once 'tip' down to one side. If it goes round, one of the party will save time by asking the invisible influence* to tip it, and the request is almost sure to be followed by the movement required.

To avoid confusion, one person only should speak.

Let a request then be made to tip *so many times*, and, if you find that the desired number of movements occur, agree how many shall stand for 'Yes,' how many for 'No,' and how many for 'Doubtful.' When these preliminaries are settled, ask, 'Can the name be given if the alphabet is repeated?' Suppose the reply to be in the affirmative, it will be better to find out who is to repeat it, as an uncertainty on this head sometimes causes difficulty. It can be ascertained by mentioning

* In using this and similar expressions, I do not intend here to indicate the nature of the influence, nor to imply that it is external or internal to ourselves. That question must be considered hereafter.

the names of those present, and begging that the table may be tipped at the right name. Then if the person indicated repeats the alphabet slowly, not dwelling longer on one letter than another, but giving time after each for the movement to be made, the table will be found to tip at some letter. Note that, and repeat the alphabet again, and so on till a name is spelled, beginning again after each letter is obtained. The name will in all probability be at once recognised. Then ask for a sentence or communication from the unseen power, which will be given at once by the alphabet and the tipping. Those who really desire to try the nature of the phenomenon will do wisely not to put *test* or leading questions, but to take what comes, and wait with patience for an explanation of all incoherencies. I would also say, Let the questions of will-power, and unconscious muscular action, &c., which will naturally arise in the mind, be deferred for the present.

It is certain that great activity in the brains of those concerned interferes with the experiment. The sentence received will perhaps contain a special message to the person chosen to repeat the alphabet, or it may be a general greeting or piece of advice, or possibly a direction how to improve the circle by changing places or otherwise. The person to whom the message is given may perhaps say, 'If this is from a spirit at all, I am sure it is not from —', the phraseology is so

unlike his. Take all you can get. If the examination is pursued in a good and serious spirit you have a better chance of receiving communications of the same character, and these are far less puzzling and misleading than the merry but foolish sentences which are sometimes given when the party only assembles for fun. And at this stage of the enquiry all discrepancies must be left for future consideration.

Perhaps, instead of the table tipping or moving, raps or sounds will be heard, like slight discharges of electricity, in or on the wood of the table. With these proceed exactly as with the tipping, first securing a perfect understanding between the *source of the sounds* and the circle around the table, and then repeating the alphabet as directed. It sometimes happens that instead of the occurrence of sounds or movements, the hand of one of the party may be agitated perhaps with some violence. If this person takes a pencil, the hand will be moved backwards and forwards, round and round, sometimes in irregular forms, sometimes in long lines of consecutive curves and waves, till at length it settles itself into a steady movement, tracing letters and at length legible words and sentences. The rapidity or slowness of the writing will depend on the character of medium power, and possibly on the temperament of the writer. Additional power is sometimes gained by another person placing a hand on the writer's wrist.

The writing should not be allowed to continue if

flippant or irreligious sentences are given, nor if the writer feels exhausted. I do not pretend to account for the fact, at all events not in this place, but I believe that when the communications are foolish or malignant in their meaning, the persons through whose agency they are given will be likely to suffer more or less exhaustion.

The movement of the hand may perhaps resolve itself into drawing instead of writing, though it is, I think, generally found that drawing is a later developement. This is often more enigmatical, but unless objects of a frightful or very grotesque character are drawn, is most likely of no hurtful tendency. More will be said of the writing and drawing hereafter.

If, instead of any of the above-mentioned results taking place, one of the party becomes drowsy as if mesmerised, and then falls either into a trance or a series of strange contortions and movements, there is no cause for fear. This very seldom occurs; when it does, it is a proof of great susceptibility in the 'medium' and of power in the circle, and in this case means are generally afforded, either by the writing of the individual affected or by means of one of the others, to obtain directions either to demesmerise the person, which is done by making transverse passes across the face, or as is more commonly the case, to 'let him alone, he will not be hurt.' It is well on first trying the experiment

to have one person in the party who is accustomed to all the various phases of the phenomenon. I cannot too strongly impress on those who wish to give the whole a fair trial, the absolute necessity of unanimity, and the great advantage of serious, even religious feeling among the members of the circle.

To persons well accustomed to witness these manifestations the foregoing directions may seem unduly minute. The details could not be avoided if the instructions are to be at all useful, and a conviction that they are really needed has led many friends to urge their insertion.

When parties form circles without the presence of a practised 'medium,' great wonders must not be expected at once. There is a process of developement required for even the lowest manifestations, by which I mean those having reference to the external senses of touch, sight, and hearing. Those who mistrust the mediumship of strangers must take the longer but more satisfactory course of gradual developement.

I believe that the amount of imposture among *paid mediums* has been greatly overrated. If they were such well-practised jugglers as is sometimes supposed, how does it happen that hours sometimes pass without any manifestation at all taking place? But, even after a large deduction is made for imposture on the part of the 'medium,' and for credulity and self-deception on

that of the enquirer, a sufficient number of genuine cases of apparent spiritual communication remain to set aside the idea of coincidence, and to challenge enquiry into their nature and origin.

A few of these instances, for the truth of which I can vouch, will be given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

RAPPING AND TABLE-MOVING — REALITY OF PHENOMENA.

IT is now ten years since I began attentively to observe the phenomena of 'Spiritualism.' My first experience occurred in the presence of Mrs. Hayden from New York. I never heard a word which could shake my strong conviction of Mrs. Hayden's honesty; indeed, the result of our first interview, when my name was *quite unknown* to her, was sufficient to prove that I was not on that occasion the victim of her imposture, or my own credulity.

A party of friends, many of them known in the literary world, permitted me to join them, and another literary friend, Mr. James,* a man of unimpeachable truthfulness, undertook to arrange a meeting with Mrs. Hayden, whom we were to visit at her lodging near Cavendish Square. At the appointed time we went, and were shown into a scantily furnished drawing-room. We had ample opportunity, of which we availed

* All names are changed or suppressed through every experience narrated.

ourselves, for examining the old Pembroke table and the other furniture before Mrs. Hayden and our friend Mr. James made their appearance. She was introduced to us, but was evidently a stranger to any of our names, which were never mentioned. As my own experience is to be narrated, I may premise, that I had determined not to ask for nor to dwell in thought on the name of any departed friend, and when the rest sat down I begged leave to sit *out* of the circle. This permission was not given, Mrs. Hayden saying, as we have since proved, that *perfect unanimity* was a necessary condition of success. I then took my place at the table with my friends. We sat for at least a quarter of an hour, and were beginning to apprehend a failure, when a very small throbbing or patting sound was heard, apparently in the centre of the table. Great was our pleasure when Mrs. Hayden, who had before seemed rather anxious, said ‘They are coming.’ ‘*Who were coming?*’ Neither she nor we could tell. As the sounds gathered strength, which they seemed to do with our necessary conviction of their *genuineness*, whatever might be their origin, Mrs. Hayden said, ‘*There is a spirit who wishes to speak with some one here, but as I do not know the names of the gentlemen and ladies, I must point to each in turn, and when I come to the right one, beg that the spirit will rap.*’ This was agreed to by our invisible companion, who rapped in assent. Mrs. Hayden then pointed to each of the party in turn.

To my surprise, and even annoyance, (for I did not wish this, and many of my friends *did*,) no sounds were heard until she indicated myself, the last in the circle. I was seated at her right hand; she had gone round from the left. I was then directed to point to the letters of a large type alphabet, and I may add, that, having no wish to obtain the name of any dear friend or relation, I certainly did not rest, as it has been surmised is often done, on any letter. However, to my astonishment, the not common name of a dear relation who had left this world seventeen years before, and whose surname was that of my father's, not my husband's family, was spelt. Then this sentence—'*I am happy, and with F. and G.*' (names at length). I then received a promise of future communication with all three spirits; the two last had left the world twenty and twelve years before. Other persons present then received communications by rapping; of these some were as singularly truthful and satisfactory as that to myself, while others were false and even mischievous. One, if I remember rightly, contained an accusation of murder against a living person; another professed to come from a 'spirit' which was quite unknown to the lady thus visited, and who was then, and I believe remains to this time, quite incredulous on the subject.

The occurrences of this first sitting are narrated in this detailed manner because the experiment was tried under very favourable circumstances, and because the

various successes and failures on that occasion served afterwards to indicate the simpler laws regulating the appearance of the phenomenon. After this meeting our names were made known to Mrs. Hayden.

We agreed next to meet at the house of one of those who had been present on the first evening. As before, I narrate my own share in the proceedings.

We had not sat for many minutes when the same sound was heard as on the previous occasion, and again it was for me. The presence of the other two friends was announced by the first 'spirit,' and each rapped at my request, a very decided difference being perceptible in the sounds, such as might be expected between the influence of a man of firm and energetic will, and that of one much younger, less powerful, and more imaginative. The first heard sound was different from both. Each of the two who had not hitherto spoken was to give some sentence by which I might recognise him. The older 'spirit,' which gave the name of one who during his stay on earth was constantly occupied in religious thought, and in anticipations of the fulfilments of the promises of Scripture, gave this sentence: '*My —, why do you doubt the holy attributes of God, when this is in perfect accord with His teaching?*'

This was certainly the sort of sentiment, but not the phraseology, likely to have been used by the person, whose name, I ought to have said, had been correctly given by the raps.

The name of the younger spirit was very peculiar, and very unlikely to have been heard by anyone present, with all of whom I had become acquainted many years subsequently to my relation's death, and I had never been in the habit of speaking of him. With Mrs. Hayden's permission I took a writing portfolio, and set it upright between her eyes and the alphabet so as completely to prevent her seeing the letters. The singular name was given with perfect accuracy. I asked then for a proof of identity, and received this:—
'D, e, a, r, e, s, t.' Every one wrote and expected 'Dearest ——,' and all but myself were puzzled and annoyed when, instead of my name, the three letters 'h, e, r,' were given. This completed the name of an attached friend of my communicant, from whom he had received much kindness, and who did not long survive him. The sentence was:—

'Dear Esther is with me, and we long to clasp you in our arms in this bright world of glory.'

Here again a mixture and an incongruity. The identification of the two 'spirits,' both by name and the meaning of the sentences, was complete; but then, '*clasp you in our arms,*' &c., was so wholly unlike any language used by my relations when with us, that it puzzled me. I afterwards found that this was a phrase of Mrs. Hayden's; and it occurred more than once in communications given by raps in her presence. Some of my friends thought this improbable phraseology a

proof of imposture; I preferred waiting, and hoped that further experiment would help me to discover the cause of these discrepancies.

On the occasion of a third sitting with Mrs. Hayden, a person was present who, if not absolutely disbelieving, was at least very doubtful of the possibility of 'raps' without imposture. For a long time nothing happened. I then begged the person in question to leave the room; immediately the raps were heard, and Mrs. Hayden said, 'They do not like A——.' I asked why they did not rap before, and the reply was, '*A—— unconsciously repels us.*' In answer to our questions, however, we found that the current once established would not be interrupted, and on the return of A—— to the table the rapping continued, and many very curious communications were given to several of the party.

The promises made at Mrs. Hayden's were kept. Many experiments were tried in private, and it was found that a number of persons, both in and out of my own family, possessed the faculty of 'mediumship' in a greater or less degree. I found, however, what I had noticed at first, that the communications were always given in the spelling and phraseology of the person through whose agency they come.*

A little incident at this time gave me some idea of

* This statement is more easily verified when the 'medium' is very young, or uneducated.

the process of rapping, and of the share which the organisation of the medium is made to take in it. A little girl in the house had been moving a saucer, and through the tipping of this a name was spelt, with the words, '*I can rap through you* (meaning myself) *to-day*.' This was not expected but it was worth trying, and I therefore went into an uncarpeted room barely furnished, and sat down by the table, on which I laid my arm. Very soon loud raps, which I called some of the family to hear, resounded on the table. There seemed to be power enough to rap the number of times desired, but not to indicate letters so as to spell anything. The sounds soon ceased and never returned. As each rap seemed to be shot through my arm it was accompanied by a feeling like a slight blow or shock of electricity and an aching pain extending from the shoulder to the hand, which remained for more than an hour after they had entirely ceased. This experiment seemed to prove that the nerves of the human body were necessary, if not for the production, at least for the propagation of the sounds.

Many strange vagaries of table-moving have been witnessed which must be very slightly noticed here. A medium would lay one hand on a small table, and with the other play a waltz or lively tune on the piano. The quick jerks and movements of the table kept perfect time to the music. Another time a gentleman at one end of a room placed his fingers on a little table desiring audibly that it should move to the other end,

making three, four, or more turns as the case might be, before reaching the end of its journey. This was obeyed punctually, to the satisfaction of a roomful of friends, to all of whom it was evident that the medium could not, if he would, have produced the movements by voluntary action of the muscles. These things are only referred to in passing. They are curious, but hardly furnish sufficient presumptive evidence of an agency distinct from that of the medium to be used in illustration of an argument.

At this time much writing and drawing was going on among a few friends. Of these more will be said hereafter. This chapter being devoted to rapping and tipping, the first form in which 'spirit knowledge' reached me, I give a few more instances of success and failure in communications received in this way.

A friend who is mentioned here as Mrs. J—— went in company with six persons to visit Mrs. Hayden, to whom they were all unknown. In the account first written to me by Mrs. J——, no names were given, but I was told that they were all persons chosen for high intelligence, good judgment, and integrity. The party sat for nearly an hour, and then, perceiving no sign of sound or movement, left Mrs. Hayden, who appeared to all of them troubled and annoyed by the failure. Another friend, quite unacquainted with Mrs. J—— at this time, found that she had the power of 'mediumship,' and that the names of deceased persons whom she

did not know were often given to her. The form in which her mediumship appeared was that of tipping. One evening some weeks after the failure of Mrs. J——'s experiment, which I had never mentioned to my 'medium' friend, I was sitting with the latter at a small table, when very unexpectedly the name of a near relation of Mrs. J——, whom I had known well during life, was given. Something was to be said to me, and it appeared that there was a great wish on the part of the 'spirit' to communicate with her relation. In answer to my question why her name was not given to Mrs. J—— at Mrs. Hayden's, she said (by tipping):

'I could not. There were two persons in the circle whose presence prevented it.'

'Were they men, or women?'

Ans. 'A man and a woman.'

'Can you give their initials?'

'Yes; X. Y., and Y. Z.'

A verbatim report, as above, of this conversation was sent to Mrs. J——, from whom I received a list of the six persons who had been present at the sitting. *Among them were Mr. X. Y. and Mrs. Y. Z.* All the party were of that class of mind which is more deeply impressed with the impossibility than with the possibility of any occurrence contrary to the usual apparent 'order of nature.'

About a year or more after my first acquaintance with Mrs. Hayden, a person came into my house who

was found to be endowed with the 'medium' faculty in a high degree. She lived with us more than six years, and of her perfect good faith (for indeed she had not skill to deceive) in the matter of spirit manifestations, neither I nor any of my friends who watched her narrowly could have any doubt. When she first came into the family I noticed in her the dark sparkling eye which has so often been found to accompany magnetic sensitiveness and great mesmeric power, what one might imagine a quality of rapid conduction. She began, too, before any mention was made of 'spiritual' phenomena, to talk of curious dreams and visions which she had had. Of these some had been literally fulfilled; others, and those the most interesting, appeared to me to convey a splendid symbolism, the application of which she did not understand, but was able to appreciate when it was explained to her. These seeming indications of medium power deserve notice, in order that persons who have had similar experience may be led to try whether their faculty may be made useful in the present enquiry. Jane also talked of sounds attributed to *hauntings* having been heard in several houses in which she had lived. That all these peculiar experiences were not to be attributed to fancy or superstition was amply proved in the sequel. Suspecting from her temperament that she was one with whom a table or other article might move readily, I begged her to sit down with me and one or two others.

She had heard of *table-turning*, but never of *rapping*; nor did any one of us expect a manifestation which we had often tried in vain to obtain. The sounds came almost immediately, first a throbbing, then a creaking, then a full well-formed sound like a concussion of air, which she said passed through her arms like an electric shock. She was not at all hurt by these experiments, and though a delicate person, seemed to gain strength and spirits during the two years and half in which they continued; for they ceased entirely after that time, and though many friends would have given her money if she could have 'got the raps,' she never could gratify their wish.

It soon appeared that no *surname* could be given through Jane's mediumship. Occasionally a *christian* name, if not an uncommon one, was rapped out; but notwithstanding this difficulty, the professed 'spirit' always found a way of making its identity known, and the relationship between it and the enquirer in the circle was always truly particularised.

As a curious instance of identification by raps, I will mention here, although it has appeared in another place, a fact which occurred during the period of Jane's mediumship. I had been brought into communication with a person in a state of frenzied excitement owing to the suicide of her brother, who killed himself in a fit of intoxication. This brother and sister were unknown both to Jane and myself, and *she* had never seen the

survivor. But some days after my interview with the sister, as a party was sitting round the table expecting 'manifestations' from their friends, loud sounds were heard which interfered with and disturbed everything else. After much questioning and cross-examining it was discovered that the disturber was a man whom I had not known in his earthly life, that he had destroyed himself, and wished to speak to me. I guessed the name of the unhappy suicide, begging him if possible to prove his identity. A series of sounds then proceeded apparently from the pedestal of the table, which were recognised as the noises produced by sawing, planing, screwing, hammering, filing, &c., all perfectly distinct. We asked whether this was meant to show us that the spirit had been a carpenter and joiner, and found that such was the intention. I had no idea of this at the time, but found on inquiring that it was quite true.

Although the medium, Jane, had the organisation necessary for the transmission of raps when in the presence of some persons, she could not obtain them when alone, or when in company with most of those with whom she came in contact. I found that, when absent from my house, she had tried among her own friends, but never with any decided success. She was always most successful when sitting beside me, and as I judged from that circumstance that *some* share of the power of transmission belonged to myself, the cause of

my very remarkable experience at Mrs. Hayden's met with a possible explanation.

The *spelling* of those sentences which were given through Jane was, as I before observed, always hers. 'Beautiful' was '*butiful*,' 'writing' '*riting*,' &c., except on some rare occasions when educated persons were present whose strong medium power, as I conjecture, overcame hers. This fact relating to spelling and forms of expression applies to every phase of mediumship I have hitherto seen; whether the explanation to be given will be as satisfactory to the reader as to myself, must be determined hereafter. I may here mention that Jane had very little perception of, or memory for, the surnames of individuals, and could rarely give me correctly the name of any friend who called in my absence, or any message in which a surname was required. The organ called 'individuality' was small in her, while in Mrs. Hayden's forehead I noticed that all the perceptions were large and full. I do not mean to attach much importance to this observation, till a greater number of facts have been recorded, connecting the character of communications given through the agency of any medium with his or her cerebral developement.

Jane was extremely fond of flowers, and the messages given by rapping, as well as those when her mediumship had taken another form, almost always contained descriptions of gardens, and references to wreaths and nosegays

of flowers. When we come to the *symbolism* which is almost invariably used through all mediums by the unseen influences, some explanation of this also will be attempted.

Poor Jane died two years ago of rapid consumption. Lest it should be supposed that the exercise of her medium power injured her, I ought to say that for three years, during which time her health was good, the manifestations had ceased. Her last illness was brought on by cold, and imprudent treatment of a constitution always delicate. A few days before her death she gave me a solemn assurance that she had never deceived me in the slightest degree in any particular connected with spiritual manifestations; 'but,' she said, 'I have from my infancy seen and heard far more curious things than I have ever talked of to anyone.'

Jane's mediumship was never successful in the presence of persons who allowed their unbelief to appear. She even said that she could *feel* an opposition, whether it were open or concealed. I believe that the uncertainty and inconclusiveness of evidence on many ghost stories may be accounted for by ignorance of the conditions of mediumship and the different degrees of power in different persons. Of this the 'Cock Lane Ghost' was in all probability an example. For a long time the cause of the sounds defied all attempts at discovery; at length it was found that they were heard only in the presence of an ignorant young girl, who

could only declare that she did not make them. Dr. Johnson was not a little proud of his sagacity in concluding that as the sounds were only heard in the presence of this young girl, she *must* have made them, consciously, and was therefore an impostor. The means taken to prove imposture were wonderfully scientific, and more to be admired than imitated. When the poor girl had been frightened by the sight of so many fine people, it would have been strange indeed if the nerves which were to serve as telegraphic wires had not been deranged in their action. After the savans of that time had found out how the raps could be stopped, they discovered how they were made. The girl was laid down with a board placed by her, and she was then told that, if she did not make the ghost come, she would be severely punished. Accordingly she took the best means she could of producing the effect of his ghostly presence by tapping on the board with her finger, and so the matter was settled.

The rappings in the house of the father of John Wesley may be better understood now, than at the time of their occurrence. Accounts of these have appeared in the *Spiritual Magazine*, but the whole story will be remembered by all readers of Southey's *Life of Wesley*.

The most remarkable instance of *table-moving* with a purpose which ever came under my notice occurred at the house of a friend, whose family like my own were staying at the sea-side. An account of this has

appeared in print before, but it is so much to the purpose here that I cannot resist adding it to the collection of experiences.

My friend's family consisted of six persons, and a gentleman, now the husband of one of the daughters, joined them, and was accompanied by a young member of my own family. No paid person was present. A gentleman, who had been expressing himself in a very sceptical manner, not only with reference to *spirit manifestations*, but on the subject of spiritual existence generally, sat on a sofa two or three feet from the dining-room table, round which we were placed. After sitting some time we were directed by the rapping to join hands and stand up round the table *without touching it*. All did so for a quarter of an hour, wondering whether anything would happen, or whether we were hoaxed by the unseen power. Just as one or two of the party talked of sitting down, the old table, which was large enough for eight or ten persons after the manner of a lodging-house, moved entirely by itself as we surrounded and followed it with our hands joined, went towards the gentleman out of the circle, and literally pushed him up to the back of the sofa, till he called out 'Hold, enough!'

Of the marvels in the way of table-moving, &c., occurring in Mr. Home's presence, his own account, corroborated by so many witnesses, speaks with sufficient detail. In referring to his very powerful me-

diumship, I only add one to the number of persons by whom the facts are attested. It is only in Mr. Home's presence that I have witnessed that very curious appearance, or process, the *thrilling* of the table. This takes place for some seconds, perhaps more, before it rises from the floor. The last time I witnessed this phenomenon, an acute surgeon present said that this *thrilling*, the genuineness of which was unmistakable, was exactly like what takes place in that affection of the muscles called *subsultus tendinum*. When it ceased, the table rose more than two feet from the floor.

The 'tipping' appears to be the easiest method of communication for the unseen influences, as it is the most readily obtained by the circle of experimenters. By it, as indeed by *all methods*, very strange and absurd communications are sometimes given. I have seen instances, and been told of others, in which long incongruous strings of names and titles have been spelt out; such as, Richard Cœur de Lion, Pythagoras, Byron, Cheops, and Mr. Fauntleroy, the list perhaps ending with T. Browne or J. Smith. The givers of these names seem to delight only in buffoonery or abuse, and perhaps, after playing absurd and mischievous tricks for days or even weeks, will seem to come in a body, giving all their names with the information that they are come to say '*Good-by forever.*' After this their names or sobriquets do not

appear again. Of course it would not be to the purpose to try, in the present state of the inquiry, to account fully for these strange proceedings. Even on the supposition that names thus given proceed from real existences, we must imagine either that the names are assumed for fun, or that some unknown law connecting the name with the character or nature is involved. Of this law, of which we seem to have a little glimmering, I shall speak further on. Whatever may be the cause of the foolish and mischievous visitations referred to, their very frequent occurrence is a sufficient reason for the repetition of a caution already given; namely, that those who wish to try experiments must, if they do not desire to be repelled in the outset, preserve a really religious, earnest, and truth-loving spirit. The absence of this temper of mind in the party will soon be followed by such manifestations as those last described, which are really hurtful to mediums, and from their reckless and untruthful character very unlikely to lead to just conclusions on the whole subject.

CHAPTER III.

WRITING — FIRST EXPERIMENTS.

DURING the two first years of our experience in *spirit manifestations*, the power of mediumship was found to exist in a greater or less degree, and in different forms, in about thirty persons. Among these were men, women, young persons, and children, persons of all ages, of all stations in society, and all degrees of education and varieties of disposition and intellect. Experiments tried with such extensive means of observation can scarcely fail to be useful in assisting conjecture on the subject; and in the hope that they may be interesting, I extract some of the most remarkable instances from a record kept at the time.

When the involuntary writing is first seen in imperfect mediums, unaccompanied by its more striking allied forms of manifestation, rapping, moving furniture, &c., it is generally thought to be the result either of an uncontrolled self-delusive imagination, or of some undeveloped faculty in the mental nature of the writer akin to that described by some physiologists

as *unconscious cerebration*, or an action carried on in the brain without the knowledge of the mind. The last view is often taken by thoughtful persons on the first appearance of the phenomenon in themselves or others. Less scientific observers are apt to attribute the whole to *fancy*. Uneducated people say the medium 'gives way,' and are confirmed in this luminous view of the matter by the fact that the movement of the hand can be generally, though not always, prevented with ease. But when it is found that the rapping or moving stops after the spelling of some such sentence as 'Let — hold the pencil, I can write by his hand,' and that no effort of *will* can reproduce the raps, or gain communication in any other way than that promised, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the same agency is at work in both forms of mediumship. But the respective parts taken by the medium and by the unseen power, if the latter exist, remain to be seen.

A great deal of nonsense, as has been said, is often written at first by mediums. This is reverted to here by way of caution, for excepting the proof that, if the unseen influences emanate from beings in another state, they are if anything in a lower mental and moral condition than ourselves, I know of nothing to be learnt by it. The verses written by the unseen power are often curious and quaint, sometimes ridiculous. But verses not of a low and mischievous character have been given to us as to many other experimenters. The

best of these contained beautiful ideas connected with the happiness of a life among the blessed and good in the world of good spirits and angels, very lovely descriptions of the scenery of that world or worlds, and much affectionate anticipation of reunion among friends and future progress in happiness together. These were the *elementary thoughts* only. The language and forms of imagery might be traced in every instance which I have seen to the brain of the medium. This, I think, will be found true throughout *all* the manifestations, and in none is it more apparent than in the writing, from T. L. Harris's always remarkable and frequently poetical productions, down to verses written with excessive rapidity by the hand of a child eight years old. I would say then, even at the risk of repetition, the elementary idea or truth sought to be conveyed does not originate with the medium; the language, spelling, and form of expression is his or hers. It is true that mediums like Mr. Harris and others whom we have known produce both prose and verse in a variety of styles, so as to favour the idea of a variety of influences, according to the names of poets or others given as the inspirers of the composition: but it will be found that the latter never exceeds the ability of the writer to attain and comprehend, though its meaning and characters may be beyond or outside of what he would have himself originated.

The name of a great poet was once given to me by

the hand of a very young medium, and I, who was then inexperienced in the whole proceeding, asked for a *complete* little poem in three verses for a friend. The child, of course, could have no idea of what was coming, as my request was a sudden thought, but in about five minutes three verses were written with very great rapidity, describing the approach of an army, a battle on the bank of a river, which ran red with the blood of the combatants, another battle on hills whose *greenness* was especially noticed, and a third when the flowers were in bloom, and when the chief was dead. The metre was uncommon, and though the lines were grotesque, they were not inharmonious. One of our greatest living authors, himself a fine poet, pronounced these three stanzas to contain a poetical element which *could* not have proceeded from the mind of a young child. In the following spring, several months after the writing, the applicability of this rhythmical production to the three battles of Alma, Inkermann, and Balaclava was apparent. But they were written long before the Crimean War broke out.

In what follows, as indeed in all that has been said, I know not how to secure anything like a belief in the trustworthiness of a narrator who is not at liberty to authenticate the truth of any one narrative by the names of those concerned. Perhaps some honesty of purpose may appear in the method both of experimenting and of recording results; this, however, will

only be sufficient to stimulate enquiry, and so I leave my statements, even if ridiculed in the first instance, to receive a larger amount of consideration when the experience of each individual shall have enabled him to verify them for himself.

Many considerations yet remained, and many experiments were still to be tried, before we could have full reason for believing that another intelligence was concerned, or, in other words, that an invisible being directed the operations of the telegraphic wire whose mechanism was in our own organisation.

From the beginning of my experience in these manifestations, two circumstances had struck me forcibly as forming an element of the question as to their nature. The first of these was the invariable assertion that they were caused by '*spirits*,' and that these spirits had once lived in the body on earth. The other circumstance was that, whatever the name given, and through whatever means or mediumship it came, the phraseology always agreed with the relationship claimed. To make my meaning more intelligible: Suppose that writings are given purporting to come from the sister or brother of a person present, and that a family party, in which all kinds of relationships are found, compose the circle. The writing, in mentioning members of the family to each other, will always specify them correctly by the relationship subsisting among them. For example;—A supposed brother writing to his sister

about her son by the hand of a stranger medium, will speak of the son as 'my nephew,' and to the son, of 'my sister,' 'your mother,' &c. I never saw this fail. It seems difficult to believe that any *unconscious* action of the brain can, without the least premeditation, produce expressions which fall into such coherence of meaning.

Here is a curious and perfect illustration of what I mean, obtained in an experiment which was tried in order to ascertain, whether a 'spirit,' having written something by one medium, can repeat the same word, or convey the same idea, by another who is unacquainted with it. In answer to this general question, we were told that this could *sometimes* be done, but that it depended on the mental harmony subsisting between the medium and the spirit.

Two young mediums were present; I placed a paper before one of them, begging that some word might be written which might be either literally or substantially repeated by the hand of the other, who was reading quietly at a distance. The writing was—

'Yes I can. "You,"'

'That is what you mean to write?' (pointing to the word *you*, but not repeating it.)

Ans. 'Yes.'

The name given of the spirit was that of one of my nieces. I laid another paper before the other medium, begging him to hold the pencil for a moment. His

hand wrote, '*My aunt.*' We then told him the object of the experiment, and showed him the word '*You*' written by the first medium.

Here the *idea*, and not the word, was conveyed by the medium's writing.

Another time I asked this question :—

'If I were to write down the name of a flower, and Emily (a very young medium) were to write another, each keeping the idea of that flower in our minds, but not mentioning the names to each other, could you (the spirit) write a third and different name, by our joined hands?'

Ans. 'Yes, with Emily and you, but not with all mediums.'

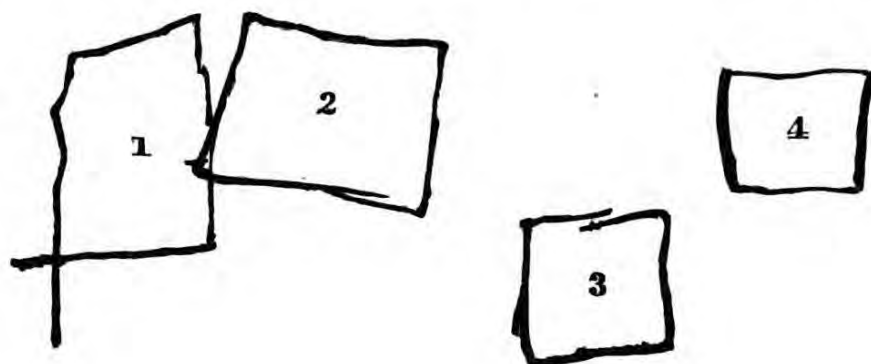
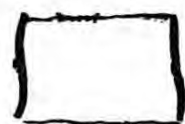
I then wrote *Rose*, and Emily wrote *Sweetpea*. Neither mentioned these names aloud. But Emily's hand with mine on the wrist wrote *Lily*. Again, Emily wrote *Jessamine*; I, *Mignonette*; and our joined hands wrote *Larkspur*. This was done four times in all, the three names each time being clear and distinct from each other. Then our hands wrote, 'Leave off; the power is gone.' It seemed to me that if either Emily or I had influenced the writing by muscular or mental power, the result would not have been a clearly written name, but a mixture of our thoughts.

While the opportunity for making experiments lasted, we obtained stronger presumptive evidence

than any yet given of the existence of another will and intelligence in the source of the writing, quite independent of the will of the medium or mediums.

Three writers were present, Edward, John, and myself. I, however, could not write alone, and could only strengthen the power of others by laying my hand on the wrist. After preliminaries were settled, and the name of a spirit given who declared himself able to draw a figure or mark by one, and to repeat it by the others, what follows took place.

By Edward's hand with mine on it, this figure was drawn. This was hidden immediately, and John, who had been at too great a distance from us to see anything if he had tried, took the pencil. I did not go near him. Edward, who cared little about the experiment, was

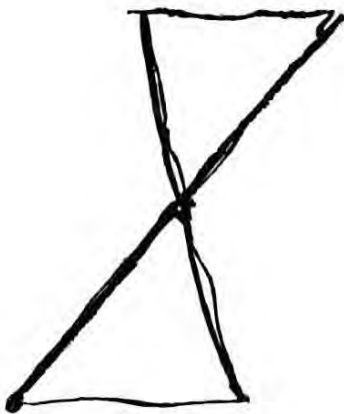


reading. John's hand made several attempts. I give a tracing of the last four.

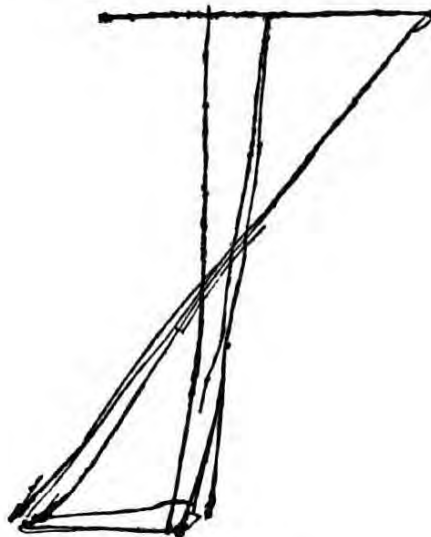
When No. 3 was drawn, I, thinking the spirit had succeeded, said, 'Is it not done?' John's hand then

made another quadrangular figure, with the horizontal lines fine, and the perpendicular ones thick (No. 4). This characteristic of the figure drawn by Edward's and my hand I had not noticed before.

I now felt that it would be more satisfactory if we, who really did feel an interest in the result, *did not know* the pattern figure. It was therefore drawn by the hand of John, who put it away at once. Then Edward held the pencil, which, with my hand upon it, drew No. 2.



Pattern figure, drawn by John.



No. 2.

No. 2, drawn by Edward's and my hands. The pencil was moved so as to double the lines. This appeared like an effort to alter the position of the figure, which is less upright than the pattern. When the pencil stopped I asked, 'Is that it?' *Ans.* 'Yes.'

E. 'Most likely it is all wrong.'

Myself. 'I expect *this* is a failure, John.'

John then took his drawing from his pocket, and we found that the two differed only in size, and in the inclination of the lines.

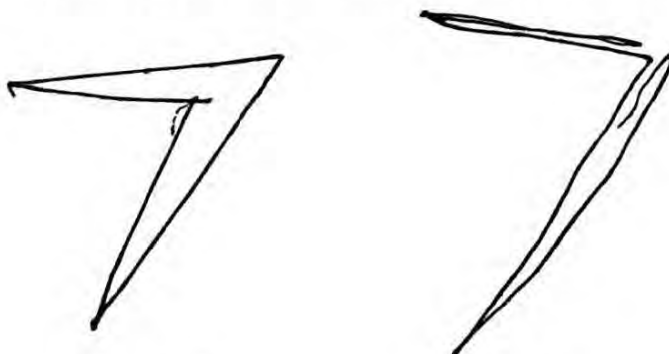
The next was less successful: as before, it was by John's hand alone, hidden immediately.

After four attempts had been made by Edward's hand and mine, I asked whether it was done.

Ans. 'NO.'

'Which is the nearest of the four figures?'

This figure (No 2) was pointed out; we found it the

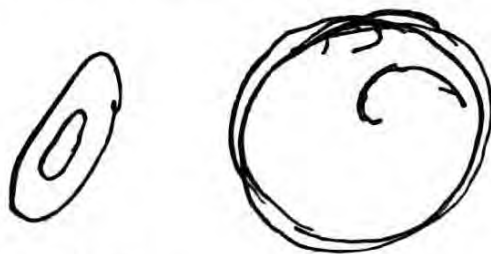


Pattern figure.

No. 2.

most like of the four. The double line appeared like an intention to form the inner angle.

The next had the pattern figure by John's hand.



Pattern figure.

This time the control over Edward's hand and mine seemed to be almost lost. Eight figures were drawn, all cir-

cles, with some other lines. Then we were told that the spirit could not do it, but that this was the nearest.

A day or two after trying this experiment, we learned more through writing, by John's hand, of the difficulty found by spirits* in transmitting what they wish to say through mediums. We were told that unless the directing power had complete control, the thought uppermost in the medium's mind *would* be given, and this made it extremely difficult, when anything was written by one medium, to repeat it by another; 'for,' it was said, 'the medium *always begins to guess and think whether it is right.* When marks or figures are drawn there is less difficulty, because the medium is not so likely to imagine a figure.' This, if it be true, shows that the positive action of the brain is exactly opposed to the passive state required by the unseen power for impression. It is also one cause, among many others, of the great difficulty of obtaining *tests* when tests are sought for. Perhaps, also, it may serve to throw light over the admitted fact that so large a proportion of powerful mediums are at present among the uninformed and uncultivated classes. If *spiritualism*, as such, is ever generally received and thoroughly understood, this will cease to be the case.

We had sometimes asked questions and received for answers, '*I cannot tell you this by E——'s hand, let D—— hold the pencil.*' The explanation sought for

* I need hardly say that I am compelled to use these expressions in narrating incidents or mentioning communications.

has then been given by D——, who nevertheless might be unable to write many things which were given with great clearness by the hand of E——. Some mediums appeared more completely under the control of some spirits than others, and I soon thought that in the characters of those who wrote, even under the supposed influence of spirits whom they had never known, a resemblance might be seen between the mind or disposition of the spirit and that of the medium. The following little incidents well illustrate this, and help to indicate the conditions necessary for full communication.

A young lady (whose mediumship has not been referred to before, and whom I call Charlotte) was trying experiments in a room the windows of which opened on a garden, in which her sister, also a writing medium, was walking. The name of my relation who is represented as having *first* communicated with me at Mrs. Hayden's was given. I write the initials as M——. I then asked, '*Could you, M——, write by the hand of Amelia?*' (the young lady in the garden).

The reply was, '*I cannot write by her hand, but my (relation specified) can.*'

We then called from the window begging Amelia to come in, for that a spirit who had never written by her before, had promised to write by her hand. She took the pencil and, after some preliminary *practice* of scrawls and flourishes as described, wrote the promised

name *at length*, with a characteristic sentiment referring to the progress of spiritual enlightenment. This spirit was the *second* who had communicated with me at Mrs. Hayden's. We then asked '*Why could not M—— write by Amelia's hand?*' The answer was, '*Dispositions do not harmonise.*'

A gentleman whose literary works had always been characterised, after the manner of Fuseli's paintings, by a tendency to the sanguinary and terrific, once asked me to place my hand on his wrist, in order to 'set his hand going.' The two hands soon moved, and the usual scrawling *practice* was made, but my arm felt stiff and painful even to the shoulder and neck. After one or two efforts the names of *Catherine de Medicis* and *Maria Manning* were written. We left off immediately. Had I not felt uneasiness in the arm before the two names appeared, the sensation might have been fairly ascribed to fancy. Certainly the pain lasted for more than an hour after the pencil was dropped.

In the next chapter I will give the explanations we received of the agency by which, as is asserted, spirits act through mediums.

CHAPTER IV.

MESMERISM.

BEFORE entering on an explanation of the manner in which, as asserted by themselves, the ‘unseen powers’ influence the mediums, it is necessary to say a few words on that which preceded ‘Spiritualism’ in the world, namely, ‘Mesmerism.’ Those who are acquainted with the processes and phenomena of mesmerism will at once understand the description of this mode of operating; but to many persons *mesmerism* is only another word for some mysterious and fearful, perhaps dangerous operation, which puts people into strange unnatural states, or throws them into an endless sleep. For readers in this vague and imaginative state of mind, some further explanation is wanted, especially as my object will be to show the connection between spiritualism and mesmerism—whatever may be the physical agencies at work in and the ultimate cause of both.

Long before the rappings, &c., were heard of, I had made many experiments in mesmerism, all of which

had the cure of disease for their object; and though phenomena were never sought after, several very remarkable cases occurred, with a very few of which I will trouble the reader. They will help to throw light on the more mysterious occurrences which afterwards took place.

1. The following will show the power of mesmerism over the muscles of the body. I leave to physiologists to describe the *manner* of its action through the nerves. A baby, ten weeks old, which from its birth had been unable to hold up the feet in their natural position, at right angles to the legs, was brought to me by its mother, who wished to be taught how to bandage the legs, according to the directions of an eminent surgeon. The feet hung quite powerless, in a line with the legs. While I was considering the best way of bandaging such very small limbs, it occurred to me to show the mother how to mesmerise them, as that, I thought, could do no harm, and, from what I had seen, would be likely to strengthen the joints. I had, however, no expectation of what actually occurred. A few passes were made—perhaps twelve, at most twenty in all—from the knees to the end of the little feet. After about six passes the feet began to rise, and immediately gained their natural position. I went on; the muscles gained a power which they never had before; the bandages were returned to the hospital; and the cure was complete, having been accomplished

in about five minutes. In due time the baby ran alone, as if nothing had ever been the matter with his legs.

2. A child who was mesmerised for the cure of severe headaches afforded me an opportunity of observing that remarkable state which has been called 'community of sensation.' This state, according to the assertions made by the involuntary writing, affords a key to some of the mysteries of spiritual action, as the happy occurrence of a Greek inscription with its two Egyptian counterparts on the Rosetta stone afforded the means of interpreting the unknown hieroglyphic. The phenomenon of community of sensation deserves especial notice; and the experience afforded by it may be applied, although the internal cause of its appearance is still hidden from our knowledge.

The boy, in a sleep-waking state, was talking to me of his headache, when a slight blow was accidentally given me by a person passing. It was scarcely worth notice, but the child called out, 'Who knocked my arm?' Perceiving that he was then in the state which I had often heard of, but never seen before, I tried the effect of other sensations. I tasted sugar, and he liked the sweetness; I took mustard, and he complained grievously of the pungency; a pin's point touching my hand seemed to give him great pain, and for a short time he appeared to reciprocate all my physical feelings. This susceptibility was, however, soon lost. After a

few experiments his sensations became confused; and though when my arm, for instance, was pinched, he felt *something*, he could not tell where the sensation arose, and talked of his back being hurt. When he returned to his normal state his head ached, and I therefore never made more than one or two trials of this again. On one occasion the little boy was placed as the last of a chain of eight or nine persons, holding each other's hands. The first in the chain took a pinch of snuff, and the child sneezed, and talked of our putting snuff in his nose. I need hardly say that, unlike the action of an electric shock under similar circumstances, the sensation of snuff-taking was not felt by any other of the party.

3. Many patients have spoken of *light* which they said they saw streaming from my fingers. The description of this appearance varied with the subjects. It has been observed by as many as eight persons during a few weeks, some of these being magnetised, some in a normal state. The boy of whom I have spoken, and also *the mother of the baby*, herself unmesmerised, saw this very plainly. The mother saw a cloud of light resting on the baby's leg as the foot received the mesmerism. One of the most remarkable instances of this perception occurred in a person holding a very respectable place in a public charitable institution. This person looking steadily at the fingers of a strong mesmeriser saw streams of light; and when the fingers

were directed downwards on some water in a tumbler, observed the rays, each of which appeared like a little sunbeam with a line of silver in the centre, fall into the water, gradually filling it, and then rising in the glass till the latter was full of mist. Then she said the water seemed to move or boil, gradually surging up like the waves of a tiny sea, till it reached its greatest degree of agitation or 'boiling point.' The subsidence, which took place gradually, always occupied the same number of minutes as the 'boiling.' Of course those who had no power of vision saw nothing of this occult action. Among mesmerised persons some perceived a movement among the particles of water, while to some it appeared brighter than before. One mesmerised girl who saw this said that the small insects in the water fell down as if struck by electricity; but this could not be confirmed, as no one but herself could discern insects so minute. An account of this phenomenon appeared in 'The Zoist,' at that time the organ of magnetic experiments. Its truth was afterwards attested in the same periodical by two respectable clergymen, each of whom had repeated and verified the experiments for themselves.

4. I once tried a few passes over the spine of a poor little deformed child, asking her whether she *felt* them. Her answer was, '*No, I can't feel anything but warmth; but I don't like it, because I am afraid of lightning, and now there is lightning coming on me.*' The

action of the water, and the sight of luminous rays issuing from the hand, are brought forward here in proof of the assertion, that a fluid influence or force emanates from the hand of a powerful magnetiser, and to persons in some states is sensibly perceptible.

5. Two instances of *clairvoyance* will be adduced, because they will be found of use in illustrating laws which we were afterwards told by the unseen influences pervade the whole universe of spiritual life; and which must therefore be interpreted before a knowledge of spiritual language or operations can be attained.

A young and ignorant girl while under mesmeric treatment for fits, from which she quite recovered, fell into the state called *clairvoyance*. In one of her liveliest moods she proposed to go and find one of my family, who was visiting at a house with which I was unacquainted. It was more than a mile distant from my own home, and I knew nothing of it but the street in which it stood. As soon as I had agreed to 'go with her,' which was done by merely holding her hand, she asked me to direct her. I did so as far as the street, listening to her remarks as we mentally went on, as if we had been walking together in London. When we reached the corner of the street I told her I did not know the number, and she must ask the first person she met to show her ——'s house. She answered that she would do so, and in a minute said, 'We are there; this is the house.' 'Knock at the door,'

I said. '*I can't yet ; I am only just in at the garden gate.*'

She then talked of ringing at the bell, saying there was no knocker ; spoke (apparently) to some person who had come to her spiritually-found door, and asked if B. was there.

'He says, Yes. We may go up-stairs.'

She described the staircase and its decorations, talked of many shut doors on the landing, and of hearing voices within. Then she said she had got into the room where B. was. The furniture of this room was described, and her description, which included some rather minute and unusual details, proved accurate. Everything about chairs, curtains, glasses, &c., was verified afterwards. And one part of her account was this :—

'*I see a gentleman (describing age and appearance) sitting beside B. They are talking together. I can't hear what they say. B. is pointing with his finger at you, and the other is looking at me. Now the other gentleman has fetched a lady, and the lady has joined them, and they are all three talking together.*'

The exact time when she said this was noted, B. soon after came in and confirmed all she said. But that which puzzled me then, and has since served as an illustrative fact, was the girl's statement, that B. was 'pointing,' and his friend 'looking,' at her and myself. B. was at that moment telling his friend some of the

most curious things that had taken place during the mesmerising, and the gentleman had *called* to his wife to come and hear what was said.

On another occasion this girl, making a mental (or rather spiritual) journey through some streets in the neighbourhood, described a chapel on fire, the flames of which had broken out *after* she was put to sleep, and the fire had not been mentioned in her hearing. She spoke of the number of engines successively arriving, the difficulty of getting water, the shouting and bad language of the mob, which she said she *heard*, and, what I thought the strangest of all, of the difficulty of getting into the chapel through the locked iron gates. This difficulty was surmounted, as she said, after some men in the crowd had climbed the railings; and she was then able to get in at the chapel door, when she traced the origin of the fire, and gave me a full description of the inside of the building in its burnt and dismantled state. Two messengers were sent out separately to ascertain what was going on at the fire (half a mile from the house), and from these, in turn, we received a full confirmation of all her statements.

This girl, like some of the others, saw the light from her mesmeriser's hand, and once when the hands were rubbed together she exclaimed that they were on fire.

Every wonderful effect produced by mesmerism has since found its explanation or its counterpart in the spiritual phenomena, so that, had unseen powers been

truly working for our instruction, they could not have taken a better method of giving the needful elementary knowledge than by making us acquainted with the processes and results of mesmerism. As all the information that can be obtained on the subject of mesmerism is valuable, for its power in healing disease when properly applied is unquestionable, I would recommend those interested in the subject to read Barth's 'Manual of Mesmerism,' in which everything connected with the *practice* of magnetism is included; and for many very interesting details connected with the subject, a little collection of cases entitled 'Clairvoyance in Hygienic Medicine,' by Jacob Dixon. An extract from this interesting little work will be found farther on. Persons in some of the highest mesmeric states do indeed appear to have passed the boundaries of material life, and to have gained an insight into the world of spirit. Of this I had one striking experience long before the time of the raps, seeing-mediums, and mysteries of the present day. It is certain that when this happened, though too many instances of *earthly* clairvoyance had come to my notice to allow of my remaining sceptical in that direction, yet I held all belief in real intercourse with spirits to be a delusion, caused by some unknown action of the brain. This scepticism was shaken by the following occurrence. Being invited by a friend to see a young lady in a state which he called spiritual clairvoyance, in which she

professed to see and converse with spiritual beings, I entered the room after she was mesmerised, and my name was not mentioned aloud. I took my seat unnoticed by her side, and listened to her exquisite description of the scenes in which she believed herself to be. Although the great beauty of the imagery, and its wonderful coherence with her theory of symbolism, puzzled and surprised me, I set the whole down in my own mind as the working of a highly excited poetical fancy. At length my friends asked her whether she could look for any spirit for the lady sitting beside her. She would try. I mentioned two, only naming their relationship to myself, giving neither the age nor sex of either. She then said, '*I am now in a garden quite full of flowers. There is a group of children hanging garlands over a lamb. How they have covered that lamb with flowers! Two children come out from the group. The girl is the oldest. They are ten and eight years old.*' She then described perfectly every feature of the two children I had asked for, dwelling with animation on their beautiful appearance and surroundings. The age she mentioned was, however, much in advance of the reality. When I remarked this, she was silent a minute, then said, '*They say that I see them as they are now; you must remember that they have been here some time.*' It then appeared that the ages she mentioned were exactly what they would have been had the two remained on earth.

CHAPTER V.

MEDIUMSHIP—MODES OF INFLUENCE.

THOUGH a kind of resemblance between the mesmeric and spiritual phenomena could not escape notice when our experiments were first made, I had no idea whatever of the real connection between the two processes, nor of the nearness to identity of the agencies employed.

But as soon as it appeared that several of our friends were sufficiently under the control of the invisible power to give answers apparently independent of our thoughts, I began to make enquiries as to the nature of the influence and the manner of using it.

A young man, sitting in a circle, had his arm shaken with irresistible violence, making innumerable curves and lines. When this had gone on some time, a very intelligent person in the party, who had been observing all that passed, said, ‘I am sure that all this is some action of electricity.’ Instantly the hand wrote, with exceeding rapidity, and no spaces between the words,

‘ Youarerightitiselectricitythatmovesthehandbutthereisa spiritthatguidestheelectricity.’

Another time, I asked a young writing-medium, quite unconnected with the one above mentioned —

‘ How do spirits write through mediums?’

Ans. ‘ The spirit mesmerises the medium.’

Another statement through a medium still younger :

‘ Spirits take hold of the wrist.’

Q. ‘ If you take hold of the wrist, and so produce a mechanical movement of the hand, how is it that the answers come in the language of the medium?’

Ans. ‘ Because we do not take hold of it in your way.’

Q. ‘ How, then?’

Ans. ‘ It is done by the spiritual fluid, which comes from the brain to the hand.’

At this point of the dialogue, it appeared as if our informant could not tell us all we wanted to know by writing, and a sketch was drawn (Fig. 1), which, strange and grotesque as it is, by the hand of a child who could not draw, conveys the idea required. The good spirit above is throwing the influence through the higher portions of the brain, namely, the organs of veneration, benevolence, ideality, and the intellectual portion. The evil spirit, nearer to earth, is trying to mesmerise the base of the brain. I cannot help connecting this illustration through a quite uninformed medium with some experiments in writing made

through my friend Miss L——, who has sometimes been obliged to leave off, from the character of the writing, the pain in the nape of the neck, and a *chill* which she frequently feels, and which always gives her the idea of an earthly or evil influence.

Fig. 1.



The illustration in the diagram was afterwards confirmed by the hand of another medium, with the additional intelligence that 'Spirits often influence through each other.'

I asked for a drawing of the process, when two

persons' hands were joined, and the drawing No. 2 was made. These two sketches, strange as they are, are nearly fac-similes of the original, which was, however,

Fig. 2.



too large for this page. According to the law of symbolism always in operation, by which it appears that the character of the representative imagery used

always depends on the brain of the medium, the appearance depicted may not be exactly what we should see if we had the power of vision. It is certain that, in circles, when a hand has been moved to write, a person having the gift of spirit-sight has declared that the form of a hand was visible immediately over the hand of the writer. Perhaps both this appearance and the illustrative drawing are meant to convey the same idea, of an influence emanating from the spirit and directing the muscles of the medium; and the extended arms and active position of the superincumbent figure may possibly be the only forms in which the directing influence could convey the idea by a child of twelve years old. I was told at the time, but have not now a record of the words, that the agency employed in rapping and moving substances was of an electrical character, but rather more material and less refined (proceeding from a source nearer earth) than that by which the hand is moved to write or draw: that the processes of rapping and moving involve two actions, the *charging* of the table, &c., and a current of spiritual fluid passed through the medium, to produce raps thrown off in successive shocks or blows instead, like the drawing or writing, of flowing in one continuous stream.

I asked the question, ‘*When a spirit writes through a medium directing the spiritual fluid through the brain to the hand, how is the thought conveyed?*’

Ans. ‘*Whatever the spirit thinks, the medium writes.*’

Thus was given in part the information sought for. We had something like a coherent theory, and could compare the action of human mesmerism, when the mesmerised person shares the sensations or feelings of the mesmeriser, or imitates his movements, with the presumed spiritual influence. We were also furnished with a key to the mystery of the difficulty found in communicating by some mediums, and the impossibility of doing so by others, while in some cases writing and drawings are executed with great ease and rapidity. This part of the subject being one of the most complicated of the whole, will be entered on at greater length hereafter.

As to the order in which the phenomena are developed in a medium, I believe that the table-moving is generally one of the first to appear; the writing precedes the drawing; vision is a later and more internal process, and hearing later still. But the earlier and most material forms of mediumship, such as rapping and table-moving, do not seem to be susceptible of any great change or refinement; the communications given after a year's practice being no more exalted than those first received; while all the more internal forms, such as writing, drawing, seeing, and hearing, are capable of being unfolded and refined to an indefinite degree.

So much comes under the head of 'Vision,' in connection with other modes of mediumship, that I proceed to give some instances of spiritual sight.

CHAPTER VI.

MEDIUMSHIP (*continued*): WRITING — VISION — DRAWING.

AS an answer to the question ‘*How is vision produced?*’ a drawing had been made in which the seer is represented as lying back with the eyes shut and receiving a current of ‘spiritual fluid’ from the two hands of a spirit. The current from the left hand enters the right eye, and reissuing from the left eye of the seer, joins the right hand fingers of the spirit again. Quite unexpectedly to me, the words ‘*In,*’ and ‘*Out,*’ were written by the eyes, thus indicating a kind of circle. These first explanatory notes and illustrations will hereafter, doubtless, appear as rude and imperfect as the first guesses of the alchemists at the simple elements are seen to be by the analytical chemists of our own time.

I next asked how the *character* of the vision was determined, and was told, ‘*Whatever the spirit thinks, the medium sees.*’

The following instances of vision are transcribed nearly verbatim from notes taken during their occurrence. They were as little expected or understood by

the mediums as by myself, and the seers being either intimate friends or members of my own family, were of course unpaid.

On one of those occasions on which a circle of friends had assembled for experiments, a vision was seen, which is well worthy of notice, both because it was preceded by the sensible mesmerising of the seer, and on account of its own beautiful imagery and meaning.

There had been a slight movement of the table, which soon however became steady, and the hand of a young man present was moved to write '*Join hands round the table.*' After a time, Mrs. D——, a lady of high intellectual power, declared that she could not keep her eyes open. We begged her not to combat the influence. Her hands were then drawn away from those of the rest of the party, who sat quietly watching her. She did not sleep, but could not open her eyes, and she said she felt a sensation like *cool fanning* over her face and brow. This lasted some minutes, and from its distinctness seemed to surprise her very much. She said that it was a most delightful feeling, but she could not guess whence it was, nor what it was for, though she felt as if some one were very near her. At length she exclaimed, '*Now I see!*' and described the vision, which was written from her own words.

'I see a church of emeralds. An altar, over which is a beautiful bright light, and a steeple, illuminated. The pavement is inlaid and of the richest colours. A

great deal of purple, but no black. The deepest colour, that which would have been black, is blue. The ends of the pews are arched, and all of precious stones.

‘Now I see a number of people coming. There is so much purple about them. They have loose robes of purple. They appear to have formed ranks on each side, and a number of beautiful children are come, all in white, with wreaths held up over their heads. They pass up the church and are kneeling before the illuminated part, which is a tower rather than an altar.

‘Now I see a beautiful altar, not a crescent. The top is inlaid with marble of beautiful colours, highly polished. The windows are purple and gold. In the centre of each window is a large precious stone; it is as large as a dinner-plate. The first is bright gold, the second is ruby or carbuncle, the third is bright blue. Now I see them (the people) all going up the immense tower. What a height! It makes me giddy to look at it! Now they have wings, and I see them all in the air. There is a bright circle, and they have passed through it. They are all gone into heaven.

‘Everything is dissolving, and a bright light coming again. Where the illuminated tower stood, I see the cross of Christ, and beside it stands our Saviour. Oh! how beautiful He looks! pointing upwards towards His cross!’

The seer said that the church appeared to be more than a mile in length. She was impressed to believe

that the figures in purple were those who had suffered for the faith of Christ, and the young ones in white, the purified spirits of those who went to heaven by His means.

We then asked for a fuller explanation, and obtained the following in writing, by the hand of the young man who had first written : —

Q. ‘What do the emeralds mean?’

Ans. ‘New. It is the New Church that is fast coming. Watch the course of events throughout the world.’

Q. What is meant by the wreaths that the young ones held?’

Ans. ‘Innocence. Never cease watching the course of God’s providence.’

Q. ‘Who are you who give us this information?’

Ans. ‘F——.’ The name of the older spirit who had spoken to me at Mrs. Hayden’s, and who has been described as delighting, in his life on earth, in anticipations of the fulfilment of prophecy, and the establishment of the Saviour’s kingdom.

After this, Mrs. D——’s eyes continuing tightly shut, we asked for directions how to open them. It was written, ‘*Just touch her forehead between the eyes, and they will open.*’ I did so, and the lids began to rise. Then it was written, ‘*Touch her eyelids.*’ They opened immediately.

‘The scenes of the vision,’ Mrs. D—— said, ‘came one after another like dissolving views.’

Both she and the young man by whose hand the explanation was written were of a character, and possessed of a cerebral organisation, which well fitted them to receive and appreciate such communications.

Mrs. D — soon had experience of a different character from that described. One instance of this afforded a means of recognising the spirit seen. The lady had become partially entranced, having her eyes close shut, but in no other way showing that she was under influence, when she began to describe scenes through which she seemed to be passing. I give as nearly as I can her own words ; —

‘These green slopes are very lovely, with their patches of flowers, and ferns, and brushwood. This young girl is Ellen; quite herself, so fresh, and fair and young. She is looking at me with her bright smile from behind a rosebush; she seems to be just pushing aside the branches to let me see her face. Now I see that with the other hand she holds the hand of a noble-looking old man whom she calls ——,’ (mentioning the relation and describing the face, features, and manner of the older spirit whom Mrs. D — had never seen in life, but who was the one mentioned as having given her the vision of the church, and as having a mind much in harmony with her own).

‘Ask him,’ I said, ‘to take some means of identifying himself for me, if possible?’ She waited a minute, then said ;

‘I see him kneeling in prayer; a book lies open before him in a character which I do not know.’

‘Perhaps it is Greek,’ I suggested. ‘If it is the spirit named, he used to read the Greek Testament habitually.’

‘No, I know the Greek letters well; this is a black square character, which looks very ancient. The volume itself has a black cover.’

When in another minute her eyes opened, I laid before her a Hebrew Bible which had been constantly read in this life by the spirit,

‘That,’ said the seer, ‘is the book itself!’

Mrs. D——, on seeing afterwards a bust of the same person, immediately and without any word from me, recognised it as a likeness of the reader of the Hebrew Bible.

The seer of the next vision, Miss L——, has been already slightly referred to. Of middle age, quiet, practical and unimaginative in her habits, and truly but not ostentatiously christian in conduct, she readily wins, and never to my knowledge has lost, the confidence of those who know her. My own acquaintance with her has lasted thirteen years, and during that time many of the most internal spiritual phenomena have occurred.

Very soon after the discovery of Miss L——’s power in writing, her hand with mine on it (it would not move

without) * was guided to write, '*I could show myself to you, if you would look in the crystal.*'

This crystal, the action of which on the eye will be explained farther on, is simply an egg-shaped piece of clear glass given to me by a friend who had seen similar glasses used in Lancashire by fortune tellers, or, as they used to be called, *peepers*.

The assertion of Miss L — 's capability of seeing in the crystal proved true. The manner of its first occurrence was, in few words, as follows. Having placed the glass on the table, covering it so closely as to shut out from it and from her own eyes every vestige of light, or reflection of the articles in the room, she sat down in perfect quietness gazing on the glass. After about ten minutes she said that it appeared to have become cloudy, then dark, then an opaque black. After this some light appeared, *apparently from within the crystal*, and the latter cleared. Then followed a succession of scenes gradually becoming more and more beautiful, each one appearing for a minute or so, then *melting away like a dissolving view*, and after a little clouding of the crystal, giving way to its successor. For the most part each of the earlier scenes was characterised either by a gate, an arch, a bridge, or some other image typical of a passage from one state into

* Experimenters will find this need of two hands a good test of the writing not being their own origination. See p. 35.

another. I have seen this in all instances of well-developed crystal vision.

Miss L —— generally seemed to pass through two doors or gates, before she saw any persons whom she could recognise as her earthly friends.

After the last arch had been passed through, and the crystal had become clear, the same spirit who had desired her to look was plainly recognised by Miss L——. Every portion of her dress, which was extremely beautiful, was minutely described by the seer, and the precision with which other spirits, friends and relations of the one first seen, were described, enabled me to recognise them at once. In an instance which I am about to narrate particularly, this recognition did not take place at the time, and the whole occurrence deserves attention as a proof that the vision could not be the effect of any occult action, either of the mediums or my own brain.

All the earlier portions of the vision had been passed through, and Miss L—— described herself as '*seeing*,' or '*being in*,' a very lovely park, in which were trees loaded with blossoms, and grass gemmed with bright flowers. Children were playing on the grass in groups, making wreaths of the flowers, and all seemed a picture of beauty and happiness. 'Among the children,' she said, 'I see some young people and some who are old, or elderly. There is Ellen, and M——, and F—— (the two who had rapped at Mrs. Hayden's), and with

them is a stranger, one whom I have never seen before. He is a new spirit, and they are bringing him here, and seem to wish to introduce him to us. He is dressed like a clergyman.' She then described *very* minutely the features and expression, including a peculiar mode of shutting the eyes, of the person she saw. Strange to say, I had no idea who the spirit was, and puzzled myself for some time with vain attempts to conjecture. We asked him to show us something by which I should be enabled to guess; something that would remind me of his tastes or pursuits when with us. She said, 'He is holding a picture.' This ought to have been a guide, but I had identified the living man so completely in my own mind with other studies of a more learned character, that the description of his image in the crystal was not recognised.

The next morning, being with a writing-medium by whom the name of one of those seen in the crystal had been given, I asked who was the old gentleman whom Miss L—— had seen with the spirits on the previous evening. The name of one who had left this world three or four months before was written. The correctness of Miss L——'s description was now apparent, and I wondered that I had not recognised the spirit, nor remembered that soon after his departure a promise had been given through a writing-medium that he would show himself to the first person who could see and describe him. In thinking how I should be able

to prove the identity of this spirit, or at least the agreement of the appearance with the written name, I remembered a good photograph of him which had been carefully locked up as a treasure, and which Miss L——, who since I received it had only visited me on the one occasion when she looked in the crystal, had never seen. There was no name attached to the photograph.

One evening when I expected a visit from Miss L——, I laid this framed photograph, and another of a friend of hers which is in a case, on the table. They were in the midst of a quantity of books, papers, and work, and looked as if they had been placed there accidentally. Miss L—— sat down by the table, and after a very few sentences had passed between us, her attention was drawn to the likeness in the frame. ‘Will you excuse me?’ she said, taking it up; ‘but I think I know this face. I must have seen this gentleman here.’

‘No, you have not. He has not been here for many years. You did not know *him*, I think. Look at this other photograph of——.’

She looked, said it was like, but could not forget the first.

‘I am *certain* I have seen *that* face somewhere. Did he belong to the ——?’ (an institution in which she had been interested).

‘No, indeed.’

She was evidently unconvinced, and though apparently trying to turn her attention to other things, could not keep it from the photograph. After some time she exclaimed —

‘Now I know that picture! That is the new spirit whom I saw in the crystal! Did not I tell you his eyes and hair were,’ &c. &c., pointing out the characteristic trait she had remarked.

The power of seeing and recognising is not, of course, confined to *crystal-seers*. Jane, the medium before mentioned, through whose faculty of transmitting raps we were enabled to make so many observations on the phenomena, had occasionally the power of seeing the spirits after their presence had been announced in a circle. Eight or nine persons were on one occasion sitting round a table. In the party was a lady till that evening a stranger to all present, but whose own medium powers it afterwards appeared were considerable.* The name of this lady’s husband, with a long and suitable message to his wife and children, had been rapped out, when suddenly the sounds ceased, and all felt disappointed by the early termination of the sitting.

Jane, however, said, ‘*I seem to be in a cloud; I shall see something.*’ She looked towards the new member of the circle, and declared that she saw standing beside

* This, as in my own first experience at Mrs. Hayden’s, was no doubt an element of success. The wife was the medium through whom, *though unconsciously*, the husband was able to transmit familiar thoughts to Jane.

the lady a gentleman, whose appearance, both as to dress (which was a uniform) and person, she described with the utmost minuteness, mentioning the form and position of two scars on the face. She said that he held out his hand, on the fourth finger of which was a curious ancient-looking gold ring, to which he seemed to invite her notice. The lady, though evidently surprised and affected, said nothing till Jane had described the exact form of the ring. Then we were told that this antique ring, the valued gift of a dear friend, had been worn till the last hour of his life by her husband. After Jane had left the room the lady showed us the ring, which had been on her finger unnoticed among many others before the circle commenced, but had been put with her bracelets into her bag as Jane came in, for we were not sure how metals or jewellery might affect the influence. The next morning Jane, *who had not seen the gold ring*, cut out its form in paper. It was exactly like. It may be thought that some kind of clairvoyance enabled the medium to see the ring in the lady's possession; but, on that supposition, how did she know that it had been worn and valued by the husband sufficiently to serve as a test of identity almost as good as the scars, which, it must be remembered, were seen at the same time?

In exploring such an untrodden region, the assertion of *one* seer alone cannot be held of value, unless, as in the foregoing instances, it affords conclusive evidence

of the apparent presence and identity of some spirit, which evidence, to be satisfactory, should be quite independent of any information received from others. Mrs. D——'s perception of the Hebrew Bible, of which I had not thought for years; Miss L——'s description of the 'new spirit,' whose name I did not conjecture till the next day, when it was written by the other medium, and afterwards confirmed by the recognition of the parties; and Jane's account of the antique ring, were all of this class. In none of these instances can the action of one brain upon another be traced as the supposed cause of vision without resorting to a mode of explanation not coherent with the other phenomena, and far more complicated and obscure than that which admits the influence of another intelligence in their production.

Whether the next case of vision will be thought to involve the necessity of other presences I am not sure. It was my own experience, the only time when I ever saw what appeared to be an external and objective reality not apparent to all others.

I was at a church with a little girl. It is needless to give an assurance of the truthfulness of my young companion, as her trustworthiness is not a necessary element in the question. But my own credibility as a narrator is requisite to give my experience value in the judgment of those who would draw inferences from it and other similar facts.

While listening with extreme pleasure and deep attention to the preacher's beautiful illustrations of our Lord's discourse to the Samaritan woman, of the fountains of living water springing up unto everlasting life, I suddenly saw over the shoulders of the preacher what appeared like the outlines of three bright heads, so brilliant as to cast the light-coloured wall behind into shadow. I touched my young companion, asking her (she had much power of vision) whether she had seen anything; I was beginning to add, 'I saw three,' when she stopped me, saying, 'I will tell you afterwards.' When we left the church she told me that just before I spoke she had seen three heads—only the head and neck—beside the preacher. She could not discern the faces. When we reached home she drew the sizes, which differed from each other a little, and the relative position of these heads, with perfect accuracy. I cannot believe that the words '*I saw three*,' even if she heard them, could have suggested to her mind precisely the same vision as had appeared to myself.

The last instance is of external vision shared by two persons. The next one of what is called *inner vision*. It also occurred to myself. A young servant, Hannah, also having the sparkling black eyes so often seen in mediums, had during her stay in my house obtained the gift of hearing, a manifestation of which more will be said in the next chapter. Not only the sentiments, but often the phrases she used, resembled those of the

person whose voice she professed to hear, and when a communication, perhaps a medicine or mode of treatment in illness, could not be given in any other way, it has frequently been whispered to this young girl. She could also see sometimes, and though this faculty diminished as the hearing strengthened, she was able to describe very perfectly the personal appearance of the departed friend who usually spoke to her, and whom she resembled in quality of mind and character, though she had never seen him in life.

One evening, while talking to a friend of another who was gone, I became, without apparent cause, very sleepy. The feeling of an influence like mesmerism remained with me after I had gone with my children to their nursery, and became so strong that I could not open my eyes. Suddenly I had, not the sight, but—so vivid that I could have described every feature with perfect accuracy—an impression of the face of the friend of whom we had been talking down stairs. He looked smiling and more happy than in life, the complexion far clearer and fairer, and the countenance brighter than I had ever known it. The glad expression made me feel happy. I asked the young girl if any spirits were present. She listened, then said —

‘Mr. R.’ (the spirit whose voice she always professed to hear) ‘says that a newly come spirit is here with them; Mr. R. thinks you can see him.’

‘I have seen a face,’ I answered; ‘tell me his name.’

She replied, 'Mr. James.' This was the right name, but as we had often expected and hoped to see or hear from this spirit, her giving the name would not have been any evidence at all. So far it might all have been guess-work or coincidence. This possibility, however, was soon put out of the question. Next day, I got accidentally into an omnibus, in which was a person of strong medium power also acquainted with the departed Mr. James, and who was then returning from a visit to some friends, interested like myself in the investigation of these phenomena. He accosted me with—

'There appears to be a reason for my meeting you. Last night at the ——'s Mr. James announced himself. We asked him whether he had been to see you, and he said that he would go at once. We then concluded that he was absent, by his not answering our questions; but he soon returned, and said that he had seen you, but was not sure of your recognising him. He said you did not shake hands with him as usual. In fact, he seemed disappointed.'

I then asked at what time in the evening this had taken place, and was told at half-past eight, being just the time at which I believed that the face of my friend had appeared to me.

In the chapter on writing an instance is recorded in which the two fearful names of *Catherine de Medicis* and *Maria Manning* were written by the hand of a gentle-

man with my own placed on the wrist: the painful feeling left in the arm and shoulder on that occasion were noticed. The reader will remember too that when an illustrative sketch was made of the method of influencing, the *evil* influence was represented as coming from a figure on the ground, and being directed towards the lower portion, what is called the basilar region, of the brain, while the higher organs are subjected to a stream or ray emanating from a figure above. When the little drawing was made I had not even a guess, much less a theory, on the subject; and Miss L——, when she saw the following crystal vision, was not only as little informed on the method of influence as I had been, but was quite unacquainted with phrenology.

‘Here is a park, or at least green grass, with oars lying down. They are painted red and blue: I suppose I am to go over the water. No; down a lane, and into a kind of hall or theatre with benches rising one above another all around. The seats are empty. In the centre, below, is an altar, and upon it a crucifix with our Saviour. In front of the crucifix there stands a vase of beautiful fresh flowers. I see behind the altar a marble tomb. What a bright light comes from the tomb and the cross! Over the altar there is a board like a sign-board. I hope I shall be able to read that inscription! But the letters don’t come out clear yet. It is getting cloudy — now clear again, and the benches are quite full of people. A man is here in a soldier’s

uniform with a wand in his hand pointing to the letters. Still they are misty, I can't read them. I don't like the look of that man, and none of the people seem to like him.'

'I wish,' I said, 'that we could have some sign whether they like his presence.'

'They have all bent their heads down sadly. They do not like it. Oh, how my neck aches!'

She put her hand to her neck just at the base of the brain. Without saying a word to her I demesmerised the spot by a few horizontal passes, while she continued looking earnestly at the crystal, the shelter for which, built up of large books, quite hid her face.

'How is the pain now?'

'Gone. That man is gone, and they are all looking up joyfully.'

'Tell me *when* or *how* the man went away.'

'I don't know; just as you asked me about the pain he had disappeared. Oh! the light from the tomb and the cross is glorious! It is a church, and I think it must be something about death they are going to show us. Here is a sweet-looking lady in a white dress, with a crimson border. She is pointing to the letters. Now I shall be able to make it out (reads) —

"*I, a, m, t, h, e, l, i, g, h, t. H, e, t, h, a, t, b, e,—*"
I can't read the next: at the end it is—"have life."

'Perhaps it is, "*I am the Light. He that believeth on Me shall have life.*"'

‘Yes. That is it. Now I see what the cross and the tomb meant. In the lane again. Coming back. Now it is all gone!’

Here it will be seen that the words presented to the seer were not precisely those of our Lord. They seem to be a compound of the two sentences, ‘*I am the Resurrection and the Life: He that believeth on Me shall never die.*’ ‘*I am the light of the world,*’ &c. I presume that the manner in which the words were collocated and shown to Miss L—— were those best adapted to convey to her mind, imperfectly impressed with the Scripture phraseology, the beautiful teaching of the vision.

Within a month from this time, the departure of a near and dear friend was witnessed by the seeress and myself.

Cases of vision might be multiplied to a very great extent, and I shall hereafter have to recur to several modifications. But enough have been here given for specimens of the different kinds of spiritual sight. It will soon, I think, be found that the different varieties in each mode of manifestation are produced by different degrees rather than by dissimilarity in kind of influence. These varieties, too, seem in a great measure to depend on the varying susceptibility of the human frame to the reception of the unseen power.

CHAPTER VII.

MEDIUMSHIP (*continued*)—THE VOICE AND HEARING.

THE first conjectures as to the cause of writing, drawing, hearing, &c., are, naturally enough, that the medium is the subject of some irregular action of the nerves and muscles, perhaps also of the brain, which may be traced by physiologists, but whose cause lies quite beyond the penetration of the uninitiated: a process like that which goes on in dreams, which, though held by the ignorant to have something awful and mysterious in their natures, are easily enough placed by the scientific to the score of late suppers, sour wines, and other similar causes. In mentioning our first experiences of writing, drawing, and vision, I have tried to choose those instances which are best calculated to place the phenomenon beyond the region of subjectivity. Perhaps the following instance of *hearing* will have the effect of producing similar conclusions as to that mode of manifestation. A sick person, who was in the habit of receiving visits from a kind friend whose mesmerism had sometimes been useful, having means of com-

munication with the unseen influences through mediums, received some instructions through the last-named channel on the nature and beneficial action of mesmerism. At one time, when a slight increase of illness had taken place, a writing-medium, who may be called Mary, wrote one day, giving the name of a spirit—

‘I have been just now to Mrs. R—— to tell her to come and see you. She will come to-day or to-morrow evening.’

The time at which the spirit said she had been to Mrs. R—— was noted down. Neither Mrs. N——, the sick person, nor the medium, expected a verification of the spirit’s writing, but the note of time was kept, because some coincidences had occurred before of impressions given to Mrs. R—— exactly at the time when her presence was desired. On that evening the invalid was sufficiently better to sit in a room on a ground floor from which everything that passed in the entrance-hall could be heard. Only the medium knew of the communication. That day passed, and no Mrs. R—— came. Next day, when the idea of the visit had been given up, the medium’s hand again wrote, ‘She could not come last night, but will this evening.’ Mrs. N—— begged another friend to make a note of the communication, namely, that the spirit had spoken audibly to Mrs. R—— at nine o’clock the day before, to desire her to go to —— Street. The note was made. Mrs. R—— lived at a distance of three miles from the house.

That evening Mrs. N——, hearing the bell and the entrance of some visitor into the hall, went directly out of her sitting-room and found that Mrs. R—— had just entered. The only words that had passed between her and the servant contained an enquiry as to Mrs. N——'s health, to which the servant replied, 'She is down-stairs.' Mrs. R—— looked relieved on seeing Mrs. N——, saying, 'I feared you were ill, for I was sent here by ——, naming the spirit.' 'Then,' said Mrs. N——, 'you must come up-stairs and tell —— as well as myself how the direction was given.'

Mrs. R—— had no idea why this request was made of her, but complied, and when the three were together, said —

'I was sitting at table yesterday with my family, when —— whispered to me, "Go to —— Street to Mrs. N——." I said, "Is she ill? It is inconvenient for me to visit her to-day or to-morrow, as I am going into the country the day after." He said again: "She is not very ill, but you could do her good." So,' said Mrs. R——, 'as I could not come to see you yesterday, I came this evening, though it was inconvenient, as all our preparations are made for going into the country early to-morrow.'

'What time did this happen?' —— asked.

'At five minutes before nine in the morning.'

This agreed to within a minute or two with the time of the medium's writing.

The young servant (mentioned p. 71), who sometimes heard whispers, was one night called up on account of the sudden illness of one of the family. She had asserted from the first that the spirit speaking to her gave the name of a departed medical friend of her master's whom she had never seen in life, though she described his voice and appearance correctly, and the expressions she used were very like his. I attributed this resemblance and her power of conveying his forms of thought and expression to a similarity in the two characters, and to this probably the *completeness* of the mediumship was due.

When the young girl saw the sick person in great pain, she listened for a minute, then said:—

‘Mr. ——— says you must have two medicines’ (naming them), ‘in turn, every five minutes.’ She procured and mixed the medicines. At the end of about five minutes she said:

‘Now, Mr. ——— says the first medicine has done its work, I am to give you the second.’ She gave it, and in less than ten minutes from the time when she entered the room the sufferer was quite relieved.

No communications are more interesting than those which, coming in one form through one medium, are confirmed through another by a different mode of mediumship.

Of this kind was the following instance of the writing of one medium, the vision of another, and the hearing of

a third, all independently of each other, agreeing in the same statement. By it also we were taught that in the spiritual heavens there are *seasons*, or, as we might call them, *waves* of influx from the first fountain of life. And that the returns of these seasons, in which spiritual gifts are plenteously distributed through angels and spirits to us on earth, are the realities whence the churches of Christendom, deriving through the Jews, have their periodic festivals. This last very beautiful fact has been conveyed to us in many forms, and demands earnest and careful study from the professors of religion.

(From my note-book): —

Last Monday Mrs. R—— described to me a very lovely vision she had had of Mrs. A—— (a very amiable young woman who had died not long before in her first confinement). Mrs. R—— saw her beneath some beautiful branches and wreaths of flowers of soft and brilliant colours, chiefly green. I thought but little of this; in truth, we are in the habit of hearing so many things of the kind, that many are overlooked; but this evening it was whispered to Mrs. R—— as she sat by me, ‘*The flowers you saw are in our arbour. It is finished, and we shall have a feast there.*’

Still I did not pay much attention to the subject, though I was pleased to see Mrs. R——’s great interest

in and delight at her vision of her friend. This morning (dated the following day) Jane's hand wrote: —

‘Our garden is so beautiful, I wish you could see it, and our arbour is finished. (The medium had not heard of Mrs. R——’s vision.)

‘Who has seen your arbour?’

‘A—— and Mrs. R——.’

‘We have a mother and a baby with us, who have been helping to make the arbour. They are just come here from another sphere, and are staying in our house till theirs is ready.’

‘Were there any other children left in this world by the mother?’

‘No, there were no others. She came from London. I think you will find out who she is.’

16th. This evening it was whispered again to Mrs. R——, that they (the spirits) could not stay long, they were so busy preparing for the feast.

19th. Yesterday evening I saw Mrs. R—— again. She told me of another beautiful vision of ‘the arbour,’ which was prepared for the feast. Grapes, peaches, apricots, and many other fruits were placed on long tables covered with white satin and gold, in a kind of raised embroidery. The most lovely flowers hung in all directions, and the branches interlaced overhead. Birds were flying about within the arbour.

During the evening a lady, whom I had not seen for several weeks, came in. We did not speak of the arbour

or anything connected with it, but our last visitor told us that she had acquired a kind of internal vision. She can see with her eyes shut, and her fingers pressed on them (this pressure of the eyes is not uncommon in clairvoyance). We begged her to try then if she could see anything, believing that the presence of mediums would ensure magnetic power. She shut her eyes, and pressing her fingers on them, soon exclaimed :

‘I am in a large and beautiful garden, like a park. Little lambs are playing about, and there are horses here too. Oh! this is not lighted by our sun, but what a lovely light!

‘I am to go farther. Here are high trees *with their branches interlaced above!* How very lovely it is! It forms an immense green arbour, nearly a mile long. It is full of flowers hanging in wreaths around; and bouquets of lovely flowers, geraniums and roses. It is all set out with splendid fruits, grapes, peaches, everything; and birds are flying about.

‘It is all gone. I have never seen anything so lovely before!’

Then we told her of the preceding visions and communications, and that we were waiting to hear the name of the feast. Mrs. R—— especially was delighted by the description, which, in every respect but the little lambs and horses, agreed so entirely with her vision of the night before.

By the writing next day we were told that another

friend of ours would see the feast (this was verified, but the vision was a very slight one, and though there were some curious and rather different particulars, I have not kept a memorandum of it). That they 'call it the feast of ——,' a very illegible word, which the medium could not read, but which, guessing letter by letter, and asking the spirit to confirm my guesses when right, I found to be 'Tabernacles.' The writing-medium had a good deal of acquaintance with Jewish customs, and knew, when thus reminded of the fact, that at this feast a tent or place open to the sky is decorated for reception, its covering being evergreens; but she had not been thinking of her Jewish friends, nor recalling the feast, till I deciphered and guessed the word 'Tabernacles.'

It will be said that this agreement of the three mediums in their description, proves nothing but sympathy of brain. This has been said to me on similar occasions by scientific men. I can imagine the brains of three persons being impressed with a similar thought *at one time*. But in this case the first was *vision*, in which the mother and baby were seen. The next writing, by a person who had not heard of the vision—in fact, she was away from the house during the whole of Mrs. R——'s visit; and the third, the impromptu vision of my unexpected visitor, who came in when we were not speaking of the arbour, and who saw, in addition to the other things, *lambs*

and *horses*. These two last images will give more significance to the vision in the minds of those who are acquainted with the doctrine of correspondence. Then, the two last ladies knew nothing of Jewish customs, yet that which was said by the writing-medium to be the 'Feast of Tabernacles' was described by both.

Here is another instance of the spiritual perception of two persons at once. I do not deny that *the brain* may sympathise in these cases—though, as in this instance, the different external form of perception would rather contradict that idea—but the sympathy I believe to lie deeper than the material brain, even in the spirit of the seer or writer; and when the spirits of two persons act in unison, those persons are together in the spiritual world.

I was once sitting by Mrs. R——, when she suddenly said she heard the sound of music at a distance. I felt then externally the *fanning* which has been before described, and internally a strange chaos or confusion of thought, which at length settled itself, and I seemed to hear the words of a little Christmas hymn, ending with—

Christmas gifts for all,
By the Spirit poured,
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Praise the Lord.

As the impression strengthened, I said, 'I seem to hear internally a little Christmas hymn.' 'I hear,' she said,

‘no words, but real music, like a pealing organ, and many voices singing hymns of praise.’

The spiritual hearing seems generally to be a later developement than the gifts of writing, drawing, or seeing. All have their place in the order of spirit life, and that order would of itself form a study. The more external developements are first; the internal ones later; as in life, come, first perceptions, then intellect, then matured earthly, and, finally, heavenly affections. We shall find that this is the process of the heavenly training—first, that which is natural or external, afterwards that which is spiritual. Again, there are degrees above and beyond this: for the intellectual of the brain corresponds to the perception of the spirit; and the love of *the heart*, as it is commonly said with more truth than is suspected, corresponds with a higher and more heavenly opening—that which Swedenborg calls the *celestial* degree. To apply this to the order of developement, sight or vision corresponds with intellect, or the first degree of spirit life; sound or hearing with love in the highest sense, or the celestial degree. Besides this order, each gift has its own degrees of developement, becoming more and more internal as the inner life expands into the outer.

I have heard those friends to whom the inner voice has come speak of it as seeming to be formed into sound, with mental confusion, as if numerous ideas and sounds were thronging together in the mind, quite

beyond the thinker's power to arrange. In this state all that can be done is to wait. It is the action of spiritual influx, and we shall have further examples of its work. Impression, which may never get beyond the most internal degree of consciousness, is sometimes projected into sight, sometimes into audible sound and its other forms. But here we find another proof of correspondential action: for that which seems, according to the spirit's description, to be *thrown in* through the external organs to the spiritual sensorium, where it forms *impression*, is also, when the power is strong enough, carried out again to the external sense; exactly as the perceptions are carried from external objects through the nerves to the brain, and again back to obey the dictates of the will, through another series of channels, to the bodily organs. Of the very important part which the ganglionic system takes in all these processes, I am not qualified to speak with anything like distinctness. It is supposed by some to be the apparatus through which the actions of the soul itself are carried on. It is quite certain that many clairvoyants refer their power of seeing with the eyes shut to the solar plexus, which is the centre of this sympathetic system of nerves. Then, in other cases again, the power of seeing is referred to the forehead, or brain. But in the matter of *hearing*, in the most marked instances that I have ever known of an internal voice audible only to the subject or medium, the

process of formation of sound seems to originate near the pit of the stomach, namely, in the great solar plexus; and this may justify the assertion of Swedenborg, that the deepest and most internal degree, corresponding to celestial love, has its seat not in the brain, but more near the heart.

The following extract from Dr. Dickson's little work contains an instance of spiritual hearing:—

‘I have some notes which point at the introduction of a spiritual element into the circuit. The clairvoyante was behind her usual hour one morning. She said that when about half way, a voice sounded, “Go back.” She thought it was some distant exclamation, and proceeded. She heard the voice again, and felt herself stopped by some invisible agency, still hearing “Go back.” She returned home. Her little boy had fallen and was considerably hurt. She said that the same voice said what she should do in her perplexity, namely, “Magnetise, and arnica lotion.” When she was in the sleep, she said that she found it was her mother and another spirit who had turned her back.

‘She drew her hand wavingly from mine one day on her passing into the sleep, and said, “What a beautiful red and blue ray came from your hand!” “And yet I don't feel well,” I said. “It came from Dr. Ley,” she answered. “We are on these occasions surrounded by invisible friends, who sometimes magnetise through you, and who make use of my tongue.

I have to express what they would say, *which I do very imperfectly.*" *

'The same day she was, while in the sleep, locally magnetising a patient. He said, "That does me good." "We should do much more good," she replied, "if all were believers like you." He asked, "How is it you know so well what to do in this state?" She pointed upwards. "Is the mind," he went on, "in this state among spirits?" "I see them about us." "Are you in spirit as you will be after death?" "Indeed I hope to be better and happier. You may awake me now."'

Some years ago, Miss Emma Jay, now I believe married and in America, came to England. The manifestation of the voice in Miss Jay's case was very remarkable. During the impression she appeared like a person under very powerful mesmerism, with gasping, twitching of the muscles, and other very perceptible effects of the unseen magnetic influence. When the system was quite brought under the controlling power, the eyes were shut; or if the lids were in the least degree open, the eyeballs were turned up, and the subject was, with very little variation, apparently in a state like that of some clairvoyantes. A question was put to her; she waited for a minute, and then gave an answer, in expression, range of thought, and beauty

* This is a confirmation of former statements respecting language.

of imagery, far surpassing anything she could achieve in her normal state. When out of the trance, she described herself as being quite passive, listening to her own words, and learning from the spirit, who had control over her organs, exactly as she would have done to the teaching of another person. She said that explanations given through her were often quite unexpected, and contrary to her previous notions. With a very finely developed brain, and a nervous system calculated to receive and transmit the influence, the medium's education had not been at all proportionate to her natural abilities. Yet few persons, especially women, could have entered at all on questions which she, or the spirit controlling her, discussed and answered with great ability and clearness. Miss Jay's voice and manner differed much when under different influences, but the phraseology was always, with variations, her own, and the chains of argument such as her well-organised brain was able to convey.

Mr. T. L. Harris, who has in a high degree the internal voice, dwells much on the phenomenon of internal respiration. This breathing, deeper in the system than that of the lungs, seems to be a usual accompaniment of all states of impression and clairvoyance. It may be observed in the deep mesmeric sleep or trance, and the change from it to the external process of inspiration and expiration of the lungs is very curious indeed. I have seen persons just waking from a trance, *cough*

and breathe with difficulty, often declaring that the entrance of the coarse outer air is painful to them, after the pure atmosphere of the spirit world in which they have been breathing. It is said, and I believe with truth, that no real influx can take place till the medium is susceptible of this state. It seems to be an ebb and flow of the spirit within, agreeing with the waves of influx from the spirit without, whose action, as has been said, is so often perceptible as *fanning*, or a current of fresh, pure air. When our pulmonary breathing and spiritual breathing are brought into harmony of action, or *polarised together*, we shall all be receptive, as a natural condition of every-day life, of the streams of influx from higher beings.

CHAPTER VIII.

MEDIUMSHIP—NATURE OF INFLUENCE.

WHEN an enquirer ventures into a new region of knowledge, he has not only to establish, but to systematise facts; and in the first arrangement, these will probably not hold the same rank as they will take when the now unrecognised territory has been measured, observed, and cultivated. The *order*, too, in which facts present themselves to such an enquirer, is not always that in which the whole is most easily communicated, and the earliest information must be rather a history of discovery than a well-digested essay on the subject.

I do not forget that the theme of spirit life and impression has been far more fully discussed by Swedenborg and a few others than it can be in such a slight account as this. But the seers do not assume that every step is to be established. They speak with the authority of teachers; as a dweller in the land can give descriptions of every part from his own knowledge; while one who undertakes to gather from the

accounts of travellers, must needs have a very undigested mass of material to work upon. This may explain the seeming repetitions and returns to the same subject in its different forms, which could not be avoided in framing an explanation like the present from many and various experiences.

Supposing the explanations as to the cause of drawing, writing, &c., generally offered to the scientific world to be received, and these processes with the more internal ones to be attributed to irregular cerebral action, self-delusion, &c., we must then fall back upon that portion of the phenomena which has been declared to be of the most material kind; namely, the raps and movements. And we shall find their use, for no explanation involving *subjectivity* can apply to experiments whose results can be seen, heard, and felt by a number of persons in a quiet waking state, and which can be repeated whenever the trial is made under favourable conditions. After the subjective theory, the next in order is *imposture*, and when this is disposed of, we have to deal with 'the Devil,' whose name I really did not wish to have introduced here. Now, having shown ample reason to believe that all the manifestations emanate from *one* source, we must settle which of the three is the moving power. Unconscious cerebration, self-delusion, or any other mental vagary, can produce writing and drawing; it cannot make intelligent sounds audible to eight or nine people

at one time, nor can it cause the movement of furniture either with or without an intelligent aim. The instances of tables rising from the floor to the height of three or four feet are so well attested that I hardly feel it necessary to refer to them. I have myself often witnessed this marvel under circumstances which put delusion or visual deception quite out of the question. Neither could it be any hallucination of the kind which made the sceptical gentleman against whom the table rushed call out to beg that it would stop.* And there was neither hand nor foot on that table, nor any professional medium in the room. The heaviest weight which I have ever seen rise by means of invisible agency, was a mahogany dining-table. It rose evenly a few inches from the floor, remaining raised while the friend who accompanied me placed his hand under one castor, and I had mine under that which stood diagonally opposite. Two other friends had their hands under the other castors, but it is evident that if my companion and I could be certain that the cross castors rested on our hands, the table, if level, must have been entirely off the ground, and the possibility of ocular delusion vanishes.

With respect to raps and movements, then, the ocular delusion or general delusion theory must be abandoned; so must the unconscious cerebration. As to the

* See p. 26.

Origin of Evil, who has been flattered by being supposed to be the chief actor in all the manifestations; of his and all other agencies I need only say, on the highest authority, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.'

But it is to the nature of the agency used, and then to the intelligent but unseen being directing it, that our next enquiry must be directed. In Chapter IV. several cases of mesmerism have been detailed. I have chosen these from among many others, not for their novel or striking character, but because they will furnish a key to the knowledge of the agency employed in producing the spirit manifestations.

The different forms of mediumship, as has been seen, are often accompanied or preceded by feelings such as are produced by mesmerism. Fanning, a warm or cool current of air, chilliness or drowsiness, with sometimes a tingling like that produced by the wires of a galvanic battery, and, during the raps, slight shocks like electricity passing through the arm of the medium, are among the commonest of the sensations. It is indisputable that the medium is under mesmeric influence, but *what is that* influence? and in these cases whence does it proceed?

The instances already given, and which might be supported by hundreds beside, prove that their source is not to be found in the medium or in any other member of the circle. The communications are coherent and intelligible; often, too, quite new to every person

present. It seems then not a hasty assumption that they are the work of an intelligent unseen being, acting by means of a force similar to mesmerism upon the system of the medium.

I may here allude, but very slightly, to the experiments of physiologists, showing the relation between the electric, magnetic, and nervous forces. All that I can venture to say is, that their effects prove them to be analogous but not identical in their nature. Electricity in the form of galvanism shares with the nervous forces the power of circulating along the nerves, and, like mesmerism,* contracting the muscles. A strong current of electricity also evolves magnetism. We know, too, how effects, very like those of electricity and magnetism, appear in mesmerism, and its other form electro-biology. The action of the positive and negative wires of a voltaic battery produces chemical composition and decomposition, and a stream from the fingers of a powerful magnetiser causes immediate and perceptible granulation in scalds and wounds. But, as far as I have seen, water is the only material element affected by the mesmeric force in such a way as to change (to susceptible persons) its taste and appearance, while, as is well known, the galvanic current can be made to act upon matter much more extensively.†

* See p. 43.

† I have heard of a trial made by a powerful mesmeriser, showing that paper prepared for photography is acted on by the emanation from

It may be a question whether all the 'imponderables,' as they have been called, are the effects of vibrating currents whose differences and resemblances depend on the number and direction of their undulations. As it is only the one which I believe to be the most intense and most refined with which I have to do, I do not pursue the comparison with related agencies. But I am not the first to believe in a connection between all the forces in creation (such a belief is involved in a perception of the harmony of nature), and the probability of our finding a scale advancing in purity and intensity as we trace them up from their action in forming the matter of the coarsest mineral, to their work in the most delicate forms of animal life.

There is no doubt, I believe, in the minds of physiologists that the nerve force, whatever may be its nature, is that which, passing along the nerves, conveys impressions from the organs of sense to the brain, and again, through another series of nerves, the dictates of the will from the brain to the muscles. That it also, possibly in a more refined form, permeates the brain,

the fingers in the same manner as by the rays of the sun. This experiment should be repeated. It might help us to find what are the properties in common between light and the nervous or mesmeric current, which also, as has been said, excites the sensation of light on the eye, in a state, the physical conditions of which are not yet known. And this knowledge may throw some light on the doubtful question of spirit-photography, a question into which I am not qualified to enter.

and is, so to speak, the circulating medium of *thought* and feeling, is unquestioned.

The nerves themselves, which, branching off in pairs from the brain and spinal marrow, form channels for the '*nerve force*,' or '*nerve fluid*,' consist each of a bundle of fibres encased in a sheath. Each fibre, when subjected to microscopic examination, is seen to be formed of a transparent enveloping membrane, enclosing the white medullary substance of the nerve which serves as the medium for the transmission of the force. Through the centre of this white substance runs a small flattened fibre; the whole forming a perfect apparatus—a telegraphic cable for the transmission of the refined electricity which conveys the messages between the spirit and body.

Sir Benjamin Brodie, in some wise and excellent strictures* on the mental and bodily ruin produced by the forcing education of this time, says: 'The nervous force is consumed equally in bodily and mental exertion, and if over much of it is expended in one way, there must be proportionally less in another.' A recent writer on psychology, J. D. Morel, has, with the later German physiological writers, very properly assigned its due importance to the nerve force in all enquiries relating to mind. Mr. Morel speaks of *three* forces, differing from each other according to their different

* *Psychological Enquiries.*

functions and operations. If, as well as *three* kinds, he had said three hundred thousand *degrees* of force, the writer might have been nearer the truth, though still far away from perfect accuracy. But we can form a very imperfect conjecture as to the limits of these degrees; for when, leaving the observation of that which we are used to call wholly material, because perceptible to our outward senses, we approach the more delicate parts of our organisms, whose existence can only be known by their results, the study becomes more difficult and complicated. This difficulty arises, in a great measure, from the fact that few persons besides those in a seemingly abnormal state, magnetic or somnambule, can make observations on the forces in question. These persons, too, differ in their powers of perception, so that emanations quite unseen by one are very visible to another, and perhaps vary so much in the appearance they present to a third and still deeper seer, that his accounts of what he sees are supposed to contradict the statements of the two first. In confirmation of this I have only to refer to the notes made by Reichenbach of the visions of his 'sensitives,' and to my own experiments with mesmerised water. These differences in vision, however, point to the boundary lines of the different degrees both of internal perception and refinement of nervous influence. The *finer* the degree of nervous circulating medium in action, the deeper will be the internal opening, and vice versâ.

In leaving the outer senses of sight, hearing, &c., with their appropriate nerve force, we come to the first degree of internal sight and hearing, with their appropriate magnetic agency. And as I suppose the distinction between electricity and the nervous force to be, that the first exists in that degree of refinement calculated to act on inanimate matter, and the last in that higher form by which the functions of animal life are carried on, so, when leaving the outer senses, we come again into the region of internal sense, we find the far more refined emanations only perceptible to those whose state corresponds with their nature and use.

Whatever may be the essential nature of this vital influence, it can hardly be doubted that it is in operation in different degrees of refinement and intensity in every human being. Neither will it be questioned, certainly not by those who have seen much of mesmerism, that an influence passing from the mesmeriser to the patient, and akin to the nerve force, is the active medium of mesmeric operations.

This force or fluid, then, or one whose effects on the system are precisely similar, but perhaps more refined, is that by which all the operations of mediumship are carried on, and *the source from whence it immediately flows is an unseen and intelligent being, asserting itself to be a spirit, which has quitted the material earthly form.*

The names of Swedenborg and Jung Stilling will

have little authority for persons who have hitherto been accustomed to consider the 'Mystics' as dreaming speculators, having no foundation but fancy for their theories, and no proof to offer of the truth of their assertions. When we know practically, however, the results of mesmerism and the sensation always described by persons under its influence, we can better form a judgment on what is said by the professed believers in spiritual influence, whose teachings were given before the modern manifestations were thought of. Long after I had heard of and felt the sensation of fanning, a cool breeze, a cold chill draught, or an electric current, of which mention is made as among the commonest experiences of mediums, I read the following in Swedenborg's Spiritual Diary. The italics are not Swedenborg's:—

'A spirit is compared to the wind (John iii. 8); hence it is that spirits have come to me both now, and very frequently before, *with wind, which I felt in the face*; yea, it also moved the flame of the candle, and likewise papers; the wind was cold, and indeed most frequently when I raised my right arm, which I wondered at, the cause of which I do not yet know.'

On one occasion, when in the company of two or three mediums I paid a visit to a house believed to be haunted, a most perceptible wind arose in the basement rooms, accompanied by a kind of vapour or steam.

This took place when the house was quite empty, and all the windows and doors were shut. Jane, the medium, often felt such a chill breeze in the circle, and has always declared her conviction that it emanated from a bad influence.

From Mr. Howitt's 'History of the Supernatural' I extract the following, which occurs in the chapter on Jung Stilling:—

‘At Marburg one of the students who attended Stilling's class, and whom he continued to know in after-life as a most excellent man, brought him a printed account of a strange occurrence which happened to his father when a young man, and to his grandfather. The latter had written down the whole narration, and printed it for circulation only amongst his friends. It is very large, being given in complete detail, with the conversation betwixt the grandfather and the spirit. The spirit described himself to have been one of their ancestors one hundred and twenty years before, and identified himself by their genealogical table. He appeared sometimes three or four times a day as a little man, dressed in a blue coat and brown waistcoat, with a whip hanging at his girdle, and knocked audibly at the door before entering. He was extremely importunate that the son should go to a certain tree in a certain meadow, under which, by digging, he would find a deposit of money. This money seemed to have chained him to the spot all these years, during which

he had not found a medium in the family to whom he could make himself apparent. But he appeared also to have a deed of blood on his soul, for he "took down the son's Bible from a shelf, to which was attached a small hymn book, and pointed out with his finger the hymn beginning 'Have mercy, gracious God,' and the third verse of which had the words '*From guilt of blood deliver me,*'" &c. The spirit continued its importunities from January 1 to April 30, 1755.

'Neither father nor son would listen to him, considering him as a tempter; but this the spirit denied, and to convince them, joined with them in singing hymns, calling on the name of Jesus, and declared that he was always glad to hear the Word of God. He joined them in the reading of the Scriptures, and, on coming to the words in the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, "We are saved by hope," &c., he clapped his hands, and exclaimed, "O yes, yes, saved by hope!" He declared that he was going through a course of purification sent from God.

'Yet there were circumstances which made the father and son believe that he was far from this purification, for fire streamed from every finger when he became angry at their resistance to his wishes. Still more, when he touched the Bible it smoked, and the marks of his thumb and finger shrivelled up the leather of the binding where he held it, and also the paper where he pointed out the place in the hymn,

"From guilt of blood deliver me," was black and singed. The Bible with these marks is "preserved in the family, and many creditable persons have seen it, and may still see it." Still further, on one occasion wishing the son to shake hands with him, he recommended him first to lay his handkerchief over his hand. This was done, and the handkerchief was found with the five fingers of a hand burnt in, so that the first and middle fingers were, in part, burnt entirely through, but the thumb and two other fingers were burnt black and singed. This handkerchief was sent round amongst friends and acquaintances, who assured Stilling of the truth of the whole, and then these singular relics were laid up for the inspection of all respectable visitors, and for posterity. The whole account was signed and attested by father and son, the clerk of the peace, the Imperial Commissioner of Liquidation, and the school-master of the place, on May 16, 1755.

'The fiery touch of the spirit which induced the father and son to believe it a bad one, modern spiritualists can testify to belong to many spirits. How often have we seen fire streaming even from the finger of a medium? How often have spirits, before shaking hands with you, desired you, at Mr. Home's, to lay your handkerchief over your hand first? How often have you felt the touch of spirit fingers prick as from the sparks of electricity?

'And Stilling,' Mr. Howitt continues, 'soon came to

understand this. He says,* “*Light, electricity, magnetism, galvanic matter, and ether, appear to be all one and the same body under different modifications. This light or ether is the element which connects soul and body, and the spiritual and material world together.*”

‘ In these words Stilling, above half a century before Reichenbach’s experiments on the Odyle force, announced that force as a modification of electricity, magnetism, &c.; which Reichenbach confirms. The spirit eventually, notwithstanding its fire, was accompanied by another radiant little spirit, and finally appeared white and radiant itself, full of joy, announcing its deliverance from the probationary state; knelt with the son, and uttered a beautiful prayer and thanksgiving to God, which Stilling gives; and then took his leave, saying they would see him no more, which proved true.

‘ As regards the touch of spirits, it yet appears true, that according to the state, the sensation they occasion is more or less agreeable. Stilling says:—“*When a departed spirit is tranquil in its mind, its touch is felt to be like the softness of a cool air, exactly as when the electric fluid is poured upon any part of the body.*” And how fully can this be confirmed by spiritualists. How frequently is the approach of spirits at

* The italics are mine.

séances perceived by the cool atmosphere which precedes them.'*

As far as I have had experience in this matter of touch and atmosphere, it has seemed to me that the temperature depended chiefly on the nearness of the spirit to earth, and this nearness might arise either from recent departure or from earth-clinging tendency. The lady who saw the vision of the church spoke of the exceeding pleasantness, 'delightful sensation,' of the fanning. When I was once at one of Mr. Home's circles, my hand, lying quietly on my knee, was touched and held for a moment by something which I tried to hold, but which vanished from my grasp. The feeling of this touch was warm, soft, and delightful. There was more of meaning and reality in it—it was more like the loving pressure of a hand in a higher sort of life, more vital than this, than I can describe; and I believed I recognised the spirit whose hand it was. In the account given by 'Verax' of a séance with Mr. Home, the same sensation is described.

I once mesmerised a little child for weakness of sight. During the process he became in some degree clairvoyant, but never quite forgot what had passed during the mesmerism. He sometimes asserted the presence of a lady dressed in white, who, he said, could tell him little things in answer to questions. One day

* Howitt's *History of the Supernatural*, vol. i. pp. 34-37.

when some reference had been made to the presence of the lady, I was called away from my patient, who, however, called me quickly back, saying that he did not want the lady to touch him. I hurried to him again, and was told that the lady had taken hold of his hand, but quitted it on my return. I of course believed that the white lady was a result of imagination, or of some cerebral delusion, and was rather surprised when he said, 'I showed you where she touched my hand; it does hurt me so.' I looked at the spot he pointed out at first, and there saw a little round mark presenting the appearance of having been touched with a hot iron. This must have been freshly made, from its appearance and the pain it gave, yet there had been neither burn nor hurt of any kind since the mesmerising began.

It will be remembered that the mesmerised girl whose clairvoyance was so remarkable saw my hands 'as if they were on fire,' when they were rubbed together. The coincidence of all these testimonies cannot be overlooked.

So we come back to the explanation given at the outset by the writing, '*It is electricity that moves the arm, but there is a spirit that guides the electricity.*' And again, as to the *modes* of manifestation. For vision —

'The spirit mesmerises the eye, then whatever image is in the mind of the spirit is seen by the medium.'

As we go on, we shall find that an image in the mind of a spirit constitutes the state or surroundings of that spirit; consequently, whatever is in the mind of the mesmerising power becomes objective when the mesmerised or the medium is, so far, let into a spiritual state. Whether the external eye of the medium is by the process brought into uniformity of action with the internal perception, I do not pretend to say; all that is asserted is, that *vision* arising from the opening of the inner sense is produced by the direction of a mesmeric force through the eye by an invisible agent.

When the force is directed through the brain to the muscles of the arm, the medium is made to write or draw according to the feeling or thought of the spirit. Here the very important law of symbolism or correspondence plays an important part in giving form to the writings and representations. But as it is not the place to enter on this at present, the accounts already given of writing and drawing, with their moving cause, have been short and elementary. They are to be spoken of more fully when all their conditions can be considered.

The raps and movements seem to be produced by a stream of mesmeric force directed through the brain and given off through the muscles of the medium. It seems that great power and great control are required to produce sounds which are of rarer occurrence than the other so-called physical manifestations, requiring as

they do a sudden influx and interruption of the current at the precise moment when the letter is repeated.

The phenomena of crystal-seeing has always appeared so weird and mysterious that among educated persons its possibility has been utterly denied; while among untaught believers it is looked upon as magical. Crystal vision is a well-attested fact, having its laws and conditions like other phenomena in this world of known and hidden causes, and a little careful observation may clear away some of that obscurity which has kept it as the property of witches and sorcerers.

The crystal, which is a clear spherical or egg-shaped piece of glass or rock crystal, seems to produce on the eye of the seer an effect exactly like what would ensue under the fingers of a powerful mesmeriser. The person who looks at it often becomes sleepy. Sometimes the eyes close. At other times tears flow. These effects are like those produced by the fingers of a mesmeriser. Then a cloudiness or mist comes over the sight; and lastly, where before, the glass with its reflection of surrounding objects had been clearly seen, a perfect black, opaque sphere appears to the gazer. This is a sign that the outer eye is acted on in such a way as to allow of other impressions than those from without to be presented to the seer's view. I dare not say to the *sensorium* of the seer, for that word is commonly used for the centre of all impression from the natural world. Although spiritual sight is now induced,

material vision is not necessarily interrupted. I have known cases in which the seer has looked off, talked about subjects in the room, even left the room for a time, and then returning to the crystal, has exclaimed, 'Here it is, all just as I left it.' The only difference noticed has been some change in the position or appearance of 'the people in the crystal.'

As an explanation of crystal-seeing, a spiritual drawing was once made representing a spirit directing on the crystal a stream of influence, the rays of which seemed to be refracted, and then to converge again on the side of the glass sphere before they met the eye of the seer. An enquirer, better acquainted than myself with polarisation, refraction, &c., of light, would perhaps have been able to trace the analogy between the laws of external or natural, and those of internal or spiritual vision.

The material brain of the medium seems to be the apparatus used for the transmission of thought. It has been said that the kind of sentiment and phraseology are always modified by the mental and moral peculiarities of the medium. This naturally gives rise, in the first instance, to mistrust in the persons present. And when we have such sentences spelt out as '*We have such beautiful flowers here,*' we cannot wonder that new enquirers form a very low idea either of the honesty of the medium or the orthography of the spirits. All kinds of explanations of this have been attempted by persons who

thought that the communications thus strangely spelt or expressed approved themselves in other respects as from their departed friends. It has been supposed they adopted a kind of phonetic writing, and even carried their old habits of contracting their words into the next state. I do not deny that this last may be the case sometimes, or rather that when spirits are able they may repeat their old customs in order to be recognised ; but I believe that the sentences, whether written, rapped, heard, or spoken, are always such as could find expression in the mind of the medium or mediums, and are invariably transmitted in language with which those minds are familiar. It will, however, be modified by the kind of influence or the character of the impressing spirit. Although many cases are on record of the speaking of languages unknown to the medium, I do not find any reason to alter my conclusion. In every instance of which I have heard, the person to whom the foreign language has been addressed, and who is of course present, has had, perhaps unconsciously, strong medium power. Even in the direct writing, where the work seems to be done by the spirit quite independent of the medium, we shall find the interference of his brain, or perhaps of the atmosphere emanating from it, proved by the spelling and expression. For instance, had Baron Guldenstübbe been unacquainted with Greek or German, the direct writings obtained in his presence could not have been in those languages.

From this last circumstance and many experiences I was led to perceive that a certain resemblance of character between the spirit and the medium must form a necessary condition of any kind of spirit message. This is illustrated in the case of the two young ladies called in the foregoing pages Charlotte and Amelia.* Another may be found in that of a lady of my acquaintance who has had her hand impelled to write. The medium's characteristics are intellectual power, benevolence, and truthfulness, with a quick sense of humour. In all these qualities but the last mentioned the spirit who gives his name was deficient, and the result is such as the very narrow channel allowed by the affinity of the two minds affords. A series of very meagre attempts at humour are made, promises to 'make merry' which are fulfilled by drawing such objects as children would hardly laugh at, and assertions which are afterwards contradicted, being the production of the spirit by the hand of this medium, who naturally wonders at the appearance of writing and drawing so little in harmony with her own cultivated taste. It is possible, however, that other causes may determine the direction of this her first stage of mediumship, for all who have been practised declare that the acquisition of the power is a gradual and well-marked process, beginning with what may be called low and external

* See page 40.

communications, and proceeding step by step, until the highest inspirations with which the brain can be impressed are transmitted and received.

As to the varying powers of transmission by different brains. Phrenology, though not an admitted fact in all its details, is generally received in its principles by mental philosophers. By this I mean that the dependence of character generally on the form and size of the brain, and its modification according to temperament, are admitted by those who deny the classing and division of organs made by Gall. It is enough for my purpose now, that the principle is admitted to the extent of taking for granted, as by Alexander Bain in his late work on phrenology, that the form and size of the brain are indications of the mental and moral character. This is almost implied in the very objection raised. Mr. Bain says of the classification of functions, 'the whole system wants revision,' appearing to forget that the 'system' is the result of observations on heads and the corresponding developements in character, and not an arbitrary arrangement of qualities made without any reference at all to the brain or its external measurements. Those who criticise the arrangement of phrenology, while they accept it in its general principles, will do well to remember that before the form of brain was observed in connection with diversity of character, the study of mental science was carried on in

the same way as navigation would be in a ship without charts, compass, or rudder.

Some very good phrenologists believe, and most consistently, that not only every convolution, but every fibre of the brain has its own especial function, each one forming a telegraphic wire for the conveyance of impression, and each kind of impression differing in the least possible degree from that transmitted by the fibre nearest. Thus every convolution or group of fibres in the brain will form a whole, of which the portions farthest from the centre have a function which approximates to that of the outer fibres of the neighbouring group. And this interblending, this shading together among the 'organs,' is in wonderful harmony with our observations on mind, and affords a beautiful explanation of the shades and diversities of character. And the brain itself has been supposed to consist of many different degrees, each corresponding to the nerve fluid, or life force, circulating in it. This thought was first given to me by a friend, to whom many mental communications are made by the 'inner voice' and by 'impression.' She had been told by a very acute phrenologist, whose judgments of character have been wonderfully true, that she was fond of guessing riddles. This lady is not accomplished in riddles, and cares little for them, but she is a highly developed spiritualist, having internal perceptions of correspondence and symbolism in many degrees. Hence she judged, and was con-

firmed in the thought by the spiritual influences around her, that that portion of her brain whose function might have enabled her to guess riddles, had a higher internal developement, and in its more spiritual action had given her a mental faculty like that of the Sphinx of Egypt, the *expounder of riddles*.

I am quite aware of the very great imperfection of the thoughts now offered for consideration on this very wonderful and complicated subject. I have tried not to assume as established truth more than is generally known; the rest is matter of suggestion, and to that portion much of what follows must be allotted. I suppose that impressions from external objects pass from the organs of sense through the nerves of sight, hearing, &c., to the brain, where they are then received among the sets of fibres or convolutions adapted to receive these impressions—as *by* the optic nerves of sense come the perceptions of form, size, colours, &c.; and again from these, the series adapted to convey the still more complex perceptions which form data for comparing and reflecting, and so on; while *from* the brain, another series of nerves conveys the dictates of the will to the muscles of the body. This rough statement may show what is meant by the following analogy between one of the best attested facts in mesmerism and the transmission of thought through mediums, as seen in the spiritual phenomena.

In that very curious mesmeric state called ‘commu-

nity of sensations,' we find that impressions are transmitted *from* the brain and nervous system of the mesmeriser to that of the mesmerised, and this when the senses of the patient seem to be closed to all external objects. And a current of power or influence is established by some mysterious union between the two systems, so that it appears, and probably is the fact, that one nervous force acts equally through both.

If I am right in extending the functions of reception and transmission even into the fibres of the brain itself, and supposing that each fibre is a channel for the conveyance of a specific feeling or mental impression, it will be easy to see that in order for one brain to obtain mesmeric control over another, the two brains must contain many fibres having similar functions, or, in other words, that the two characters must be alike in many points. The various degrees of power possessed by mesmerisers over different patients may be partly accounted for in this way, and may also depend on some unknown conditions in the temperaments of each by which the quality of the nerve force is affected.

In the spiritual manifestations it is asserted by the unseen power that the effects are produced by spirits taking the place of an earthly mesmeriser. And the conditions already laid down being kept in mind, we see how the communications made through any medium will be modified by his character; for a spirit wishing only to convey mischievous or destructive ideas

cannot find means to transmit them through a brain whose fibres are found only to receive the highest feelings, while a brain in which only the lowest elements predominate cannot furnish a channel for the beneficent influence of a good spirit.

In this part of the enquiry, though the *interior* action of the brain has been hinted at, I have not spoken of the action *on the soul*; because that portion of our being has yet to be considered.

But how do spirits become mesmerisers? This, the most puzzling portion of a difficult question, can only be answered, as other portions have been, hypothetically, but for the conjecture I am about to offer there is a strong though indirect evidence arising partly from observation, partly from the coherence of the statements made by the unseen powers, and partly from the beliefs and legends of all times, and, to crown all, that which all Christians venerate as revelation.

These presumptive arguments may receive confirmation from the accumulating mass of testimony now coming from all quarters, and the coherence of the whole may recommend it to the notice of those who would not think any separate portion of the subject worthy of attention if taken apart from the rest.

The nerve force, with all its related invisible and more refined agencies, constitutes the life of the body, inasmuch as it forms the instrument without which sensation, thought, and motion could not go on. Closely

connected, if not one form of this, is the agency employed in mesmerism. According to the common definition, the life force, even in its least refined degree, is immaterial, because imperceptible to the senses in their usual state. When the life of the body ceases, all we know is that the material, which is in fact a residuum or deposit, whose formation has been the work of the spirit, decays and returns to its original elements, like the withered husk when its contained fruit is ripe. But this immaterial vital portion of our frame is no less a reality than its outer covering, and, unlike it, has never been seen to fall to dust.

What, then, becomes of that which permeates and animates the body? Let us not seek the living among the dead. In the next chapter I will bring together some experiences which may help us to follow the released spirit, and, by connecting the visions of clear-seers with some of the reasonings of physiologists, to find whether the spiritual body possesses powers of the same kind, though intensified and exalted in degree, as those which it wielded when in its now forsaken shell.

CHAPTER IX.

PROCESS OF DEATH AND FORMATION OF THE SPIRITUAL
BODY.

‘**H**OW are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?’

Analogy, though a bad master, is often a very good assistant in difficult enquiries. I intend to call in its aid as a pioneer to reasoning in this untrodden ground, to strengthen a theory which has more than mere conjecture in its favour. Following the analogy afforded by all the successive formations of nature, we find simple elements reproduced in a more refined complicated form in the grade of being next above that in which they first appear. Thus, the vegetable has in itself the same elements as the mineral combined under the new conditions necessary to organic life. The simplest animal has the elements of organic life in a higher degree and in the conditions necessary to the developement of its organisation; the next above has again the elements of the first under new and more refined relations. The higher the animal, the more

complicated and refined is the combination. And at the top of the scale we find Man, who, in the most perfect organisation apparent to our bodily senses, combines with all the elements of organic also the highest animal life, and, as might be expected, a *something*, possibly the result in some part of the more refined combination, superadded.

This is well said by the physiologist Bichat:—

‘La vie, examinée plus en détail, nous offre deux modifications remarquables. L’une est commune au végétal et à l’animal; l’autre est le partage spécial de ce dernier. Jetez, en effet, les yeux sur deux individus dans chacun de ces règnes vivans, vous verrez l’un n’exister qu’au dedans de lui, n’avoir avec ce qui l’environne des rapports de nutrition, naître, croître et périr fixé au sol qui en reçut le germe; l’autre, allier à cette vie intérieure, dont il jouit à plus haut degré, une vie extérieure qui établit des relations nombreuses entre lui et les objets voisins, marie son existence à celles de tous les autres êtres, l’en éloigne ou l’en rapproche suivant ses craintes et ses besoins, et semble ainsi, en lui appropriant tout dans la nature, rapporter tout à son existence isolée.

‘On dirait que le végétal est l’ébauche, *le canevas* de l’animal, et que pour former ce dernier il n’a fallu que revêtir ce canevas d’un appareil d’organes extérieures propres à établir des relations.’

Reasoning thus from analogy, we may naturally

expect an uninterrupted rising scale in the order of creation. But that which is in the next degree above cannot be observed, as that below ourselves, by the means of our senses. We have to rise from things which are seen to those which are unseen; and in gaining a glimpse of the *something* beyond the apparent life of man in less well-explored pathways than those of natural science, we must avail ourselves of help from whatever source or direction it may come. As all that I have hitherto said, both in the way of fact and reasoning, has been first suggested by my own experience, gathered in different forms, it seems the most natural course, at this stage of the enquiry, to give, in the order in which I have received them, explanations and illustrations of the process of death and the formation of the spiritual body. As before, I only ask for belief in the narrators' honesty: whether any, and how much value will be attached to the facts narrated, will depend entirely on the mental state of the reader, and his ability to receive and appreciate evidence of the nature adduced.

When we found that so many unexpected explanations came by the hand of the young medium who drew the sketches of spiritual impression, I begged for as clear a description as could be given of the process of death. Having myself read some American accounts of visions, dreams, &c., referring to this subject, I had a rather vague notion of the spirit breaking away full

formed from its earthly covering, and floating at once on high in a body prepared to enter into the happy spheres.* Reports of visions which had reached me confirmed this belief. I was, therefore, pleased and surprised when, by the drawing, a wonderful and systematic process, coherent in all its parts, and making no extravagant demand on our powers of belief, was unfolded. The person by whom the drawing was made was too young to have thought on the subject, and his hand moved without, as in some cases, being touched by that of another person.

The pencil traced a recumbent figure, evidently meant to represent a dying person. From many points of this figure, the hand of the medium formed long lines which met in a point placed carefully at a short distance above the figure. As the lines were multiplied, the point was also increased in size till it became a small globe or circle, and from that circle other lines were drawn out to represent the body and limbs of another and smaller figure. The larger figure below, and the smaller one above, were then numbered, and notes, to correspond with the numbers, written below. From this diagram it appeared that the process of death, and the entrance into another state, is as natural (in the sense of orderly) an event as the birth of a child.† No more real mystery, nothing more super-

* I had not at that time read Swedenborg's description of death.

† The unborn child lives only an *organic* life. The processes of *animal*

natural (in the sense of miraculous), accompanies a departure from, than an entrance into, this world ; for that which passes the ken of mortal eyes is not necessarily outside the order of creation.

The lines drawn from the recumbent figure, and meeting above, represent the 'spiritual fluid.' This will be recognised as that invisible element of the body which, drawing nourishment from its surroundings, is the essential agent of vital force, of will—power, and even of thought and feeling. That it quits the body at death is certain, for it is not, like the material part, left to decay. It becomes a question whether, having been only elaborated in the animal frame, this, the most delicate and vital portion, ceases to exist when its source is destroyed ; or whether, having its source in a power above and beyond the body which it has animated and inhabited, it passes away, prepared by its sojourn here for another dwelling, when its earthly one is capable of containing it no longer. I have digressed in order to identify the 'spiritual fluid' of the invisible writer with a part or the whole of the magnetic or vital forces spoken of before. It will afterwards be seen that these vital forces are what constitute *the soul*, in its most material and most refined elements.

The 'spiritual fluid,' then, was represented as coming from every portion of the frame, its streams meeting

life come into action when it enters this world. See Bichat, *Sur la Vie et la Mort*.

near the heart—I think at the great solar plexus—and, having passed away through the brain, uniting again above the body, there to form the new body which is destined to be the future dwelling of the spirit. These streams appeared by the drawing to carry from the material body each its own type of life, by which I mean that each minute current is adapted to fill one place and form one specific portion only, in the new combination. Thus the spiritual fluid, leaving the hand of the material body, will enter the nucleus of the spiritual organism, to be again projected, and to form the hand of the risen being. As the butterfly's folded wing can be traced under the shell of the chrysalis, and may even, in its rudimentary state, be seen in the caterpillar before its first change, so every portion of the resurrection body is contained and wrapped up during life in the material form. This is the teaching given by our invisible companions, by means of the involuntary writing. The clearest explanation came by the hand of a young person who had no preconceived ideas on the subject; but similar descriptions have been given by many seers and mediums, each one ignorant of what has been said by others. I speak now of modern days, the days of spirit mediumship; but let anyone look through the* records of old times, the teaching of

* For most copious details on the spiritualism of early times, see W. Howitt's 'History of the Supernatural,' &c., just published; a work so full of information in every branch of Spirit History, that, had not

ancient uninspired philosophers, and the mythologies of early religion, and he will find that what is brought forward with the expectation of ridicule in these Christian days, and this vaunted 'nineteenth century,' has been a universal belief, held with *more* or less of modification, according to the seer's mind, and waiting for the fulness of time for its clearer revelation, yet as the truth that the future state is a continuation of the earth life, and the heavenly body an outbirth from the material form.

Having given the spirit's account of the passing over the boundary, I will bring together a few records of appearances, drawn from the statements made by persons who profess to have a more than ordinary faculty of vision. At the risk of censure for repeating what has appeared elsewhere, I first give every trustworthy account which has come to my own knowledge.

First, appearances to those present at the time of death. Many years ago, Mrs. D——, a person in humble life, but of tried and proved truthfulness, and rather matter of fact in her mental habits, said to me,

this little book been completed before it came into the hands of the present writer, the appearance of a smaller work on the subject would have seemed superfluous. A few questions, however, are touched in this volume which have not come within the scope of Mr. Howitt's book; but it is quite impossible to avoid repeating a very few of his amply detailed statements in illustration and proof of the spirit's assertions.

in a conversation about ghosts and ghost-seeing, 'I never saw a ghost, but I have seen a spirit rise.'

'If you will tell me exactly what you saw,' I said, 'I will write it as you speak, and will beg you to sign your name.'

This she did, and the present account is copied from her own words as I wrote them, and she put her signature:—

'When I was sixteen years old, I was nursing a child of seven who had been ill since his birth with disease of the head. He had been for some days expected to die, but was quite sensible. About noon I left him in a little back parlour on the ground floor. His mother and a friend were with him. I was returning from the kitchen to the child, and had just reached the top of the staircase, when I saw, coming from the door of the room, the form of a little child. It did not step on the ground, but immediately went up over the staircase and disappeared from me. The bed on which the sick child had been lying was close to the door of the room, and that door was not more than about a foot from the top of the staircase which I came up. As I entered the room, his mother said, "He is just gone." The figure that I saw was a little child, fair and fresh-looking, and perfectly healthy. It looked fatter and younger than the little sick boy, and had a very animated, happy expression. It was like a living child, only so light.'

Compare the above account of a vision by a girl of

sixteen with the following narration of an imperfect perception of the same kind, which occurred, later in life, to the same person.

‘More than twenty years after that, I was sitting up with the mother of a child who had been ill three or four days with fits. It was more than two years old. The mother had one arm under the child’s head. I was on the other side of the bed, lying by the baby, and the fire was burning brightly on the same side of the room as that on which the mother sat. Suddenly I saw the fire darkened by something that seemed to flutter or move backwards and forwards before it. I noticed this to the mother, who was between the bed and the fire; but she did not see it, and declared that the fire was bright. The fits left the child about six o’clock, and it lay perfectly still till it had ceased to breathe about half-past ten. I saw the darkening of the fire for an hour before the child died, and the instant it expired the fire was distinctly visible. J. D.’

The seer of the above was an uneducated woman who could not account for the variation in her two visions, and who had certainly never heard of the different degrees of opening of the spirit sight. To me, therefore, the account of the second vision confirmed the truth of the first. Had she invented both stories, she would most likely have made the second instance appear the most striking and wonderful. But she was not given to invention.

I was myself once standing with a person who had sometimes the gift of spiritual vision, beside a bed on which lay one whose life was departing. The breathing was ceasing slowly when I noticed a thin white mist which seemed to rise two or three inches above the bed. My companion appeared also to be looking at something. Her eyes, which always had a strange glitter when they encountered any object unseen by others, were raised gradually from the recumbent form to the top of the bed; then, returning, seemed to rest half-way between, gazing, as far as I could see, on vacancy. This earnest gaze lasted more than a minute. I looked at her enquiringly, but she did not speak. She told me a few minutes after what she had seen, thus: —

‘I was looking at a mist which seemed to be rising from the bed, and which I have noticed some time, when my attention was drawn upwards, and I saw a pillar of light, between sunshine and moonlight, rising three or four feet. Within this was a still brighter light, becoming more brilliant at the centre; and from the centre to the circumference, from within outwards, it was all working together with intense rapidity. I saw it once again, but slightly afterwards, just as the last breath was drawn. It seemed then to pass off by the top of the bed.’ The seer has been a trusted friend of my own for many years; her character for truthfulness is quite above suspicion.

On giving an account of this appearance to a friend, he told me that a similar statement had been made by a girl in whose character for truth he had entire confidence. The incident occurred in Eubœa, where my informant has an estate on which he has lived many years.

The young woman had nursed her mother, who was confined to her bed by long and wasting illness. The poor invalid died gradually; the feet first, then the legs, becoming numb and powerless. At length life seemed to be confined to the head and upper part of the body. One night, or rather towards morning, the poor girl awoke suddenly and saw a strong light rising to some height above the sick woman, from whom it seemed to emanate. It passed away in an upward direction, and disappeared. The girl in great terror called out to her mother, but received no answer. She then ran to a friend (a confidential servant of my informant), and told her what she had seen. Her friend returned to the cottage, where they found the mother quite dead.

The late Miss W——, well known at one time in the mesmerising world, told me that she once nursed an uncle through his last illness. As he died, a very small bright cloud, appearing to come from the nostrils, passed away, and rising while she watched it, disappeared by the ceiling. This is another instance of a difference in the *power* of vision.

My readers who are old enough to remember some of the early observations on magnetised girls, may recall the assertion made by one of the Okeys, who, being taken by her mesmeriser into one of the hospital wards, declared that she always saw a cloudy figure, to which she gave some slang name, rising from the beds of certain patients. It was asserted by her mesmeriser, that in all those cases where she had represented the form as *tall*, the patient died; but there was a chance of recovery for those from whom it only seemed to emanate to a lesser height. This statement is not held of great importance in the present enquiry, for the experiments seem not to have been made in a very careful manner, but they serve as corroboration of a fact otherwise well attested. The shorter figure was probably an efflux of the most external spiritual fluid of the sick person.

In like manner, Mr. A. J. Davis's account of his clairvoyant vision of a death may be referred to. Not having his 'Great Harmonia,' in which the narrative may be found, I cannot give an extract, and I only write from memory. The history is a very interesting one, and its close agreement in many points with the visions of other seers places it beyond the pale of fiction. The writer, who is said to be a genuine clairvoyant and medium, describes the gathering of the life-force or nerve-spirit from every part of the body in the head, whence it again reissues, forming a cloud of beautiful

mellow light above the figure. Within this atmosphere the new head, then the body and limbs of the spirit appear. Mr. Davis, like J. D——, dwells on the freshness and bloom of the newly-formed spiritual body. Until the completion of the form, a stream of electric light is seen passing from the head of the dying person to the beautiful figure above, and when the work is done, and the *life*, having quitted its old tabernacle, has found and animated its new house, this last link with earth is broken, and the freshly-formed being passes upwards to its new home. The cord of electric light carrying the nourishment from the old envelope to the new form, makes the analogy between the earthly and spiritual births complete. Two friends who have the gift of vision declare, that they know when a spirit appearing to them has not permanently entered its next state by the line of electric light which it seems to draw after it.

Accounts of the process of death have been given by various seers. These narrators, it must be remembered, are all quite independent of each other, and their descriptions were given, with one exception, long before *spiritualism*, in the modern sense, was known. I do not class the following with the foregoing visions, because the first statements were made by observers of the process itself, who described as much as was visible to them on different occasions of death. The more detailed accounts which follow come from persons who

profess to have gained a general insight by clairvoyance into the whole subject.

The following is from 'Guardian Spirits,' *A Case of Vision into the Spiritual World, from the German of H. Werner*, New York, 1847. The author, Werner, was pastor of Beckelsberg, Stulz, on the Rhine. The translator, A. E. Ford, appears, by his preface, to have been a Swedenborgian, but the absence of a definite Swedenborgian doctrine from the theology of the seeress is a guarantee for the translator's general fidelity. The revelations are in a series of dialogues between the author and his patient R.—.

'*Author.* You said that the magnetic sleep was similar to death. Explain this to me if you can.

'*R.* Yes, certainly; the magnetic state is similar to death. The way in which the soul leaves the body I cannot now explain to you; I can only give you an image of it as I feel it. It seems to me now as if in the waking state the body were the house of the soul, and it might look out now at this window, now at that. In the somnambulic state, however, the soul has gone out and shut the door of its dwelling. For this reason I now see you and myself as a third person does a group. I am at your left, and am looking at you and at my own body.

'*Author.* Will this be the case in dying?

'*R.* Yes; only with this difference — that return to the body is no longer possible. In dying, the spirit

leaves its residence exactly as in the magnetic sleep. But as it cannot be without the soul (because they are there united as body and soul), for this reason it cannot rise without it. The latter does not part with the body so easily as the spirit, which is divine in its quality; only with hard struggles does the soul leave the body, with which it has much affinity, and which it greatly loves. For this reason, it also for the most part takes with it its corporeal appendages, which often are not the best; because they have grown, as it were, into its very nature.

‘*Author.* What distinction is there between spirit and soul?

‘*R.* *The spirit is the life of the soul, the eternally divine, begotten from God.* The latter (the soul) belongs to its personal essence and completes its whole. In its essence it is a spirit body, and hence can put on altogether the nature of the spirit and supernaturalise itself; and on the other hand, can overcome the spirit, and more and more corporealise and debase itself. It is the countenance of the spirit, its characteristic form or clothing, as you will. Neither can subsist without the other; they are as closely united as soul and body; how, I cannot tell. These are connections that exceed the power of my eye.

‘*Author.* But perhaps you can tell me how both are united with the body?

‘*R.* Yes, I can. The soul is the internal sense of

the man, *by which the spirit expresses its essential activity*. The latter gives to the soul power for its vital expressions. But that these may be manifested, there is required still a third, which is superadded, and which, at the same time, moves and animates the body. This is an exceedingly fine substance, of which the soul itself seems almost entirely to consist, and with which it pervades the body in all its parts.

‘*Author*. Is this the so-called nerve-spirit?

‘*R*. You have the right idea. It is what gives to the body eternal life, nobility, and power, but the name does not please me.

‘*Author*. Do you know any which describes it better?

‘*R*. No, I know no word for it.

‘*Author*. What becomes of this nerve-spirit in death?

‘*R*. It is indeed taken out of the essence of the soul, but by its operations in the body has more of its nature than the soul; in itself considered, *it is always its instrument for operating in the external world*. And when the soul parts from the body, this fine substance accompanies it; for it is as well a part of the soul as of the body. Should it stay in the body, this would live on although the soul had left it. This is in some measure the case in my present state. . . . In death, the soul is the body of the spirit, and is destined, if the spirit is not to miss the high end of its creation, to be-

come one with it, to be spiritualised. This presents itself to me as another dying; the nerve-spirit is destined at last, as what is more gross and corporeal, to be entirely removed, and the soul to assume the nature of the eternal light of the spirit.

‘*Author.* To what purpose does the nerve-spirit serve after death?

‘*R.* It does not renounce its nature, although invisible to the bodily eye; it is very gross and corporeal in comparison with the essence which spirit and soul make together. The soul cannot free itself immediately after death; each, it may be said, takes something of lower desire with it into the other state, and this is what attracts and weighs the nerve-spirit downward to the earth. Souls quite earthly wrap themselves gladly in it, and *give thereby* the characteristic form to their spirit. By the aid of this substance, they can make themselves seen, heard, and felt by men. *They can excite sounds in the atmosphere of the earth.*’

I now extract from the ‘*Seeress of Prevorst*’:—

‘She, the seeress, was frequently in that state in which persons who have the faculty of ghost-seeing perceive their own spirit out of their body, which only enfolds it as a thin gauze. She often saw herself out of her body, and sometimes double. She said, “It often appears to me that I am out of my body, and then I hover over it, and think of it, but this is not a pleasant feeling, because I recognise my body; but if my soul

were bound more closely to my nerve-spirit, then would this be in closer union with my nerves, but the bonds of my nerve-spirit are daily becoming weaker."

* * * * *

'The seeress said that the separation of the spirit from soul and body in sleep-waking bore a great resemblance to death, but was not the same. When the spirit quits the body, in the last moments, it becomes weak and helpless; it cannot draw the soul after it, and can only wait. The dying person *is then unconscious of all that happens*; the future is hidden from him, and he can no longer express himself. When, previously to this moment, a dying person declares that he is now certain of the existence of a future state, &c., it is because the soul, being no longer under the direction of the brain, recovers its natural power of clear-seeing and hope of the future, which had been before obscured. When the spirit has quitted the body, the soul knows it can no longer stay, but struggles to be free. This is the moment of the death-agony, and at this moment, instead of the now powerless spirit, the spirits of the blest stand by to aid the soul; and the struggle is longer or shorter, in cases of natural death, in proportion to the ease or difficulty with which the soul can separate itself from earthly things.

'With respect to the nerve-spirit, or nervous principle of vitality, she said that through it the soul was united to the body, and the body with the world. . . .

‘The nerve-spirit is immortal, and accompanies the soul after death, unless when the soul is perfectly pure, and enters at once among the blessed.* By its means the soul constructs an airy form around the spirit. It is incapable of increase or growth after death, and by its means the spirits who are in *the mid region* are brought into connection with a material in the atmosphere which enables them to make themselves heard and felt by man, and also to suspend the property of gravity, and more heavy articles. When a person dies in a perfectly pure state, he does not take this nerve-spirit with him. Though indestructible, it remains with the body, and at the general resurrection is united to the soul, and constructs it an aerial form. Blessed spirits, to whom this nerve-spirit is no longer attached, cannot make themselves heard or felt; they appear no more. The purer the spirit is, the higher grade it holds in the mid region, or intermediate state, and the more entirely it is separated from the nerve-spirit.’

There is some discrepancy in the account of the final destination of the nerve-spirit. The seeress says that the purer it is, the more completely it is thrown off. It appears to be the connecting link between the electricity in the atmosphere and the soul. It is the magnetic fluid in its animal degree, which I have tried to indicate in the preceding pages as the vital

* 1 Cor. xv. 48.

instrument in our bodies, and the element which we have in common with those who have left the earth and are invested with a new form; but it seems questionable that this *most* earthly portion of the spiritual should ever be reunited with it again 'at the general resurrection,' after the pure spirit has disencumbered itself of its most earthward-tending vestment. That, in this particular, the mind of Friderica Hauffé was influenced by the opinions of Justinus Kerner, her physician, is quite possible; but it seems more likely, as all her teaching seems to have been new to him, that either he or the English translator (I have not the original to refer to) have mistaken the speaker's meaning.

Next to these German seeresses, and on account of their many points of resemblance, I will place a far older description—that of Socrates, or, more properly, of Plato in the words ascribed by him to Socrates. We cannot expect that these Greek sages and seers,* living 400 years before that full revelation of immortality which was made by the Saviour, should give as perfect a description as St. Paul of the entrance into the next state. Every seer clothes the truth he imparts in the thoughts familiar to his mind, and this description of Socrates is, as might be expected, full of the imagery drawn from the religion of his country;

* Socrates at least was spiritually gifted. Witness his demon, or guardian spirit, and his dreams.

but making all allowance for Greek mythology, we have a statement nearly resembling that of the seeresses quoted. The latter part, concerning the manner in which the good are received in the next state, is like some of the descriptions which follow this extract from the 'Phædo:'*—

'The soul, then, the part without form, immaterial,† is that which goes to inhabit another place, invisible like itself, noble and pure in nature; namely, to Hades, the true world of spirits, near the good and wise God. And there, if God wills, my soul must immediately go. For can the soul, being of a nature so infinitely superior—can it, when separated from the body, at once be dispersed into nothing, and utterly destroyed, as some people think? Far otherwise, O dear Cebes and Simmias! Much more must it follow that the part which has taken its departure in purity, not encumbered by any of the bad impure passions of human nature, because it had endeavoured through life to remain uninfluenced by them, and to fly from all that was bad—devoting itself to true philosophy, and aiming to die happily, for this is right and true philosophy, is it not?—how much more likely must it be

* I prefer Lady Chatterton's translation to Dr. Whewell's, because it is a trifle clearer, and is quite as faithful to the original. Either version would serve my purpose.

† Socrates seems to believe that what is generally invisible must be without form.

that the soul so prepared will depart to its kindred spirits—to the region of the Divine, the Immortal, the Wise, where it must attain true happiness and be freed from all errors and ignorance, and fears and wild desires, and all other human influences—and dwell henceforth with the gods, as those are taught to expect who are consecrated in the holy mysteries?’

To this Cebes assents.

‘ But I think that if the soul departs from the body polluted and impure, because it has always been influenced by the body, and has served it, and delighted in its evil passions, and allowed itself to be deceitfully charmed by its desires and pleasures, so that it believes in nothing that is not material and corporeal, and can put faith in nothing except what can be touched and seen, or drunk, or used for enjoyment, because it darkened its eyes, and deafened its ears, and hated and dreaded the invisible and intellectual objects which are the aim of philosophy — dost thou think that such can be pure in itself, or fitted for a region of purity?’

‘ Not in the least,’ said he. ‘ No, for it must be drawn away by the corporeal encumbrance * which this

* In the ‘Timæus’ of Plato the philosopher speaks of what he calls *ὄχημα*—the *vehicle* of the soul. The description of this, which constitutes the connecting link between soul and body, identifies it with the ‘nerve-spirit’ of the seers and the ‘spiritual fluid’ of my young medium.

habit of living in, and being influenced by, the body must create.'

'Certainly.'

'And in this case, the soul (which survives the body) must be wrapped up in a helpless and earthy covering, which makes it heavy and visible, and drags it down to the visible region, away from the invisible region of spirit world, Hades—which it fears. *And thus these wandering souls haunt, as we call it, the tombs and monuments of the dead, where such phantoms are sometimes seen. These are apparitions of souls which departed from the body in a state of impurity, and still partake of corruption and the visible world, and therefore are liable to be still seen. . . .* And these are not the souls of good men, but of bad, who are thus obliged to wander about suffering punishment for their former manner of life which was evil. And thus they wander, until, by the longing which clings to them for earthly things, they are again enclosed in a body, chained to one most probably with habits resembling those which they had acquired during their former lives. . . . Those who had indulged in gluttony and contemptuous pride, who had been brutalised by drunkenness, devoid of any feeling of shame or self-restraint, would naturally pass into such bodies as asses and other beasts. . . . And therefore it is probable also of the rest, that each will go into the state which most resembles the condition they had striven to attain

either by indulging in bad propensities or by omitting to cultivate the better instincts of their nature.'

We shall perhaps return to Socrates, in a comparison of ancient and modern speculations concerning the destination of souls.

Some particulars of a case of lucid vision induced by magnetism are given in a little work, 'Somnolism and Psycheism,' by J. Haddock, M.D., London, 1851.

'The patient, Emma, while in a state of ecstasy, made some revelations in which man is represented as a spiritual being, rising from what she calls "the shell" of the dead material body, immediately after death; or as soon as the connection between the soul and its material covering is completely severed, which, she says, does not occur sometimes until a day or two after what appears as death. The risen and emancipated spirit is a perfectly organised existence, preserving the human form, and having a complete sensational perception of his fellow-spiritual beings, and the beautiful scenery of the spiritual spheres, that is, provided he was, during life, in a moral state in harmony with those spheres. . . .

'It seems (said the clairvoyante) as if the idea of what you should say comes into the mind, and they (the angels) tell you what you want to know. When I got with the angels, I seemed like one who had gone a long journey and got home; but I could not tell how I went the journey. When I was seated near the fountain, I asked how people got there, meaning, how

they left the world by death. It was told me, they were not always dead when their friends thought so, for all the actions of the body stop by degrees.* It was sometimes two or three days after what is called death, but was not always alike; some were a longer, others a shorter time. During this time they were like a person asleep, and in a state between this world and the next. As soon as people rise into the spirit-world, angels talk to them, and tell them where they are, and try to lead them upwards.'

I once asked, by the hand of a boy, some questions relating to the same subject, of a spirit, or rather an unseen intelligence. The medium's style of speaking was very laconic, and accordingly the spirit information was given in few words.

Q. 'Is going into a trance the same process as dying?'

A. 'Not exactly.'

Q. 'How does it differ?'

A. 'The spirit returns.'

Q. 'Can you describe to me the sensation of dying. Do people suffer pain?'

A. 'Sometimes they do.'

Q. 'Had you any pain in dying?'

A. 'None.'

Q. 'Do you remember the last time you spoke?'

* See Bichât, *Sur la Vie et la Mort*.

A. 'Yes.'

Q. 'What did you feel after that?'

A. 'As if I was going to sleep.'

Q. 'What was the next sensation?'

A. 'As if I was shut up in my body.'

Q. 'What was the next thing?'

A. 'I came out.'

Q. 'And then?'

A.

'Collect
together.'

The line was drawn round the words as if to illustrate the collecting or embodiment. About the same time a very young child wrote, '*It is not death, only the spirit breaking loose.*'

By the hand of another child was written, purporting to be from a spirit—

'We are never tired, because we have in us the strength that comes from the body when we leave it. When we were on earth, the strength of our spirits was locked up; but now we have the everlasting* and beautiful strength of the spirit, and the strength we take from the body, which mingles with the spirit strength.'

(It was here observed that at death the body decays.)

* Imperishable.

‘I know, but when we go, the strength that was in our body goes with us.’

The idea of the ‘sleep,’ and the state between this world and the next, was conveyed, in the drawing of the process of death, by the spirit’s passing through a state represented by a plain. It must *cross a river* before it gets into a state in which it can recognise friends.

‘The Birth into Spirit Life,’ is the title of one of the most interesting articles in the ‘Spiritual Magazine.’ The writing is anonymous, but the name of the medium is known to me, and is a sufficient guarantee for its genuineness.

‘I lived alone on the earth at the time of my departure from it, and was attended by two faithful servants. I had left them suddenly, and they had stretched my body on the couch where in my last illness I had been carefully attended by their hands. I closed my eyes on nature and opened them on spirit life. I saw my two attendants busy with a corpse and also occupied in ministering to my spirit form that stood upright before them. They were anxious to perform aright the new and mournful duties that now devolved upon them in the natural sphere, and that desire caused them to fulfil the use that now pertained to them,* that of tending an immortal spirit, on his

* This seems probable, as the liberated spirit would be able to see the spirits of his attendants, and, as will be explained in the chapter

first entrance upon that life which is but one step removed above nature.

‘ I have just said that I did not know I had left the world, and yet I beheld my corpse stretched on the bed I had lain and suffered on. I have not made that statement without a purpose, being desirous to show that the one condition is not incompatible with the other. It is so to the spirit *in* the flesh, but not to the spirit *out* of it, for both the one and the other are in a perfectly normal condition for the time being, and therefore that which would be abnormal to the one is perfectly normal to the other, and a normal or usual state of mind will not surprise or cause extraordinary emotion to the person experiencing it. Thus it would cause a spirit very great astonishment, should he be suddenly brought back into nature; he would not comprehend many things that he saw, and he would wonder why he did not behold those objects that are purely spiritual which he had been accustomed to in the world of spirit. He would find himself in a totally abnormal condition. And so if a person in the flesh be elevated into the spiritual regions, he is much astonished at the objects he there beholds; he also is in an abnormal, or extraordinary state of mental perception. But, when a spirit has left the natural frame, then is spirit life with

on Correspondence, their wish to do all they could for him would place their spirits in the attitude of doing kind offices for his spiritual form.

all its concomitants a perfectly homogeneous existence, and he is not aware that he has ever dwelt in any other sphere. So when I beheld my natural frame delicately tended, I found that I myself—my spirit—was provided for as to all my requirements, and by the same persons with whom I had been accustomed to associate during my life in the world. And it being according to divine appointment that both good offices should be simultaneously performed, all appeared to my new-born spirit perceptions to be perfectly harmonious and congenial. . . . Spirit life dawns upon the senses of mankind, not with surprise, nor necessarily with pleasure to the good, nor pain to the unheavenly, but it does so to every grade of human beings with a perfectly normal perception of all its realities and in all its varieties of aspect; for it is the life we have all along been recipient of, and it is just as natural for us to become suddenly conscious of it as it is for the infant to be ushered into the material world without consciously experiencing any unusual degree of excitement from the occurrence. The outward consciousness of both the one and the other is gradually developed, the experience of each individual varying, *just as at the birth of the soul into its first garb or covering.*

The next experience is slightly different.

THE PROCESS OF DEATH.

‘The first lesson, I think, every spirit learns, is one in reference to death. The general impression is, that persons suffer intensely in their last moments, and we hear much of “the agonies of death.” These however are generally imaginary, and in most cases there is little or no consciousness of suffering; even when there is a struggle, it is only an effort, painless in its character, of the spirit to burst the bonds that have bound it to the physical body: this struggle may create contortions of the body, but in most cases all consciousness of pain has passed away. This was my own experience, and I have been told by many others that it was theirs. I experienced but very little suffering during the last few days of my life, though at first there were struggles, and my features were distorted; but I learned, after my spirit had burst its barriers and was freed from its connection with the external body, that these were produced by it in its attempt to sever this connection, which in all cases is more or less difficult; the vital points of contact being suddenly broken by disease, the union in other portions of the system is necessarily severed with violence, but, as far as I have learned, without consciousness of pain. Like many others, I found that I was unable to leave the form at once. I could feel myself gradually

raised from my body, and in a dreamy, half-conscious state. It seemed as though I was not a united being—that I was separated into parts, and yet despite of this there seemed to be an indissoluble connecting link. My spirit was freed a short time after the organs of my physical body had entirely ceased to perform their functions. My spiritual form was then united into one, and I was raised a short distance above the body, standing over it by what power I was unable to tell. I could see those who were in the room around me, and knew by what was going on that a considerable time must have elapsed since dissolution had taken place, and I presume I must have been for a time unconscious; and this I find is a common experience, not, however, universal. As consciousness returned to me, the scenes of my whole life seemed to move before me like a panorama; every act seemed as though it were drawn in life-size and was really present: it was all there, down to the closing scenes. So rapidly did it pass, that I had little time for reflection. I seemed to be in a whirlpool of excitement; and then, just as suddenly as this panorama had been presented, it was withdrawn, and I was left without a thought of the past or future to contemplate my present condition. I looked around me, and I thought, if there is a possibility of spirits (for I seemed half-conscious now that I was a spirit) manifesting themselves to those still in the form, how gladly would

I now do so, and thereby inform my friends and others of my condition, at least as far as I understood it myself, which I confess was not very far. Everything seemed to be in a whirl of motion; scarcely had one desire come, before another was presented. I said to myself, "Death is not so bad a thing after all, and I should like to see what that country is that I am going to, if I am a spirit."

'I had heard the spiritualists say that the newly-born spirits were always received in the arms, and welcomed by kind and loving guardian spirits; finding none around me, for I had seen no spirit out of form yet, I concluded this was not true. Scarcely had this thought passed through my mind, when two, with whom I was unacquainted, but toward whom I was attracted, appeared before me. They were men of intelligence, but like myself, had given no special attention to the higher principles of spirituality; they knew my name, although I did not reveal it, and they shook hands with me in a hail-fellow-well-met sort of way, that was very pleasant to me. They then conducted me from the room where I had died, and in which I had remained until this time. Everything around me seemed shadowy, yet through these shadows they conducted me to a place where there were a number of spirits assembled; these had been in spirit-life a longer time than I had. I might mention the names of some of these, but I prefer not to do so now.

‘I remained in conversation with these spirits for some time, and then, without knowing why or how, I was attracted back to the place in which my spirit had separated itself from the form. I then found that I must have been in their company much longer than I supposed, as, contrary to the experience of many whom I have since met, I did not attend my own funeral; and I would here remark, that it is generally gratifying to a spirit to do this, and where the body can be kept for some time, they gladly embrace the opportunity of attending on this ceremony, and listening to and aiding those who officiate on such occasions.’*

As to show the common truth pervading all these descriptions, with the variety of imagery according to the character of both spirit and medium, a genuine collection of statements made either through clairvoyants or mediums is valuable, I add one more account by a spirit, through the writing of a child, of the ‘entrance into life.’

‘When a mortal dies, some friendly spirit enters the room and strews rose-leaves over the floor and the body. They then take a tiny silver bell, and ring it, which is the signal for the spirit to come out of the body. When I came away, — rang one of these tiny bells. It was so gentle that I came directly to sense.

* *A Narrative of the Experience of Horace Abraham Ackley, M.D., late of Cleveland, Ohio, since his entrance into Spirit-life.*

I rose up and stood by the window. The smell of rose-buds made the room like paradise. The golden light was shining on the wall, and something seemed to call me. I turned, and it seemed as if a gulf were opening at my feet, and then I saw before me a dark thing like a shadow. Something told me it had been myself, and then —— came and took me away.'

Mr. Haddock's seeress often saw persons in the body as shadows, while those in the spirit-form appeared to her. With respect to the *bell* and the *rose-leaves*, the reason of their being used in the description will appear in the chapter on correspondence. I have often seen bells drawn or written of by mediums, and have always found a bell to be a symbol of spiritual communication, or revelation. Rose-leaves and buds typify affectionate feelings. The spirit who wrote had a loving welcome to its new home.

A young friend of my own, while in a clairvoyante state, was questioned on the process of death. The following vision was presented to her. It must be remembered that this was not a description of any departure taking place at the time. It was rather an illustrative picture, imaged forth in the forms familiar to the seer's mind.

VISION, SEEN JANUARY 11, 1859.

‘I said I saw a glorious sunset. It is wonderful indeed! This sunset is shown me as a type of earthly life.

‘Across the glowing sky hastens a group of angels. What are they bearing along with them? Ah, I see now. They carry a golden cross, a golden cup, and a lily crown. How beautiful are those angels! but they hasten rapidly away. I am going with them. I see where they are going. It is towards the earth, where it is cold and twilight. They are gone to comfort a little child—a little pale, very pale child. The child is about to die. Yes, it is for this child that the angels have brought these glorious gifts of the cross, the cup, and the lily crown. Ah, how pale is the little child! Now it is dying! But how can I describe the wonderful process of death? It is too interior to be described, and should be witnessed. An angel has taken the child, and is drawing forth the internal of the child into the external. The old external child will die, but the new child will be drawn forth, and becomes the external. The mode of this is more wonderful than can be conceived. The angel draws forth, as with a magnet, the various particles of the child, and attracts them into a new form. First of all, as by a wonderful music, all the particles of hearing are drawn forth. Later on, the

particles of vision, and then the child will behold as well as hear. It is most wonderful !'

All accounts of death-beds are full of interest, but it is very seldom that the different stages of the process are so well marked as to render them apparent to bystanders ; and the sorrow of friends, whose eyes are bent on the mortal coil and blind to the beautiful work which is going on as the case of clay is deserted, only throws a gloomy horror over the scene. In the next chapter I shall try to gather a few out of the numberless records of 'last words' and looks which strengthen the conjecture, that the spirit often has a glimpse of the promised land before it is free to pass the barrier. A good collection of well-authenticated death-bed memoirs, with notes of the nature of the disease, its duration, and the mental and physical state of the dying person, would be a valuable contribution to psychical knowledge.

The last testimony, before we refer to the authority of Scripture, will be furnished by Swedenborg, whose writings I quote as I would those of Socrates, not putting *implicit* faith in the revelations of either. Both were philosophers, though in different lines of wisdom, and both, Swedenborg preeminently, gifted seers. Like other seers, they received spiritual truths under the imagery with which their brains were familiar, and thus were liable to fall into what to other minds might seem partial error. For every human being has

his own sphere of spiritual perception, which is to him the spiritual world. Into this sphere he comes whenever, by the shutting of the outer material sense, the internal life is entered. And spirits sympathising with the seer can communicate their thoughts through his brain, so the ideas and images presented in his spiritual state are what he will describe and possibly believe to be absolute truths.

This remark should be kept in mind, and applied to each of the seers quoted, in explanation of their resemblances and differences. The more highly informed the seer, the nobler and truer will be the symbolism his mind can offer to the spirits' teaching. And a philosopher who only ceased his scientific enquiries when his perceptions were turned inwards on a world above and beyond that explored by the senses, could not fail of bringing to the new region a rich *apparatus* of acquired facts and well-observed objects. As much of literal truth, therefore, as can come from the spiritual into the material world may be looked for in the visions and narrations of Swedenborg, who gives as follows : —

THE PROCESS OF DYING — RESURRECTION.

‘When the body is no longer able to perform its functions in the natural world, corresponding to the thoughts and affections of its spirit which it has from

the spiritual world, then man is said to die. This takes place when the respiratory motions of the lungs and the systolic motions of the heart cease; but still man does not die, but is only separated from the corporeal part which was of use to him in the world: for man himself lives. It is said man himself lives, because man is not man from the body, but from the spirit, since the spirit thinks in man, and thought with affection makes man. Hence, it is evident that man when he dies, only passes from one world into another. Hence it is that death,* in the word in its internal sense, signifies resurrection and continuation of life. The inmost communication of the spirit is with the respiration and the motion of the heart; its thought with the respiration and the affection, which is of love, with the heart; wherefore, when these two motions cease in the body, there is immediately a separation. Those two motions, namely, the respiratory motion of the lungs, and the systolic motion of the heart, are the very bonds, which being broken the spirit is left to itself, and the body being thus left without the life of its spirit, grows cold and putrefies. That the inmost communication of the spirit of man is with the respiration and with the heart, is because all the vital motions thence depend, not only in general, but also in every part. The spirit of man after the separation remains a

* A confirmation of this will be found further on, in the frequent spiritual predictions of death.

little while in the body, but not longer than till the total cessation of the heart's action, which takes place with variety, according to the state of the disease of which man dies; for the motion of the heart with some continues a long while, and with some not long. As soon as this motion ceases, the man is resuscitated, but this is done by the Lord alone. By resuscitation is meant the drawing forth of the spirit of man from the body, and its introduction into the spiritual world, which is commonly called resurrection. The reason why the spirit of man is not separated from the body before the motion of the heart has ceased, is, because the heart corresponds to affection, which is of love, which is the very life of man, for from love everyone has vital heat; wherefore, as long as this conjunction continues, so long there is correspondence, and thence the life of the spirit in the body. How resuscitation is effected has not only been told me, but also shown by living experience. The experiment itself was made with me, in order that I might fully know how it was done. I was brought into a state of insensibility as to the bodily senses, thus almost into the state of the dying; yet the interior life, with thought, remaining entire, so that I perceived and retained in memory the things which occurred, and which occur to those who are resuscitated from the dead. I perceived that the respiration of the body was almost taken away; the interior respiration, which is of the spirit, remaining, conjoined with a slight

and tacit respiration of the body. Then there was first given communication as to the pulse of the heart with the celestial kingdom, since that kingdom corresponds to the heart with man. Angels thence were also seen, some at a distance, and two near the head, at which they were seated. Thence all proper affection was taken, but still there remained thought and perception. I was in this state for some hours. The spirits then who were around me removed themselves, supposing that I was dead. There was also perceived an aromatic odour,* as of an embalmed corpse, for when the celestial angels are present, then what is cadaverous is perceived as aromatic; and spirits perceive this; they cannot approach. Thus also evil spirits are kept away from the spirit of man, when he is first introduced into eternal life. The angels who were seated at the head were silent, only communicating their thoughts with mine; and when these are received, the angels know that the spirit of man is in such a state that it can be drawn forth from the body. The communication of their thoughts was made by looking into my face, for thus communication of the thoughts is made in heaven. Because thought and perception remained with me, in order that I might know and remember how resuscitation is effected, I perceived that those angels first enquired what my thought was, whether it was like the thought of those who die,

* This seems to justify many stories of sweet odours near the death beds of the good.

which is usually about eternal life ; and that they wished to keep my mind in that thought. It was afterwards said that the spirit of man is held in its last thought when the body expires, until it returns to the thoughts which are from its general or ruling affection in this world. Especially it was given to perceive, and also to feel, that there was a drawing, and, as it were, a pulling out of the interiors of my mind, thus of my spirit, from the body ; and it was said that this was from the Lord, and that hence is resurrection. When the celestial angels are with a resuscitated person, they do not leave him, because they love everyone ; but when the spirit is such that he can no longer be in company with the celestial angels, he desires to depart from them ; and when this is the case, angels come from the Lord's spiritual kingdom, by whom is given to him the use of light ; for before he saw nothing, he only thought. It was also shown how this is done : those angels seem, as it were, to roll off the coat of the left eye towards the septum of the nose, that the eye might be opened and be enabled to see. The spirit does not perceive otherwise than that it is so done, but it is an appearance. When the coat seems to have been rolled off, there appears something lucid but obscure, as when a man, on first awakening, looks through the eye-lashes. This obscure lucidity appeared to me of a heavenly colour, but afterwards it was said that this takes place with variety. Afterwards something is felt to be rolled off

softly from the face, and when this is done, spiritual thought is induced. That rolling off from the face is likewise an appearance, for by it is represented that he comes from natural thought into spiritual thought. The angels are extremely cautious lest any idea should come from the resuscitated person but what savours of love. They then tell him that he is a spirit.*

The 'appearances' spoken of by Swedenborg are correspondential: of this more will be said presently. The 'bell' and the 'rose-leaves' are also symbols. And by comparing the imagery in these visions and descriptions we shall find a common idea in all, underlying the symbolisation, which receives its form according to the mind of the recipient. In the vision (p. 153), the angel draws forth, as by a wonderful music, the interior of the child, and the sense of hearing is first developed. Hearing and sound, *all* the mediums tell us, correspond to the affection of love, which is characteristic of the celestial kingdom; light and sight, to knowledge, and to the lower or spiritual degree. Thus the clairvoyant's vision and Swedenborg's description are accordant as to the order in which spiritual perceptions are opened. And the spirit who smelt the rose-leaves and heard the silver bell of the welcoming angel was born into a loving region before his spiritual sight was opened.

* *Heaven and Hell*, pp. 445-450.

Turning to the *natural* aspect of the subject. The two seeresses whose descriptions of body, soul, and spirit agree so entirely, teach us 'that the spirit, which is divine in its nature, goes first, and the soul and nerve-spirit—by the combination of which (if they are not different degrees of the same) animal and organic life is sustained—follow. In the order indicated, that which is less material, the spirit, is first disengaged. This is in accordance with Swedenborg's *celestial degree*. Then comes the *soul* with its atmosphere of 'nerve-spirit.' This, we are told, being intimately united with the body, does not quit it till after apparent death, being gradually drawn away. Bichât says that animal life ceases first, organic life afterwards. All agree that the elements leave in the order of their independence of the material substance: and thus the symbolic statements of the spirit through a medium, the description of the clairvoyants, and the observations of the physiologist, confirm each other. After all, we are led back to the old exploded idea of spirit, soul, and body. How firmly this division was believed in by early writers may be seen in a well-compiled little volume, by George Bush, Professor of Hebrew in New York University. The book is entitled: *The Soul, or an Enquiry into Scriptural Psychology, as developed by the use of the terms Soul, Spirit, Life, &c., viewed in its bearing on the doctrine of the Resurrection*. The following extract is to the purpose:—

‘This distinction (into spirit, soul, and body) was clearly recognised in the ancient philosophies. The three-parted hypostases of body, spirit, and soul, was familiar even among the fathers of the Christian Church, of whom no one is more explicit than Irenæus: “There are three, of which the perfect man consists, flesh, soul, spirit; the one, the spirit, giving figure; the other, flesh, being formed. That, indeed, which is between these two is the soul, which sometimes following the spirit is raised by it; and sometimes consenting to the flesh, falls into earthly lusts.” *

‘Origen speaks with equal distinctness to the same effect:—

“There is a three-fold partition of man, the body or flesh, the lowest part of our nature, on which the old serpent by original sin inscribed the law of sin, and by which we are tempted to vile things, and as oft as we are overcome by temptation are joined fast to the devil. The spirit, by which we express the likeness of the divine nature, in which the Creator, from the archetype of His own mind, engraved the eternal law of the honest by his own fingers, and by which we are firmly conjoined to Him, and made one with Him; and then the soul, intermediate between these two, and which, as in a factious commonwealth, cannot but join with one or

* Irenæus, lib. v. c. i. I give a translation rather more literal than that of Professor Bush.

other of the former parties, being solicited this way and that, and having liberty as to which it will adhere. If it renounce the flesh and join with the spirit, it will itself become spiritual : but if it cast itself down to the desires of the flesh, it will itself degenerate into the body."

' In the Alexandrian philosophy in particular, which favoured the Pythagorean and Platonic, the distinction above mentioned is very plainly recognised, as they denominated the *πνεῦμα* as the rational soul (*νοῦς*, τὸ λογικόν mind, and the *ψυχή*, sensitive soul, τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν, that which desires or lusts). Josephus also gives us intimations to the same effect. Thus, in his account of the creation he says (lib. i. c. i.), "God took the dust from the ground and formed man, and inserted in him a spirit and a soul." Thus, too, in the apocryphal book of Wisdom (chap. xv. 11), "Forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and Him that inspired into him an active soul, and that breathed into him a living spirit."

' In the book of Enoch, likewise apocryphal, we find mention made of τὰ πνεύματα τῶν ψυχῶν τῶν ἀποθανόντων ἀνθρώπων, the spirits of the souls of dead men ; and again, τὰ πνεύματα τὰ ἐκπορευόμενα ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῶν ὡς ἐκ τῆς σάρκος, spirits going forth from their soul as from the flesh. For ourselves (says Dr. Bush), we read in these extracts intimations of a great psychological fact, viz. that the *πνεῦμα* is to the *ψυχή*, the spirit to the soul, what the soul is to the

body. The soul is a kind of involucrum to the spirit, what Plato calls the *εἰδωλον*, image, of the spirit. The *ψυχή* is the *spiritual body* or body of the spirit, so-called, however, not as denoting its true ontological nature, which is psychical (?), but rather its uses as constituting the form through which the affections of the spirit manifest themselves. . . . As it is through the gross material body that the soul manifests itself in the present world, so we are warranted in believing that it is through the soul that the spirit manifests itself in the other world; in other words, it performs for the spirit the office of a body, and is consequently so termed.*

The last authority I shall bring forward is that of the Apostle Paul. To professing *literal* Christians his assertion may be held sufficient even without all the confirmation brought from other sources, while that living confirmation will show to learned readers that the Apostle taught a real doctrine, an absolute fact, unadulterated by any Greek philosophy or popular superstition. Unbelievers, too, may learn from real occurrences leading up to those spiritual truths which are the beginning and end of Scripture teaching, that the simple and grand assertions of Holy Writ are all in harmony with the order of creation.

St. Paul (1 Cor. xv.) gives a clearer and more

* Bush, *The Soul*, pp. 91-93.

concise description of the process of death than has been received from any seer or philosopher; but a literal translation from the Greek is needed to make this apparent. The words of our received translation are not quite so specific as those of the original, and the introduction of italics, to supply the supposed sense in the common version, leads to a less defined meaning than that of the writer. The following is slightly varied from the authorised version. We must read it with the idea of the natural resurrection that has been described: —

CORINTHIANS XV. 35–57.

35 *But some will say, How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?*

36 *Oh foolish one! That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.*

37 *And what thou sowest, thou dost not sow the body that is to come, but bare grain, perhaps wheat, or any other grain.*

38 *But God gives it a body according as He will, and to each of the seeds its own body.*

39 *All flesh is not the same: but one flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds.*

40 *And heavenly bodies, and earthly bodies; but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another.*

41 *One glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of stars, for star differeth from star in glory.*

42 *So also the resurrection (ἀνάστασις, standing up) of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption.*

43 *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.*

44 *It is sown a soul body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a soul body, and there is a spiritual body.*

45 *So it is written, The first human Adam became a living soul, the last Adam a vivifying spirit.*

46 *But not the spiritual first, but the soulish; then the spiritual.*

47 *The first man from earth, earthy (clayey): the second man the heavenly.*

48 *Like to earthly material are the earthly, and like to that which is heavenly (in its nature) are the heavenly.*

49 *And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall bear also the image of the heavenly.*

50 *But I say this brethren, that flesh and blood are not able to inherit the kingdom of God, nor does decay inherit incorruption.*

51 *Behold, I explain to you a mystery. All indeed will not sleep, but all will be changed.*

52 *In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at*

the last trumpet: for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 *For it must be that this corruptible clothe itself in incorruption, and this mortal clothe itself in that which cannot die.*

54 *But when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then is fulfilled the written word, Death is absorbed (or ended) in victory.*

55 *Where is thy sting, O Death? Where is thy victory, O Hades?*

56 *The sting of Death is sin, and the power of sin the law (the Jewish law).*

57 *But thank God, who giveth us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Some words in the above have been slightly altered, only because the ear, accustomed to attach a definite meaning to a series of phrases, receives the same with difficulty in a new and partly different sense. Some have been changed in order to give what seems to me a more faithful rendering of St. Paul's meaning. Of these last, the most important is the word *psychical* or *soulish*, used instead of *natural*. It would be tedious if I were to attempt to go into details as to which versions favoured this or the other reading. I will only say that the word translated *animal* is an adjective

formed from *Psyche*, which word bears the meaning *soul*, and no other, in every Greek writing. The rendering of this word by *natural* does not convey its full meaning. It has sometimes been translated '*animal*,' but that gives rather its lower than its higher import. A German translator of the Vulgate has received this idea in full, and has given for it the word '*thierische*' (like the beast).

Verse 44, 'It is sown,' &c., implies that a process goes on something like that with seed which is not put into the ground to grow up at some uncertain and far distant future, but as having its life continued and developed from the parent plant. It does not appear that, by the analogy of sowing, Paul meant *the burial* of our bodies, though their being laid in the ground has favoured this notion. The *seed* of which he speaks in his comparison is the living spirit given, the 'breath of life' breathed into the psychical body for its uses in the world. The psychical, or soul body, is our present body, which is animated by a soul: this is man as he is here. The spiritual is the next body, animated by a spirit, so, the Apostle says, 'there are (in man) the soul body and the spirit body'—verse 45. In the quotation which follows, 'The first human (*ἄνθρωπος*) Adam *was made*,' &c., the word translated 'was made' should be 'became,' or 'passed into,' a living soul—the Greek word always implying transition, whereas 'was made' conveys a vague idea of original formation, the

carrying on of which application to the second Adam falsifies the whole meaning. St. Paul completes his answer to the question, 'How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?' by saying (verse 46) that the soul life is first developed, the spiritual afterwards, as the soul takes that place in the spirit man which the material body had held in the mortal being before death.

In verse 47, the different natures of the two bodies are recognised: the *first*, the man in this world, formed of the same elements as the material creation; the *second*, the spiritual man, being of heavenly elements. I have here omitted 'the Lord from heaven,' because it is not found in the most authentic manuscripts. It is omitted by Lachmann, the German editor, whose edition includes every careful emendation; and the supposed reference to the Saviour is not required in this place—for the work of the Lord, in the risen and rising man, is fully treated of in other parts of the chapter. The verses, from 35 to 53 inclusive, relate entirely to the process of putting off the perishing material, and being clothed in that inner body whose heavenward developement during our earthly existence depends on purity of aim and obedience to the will of God. One who has low, sensual, earthly desires, has for his new body that soul which has been materialised and rendered akin to earth, while one who by prayer and love of the Highest has united his spirit with

the Holy Spirit of the Lord, has the refined and *spiritualised* soul for his new investiture.

The Apostle winds up by saying that the 'hidden thing,' or 'secret,' which he has told them is, that at the end of this earthly life we do not go into a long sleep, but are *changed*, and that the change takes place at once; i.e. at the time when the body dies.

The destination of the spirit and the work of the Lord is described earlier, and at the end of the chapter. 'Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.' By the word translated '*first-fruits*,' is not meant the *earliest* fruit or produce, but an offering set apart as especially belonging to God, as were the first-fruits among the Jews. Those who 'slept' had not risen from 'Hades,' their first state after death, for the victory over *Hades* was not gained. It needed the Word* made flesh to re-open the channel for the descent of the Holy Spirit; in other words, to open the kingdom of heaven.

'For as in Adam, or in the natural man (the body), all die, so in Christ (the spirit) shall all be made alive. But Christ the first-fruits (first returned to the Source of Life), afterwards they that belong to Christ at His coming, or in His presence.'

'Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He

* The Word, or Logos, will be spoken of hereafter, in the chapter on Scripture.

shall have put down all rule, and authority, and power. For He must rule till He have put all enemies under His feet.'

'The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.'

This last death refers to death in its largest sense, the death of the soul. 'Fear not,' our Saviour says, 'him that can kill the body.' As a necessary consequence of the continued reign of Christ, sin will disappear, and the soul, freed from its impurities, will no longer be drawn downward towards its material covering, but rise, at once spiritualised and gaining more and more vitality as it ascends to the Pure Fountain and Source of Life.

If before writing the foregoing paraphrase I had seen 'Stanley's Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians,' the chapter would have been given in Dr. Stanley's words. I have however let it remain, being in substance the same as the version of that excellent writer, to whose whole work I refer my readers.

Of verse 40, Dr. Stanley says of heavenly bodies: 'In the first instance, he (Paul) means the angels.' Dr. Stanley omits the word 'Lord' in verse 47, following, as I have done here, the Greek of Lachmann. His note on verse 48 is:—

'The earthy, *οἱ χοϊκοί*, men in their mortal state; the heavenly, *οἱ ἐπουράνιοι*, Christians after the resurrection.'

Verse 52, 'Behold I show you a mystery,' is thus paraphrased: — 'Behold, look my words full in the face, they contain a truth which we are slow to recognise, but which is true notwithstanding.' Of all the various readings of this perplexed passage (Stanley says), that of the received text, as contained in the five MSS. he enumerates, is the best. 'We shall all of us not die but be changed.' . . . 'Although it is by no means certain that all of us, (i. e. myself and the Corinthians) shall die, yet it is certain that we shall all be changed. The passage is personal to himself and his readers, and is written in the same expectation as that expressed in the parallel passages . . . that the end of all things would take place in that generation.'*

I believe that St. Paul's meaning was much more simple. He wrote to those who believed death to be an endless sleep; he tells them that he will make clear to them what has been a mystery, namely, that the common lot and apparent end of humanity is not extinction, but change of state.

I have now brought together evidence from many sources, of the fact that the end of earth life is also the entrance into the spiritual state, or the resurrection. And I think it will be found on examination that every Scripture expression which seems to imply an in-

* Stanley's *Commentary*, p. 333.

intervening state of unconsciousness or sleep of the souls is really figurative. When the day of judgment is described, the inhabitants of the world are spoken of as *sheep* and *goats*. We know that the souls passing through the judgment are not sheep and goats, therefore the same allegorical or figurative form which cannot be denied to one part of our Lord's parable must be extended to the rest. Indeed, St. Paul's expressions of 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,' seem meant to convey the idea that the change is not to be deferred for an indefinite time after death, but takes place at once. The 'trumpet' of the angel probably conveys the same truth as the 'bell' of the receiving spirit.

If further proof is wanted that the change is effected at once and at the time of death, we shall find it in the words of Christ, when He speaks of 'the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who is *not* the God of the dead, but of the living,' implying that the Patriarchs so often quoted by the Jews are *living* and *conscious* beings.

It has also been my aim to show that the spiritual body, or the soul, being an organisation embodying all those forces whose deposit is the material form, issues from its shell carrying with it into the next state all the energies it possessed in this, unincumbered by the trammels of the flesh. That among the vital elements which in every shade and degree of refinement

exist in every human being, is the nervous force, or the agency used in mesmerism, and that all the spiritual manifestations are thereby produced; the spirits most nearly allied to matter acting most easily on matter and on gross outward natures, while those of a higher degree impress the finer and more internal portions of the brain, and through them the soul. In the chapter on Inspiration we must consider the highest action of the highest influence, that on the most internal spirit, by the Holy Spirit of God.

The power of imparting vital or magnetic influence possessed by spirits seems to be referred to by St. Paul, when he says, 'The second heavenly man is a life-giving spirit.'

Many instances might have been brought together, showing how a healing influence like that of an earthly mesmerism has been often felt in illness, procuring rest and relieving pain. I have drawn so largely on my readers' capacity for belief even while confining myself to facts in illustration of the usual spiritual phenomena, that I will not go further; but if ancient tradition and modern spiritual communications are to be trusted, every spirit, in or out of the flesh, exercises an influence for good or evil, for health or disease, on those spirits whose qualities fit them to imbibe that influence. From the beings whose wretched lives and mischievous statements evince the depravity of their nature comes a hurtful and weakening magnetism,

while from the loving friend who, passed away, tries to pour gladness into the sorrowing soul by an assurance of his presence and happiness from higher and still higher sources, through angels and archangels, streams the heavenly life, even from the Sun of Righteousness about to rise with *healing* on His wings.

CHAPTER X.

DAYBREAK.

THE apparent recognition by the dying of those who have gone before, is a common and notorious fact. So very numerous, indeed, are instances of this kind, that each reader will probably be able to recall to his own mind incidents more convincing and better adapted to support my other assertions than a large collection of accounts received from strangers. I will, therefore, only mention a very few instances in illustration of all that has been, and remains to be, said on the process of death and the entrance into another state.

A very complete description of the feelings of a dying person is given in a letter from Admiral (then Captain) Beaufort, to Dr. Wollaston. This may be found, extracted from the autobiography of Sir John Barrow, in Haddock's *Somnolism and Psycheism*, to which work I have before referred, and to which I am indebted for more than one interesting extract.

‘Many years ago, when I was a youngster on board

one of His Majesty's ships in Portsmouth harbour, after sculling about in a very small boat, I was endeavouring to fasten her alongside the ship to one of the scuttlings; in foolish eagerness I stepped upon the gunwale; the boat of course upset, and I fell into the water, and, not knowing how to swim, all my efforts to lay hold either of the boat or the floating sculls were fruitless. The transaction had not been observed by the sentinel on the gangway, and, therefore, it was not till the tide had drifted me some distance astern of the ship that a man in the foretop saw me splashing in the water, and gave the alarm. The first lieutenant instantly and gallantly jumped overboard, the carpenter followed his example, and the gunner hastened into a boat and pulled after them.

‘With the violent but vain attempts to make myself heard, I had swallowed much water. I was soon exhausted by my struggles; and, before any relief reached me, I had sunk below the surface — all hope had fled, all exertion ceased, and I felt that I was drowning. So far these facts were either partially remembered after my recovery, or supplied by those who had latterly witnessed the scene; for during an interval of such agitation a drowning person is too much occupied in catching at every passing straw, or too much absorbed by alternate hope and despair, to mark the succession of events very accurately. Not so, however, *with the fact which immediately ensued*. My mind had then

undergone the sudden revolution which appeared to you so remarkable, and all the circumstances of which are now as vividly fresh in my memory as if they had occurred but yesterday.

‘From the moment that all exertion had ceased—which I imagine was the immediate consequence of complete suffocation—a calm feeling of the most perfect tranquillity succeeded the most tumultuous sensation. It might be called apathy, certainly not resignation; for drowning no longer appeared an evil: I no longer thought of being rescued, nor was I in any bodily pain. On the contrary, my sensations were now of rather a pleasurable cast, partaking of that dull but contented sort of feeling which precedes the sleep produced by fatigue. Though the senses were thus deadened, not so the mind; *its activity seemed to be invigorated in a ratio which defies all description*; for thought rose after thought with a rapidity of succession that is not only indescribable, but probably inconceivable, by anyone who has not been himself in a similar situation. The course of these thoughts I can even now in a great measure retrace: the event that had just taken place, the awkwardness which produced it—the bustle it must have occasioned, for I had observed two persons jump from the chains—the effect it would have on a most affectionate father, the manner in which he would disclose it to the rest

of the family, and a thousand other circumstances minutely associated with home, were the first series of reflections that occurred. They took, then, a wider range: our last cruise—a former voyage and shipwreck—my school, the progress I had made there, the time I had misspent, and even all my boyish pursuits and adventures. Thus, travelling backwards, every incident of my past life seemed to me to glance across my recollection in retrograde procession; *not, however, in mere outline as here stated*, but the picture filled up, with every minute and collateral feature; in short, the whole period of my existence seemed to be *placed before me in a kind of panoramic review*, and each act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right or wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or consequences—indeed, many trifling events, which had been long forgotten, then crowded into my imagination, and with the character of recent familiarity.

May not all this be some indication of the almost infinite power of memory with which we may awaken in another world, and be compelled to contemplate our past lives? Or might it not, in some degree, warrant the inference that *death is only a change or modification of our existence, in which there is no real pause or interruption?* But however that may be, one circumstance was highly remarkable, that the innumerable ideas which floated into my mind were all retrospective;

yet I had been religiously brought up; my hopes and fears of the next world had lost nothing of their early strength, and at any other period intense interest and awful anxiety would have been excited by the mere idea that I was floating on the threshold of eternity; yet at that inexplicable moment, when I had a full consciousness that I had already crossed that threshold, not a single thought wandered into the future; I was wrapt entirely in the past. The length of time that was occupied by this deluge of ideas, or rather the shortness of time into which they were condensed, I cannot now state with precision; yet, certainly, two minutes could not have elapsed from the moment of suffocation to the time of my being hauled up.'

The rest of Captain Beaufort's letter contains the account of his physical sensations on being restored to the consciousness of this world.

Sir William Hamilton, in his lecture on '*The Conservative Faculty*,' says:—

'On this theory [of attention, &c.], the proposition with which I started,—that all mental activities, all acts of knowledge, which have been once excited, persist,—becomes intelligible; we never wholly lose them, but they become obscure. This obscuration can be conceived in every infinite degree, between incipient latence and irrecoverable latency. The obscure cognition may exist simply out of consciousness, so that it can be recalled by a common act of reminiscence. Again, it

may be impossible to recover it by an act of voluntary recollection; but some association may revivify it enough to make it flash after a long oblivion into consciousness. Further, it may be obscured so far that it can only be resuscitated by some morbid affection of the system; or, finally, it may be absolutely lost for us in this life, *and destined only for our reminiscence in the life to come.** (The italics are mine.)

Admiral Beaufort's sensations were those of a person about to leave this world by a sudden and violent, though happily incomplete, severance of the bond between body and soul. These instances of revival of memory do not occur so frequently just before death (as far as we know) as during the last illness, when, in dreams and so-called delirium, the soul often returns to the scenes of childhood, and seems to wander with its first friends in its earliest home. But a few hours before death not only is the presence of already gone friends discerned, but perceptions of beautiful scenery, sounds of exquisite music, and sometimes even the objects required for a long journey, seem to be present to the mind of the departing traveller.

It would be strange indeed if this were not the case, and if, in all the varieties and combinations of disease by which death is caused, the last perceptions of earth, and first of Heaven, should not vary greatly in the

* Hamilton's 'Lectures on Metaphysics,' vol. ii. p. 215.

order of their occurrence. It is as if the walls of the prison giving way, the captive before his escape looks sometimes through one, and sometimes another opening, into the region beyond, whence the friendly inhabitants come to guide him on his way.

It was not long since a daughter was describing to me her mother's last hours. 'The night before her death,' she said 'we heard her name her sister, who had been dead for years.' She said that her sister stood beside the bed, and she lay and talked with her for two hours. We could not distinguish what she said, but when I heard that her sister was there, I felt sure that my mother was going.

In these conversations between the parting and departed spirits it seldom happens that words are articulated, while yet audible sounds issue from the lips. It may be that the spirit, held by a slender bond to the body, still moves those nerves and muscles which it had been accustomed to control, but from their incomplete and inharmonious action, the telegraphic wires only give sign of a power at their inner end, by an incoherent vibration in place of a regular movement. Many times the loveliest scenes are spoken of, though the failing strength is insufficient to describe them. Very often the traveller seems to recognise *water*, and sometimes this is spoken of as a sea, or a river, which he has to cross. This fact of frequent occurrence is used by Mr. Dickens in his touching scene

of the death of little Paul Dombey. The novelist is a close observer of nature, and it is likely that he here describes what has come under his own notice.

Within the last ten years an authoress died whose works are the outpourings of a mind full of graceful and lovely images. As her last moments approached, she looked up with an expression of quiet delight, repeating thrice, very softly, the words ‘How beautiful!’

It is difficult in the great wealth of illustrations which abound in this part of the subject, to make a selection. I wish if possible to bring those to notice which I know to be strictly true, and which may afterwards be referred to as instances of spiritual correspondence.

One, dying young and pure, told her nurse a few hours before her spirit was released, that there was water to be crossed, and beyond that she saw an Oriental scene. The nurse did not know that the opening vision had disclosed the imagery of the spiritual *East*, the morning land of those who love the Lord.

A description of the last hours of a most lovely and heavenly-minded child, was given to me by a friend. I repeat it as it came to her from the mother, whose expressions of yearning love for her child, and consciousness of his spiritual presence, led the narrator to enquire about the circumstances under which the young traveller was released.

Q. 'How was it with your poor little boy at the last?'

Mother. 'After many months' suffering, at length the morning came when God called him from us. He had frequently spoken about his approaching death, and sought to realise the change before him. Our minister was very kind and often came to pray and talk with him, but for a very long time he could not get rid of the idea that when he came to Jordan he should be unable to pass over. The morning on which he died having bade all the family farewell, he lay for some time quite quiet, when at length he said to his father, who was sitting at his bedside, "*Father, do pray take out the window. Don't you see that the glass prevents my getting away, you must see how I am trying to get out, and cannot get away!*" His father opened the window, but still the poor little fellow did not seem quite satisfied. Again he spoke in the great stillness of the room, his voice sounding strong and clear; he was evidently replying to some question which he had heard asked.

"*Yes,*" he said, "*my name is John L——, and I come from M——. Yes, I HAVE told lies, but I promise to do so no more!*"

'We were astonished and awestruck. We felt that he saw and heard an angel invisible to us. Again he said:—

"*Mother, here is grandmother come! you must see*

her! And she is with such a great company, and they say that they are come to take me away with them." Soon after that he gently breathed his last.'

'Such,' says the narrator, 'was my conversation with Mrs. L——. Doubtless, dear friend, you will agree with me that the "great company" was a holy assembly of ministering spirits sent by God to conduct the poor child's soul safely across the mystery of "Jordan," so much dreaded by him, and you will rejoice, as I did, on hearing of the comfort vouchsafed to the sorrowing mother through a "vision of angels."'

The next account does not bear quite the same force of evidence which I should wish to belong to my own or intimate friend's experience. While trying to choose among various descriptions one or two calculated to illustrate the fact of the spiritual opening before departure, I received the following in the words of an eye-witness. My informant has only been a few weeks in my family. As far as I can judge her character is decidedly truthful, and her powers of invention not great. She always keeps to a story which she has once told, without deviation from the original version, and though when I heard this account I tried to test her by suggesting additions she rejected all these, and adhered literally to her first statement. It would however not have been thought worthy of a place here, but for the recognition of her departed sister and the description of the corresponding light. The subject

was suggested by some questions I put to her, she having told me of a fright occasioned by the reappearance of a worldly wealth-loving spirit which was seen by three persons, and which made her so uncomfortable that she left the house at which it occurred. I asked her whether she had been present at the departure of this spirit, to which she answered that she had, but that the death was very unlike that of —, a near relation, ‘which was so happy! Oh! that was beautiful! I shall never forget that scene as long as I live.’

I begged for a description, and she went on:—

‘He was a real good man, he had led a good life, and done much for the poor. His illness was terrible, but he said he did not suffer. “Whatever God,” he said, “pleases to inflict on me, that I can bear contentedly.” Just before he died he looked round the bed and saw us all round him, and he said, “Oh dear J——, and A——, and D——, do all of you try to come to our Father!” And then he looked up and called three times “C—— (the name of a relation who had gone before), I am coming to you, to be with Jesus Christ!” “And there,” he said, pointing to the right-hand corner of the room, where there was a bright light which we all saw——

‘I interrupted her—“You mean a candle or moonlight?”

‘No. I don’t know what it came from. It was like a bright twinkling star, with rays all coming out

quickly from the middle to the outside, and the centre was very bright indeed. Well, he pointed to it, "And there," he said, "is Jesus Christ, who died to save the world; I am going to Him." Those were the last words he spoke. We all saw the light—everyone in the room—and it moved from where it was when we first saw it, and came and rested on the bed just as he died.'

This vision of Christ given to the dying man is only one in addition to an infinite number of similar occurrences. A near connection of my own asserted the continual visible presence of the Saviour, some time before she was released. The seeming mystery of the appearance in so many different aspects of the *Word made flesh*, will become clear as we learn more of the laws of spirit manifestation.

In the last chapter I have brought forward many concurrent testimonies of seers to the fact that spiritual hearing is developed in the process of change, before spiritual sight. Swedenborg gives as a reason, that in the next state the spiritual developement is in a different order to that in which it takes place while we are in the body. In the last process we are penetrated, in the first instance, as it were from without, and so the more external *vision* is generally developed before hearing. After the change the developement takes place from within, and the heavenly or higher angels are first associated with the parting spirit. The accounts are

very numerous of heavenly music being heard around the beds of the young and pure, and if the sounds have not been audible to others, which is occasionally the case, the glow on the countenance of the listening traveller about to wend his way hence shows the delight inspired by the angels' welcome.

The last moments of the little captive in the Temple, Louis XVII., as described by Beauchesne, are an instance of this, when *hearing* in a preëminent degree was the spirit sense awakened to bring joy to one whose cup on earth was so full of woe.

Gomin, seeing the child calm, motionless, and mute, said to him, 'I hope you are not in pain just now?'

'Oh yes! I am still in pain, but not nearly so much. The music is so beautiful!'

Now there was no music to be heard, either in the tower or anywhere near. No sound from without could reach the room where the young martyr lay expiring. Gomin, astonished, said to him 'From what direction do you hear this music?'

'From above.'

'Is it long that you have heard it?'

'Since you knelt down. Do you not hear it? Listen! Listen!' And the child, with a nervous motion, raised his faltering hand, as he opened his large eyes, illuminated by ecstatic delight. His keeper, unwilling to destroy this last sweet illusion, listened also, with the pious desire of hearing what could not possibly be

heard. After a few moments of attention, the child again started, his eyes sparkled, and he cried out, in intense rapture, 'From amongst all the voices I have distinguished that of my mother.'

That word, as it left the orphan's lips, seemed to relieve him of all suffering; his knitted brow relaxed, and his look lighted up with that calm brightness given by the certainty of deliverance or victory. His eye fixed on an invisible object, his ear attentive to the far distant sound of one of those concerts that human ear hath never heard. A new existence seemed to break in upon his young soul.

A moment after, the brightness of that gleam was gone. His arms were crossed upon his breast, and an expression of sad discouragement was visible in his countenance. Gomin looked close at him, and followed all his motions with a troubled eye. The child's breathing was not more powerful, but his eye was wandering slowly and confusedly, and from time to time it turned to the window. Gomin asked him what so interested him in that direction. The child looked at his keeper a few moments, and then, as if he had not understood the question, though it was asked him again, made no reply.

Lasne came upstairs again, to relieve Gomin, and the latter went out of the room, his heart very heavy, but not more uneasy than he had been the day before, for he did not even yet anticipate so sudden a close.

Lasne sate down near the bed, and the prince looked at him long with a fixed and dreamy eye. On his making a slight movement, Lasne asked him how he felt, and what he would like. 'Do you think my sister could have heard the music?' said the child. 'How much good it would have done her!' Lasne could not answer. The anguished glance of the dying boy turned eagerly and suddenly towards the window. An exclamation of joy escaped his lips; then he said, looking at his keeper, 'I have something to tell you!' Lasne came close to him and took his hand. The prisoner's little head leaned on the keeper's breast, who listened, but in vain. All was said. God had spared the young martyr his last mortal convulsion of anguish. God had kept to himself the knowledge of the last thought. Lasne put his hand on the child's heart; the heart of Louis XVII. had ceased to beat!

By following out the ideas suggested, and comparing the results with the spirit manifestations, we may find the law by which each soul's future home is determined not quite beyond our ken.

Many stories have been told of hideous forms and dark shadows, terrifying bad men and women during their last hours. As I only have these accounts at second hand, they are not brought forward as affording material for reasoning. Nevertheless, if we believe that the laws of affinity prevail throughout the universe, extending from the world of spirit to the world of matter,

and equally affecting spirits in and out of the flesh, so that 'we may know a man (in either world) by the company he keeps,' it is not more unlikely that dark and evil beings should throng round their associate as he approaches their state than that the bright and good should welcome their dearly loved ones to their happy home. 'Like to like,' is one of the first laws of the spirit world. It is in the spiritual universe what the laws of attraction and affinity are in the chemistry of matter. And not the only analogous law, as we shall see when we enter on the subject of correspondence. By it the destination of the freed spirit is determined, and the 'ashes to ashes, and dust to dust,' of the burial service equally expresses a truth when applied to the perishing remains, as to the destination of a soul which has yielded to earthly attractions. Ought we not, in that same burial service, to follow with a greater joy than is expressed the heaven-aspiring being, as it is led by spirits and angels, among whom are its best-loved earthly friends, on its upward path.

'Then shall the dust return to earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.'

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOME OF THE SPIRIT.

THE universal law of developement from within outwards had been very partially applied to our future state, as indeed it had only been dimly apprehended, when we received the first descriptions of the 'Spirit homes.' This fact should be remembered to prevent the supposition that a hypothetical explanation preceded or accompanied the experiments. So far was this from being the case, that the first accounts of spiritual scenery, varying in character, but seeming always to be in harmony with the tastes and tendencies of the spirit when on earth, were very puzzling. Sometimes the whole appeared to be allegorical in the sense in which the word allegory is commonly used. Then the assertions of literal truth and absolute objectivity threw the whole again into confusion.

The first glimmering of light which broke up the darkness arose from the observation that, by whatever means of communication accounts came, the various images by which they were conveyed always consisted

of objects familiar to the writer's mind, and were also, as far as I could judge, in accordance with the feelings and pursuits of the spirit. I also perceived, that if through one medium a supposed spirit described himself as having passed through certain states, something bearing the same construction would be given through quite a different mind and hand. I will try to illustrate my meaning. A kind-hearted high-spirited young lad died. Soon after his departure his name was written by the hand of a boy resembling himself. In answer to a question relating to his new state and his entrance into it, the medium's hand drew a river, on one bank of which was a scene evidently meant to be rather gloomy and uninviting, while on the opposite side was first a plain, then ranges of hills rising one beyond the other, and just over the top of the last and highest, a sun. The medium's hand drew ships and boats crossing the stream, and a bridge. By the writing then it was told that some people went by the ships, some by boats, and some walked, or rode over the bridge. I asked, 'How did you go?' the answer was '*jumped over.*' Another medium, describing the entrance into the spirit world, drew gates, railway trains, bath chairs and carriages, and wrote of these methods as suited to the different degrees of velocity with which spirits entered their new state. Now in narrating these statements I do not mean of course to imply that the descriptions are *literally* true, neither do I mean to say that the ideas fixed by memory

in the spirit's mind may not make them bear to him an appearance of absolute truth. It is certain that these and many statements which at first sight seem absurd and unaccountable have been made, and our present work is to find in what sense or manner they are to be understood. Every mode described is found to be familiar to the mind of both medium and spirit, as in the case of the boy, when the writing described the readiest way the spirit could imagine of effecting a sudden and unobstructed change of state.

The accounts given by the *same* professing spirit through different mediums were also at first very puzzling in their dissimilarity, but it soon became evident that the same fact was conveyed under different images. For instance, by one medium the spirit said, '*I have crossed two rivers since I came here, and am now resting.*' By another;—'*I walked through a gate into a beautiful field and gathered flowers—then passed through another gate and am here, where there is more beautiful fruit than any you have in your world.*' Each of these descriptions implies two changes in an advancing state, and a rest in which something is gathered or appropriated. This appropriation was afterwards described by a more matter-of-fact medium as '*learning more of God.*' The last expression, which barely conveys the truth, may seem to some minds a very poor description of the happiness of heaven, but the poverty will be in their own inadequate conception.

‘Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard,’ the smallest fraction of the rich imagery with which such ‘learning,’ must be invested, as all the mysterious realities of creation unfold themselves to the soul of man in an approach to the source whence it has its origin.

The first particular description of a spirit’s home which we ever received was declared to be from one who, when on earth, was pure, innocent, and self-sacrificing; and in whose name assertions had been often made of the objective reality of his abode, and of the constantly increasing glories and beauties springing up around him, with the developement of his internal thoughts and feelings and the increase of his knowledge.

A picture of the house had been asked for, and by the hand of a very young medium an outline was drawn, which in touch and style was very like the drawing of the spirit when on earth. It was of the interior of a house, on the ground-floor. There was a spacious room with doors opening into a vestibule, thence into a garden. On one side of the room a sofa was placed, and on each side of the open door were vases of flowers. A large table stood in the centre of the room, and on it were many articles. The most conspicuous of these was a double vase or pair of vases, in the form of cornucopias, full of flowers. The shape of this, which is very pretty, is *now* common, but had certainly never been in any of the shops at the time of the drawing. It was recognised as a new shape when it appeared several months after-

wards. All round the walls were portraits of the family of the spirit.

The outside of the house was then drawn. It consisted of three stories, and round the outside of the ground-floor was a colonnade covered with glass, and having creeping plants twined around each pillar. Through the opened wooden doors could be seen the table, &c., which had been represented in the interior. The second floor had one window, and appeared to be covered within with vines and festooning plants. The third consisted of two little rooms, each having one window, and each being surmounted with a dome and cross.

We were told, by the writing of the same medium, that in the lower room *all* the friends of the spirit could assemble; in the second only the dearest of all, those who were friends in spirit; and into the top little rooms the spirit went to be quite alone, *to pray and think*. After this time, by another and a very young medium it was written, '*A fountain has sprung up in my house.*'

Now, though it was very evident that this house in some way typified the soul, with its external, its spiritual, and its innermost or heavenly affections (of which all centred in the cross), still the drawing of the house was an enigma. The positive assertion of objective reality on one side, and the equally positive contradictions by other spirits who professed to have means of knowing, threw the whole into confusion. At the end of some months after the explanation of the drawing had been

abandoned as hopeless, it was seen by a person whose finely developed brain, in which little but the faculty of language had been cultivated by education, admirably qualified her to receive *new* truths. By the hand of this person an explanation was written, by which both the present drawing and all the former contradictory statements were harmonised and accounted for. It came in answer to questions, and was as follows :—

Q. ‘*Are the house, and the fountain, and the other beautiful objects real and palpable to you, as the objects on earth are to us ?*’

Ans. ‘*Yes, yes.*’

Q. ‘*Are there really pictures of your family in your house ?*’

Ans. ‘*They are pictures on the walls of memory.*’

Q. ‘*Is the whole symbolical, and drawn in this way merely from the impossibility of expressing it otherwise through the medium ?*’

Ans. ‘*All in my soul, that is the house. And they are external as they project themselves from the inner. As I gain knowledge, one representative after another takes the form of the beautiful things I draw.*’

Q. ‘*Do you mean that things in your degree are as real to you, as the outward objects in our state are to us ?*’

Ans. ‘*Can you not see that as soon as the life principle in trees and flowers becomes external it is real to you, but is in fact no new creation ? The*

painter, sculptor, and poet, as rapidly as they embody their ideal on canvass or in marble. . . . I cannot express all I would, but the fact of their embodying any existing ideal, however high or low, awakens a more perfect life of conception deeper in the soul ; thus here as well as there (in the spirit state as on the earth) the arts are living and eternal progressive realities.' C.

Before commenting on this, I will finish my detail of communications on this subject.

An interesting communication connected with the home of the spirit was made among the circle of friends whom I have spoken of as taking part in the experiments. I can vouch for its truth. The following was received in a letter : —

‘ A——, J——, B——, and F——, were with E—— (a clairvoyante, not professional) May 19, 185—. E—— had for some time been asleep, and describing heavenly scenes ; she became silent for a little while, when she was asked, “ Where are you now ? ” She immediately answered, “ C—— is with me. He looks very beautiful. He has a mansion in which he lives. There is a marble table in it. The Word is on the table open at St. John. He has a great many flowers all around him, and some in his hand and on the table. There is a bookcase too in the room, with the Word in the centre and a star above it. He has a small garden which he cultivates, and which is full of red and white roses. He has pictures in his house of all his family.”

E—— was asked how C—— looked. She answered, “Very beautiful, nothing dark about him. (The features of the spirit, whom the medium had never seen in life, were then described, and the age mentioned.) He says he has not been studying much lately, as he has been so anxious to watch and prevent other spirits from writing in his family. He is sorry, too, to see his mother fret about his leaving her, and he has also been much occupied in drawing their thoughts to the *Lord*.” *Twice* this last was mentioned. We then asked E—— the meaning of buds and flowers. She replied, “Buds are the beginning of spiritual ideas. As the buds gradually open, there is an increase of faith; as they become full-blown on earth, they are ready for heaven. It takes a long time to be full-blown.”’

This account was contained in a letter to one of the relations of the spirit. This person went immediately to a medium through whom what purported to be the spirit of C—— had written before. The question was asked, ‘Did you speak to E—— on such a night?’

Ans. (By the medium’s hand) ‘Yes.’

Q. ‘Did she see your house and garden?’

A. ‘Yes.’

Q. ‘What flowers were there in the garden?’

A. ‘Roses, red and white.’

Q. ‘And in your room?’

A. ‘A table.’

Q. ‘What was the table made of?’

The hand wrote 'Ivory' and scratched it out, then wrote 'Marble.'

Q. 'What was on the table?'

A. 'Bible.'

Q. 'What was it open at?'

A. (With some difficulty) 'Isaiah.'

Now either the J. written by the medium's hand as the beginning of John had suggested Isaiah, and the spirit losing control could not guide the hand, or by some deeper law, Isaiah took the place of St. John in the mind of the medium. A guess may be formed on this subject further on.

We once had much communication with a spirit who had lately left the world, and in whom the family affection seemed to overpower every other feeling. The survivors were doubtful as to the future life, or at least did not realise its *immediate* occurrence or its glorious happiness for souls in a prepared state. The writing, which gave the name of the departed one, conveyed earnest entreaties that her family might be told that '*she was still alive, and could speak to them.*'

When I asked what sort of place she was in, the answer was, '*It is my home, but they are not there.*'

Then she wished that *they* might learn of the realities of the Gospel, as, she said, she was now receiving it.

Not only happy, but unhappy, desponding, and even wicked spirits have sometimes asserted their presence. In answer to our enquiries about their state and sur-

roundings, we have been told of places with which they were familiar, and which they did not seem to distinguish from their old earthly haunts, afterwards of either 'going into a place whence they would rise higher,' or of 'being very miserable.' We will hope that even from this misery they might rise in time, for none who have come to us have seemed absolutely without good feeling.

At p. 21 I have told of rapping which was meant to imitate the sounds in a carpenter's workshop. The sounds professed to come from a poor drunkard who had hung himself in the workhouse. After I had found that the description of his occupation was a true one, his presence was again announced by the same means (raps) when only three persons were present, one of whom had the gift of seeing and sometimes even hearing the spirits. The poor suicide said that '*he was very miserable; that he had been taught about God and Christ when on earth, but had never thought it was real, or that he should be alive after his death.*' He wished his sister (who had intemperate habits) to be told about him, and urged to reform, and he said '*he did not know how to rise.*'

Foolish as it may appear, I must say that I talked to the unseen as I would have done to an *apparent presence*. I found that *we* (who were nearer his former condition) seemed more real and authoritative to him than any of those higher beings who could have led him upwards, *but whose presence he seemed to think an*

illusion. This fact, which I have met with more than once, was evidently unexpected by the medium, and struck me very much.

While the dialogue with the invisible went on, the raps which had come in assent to my entreaties that he would try to pray for help, &c., suddenly ceased, and the medium, who felt a cloud coming over her sight, said she should soon see him. In a minute or two she declared that she saw a man looking very sad and dark. '*He seems,*' she said, '*to be in a cave with others — all are wretched-looking; he is the best, but he is dressed in dark grey rags.*'

'Does he hear me?' I asked.

'He bows his head.'

Then I went on talking as one would do to an embodied soul in a similar state.

'Now,' she said, 'he looks more cheerful. He will mind what you say. *And now I see a little hole at the end of the cave, and light is coming in.*'

I should hardly have ventured to recount the above, if it had not been so *perfectly* in harmony with the assertions of Swedenborg, who describes caves—gloomy workhouses, and dull miserable stone-yards, with many disgusting accompaniments—as the environments corresponding to the state of those who leave this world in the guilty or degraded position of the suicide spirit.

As the person who saw them 'in the cave' was *certainly* quite ignorant of Swedenborg's writings, the

agreement of her vision with the great seer's description was the more remarkable.

It is only right that apparently conflicting statements should be given. Many descriptions of 'houses' were gathered at the same time from different sources and through different mediums, and to one of these, if not to the first drawing of the house, the following refers. It was written by the hand of a person quite unconnected with any of the spirits whose homes had been described, and the asserted name of the unseen writer was that of one who on earth had made little advance in Christian purity or self-denial, and who, by his own account, was still in a very undeveloped state indeed.

Though the last spirit almost charges the first with mistake and consequent misrepresentation, yet the accounts agree in principle, both showing that the *condition of the soul* is what lends it imagery. This had been realised in an intense degree by the first loving and unselfish spirit, while the perceptions of the less advanced being were only dim and cloudy. The mind of the medium through whom the last was written was, however, in a more mature state than that of the young person who drew the house.

In answer to a question from the medium as to the description given of spirit life it was written—

'I say that what such spirits write and reveal is what can only be compared to looking through glasses which distort. They think they see, and when they are

unable to find suitable words, they use what they think most analogous. Even on the lower regions of heaven there is no distress to the bodies of spirits. All their wants are spiritually supplied; but there are no chairs, no sofas, no temples, no canopies, nothing, in short, your limited language can describe; and it is only a vain attempt to comfort the left behind relations to write such things. I can give you no better idea of the state of the part of heaven where I am staying, than by asking you to shut your eyes, and think of the glowing colours of some sunset, which have remained in your recollection. There was red, blue, rather purple, perhaps almost green, where the gold tinged the blue to the greenish tint. All these things have names on earth as colours; but the colours themselves, where wilt thou find them? Not in your tin boxes, or tubes, or on the canvasses of the most celebrated painters. Thus heaven has its couches, its rests, its coverings, its comforts; none need mourn for those of earth; but attempt to name them with the equivalent on earth, the resemblance dies away, as dies away the gold, and the many hues of an autumn sunset even whilst seen most vivid. How cold the reality of the sky no longer thus illumined, I need not say; but so are the attempts to raise the thoughts of mortals to the realities of*

* This is not inconsistent with my statement, that spirits having no language impress the thought, and it finds expression in the medium's words.

heaven; never to be fulfilled, for the words fail as well as the ideas. A belief in the power of writing by spirits will increase as the world grows older; and when once that has become more general, the spirits will be less afraid to say the truth, that of all heavenly things granted to spirit life, none can be revealed. They are kept—why not?—to entrance life on heaven, which to many sorrowing hearts needs as much of the creature comforts as ever sorrow on earth required to keep up the failing strength for life; for there are sorrows which cease not when this earth vanishes, and as prison diet must needs be a generous one, so the spiritual body unhinged in its dearest feelings requires that strengthening which belongs to spirit life, all wonderful to man as he awakens into it.'

As any descriptions professing to come from spirits through the hand of a perfectly honest writer are curious and interesting, I add the following from the same source as the above:—

'I said that spirits far advanced on heaven were shy of beginning relations with those of earth, and that numbers were waiting on the confines of the land they had left with regret, ready to communicate under any name they could take to insure them attention. I also said that numbers were occupied in watching the entrance on to heaven of spirits released from earthly bodies. You are right in believing the spirits have their bodies, and they spend ages, according to earthly

calculation, in this frivolous although to a certain extent interesting occupation before they attempt their own road upwards. For I must compare the ascent into the higher heaven to the ascent of a hill, or rather succession of hills, each summit revealing a higher grade of ascent. This so far as I know, for I have only overlooked the beginning of the ascent myself. I see others pass up and down; there is no difficulty in returning a second time. If once the road has been traversed, a spirit is free of the part traversed. . . . A wish is often felt to communicate, to relieve the tedium of eternity; for tedium there is in many cases, and discontent—oh, how much! Only those who learn content on earth amidst life's hardest lessons, or are constitutionally contented, begin spirit life with any amount of life happiness on heaven: not idle content, however.'

I have said that this spirit's own account of his state and doings was not very favourable. What he calls *heaven*, other spirits call the spirit-world. The distinction is not very important as long as we remember that *all* communications recognise an intermediate or *first* state, which seems to be a continuation of the earthly condition, before the upward or downward course is taken. The following, which describes his own state and confirms some of my former assertions, is worth notice:—

'I am glad that spirits are always sure of being

together when love has united them on earth ; and when spirits are awfully distant from each other, it is the fault of one or other of them. God permits union, and He does not compel it ; and the good or the better—for many are better who cannot justly be called good—are able to go to the less good, and the less good may never trouble the better. . . . There are occupations and amusements in heaven suited to every spirit for their recreation, and a great many spirits do nothing at all for a long time after they come through death to heaven ; and if you wonder at this, I think you will be still more surprised to learn that one of the most idle spirits of heaven is the spirit who writes by your hand ; and the cause is, that the dissatisfaction of spirit life is so great, that there is a feeling of utter despair at the impossibility of working into better life. But this diminishes slowly, very slowly ; at first by degrees, but not for years of earthly measurement. Then cometh the wish to be better ; it comes quicker to some than to others, and in a great many the wish does not awaken till after a whole generation has come through death to life ; and the companionship of others is instrumental in awakening the wish, without which heaven is as the slumber of the grave. And there is not so much inaccuracy as some think in talking of the sleep of death ; but it is not a*

* This spirit is only describing those of his own acquaintance, who seem neither to have high aims, nor absolute criminal dispositions.

necessary condition of spirit life, and there are some who pass at once into enjoyment; for it is not enjoyment to be doing nothing, while the better are at once employed, and progressing into higher states of spiritual happiness.'

Let us see how the above conflicting statements can be reconciled.

In travelling into the region of 'houses not made with hands,' a region where the only experience which we have for guide is in itself a mysterious study—'such stuff as dreams are made of'—we can still find a little guidance in analogy which will lead us from the known and seen to the hidden and unknown.

We have seen that the mysterious germ of life said by the seeress to be 'begotten from God' is placed at its origin in circumstances to attract to itself those particles which are necessary to form a soul-body, or a body whose whole organisation is animated and pervaded by the soul. At birth, the *enclosure* which serves to nourish it is thrown off. In like manner, by means of what has been called the *nerve-spirit*, impressions are gathered from the external creation to the soul, which thus, through means expressly provided by the body, is nourished and matured by the impressions it receives during its life on earth from external nature. The body then, having in its wondrous chemistry supplied those fluids or imponderable forces which have acted as channels to transmit the required

sustenance through the nerves and brain to the soul, has done its work. It declines and dies, as in the earlier period the sustaining envelope is left, or as the withered husk falls from the perfected fruit. Then the soul, with all the memories and impressions of which it has become the storehouse, takes its place, and the more internal spirit developed and advanced animates the 'spiritual body.' But, according to the belief of most thoughtful men,* we are, even in this earthly life, the architects of our own surroundings; external nature supplies the *cause* whose effect is produced through the senses and brain, according to a *type* or *idea* in the mind, and the susceptibility to impressions from outward objects varies in quantity and in relative proportion, and forms the distinctive character of each individual.

Let us apply the last thought to the appearances and realities of the next state into which the spirit enters

* Mental philosophers are of three classes: the *Idealists*, who believe, with Berkeley and others, that ideas are communicated without any real substratum; the *Realists*, who hold that we perceive outer things as they really are; and a third, who may be called *Intermediate Idealists*—of this class are the great majority of philosophers, who believe that matter is *a something* external to ourselves which produces its appropriate impression or idea on the senses and mind, but which requires its appropriate receptivity in the mind to give it form and character. The *ideas* of Plato show that he belongs to this third class, and the observations of phrenologists, which prove a variety of susceptibilities to impressions, are strongly in favour of the doctrine.

in a purer form, the gross corporeal particles of earth having been replaced by the inner *soul-body*, and having within itself those essential *types* or ideas whose developement is to be the work of its everlasting life. Of these, the most external—the framework, so to speak—are what have been nourished by its earthly surroundings into the memory of persons, things, events, or feelings. As in this world memory is called by mental philosophers the consciousness of the past, so in the next, where the relations of time are changed, the memory in all cases where the affections are concerned will probably appear only a continuation of the feeling. In Admiral Beaufort's narrative, and other similar descriptions, the recollections of a life are spoken of as presenting themselves at once in the shortest possible time to the mind. According to the process of developement *from within outwards*, those most external recollections which have been appropriated or drawn into its life by the spirit become perfected ideas, and only require the influx of vitality from within to throw them off, as the bark of a tree is driven to the surface with the rise of the vital sap. According to all the descriptions I have received this is what really takes place; and all the feelings and impressions on earth remain in the soul, and find their appropriate nourishment and external objectivity in the next sphere, where they thus become the seeming realities of the heavenly scenery. But these are not the only realities,

for the rapid spiritual developement multiplies and magnifies every perception, so that the forms and hues and sounds by which a single idea is conditioned are immeasurably more numerous than those which characterise the corresponding ideas of the soul in its earthly embryo state.

We must remember that the first spirit, whose *house* was described, spoke of the embodiment of an existing ideal, as awakening a more perfect life of conception deeper in the soul; by which was meant that, as a natural consequence of the developement outward, a corresponding increase of life will take place in the innermost spirit or germ of vitality, which, according to the two seeresses before quoted, receives its essence from *the Divine Source*. This is entirely in harmony with all the laws of natural growth, and receiving it as not only fair conjecture, but one supported by the assertions of spirits, as well as the analogies of nature, we may trace its consequences on the whole circle of our spirit life. Surely the internal influx will be of the same character as the outer developement, or the nature of the man would have changed. If our thoughts, prayers, and aspirations rise to the great Father of our spirits, we draw a large amount of heavenly life into the soul; the second man from heaven is nourished and strengthened, and we constantly *rise*, as the spirits write, into a higher and more internal state. If, on the contrary, the thoughts and

inclinations tend downwards, in an earthward instead of a spiritual direction, the stream of vital influx must of necessity dwindle and diminish: 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'

Can we not trace the process?

The next state will be only a continuation of thoughts and feelings spent on earthly and sensual objects, a turning back to the world which is left behind, instead of a pressing on to the things which are before. And so a gradual inversion of the usual spiritual progress, or, in other words, a decline from higher to lower forms of life. The seers and Socrates speak of this degradation of the soul that clings to earth, when, becoming an impoverished essence, seeking earthly enjoyments of which it has only the recollection, it falls in turn into the states of the lower animals, according to the character of its propensities, and finally even loses the degree of the animal, and sinks through lower and lower degrees of the less organised creation till the lowest is reached.

Socrates says: 'Those who had indulged in gluttony and contemptuous pride—who had been brutalised by drunkenness, devoid of any shame or self-restraint, would naturally pass into such bodies as asses and other beasts. . . . While those who have had a propensity to injustice, to tyrannise over others and rob them, pass into the bodies of such animals as wolves, hawks, and vultures; for where else could such go?'

‘Without doubt,’ said Cebes.

‘And therefore it is probable also of the rest, that each will go into the state which most resembles the condition they had striven to attain, either by indulging in bad propensities, or by omitting to cultivate the better instincts of their nature.’ (*Phædo.*) This gradual but certain declension issues in the final extinction of the soul.

This agrees with St. Paul’s doctrine. ‘Fear not him who can kill the body, and after that hath no more that he can do,’ &c. The ‘eternal punishment’ of the wicked is truly spiritual punishment, as eternal* life should be spiritual life. The second spirit, who combated the idea of objective reality in heaven, though he admitted the reality of appearances, also writes:—

‘There is no hell for the wicked, only more or less happy places for the just, according to their virtuous avoidance of the wickedness of this world, and a place of improvement and instruction for all.’

This may be and probably is true as the influencing spirit perceives it. His own state is not very unlike what it was here. Many, by his description (p. 205),

* I may not here enter into all the reasons for rejecting the usual translation of *αἰώνιος*, but my statement is not new. The word has always been obscure to scholars, and I can only beg that its application by ancient writers in the sense I have assigned to it should be examined. Plato’s *αἰῶνες*, or *Æons*, were breathings of spirit power from God, thus *Ages* in one sense.

are in the same condition and continue so for a long time; but it follows as a necessary consequence of the universal law of spiritual attraction and sympathy, which must operate more strongly when the bonds of the body are cast aside, that the ill-disposed will congregate together, as in this world, in lower and yet lower depths of sin. During the life on earth, the direction of the will may be more easily changed, and through that influence described in Scripture as the work of God's Holy Spirit in the souls of men, higher aspirations may and do take the place of the lower propensities. But in a state where all affinities will impel with greater force, like will consort with like, good or even a desire for good will rise to God, and hopeless evil will sink to evil.

When we examine into the universal law of symbolism, or the *correspondence* of the internal of one state with the external of those above, we shall find how this massing together of wickedness will be inevitably accompanied by a loss of all the beautiful perceptions and sensations which make an advance in the heavenward course so glorious; how darkness and chill or a smouldering fire will be substituted for the light and warmth of the Sun of righteousness; how discord and strife, instead of love and harmony, will pervade the whole, and form the lamentable surroundings of the descending spirit. That this is the fact is asserted by all mediums, as the foregoing accounts show.

‘Hell’* is the Scripture name given to this condition. We need not try to change it.

Thus are built for us those many spiritual mansions of which our Lord tells us, and to which His ascent into heaven opened the way.

But it is evident that we are ourselves the architects of our houses, not so much by our own acts, as by our own state, and that state depends on our reception of the higher life from above, the influx of the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth.

It is agreeable to all the analogy of nature that there will be a kind of order in the developement after death; but when *state* perceptibly determines what we call time and place here, this order will follow the degree of strength of impressions. Thus, as in Admiral Beaufort’s description, those nearest the time of death will form the first on awakening, so the next state will appear to be only a continuation of this, without the suffering which has preceded the change. Then, a gradual unfolding of the storehouse. All the memories of this world, with their treasured loves, their hoarded knowledge, and their innumerable scenes and pictures, will be as an opened roll, forming what in the grand but real symbolism of Scripture is called the book of judgement: ‘And the judgement was set, and the books were opened.’

* The word Hell is not *always* used in the Greek when it is found in the English Testament. In most places the original word is Hades, or the spirit-world.

CHAPTER XII.

APPEARANCES AFTER DEATH.

IF this chapter were meant to be merely a collection of ghost stories, chosen without regard to anything but careful authentication, it would soon swell into a volume; for almost every friend can give a well attested tale of a ghost, either direct or traditionary: but my intention is more definite, and every instance is chosen either for the purpose of illustrating what has preceded, or of furnishing data for further reasoning.

It seems needless, at this stage of our inquiry, to go over all the arguments for or against appearances after death; the simple fact, that in all ages and nations such appearances have been believed in, is enough to establish a foundation for the conjecture that, under certain unknown but not very uncommon conditions, the spirits of the departed are able to show themselves to the living. For a great variety of facts connected with this subject I refer to Mr. Dale Owen's 'Footfalls on the Boundaries of another World,' Mr. Howitt's 'Supernatural in all Ages and Nations,' and a large number

of well-attested statements in the *Spiritual Magazine* and other publications, all showing that, if evidence is insufficient to establish their truth, it cannot be held to confirm that of any single occurrence. Much of the mystery in which this subject is veiled is due in part to the manner in which it has been treated by so-called sensible persons and scientific men; by those who, when other subjects are in question, boast of their earnestness in collecting facts before trying to form conclusions. In the matter of spiritual appearances, it is certain that wherever their occurrence is asserted a very uniform series of phenomena has been described. The sudden terror, not always *fear*, but often rather due to physical than mental action on the nerves, the electric thrill or shudder, the faintness, sometimes sleepiness, sometimes a sudden waking from sleep, occasionally an appearance of lambent flame or blue mist, and sometimes even a phosphorescent or sulphureous smell, are among the commonest of the facts attested. We may say that these are all the produce of ignorance and superstition; but why should ignorance and superstition always agree so well in their fictions? There must be some good reason for this agreement; but as it is not for one who has hazarded conjectures as to the causes of rapping, writing, and crystal-seeing, to enter into any train of reasoning which supposes only hallucination or subjective mental action in the asserted appearance of ghosts, I will only

give a few well attested instances of different kinds of apparitions, and then try to explain and classify them according to the theories of spiritual and material existence already given.

From all the information which we have been able to gain from professedly spiritual sources, as well as by inferences drawn from the facts themselves, it appears that these apparitions are of different kinds, or rather *degrees*; varying from that of the low material ghost—who enters with a loud rap at the door, passes with a heavy footstep round the room, pulls the curtains or bedclothes, and behaves in an obtrusive unmannerly way, and who seems plainly visible to the bodily eye, audible to the ear, and even palpable to the touch,—to the beautiful angelic vision of the lost parent or child, whose glorious appearance, though perhaps only seen in a dream, gives comfort and gladness to the mourner. The first kind are of the earth, earthy; and with these lowest I begin. Such are described as seen by the *Seeress of Prevorst* and by the seeress in *Guardian Spirits*. These ghostly forms were often seen by others beside the seeresses themselves, though it is most probable that the condition of mediumship of both these women rendered it more easy for the spirits to clothe themselves in an atmosphere by which they were rendered visible. On the subject of these low earthly souls, I have already quoted Socrates, who speaks of them as retaining enough of earthly material to

make themselves seen and heard, and who haunt about graveyards, and other places where the heavy damp state of the air is suitable for their appearance.

In answer to questions as to the means by which apparitions of this kind are produced, an assertion is constantly made by the spiritual writing that spirits near to earth, even if not evil, are able to gather from the atmosphere the finer elements nearest in affinity with their own external. The growth of the body during earthly life by the developement of the spirit elements within is thus described; the spirit and its surroundings possess an attractive power, which gathers according to its quality corresponding substances from the enveloping body. Before birth the formation takes place in this way, and during the earth-life we subsist by taking into and assimilating with our systems particles from the air, and from the solid substances around us. But in the future state only that most external portion of the soul which forms the new body can have any affinity with earth, and, as in the case of those spirits whose aspirations and affections are directed upwards the outer material is thrown more and more off, so with the downward-tending spirit there is a constant yearning for association and assimilation with earth. Hence the magnetic power which these last possess of gathering around their spiritual forms a covering of matter, which, though delicate and refined to us, is coarse and heavy to them. It does not appear

that the spirits making themselves visible by this process are all, without exception, of an earth-tending nature. Those recently departed may occasionally become apparent as a necessary consequence of the newness of their entry into life ; but it is probable that those haunting spirits which are said to return year after year, or at longer or shorter periods, in some places, and to appear in the dress they used to wear in life, are of this character.

Of this kind of manifestation, too, are said to be the famous 'hands,' visible to many persons through Mr. Home's wonderful mediumship. They are not necessarily those of earth-clinging beings, but I am not aware of any instance in which a heavenward-tending spirit has after a long period of time made a hand visible and palpable to the touch. What electric or magnetic state of the medium enables the spirit to clothe itself in this material covering has yet to be discovered, as well as the *physical* part of the other conditions of mediumship. I have been assured, by three persons of unquestionable truth, of the sight and touch of hands *without the presence of any known medium*, and in a waking state. In one case it was the hand of a baby seen by its little brother on the father's pillow, and soon after felt by the mother to touch her own hand. Another time a child saw and described to me a beautiful rosy dimpled hand, which she recognised as that of one who had left her. In these cases the seer was the

medium of manifestation. When we consider the doctrine of *correspondence*, in its relation to manifestation, we shall see why the *hand*, which is always used as a type of power, should be so often seen. I have known mediums and clairvoyants of a common-place and rather ungifted nature able to see only *the feet* of very refined heaven-tending spirits, while the whole form of others, who in life had been nearer to their own nature, was plainly seen and described. In the case of the hands, seen in Mr. Home's presence, we may gather from the letter of *Verax*, himself a spiritual medium,* that they were not all equally visible to all the party. The sight of each person was in proportion to the affinity with the spirits, and the degree of spirit vision thence acquired; for, as I have already said, spirits can only find channels for manifestation in any form through that mental organisation which they have in common with the medium: and this does not imply that a low spirit cannot make itself heard or seen, or otherwise communicate, in any degree at all, through a person with noble qualities and high aspirations; because there is a mixture of elements in the highest as well as in the lowest human being. It is the difference of proportions and combinations that causes varieties of character. But in the instances of assuming a visible form, it follows as a necessary consequence of what I have said,

* See *Incidents in my Life*, by D. D. Home.

that the more earthly the spirit, the greater will be the number of persons to whom it can show itself. In the case of hauntings, it has been surmised that even the place itself furnishes odyllic or magnetic conditions which enable the spirits to clothe themselves in a visible form. This is in some measure confirmed by the fact that disturbances cease when the house or room is rebuilt.

In order to begin at the very lowest step of the scale, I will narrate some circumstances which came under my own observation, in which all the phenomena of 'haunting' occurred. Every incident of the story was known to me as it took place, and if the sounds and appearances described, with the large amount of confirmation they received from facts afterwards made known to us, can be attributed to imagination in the first place, or coincidence in the second, I do not see how any amount of evidence short of actual sight can determine the cause of any occurrence whatever. The narrative is given in the words of an eye and ear-witness who was quite unprepared for any such disturbances in the house, as she was ignorant of its former history and character, and never felt a sensation like fear until the last visit, when the sound of a voice was heard from the keyhole of the door. As in former narrations, names are suppressed and initials changed.

'In the summer of 18— we went for a few weeks to — House, in the village of D—. Its damp and dilapidated condition rather repelled me, but for a short

time in a dry hot summer this seemed of little importance. We knew nothing of any former occupant. The house consisted of three stories above the basement: namely, ground floor, containing dining-room, &c. ; first floor, drawingroom and three bedrooms; second floor, bedroom to the front over the drawingroom, and three small chambers to the back, the second and third opening from the first; and the third, a very small room, or rather closet, having for window only the glass panes of a door which faced the fireplace, and opened on the landing of a little ladder staircase under a cover, and outside the house. The lower steps of this little flight adjoined the door of the small bedroom below. The windows of all the bedrooms at the back of the house are sheltered from the road, and, considering that the house is in a village and surrounded by other houses, nothing can be more secluded than the two rooms at the top and the bottom of the staircase.

‘On the basement is a kitchen having a dark larder, entered by a door on the one side, and scullery on the other. In the scullery is a sink, and on the left of this sink a doorway leading through a dark stone passage to a deep well, from which pipes were once placed to supply water to the house above.

‘On the first night of our stay I heard at midnight three loud knocks at the door of my room. A servant had been left in the house by the person from whom I hired it, and I concluded that it was she who wanted to speak to

me, as all my family were in bed. I called to the person to enter, but no one came in. The knocks were twice repeated and twice answered. At length I got up, opened the door, and found nobody.

The next morning my servant, who had slept in the little back room, begged that she might not be required to occupy it again, as she had not closed her eyes all night. She did not give any reason for her wakefulness or her request, but I concluded that she felt the oppressiveness of the air (the weather was very hot), and complied with her wish. She was a sensible Scotch girl, quite incredulous on the subject of ghosts, and rather priding herself on her superior understanding. After some time a young woman from the country, who had once lived in the family, came to see us, and, the rest of the house being full, occupied the little back room. Just before midnight I went to all the rooms to see all my family settled, and found that the new comer was in my servant's room, which was very small even for one person. She declared that nothing should induce her to sleep in that 'dreadful hole;' that as soon as she was laid down she heard a sort of sobbing or sighing close to the head of the bed, near the fireplace, with a strange noise, as if some one were sweeping a broom or duster all round the paper of the room. My own servant then told me that on the night when she had slept in that room, though she did not hear the sighing, she was conscious of a *presence* which prevented her resting, as if

some one were standing close to her pillow. She also heard the sweeping round the paper. Both women declared positively that there had been no previous communication between them, and I knew well that both were thoroughly truthful. Indeed, it would have been very foolish in my servant to frighten her visitor heedlessly, for it was very inconvenient to her to have a companion in a bed little larger than a child's crib.

Another person, a well-known *sensitive*, slept one night in the little back room. She afterwards said that she had not rested at all. She had a sensation through the night as of a tight bandage across her forehead, a cold perspiration, and a feeling of horror, connected with the door opening into the little room. A young man of 20, a complete unbeliever, afterwards occupied the same room (that *adjoining* the back room), and described a similar feeling. To get rid of the oppression he rose at daybreak, and went out into the open air. After this no one slept in the back room. Two days before we left the house, a young lady, who had lived for three years in a remote part of the country, came, with two other friends, to visit us. The three had found the house with difficulty, and the young lady, who is a remarkable clairvoyante, noticed the small oddly shaped rooms, and the antiquated look of the whole place (for the premises did not consist only of the house, but included a yard, and a wooden bridge across it to stabling on the other side), and expressed a wish

to go over the whole. I gladly assented. I told her that I fancied the house was haunted, but no one room was specified. Nothing passed which could induce her to look for ghosts in one part more than in another.

My three friends then went through the first floor bedroom to the bottom of the little ladder staircase, and, Miss —— desiring it, they went up. I, being lame, did not follow them, but went up inside the house to meet them as they entered the little back room. When I reached the door-step I found that they had just got into the room. Miss —— was standing looking at the fireplace, which, it must be remembered, was opposite the glass door through which they entered, close to the bed's head. Her friends held each a hand, and spoke to her anxiously, as well they might, for she looked frightfully pale and horror-stricken. At first she seemed unable to speak, then only said, 'Take me away.' We all hurried down stairs, and she told us that while going up the little flight of steps, she had not thought of seeing anything, and when she got to the door, though there was something white by the fireplace, she took it for a towel or some shavings. She was, however, made to look at this, and she then saw the figure of a small woman kneeling, in a white night-dress. She did not see the head. The dress was stained with blood; and there was a pool of blood on the floor. On the stairs a man passed her, dragging up a small woman against her will. Miss —— seemed in a great hurry to get away.

We left the place two days after this; and in the course of three or four weeks, removed to a new house. A person from D—— was recommended to me to fit carpets, &c., whose exceeding deafness was a great drawback to her in her work, though, as it made conversation impossible, it gave me security that she could not have heard of these disturbances from any of my servants. I had been with her for some hours giving directions, &c., when I thought of asking ‘If she knew the house at D——?’ She looked mysterious, and said she did n’t know much of it. ‘What do you know?’

‘No further than that they say it’s haunted.’

‘Will you tell me all you have heard about it?’

She then told me that ‘it belonged, years ago, to Mr. L——, but he went to live in another house. He had a daughter very small in her figure, and gentle, but “silly like,” not crazy. Mr. T—— married her for her money, for she inherited a good deal from her father, and the house came into her possession. He ill-used his poor little wife terribly, and dragged her about. And he took her to that house and shut her up there. When she died she was out of her mind, but there was some mystery about her death. Some gentlemen and ladies tried to find it out, but nothing was known satisfactory, only they say the house has been troubled at times ever since, and nobody stays long in it.’

‘Do you know in what part of the house he kept her?’

‘A little back room at the top of the house; but I

never was there, myself, so I only speak as I've been told.'

Soon after this time, being in the village, and finding the outer gate open, I went in for the ostensible purpose of asking about the rent, &c., the house being to let. The landlord, who was in the house, told me that all *noises* could be accounted for by the falling in of a chimney, which had been shaking for some time. I went up stairs with him, and found that the chimney and fireplace of the little back room had sunk so completely that the fireplace was lodged on that of the room below. I told the landlord of the various occurrences that had come to my knowledge, observing that though the falling of brick and mortar might be *heard*, it could not produce an apparition as seen by Miss —, nor the feeling of horror described by persons who had no idea of any catastrophe having taken place in the house. The landlord said that anyone might have it for the rest of his term for a mere trifle, for he could not dispose of it, and that he should leave it in thorough repair. Soon after this, I found a broker's wife, who was left in charge, standing at the outer gate. She said she was afraid of remaining within the house; for that one day, as she stood at the sink in the scullery, a woman, whose face was bound up like a dead person's, came out of the well-passages, touched her shoulder in passing, and, crossing the scullery, disappeared in a little low closet opposite the sink. I enquired about the character of this woman,

and found that I was not the only person to whom her story had been told, though the hearers were generally incredulous, and ready to condemn her.

The house stood empty for some time after the repairs, which, however had not been very complete. In the course of a few months some friends, one of whom had the faculty of spirit vision, went with me to pay a visit to it. As no one came to answer the bell we supposed the house was empty, and went to the agent for the key. We then unlocked both garden gate, and house door, and found all the lower rooms shuttered up and empty. The lady, who is a seeress, went up the little ladder followed by her husband, and on reaching the glass door said, 'There are people inside, they have got a fire here; but the door is locked, so we must go up inside the house.' The other lady said that 'of course the people could not hear the bell if they shut themselves up in that room.' We went up stairs inside, and when we reached the door between the two little rooms, my friend looked strange and dismayed. The room was quite empty. 'I am sure,' she said, 'I saw them both, the man stood *here*!' pointing to the place, 'and left the room as we came to the glass door. The woman sate crouched down *there*,' pointing to the spot by the fireplace where the figure had been seen by Miss —, and whence the sounds had issued. 'She is very small and looks imbecile; she had on a lilac dress. They had quite a bright fire when I saw

them from outside.' We stood looking for a minute or two, nothing of course being visible to anyone except this lady, who seemed, after a time, to see the little woman again, for she said, 'I can't bear the look of those dull grey eyes.' Then she said that both had gone down stairs, and ran off quickly to follow them, not stopping till she got to the side of the well, from which it must be remembered the broker's wife had declared the apparition had come. When beside the well, Mrs. — appeared to be under a kind of spiritual impression, and told us that the cruelty practised by the man on the poor woman was beyond description. 'They,' she said, meaning the spirits, 'say that they need not show me all. I think she was drowned in this well; she was kept upstairs in that little room; one night she got out of bed, fell on the fender, and cut her forehead open. Another time she escaped, and ran down stairs, he pursuing her; then she threw herself into the well; he did not drown her. I do not think she was here more than a fortnight, and he brought her late one night in a little fly; not one of those flies or cabs that are used now, but a little narrow fly, in which the people sit opposite each other. He is an ill-looking man, with shaggy hair, and thick eyebrows, and a low forehead, he is what they call *beetle-browed*. His complexion is coarse, but not red.'

Soon after this time another party visited the house, getting the keys as before from the agent. The visitors

were Mrs. —, the seeress, two sisters, who had more or less of medium power, two ladies of middle age and unquestionable good sense and truthfulness, and myself. All went down stairs, as the little room at the top was quite empty, and felt free from any presence. As we all stood round the kitchen table (the only piece of furniture in the house), I mentioned a visit which had been paid to the place since our last, by some other friends, one of whom saw a spirit disappear near a large flag-stone in the larder. As I mentioned this circumstance a *great crash* was heard, apparently from those stones; I examined the larder immediately and found it quite empty. The hand of the younger lady was moved to write, '*The stone is spiritually fixed, you cannot move it.*' From it all sorts of noises were heard, differently perceptible however to the different members of the party, one of whom heard nothing at all. To some of us they appeared like footsteps, flutterings, and little tappings. Two or three cloudy forms were said by the two medium ladies to be visible to them, and to pass about in the kitchen and scullery. This time the first seeress saw another woman, with the woman and man. At length a wind, sensible to most of us, and strongly so to myself, arose in the kitchen, which also seemed filled with a kind of cloud or steam. One lady felt herself pulled and pushed more than once, and she as well as myself had an oppressive pain in the head, like that which is sometimes felt in

thundery weather. The turmoil and wind in the kitchen increasing, Mrs. —, the first seeress, thought that we had better leave the house. We ascended the kitchen stairs, the lady who had been pushed and pulled leaving with some reluctance, for she wanted to see more. Before leaving the house, we saw that all the windows were safely barred, and the doors of the rooms shut. All were satisfied that we left the house empty as we found it. I then locked the house door with the key which I had carried the whole time, and all six stood outside the door listening to the confused noise within. These sounds were like the mingling of a thousand discordant voices at a distance, as if from a disturbed noisy crowd. As we listened, the lady who had been pushed before asked why I was pulling her dress — I had not touched her. Just then the noise seemed to condense into one horrid hissing sound, which uttered an imprecation on our eyes in four words, the first of which was indistinct. Some people thought that the wicked spirit could not utter the holy name which he was trying to profane. I had never felt anything like fear till that moment, but a horror seized me, and I felt as if nothing could induce me to enter that house again. Mrs. —, the seeress, and her little boy, who had joined us from the outside, both heard it as well as myself. Miss L. heard a hissing. In order to make sure that my ears had not deceived me, I took Mrs. — aside and begged her to repeat the

words she had heard if she did not mind doing so. She told me the three last as I had heard them. The little boy, when asked, said he had heard 'bad words,' but we did not wish him to specify more particularly. Neither of the other three ladies heard anything.

Soon after this time I learnt that between thirty and forty years ago, at the time indicated by the date on the family grave, two little flies exactly answering to the description given by the seeress were kept in the village. I found an old lady, the wife of the person who had owned these carriages, and learned from her that all the books had been destroyed when her husband gave up business. So no further information could be obtained. Guided by my first information from the old deaf woman, I tried to learn more of the character of the man. One lady, with whom I accidentally met, gave me some particulars, among others, that he was a coarse, ill-looking, *beetle-browed man*, who never looked anyone in the face; that his wife was small in person, and deficient in intellect, but that his ill-usage made her worse. From another person who gave information with reluctance, I heard that she died raving mad from ill-treatment, and that an unsuccessful suit had been instituted to get a divorce by some of her family, on the ground of cruelty. After this time I met with a person who knew the man well, and who spoke of his having appeared since his death in other places in which he had lived on earth. This person said that his conduct

to his wife was horrible, but that *to all* he was a *bad avaricious* man. When I asked if he ever swore, she said 'he seldom spoke without an oath, and his tone was always a snarl.' His usual imprecation, one which he had used in speaking to her, was the one I had heard. All this information was given me before I mentioned anything connected with my former enquiries. To this day, I have not ascertained *with certainty* where or how the poor woman died, for there are conflicting statements on this subject, among those who profess to know, some asserting that her death occurred in the village of D—, and some that she died at a greater distance from London.

It is now some years since I met with a gentleman who had had some strange experiences in the matter of 'hauntings,' which the communications between a clairvoyante in his house and the spirits rendered still more remarkable. This gentleman told me that from the revelations of the clairvoyante he had been enabled to discover much of the former history of his house, which history he had been able to verify. One day the clairvoyante told him that the spirit would appear to her in her waking state, on a certain day and hour, and my informant, to defeat the intention, for he feared the effect on the young woman's nerves, sent her out. She, however, for some reason or other, unexpectedly returned before the appointed time, and the meeting took place. The clairvoyante, who never, in her waking state, re-

membered what she had said when mesmerised, met the spirit, and the description she gave agreed entirely with her account when in her lucid state. She was, however, much frightened by the encounter. A very respectable man living in the same house gave me an account of his seeing this spirit. He had been utterly unbelieving, and had laughed at my informant and the clairvoyante on account of their belief. But he said, that one day on entering an upper room he saw the spirit. She was in a white dress. It seemed as if an *electric shock* came from her eyes, and fixed him to the spot on which he stood. He saw her for a few seconds, then she disappeared. The above was taken from the accounts of the parties themselves, and finds a place here on account of the electrical effect described by the last person.

In 'Guardian Spirits' we find an account of a spirit by the sight of which the seeress was greatly terrified.

'He,' she says in answer to her magnetiser's questions, 'is a frightful object.' . . . 'The form of a man, dressed in a dirty countryman's frock, not very tall. His face, like his whole figure, is dark gray, inclining to black, it has no proper features, but is all rough and ragged. The eyes are like those of a bear; he appears to be bent and grown together in a shocking strange manner, a true monster; he has crooked club-feet, and a form crippled all over, with shockingly long fingers.

This spirit, it appeared, had been a monk in this life ; he murdered and buried five of his own children in the monastery. He also committed crimes of other kinds.'

This is very much like the *Afreet* of Egypt and the East, and the dark spirits mentioned by the *Seeress of Prevorst*. The *Afreet* is thus described in the 'Bahar Danush' quoted by Southey :

'He beheld a black demon heaped on the ground like a mountain, with two large horns upon his head, and a long proboscis, fast asleep. In his head the Divine Creator had joined the likenesses of the elephant and the wild bull. His teeth grew out as the tusks of a boar, and all over his monstrous carcase hung long shaggy hairs, like those of the bear. The eye of mortal form was dimmed at his appearance, and the mind at his horrible form and frightful figure was confounded. *He was an Afreet* created from mouth to foot by the wrath of God. His hair like a boar's, his teeth like a bear's. No one ever beheld such a monster—crook-backed and crabbed-faced, he might be seen at the distance of a thousand furlongs.'

My object in making the extract is only to show the resemblance between descriptions of wicked spirits of the same class, and the continuance of a belief in Afreets in the East.

Mrs. Poole's account, which may be found in her 'English Woman in Egypt,' is given in part in Mr. Howitt's 'Supernatural in all Ages' &c.

‘Mrs. Poole and her brother, Mr. Lane, took an eligible house in Cairo, but in a few days were greatly disturbed by continued knockings; and the servants began to quit them. Two maids left them almost directly. They said that the house was haunted by Afreets. They themselves were greatly disturbed by these knockings; and one morning hearing a noisy dispute between their servants, they demanded the cause of it, and were informed that there was a devil in the bath, that nobody had been able to live in the house for a long time on account of this devil; only one person, who had soldiers and slaves, had been able to hold out nine months; for the rest a month at most was enough.

‘This was agreeable intelligence, and it now came out that a former tenant of the house had murdered a poor tradesman who had entered the court, and two slaves, one of these, a black girl, in the bath. The Afreet continued among them by marching round and round the gallery leading to the different rooms as if in clogs, striking the doors as he passed as if with a brick. They hunted after him, but could detect nobody. One night a servant shot at the Afreet, and for some time they were quiet, but it soon began again. The loud knockings went on; *heavy weights seemed to fall* under the window of the room in which they sat; there were loud tramplings as in clogs, and blows on the doors and water-jars placed in recesses in the gallery. These

noises continued the greater part of the night, and one servant left after another. At length they were compelled to quit too; and Mrs. Poole, at the time of her writing, said that six other families had gone in, and were driven out again, their windows and their china being demolished even in the daytime.'

In the ghost-laying tradition to which I shall refer again, which describes a little residuum of dust or earth as the result of the process when successful, the effect is not said to be permanent. I have been told in Wales of spirits 'laid,' and their remains deposited under earth or stone, but after a certain period they re-appear and get worse than ever. This appears to be the case with the Egyptian Afreet. The Arab servant says:—

'The Afreet passed me in the gallery and repassed me; when I thus addressed it. "Shall we quit this house, or will you do so?" "You shall quit it," he answered, and passing me again he threw dust into my right eye. This proved he was a devil, and I wrapped my cloak around me, and watched the spectre as he receded. I stopped in the corner, and observed attentively his appearance. It was tall and perfectly white. I stopped and before it moved again, discharged my pistol which I had before concealed, and the accursed was struck down before me, and here are the remains." So saying, he picked up a small burnt mass, which my brother showed me afterwards, more resembling the

sole of a shoe than anything else, perforated by fire in several places, and literally burnt to a cinder. This the man asserted, agreeably with popular opinion, was always the relic when a devil was destroyed, and it lay on the ground under a part of the wall where the bullets had entered.'

The Afrit or Efreet, described in the note to Thalaba, would not appear to have ever been a mortal; but Mrs. Poole's statement, that the one shot at Cairo was supposed to be the spirit of a murderer, makes it probable that the Afreet is *always* the spirit of a wicked man, and that the translation of the first extract has been in some way erroneous. It is true that the Afreet of the 'Bahar Danush' resembles the frightful spirit seen by the seeress in 'Guardian Spirits,' and that spirit again had been, like Mrs. Poole's Afreet, a murderer during life. But there was a difference in the appearance presented to the Egyptian servant, who saw the form which he shot at, as a tall white figure. These differences of appearance will be better understood when we enter into the question of correspondence, and consider the different degrees of opening of inner vision in the seer.

There are many stories in Wales of haunting spirits which, having been *laid* by the intense gaze of those skilled in such matters, disappear, leaving behind them a little dust, which is generally buried. It is said that after this operation the spirit does not re-appear for

some time. I do not treat this with ridicule, because the same tales have come from so many different and unconnected sources, and because both the shooting of the Egyptian Afreet and the laying of the Welsh ghost may *possibly* bear the same interpretation. This 'laying' of a spirit is almost always done by the eye, and only some gifted individuals are able to perform the feat. Now supposing an earth-tending spirit to have covered itself in a partially material wrapping, the envelope, according to the statements of the seers, is held over its form by a kind of magnetic attraction possessed by the spirit. To dissolve the union between the spirit body and the semi-material particles polarised to it, as steel filings to a magnet, a contrary magnetism is required, and this is supplied by the mesmeric power of some person in the body. The 'shooting' may act as a decomposing power by changing all the atmospheric conditions about the earth-covered spirit, by which operation all the adhering particles are detached, and precipitated. On the supposition that the laying of these ghosts has consisted in detaching earthly particles from the spiritual form, there is no reason why the process of attraction and assimilation should not begin again, and a visible husk be assumed as before. This would account for the temporary disappearance of the spirits, and their re-intrusion again after a time in their old haunts. In the cases of 'laying' by religious rites, which are very well attested, I imagine the

process to be moral rather than physical, and to consist of an effect on the feelings of the spirit, by which it is induced to direct its thoughts into higher regions, and so to lay aside its earthly investiture. All persons who believe in communication with spirits say that one of the strongest motives that unhappy spirits have for seeking the living, is to obtain the aid of their prayers. Our own experience has strongly confirmed this. A case of this kind was that of the poor carpenter (p. 201), and I was then told that *to him* the higher spirits who would lead him in an heavenward direction were scarcely perceptible; he had known nothing while he was here of a state like theirs, and was unprepared to enter into it when he left this world; and as similarity of *state* in the spirit constitutes nearness, he was far removed from his guides, who were able to approach him only through the intervention of one in the body, with whom he was in a kind of *rapprochement*, and whose assertions he believed. While on the subject of 'laying' ghosts I may notice the strange old fiction, as it is considered, of laying them in the *Red Sea*. When we enter into the doctrine of *correspondence* into which spirit-language falls when it comes through a mortal brain, we shall see how significant is this apparently absurd idea. We shall find that Egypt typifies, both in Scripture and in all spiritual communication, the natural state, out of which every soul must be led before it comes into Canaan, the higher or truly spiritual

degree. These poor spirits are supposed, in their hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt or their desire to return to the natural state, to have passed over the boundary between the two conditions, and thus the laying them in the Red Sea is only a correspondential way of expressing their being sent back into the state proper for them.

A very interesting account of haunting may be found in the second volume of the 'Spiritual Magazine,' entitled 'Clamps in the Wood,' by Mr. Howitt. I have not the number containing the article, but can give, from recollection, a sufficiently correct account of the facts to illustrate other statements. I have also more than once heard them in Mr. Howitt's own words. The house called 'Clamps in the Wood,' stands in a lonely neighbourhood in Derbyshire, in a mining district. The spirits by whom this house is haunted are believed to be those of miners. According to the descriptions received by Mr. Howitt on the spot, these spirits present different appearances to different seers. To the grandmother, who saw them first, they appeared as *lights* issuing from the wall, moving about the room and returning by the way whence they came. These lights are about two feet high, and *in the centre of each is a brighter light, radiating and working outwards as rapidly as possible.* Compare this account with that of the person who saw the departed spirit (p. 128), and the instance (p. 257) in this chapter. After a time,

as the old woman's vision opened, she distinguished the forms of men within the external luminous atmosphere, and saw that they were *black and shining*. This is the appearance of men working in the lead mines. The son never saw more than the atmosphere of the figures, but took great delight in watching them, and called them his *glorious lights*. They were only visible in winter.

In many legends and histories of haunted houses, the spirits are said to appear periodically, at longer or shorter intervals of time. None of these haunting spirits are of a high order, though some are very low and wicked; while some are, like those at 'Clamps in the Wood,' quite harmless, perhaps even kindly disposed. But they are all more or less nearly allied to matter, and in some material circumstance one condition at least of their periodical visits may be sought for. It has lately been found that there is a *periodicity* in certain magnetic conditions of the atmosphere, under which also the aurora borealis is most frequently observed. Admiral Fitzroy gives the period of eleven years for a rise in the magnetic state, at the end of which time it is at its highest point, the same condition recurring at the end of another eleven years. The appearance of spots in the sun is said to be coincident with this highest degree. It has occurred to me as possible, that the recurrence of ghostly visitations may be traced to a similar cause as that of the aurora borealis, namely, the increase or diminution of certain magnetic conditions of the atmo

sphere. Readers of Reichenbach may remember that some of his sensitives, in whom the spiritual eye was shown to be partially open by their perception of the mesmeric stream from the hand, described a luminous appearance precisely resembling that of an aurora radiating and scintillating from the poles of a spherical magnet.

Many spirits are said to appear like those at Clamps, only at one season of the year, some every three, and some every five years. It may be that the atmospheric state which enables them to show themselves only occurs at these periods, and it is also possible that a certain time is needed for them to attract to themselves those particles by which they are rendered visible. The haunted house mentioned early in this chapter is said to be visited periodically, and the year in which the sounds and sights were witnessed was one of intense heat. Very beautiful auroras were seen during the summer, and thunder and lightning and various meteoric phenomena also occurred. Since that time the house has been quiet, but it is possible that the alterations and repairs made by the last occupant may have put the spiritual visitors to flight. This only time can show.

Among the lowest spirits are those whose mental state has been imperfect, and whose character has on earth assimilated them in some measure to the animals. We know that the brain of man and its animating soul contains portions similar to the brains of animals. Every man or woman has in his or her brain all the

fibres through which the animal instincts come into action—and *something more*. But the ‘something more’ is that which assimilates him to the angels. Now supposing the brain to be very deficient in all the higher portions of organic fibre, but to have the lower ones in fair developement, and of course in corresponding activity, the result will be a character deficient in the moral and intellectual qualities, but active in the animal propensities and feelings. This is the case with many idiots and imbeciles. They may be perfectly harmless, and even affectionate, and we may suppose that, when the spirit has thrown off its outer husk and covering, a more exalted organisation will succeed to the first, which indeed is like an imperfect machine, unfitted for the work it has to do on earth. But the first state of the soul after its change will be exactly that in which it leaves this world; and as every quality has its corresponding form, the conclusion is unavoidable that the unhappy beings in whom animal instincts and propensities greatly predominate will bear in the external of the spirit body the impress of its inner life. This, slightly modified, is the old Eastern doctrine. It is found among the Greeks, in Plato among the rest, and in many nations at the present time. An account was given to me, years ago, of an apparition illustrating this. It was seen by many persons in the beautiful region in which its appearance took place, and many persons in the neighbourhood attested its frequent

visits. But the one from whom the statement was received was an eye-witness of the phenomenon, a man who until that occasion had never seen anything of the kind, and who had neither any belief in nor fear of ghosts. He was a well-informed and educated man. From him I learned that one evening, as it grew dusk, he was walking along a country lane leading from —— grange to the village. His road lay on the hill side. He was followed closely for some paces by a large dog, white and reddish-brown. At first he scarcely noticed his companion, then, seeing that it was different from any of the dogs belonging to the neighbouring farmers, he turned and looked steadily at it. He saw that it was larger than a common-sized Newfoundland dog, and that its face bore some resemblance to a calf's, the reddish-brown being mixed with white on the face. As he looked, the creature disappeared, and my friend declared that a fear such as he never felt before, an intense horror, seemed to take possession of him. He reached his home with difficulty, and was ill from the nervous shock for a day or two after. This apparition was occasionally seen for some months; then, some workmen digging under the walls of —— grange, in order to enlarge the building, came upon a skeleton which, by the red hair, was taken for the remains of a poor imbecile boy who had once lived in the house, and who had disappeared in a suspicious manner, his removal being attributed, as happens in country neighbourhoods, to

anyone and everyone who could be supposed to have an interest in his absence.

I should not have ventured to repeat this story if it had not been attested by many persons, whose evidence was corroborated by my friend.

These earth-tending spirits are in every way disagreeable, as are spirits in the body of the same character. But besides the fear and horror produced by the sight of a *supernatural* object, there seems to be an effect produced on the nerves like a shock of electricity or a wrongly directed galvanic current. I pass from these very low spirits to others who may be harmless or good, and who are attracted to their friends by sympathy and affection.

We need not look for an envelope of material particles in these less earthly cases, for the conditions being favourable, a person whose spiritual eye is opened will always see those spirits with whom he is *en rapport*. As I have made this assertion before, I give two instances of it here, in which a spirit still in the body was seen by one bound to it by magnetic *rapport* and affection. The condition of being still in the body, and the shortness of time consumed in the whole occurrence, seem to preclude the idea of the vision being quite of the same class as those already described. I have the strongest possible evidence of the truth of the next instances, which are given without change of initials.

A lady, Miss F——, was ill in a distant part of the

country. A friend, Mrs. W——, who is, owing to some natural cause, in strong magnetic *rapport* with Miss F——, while visiting Mrs. N——, expressed great sympathy for the sick person and desire to give her comfort. Both Mrs. W—— and Mrs. N—— are the subjects of spiritual experiences. Mrs. N—— observed that her friend while talking looked for a minute or two abstracted and absent (Qy.—Was the word *absent* first applied in this sense?), after which she conversed as before. The time was well marked: a few minutes before four o'clock, the dinner hour. On the next morning, or that following, a letter came from the mother of Mrs. W——, in whose house the invalid was living. The writer said that on the day in question, while lying down at about four o'clock in an upper room, she heard her daughter's footsteps up the stairs, and then saw her pass along the passage and enter Miss F——'s chamber. Although Mrs. W——'s back was towards her mother, the seer had a perception of her face. Neither walls nor doors offered any obstacle to the mother's vision; and the dress, hat, and mantle described in the letter, were those which Mrs. W—— wore, and which had not been taken off during her conversation with Mrs. N——.

Another very remarkable example of the same kind, proving the strong magnetic affinity between the same two ladies, has lately been told me by Mrs. W——. Miss F—— earnestly longed to receive the communion

in the little village church in the place at which she was staying ; severe illness, however, prevented her leaving the house, and a kind sympathising friend who was with her suggested that, by turning her thoughts in the right direction she might receive as much benefit in the spirit as she would have done by being present in the body to partake of the Lord's Supper. This Miss F—— did, and such a calm and peaceful state ensued, that she quite ceased to lament her inability to be present. But on the very day on which the sacrament was given, Mrs. W——, between two and three hundred miles off, had a vision of Miss F—— sitting quietly in her place in the little village church (which was very *dusty*), waiting to receive the rite.

These are confirmations of Swedenborg's assertion, that sympathy with, or even thought of, a person produces presence in the spirit-world, and the spiritual state is subject to the same conditions. It thus becomes easy to explain the many instances of appearance of those just gone or going, to friends whom either they love, or with whom they wish to communicate. The state of a spirit *immediately* after quitting the body, before it has undergone any of the future changes for better or worse, is so like that of many spirits in the flesh, which, like that of the lady mentioned last, are easily detached from their earthly covering, that the occurrence of similar phenomena in both states is quite intelligible. I have heard it said by seers, to whom the

appearance of spirit still in the body is not uncommon, that they can always tell when one has entered its future home, by the absence of a *line of light* which forms the electric chain connecting the spirit with its tabernacle. This agrees with the statement in p. 131.

When living persons are able thus to show themselves to those whose sight is opened, they appear to those with whom they are present in the body in a more or less abstracted state, the degrees of which vary from an apparent reverie to a deep magnetic trance. And if the mother who saw the sympathising visitor pass to the sick room had not had her spiritual vision opened, nothing would ever have been known on the matter, except Mrs. W——'s expressed wish to give comfort to the sufferer.

The following incident was well known at the time of its occurrence to a large number of persons in India. It is a striking instance of the presence of a departed spirit caused by its last wish to see a near relative. The story was given to me by an Indian officer, whose father, the seer, was also a servant of the Company. My informant received it from more than one of the gentlemen present, who made notes of the circumstance at the time. The initials are changed.

The regiment to which Mr. C—— belonged was stationed near a little village up the country, and in the hunting season parties were formed, who on returning from the hunt breakfasted at each other's quarters. One

morning, when it was Mr C——'s turn to receive his friends, he awoke at daybreak, and saw the figure of a woman standing beside his bed. Being quite without fear or superstition, Mr. C—— concluded at once that the appearance was produced by some ocular delusion. He sat up in bed, rubbed his eyes, and expected his visitor to depart. But she still stood there, and he, being determined to settle the question, got up, crossed the room to the washing-stand, washed his face, and, turning again to the spot, saw the apparition still in its place. He went up to the figure, recognised her as his sister, and exclaiming, 'Good God!—what brings you here?' swooned away.

Mr. C—— was unable to join the hunting party that morning, but made breakfast for his friends on their return. While they talked of his inability to go with them, he set down the teapot, and, with his hair *literally* standing on end, pointed to a spot in the room where no one present could see anything. 'Is it possible,' he said, 'that none of you see the woman standing there?' His friends declared that the place was quite vacant, but Mr. C—— went on, 'I tell you all she stands there, and she came to me early this morning. She is my sister —— whom I left in England. I am confident we shall hear of her death. Each of the gentlemen present made a note of this assertion. As soon as news could arrive by the mail, Mr. C—— heard of his sister's death, and of the earnest wish expressed by her before she left

this world, that her brother would take charge of her two children. The two sons were brought up by the uncle.

In the recently published *Memoirs of the Rev. J. Leifchild* is the following account of an apparition at the time of death. It seems to have been caused by the affection of the departing spirit for his own family, to whom his thoughts reverted before his final departure from this world. Mr. Leifchild, the writer of these memoirs, says:—

‘I give an account of an occurrence which soon after befell my aunt, for the truth of which as an event I can vouch, but of which I can offer no solution. She was standing in a little shop fronting the street, while a customer was being served. On a sudden her absent son passed in the street before her, and as he passed gave her a look of recognition, which so surprised and overjoyed her, that, forgetting everything else, she rushed into the street after him. When there she could not see him, and concluded that he had gone to the alley which led to the Abbey (my father pointed this out to me, and the place of apparition), and meant to hide himself awhile. We all went in search of him, as soon as we could assemble, but could not discover any trace of her son. My aunt then concluded that she had seen his spirit and fell seriously ill. I noted the circumstances in writing at the time and pondered over them.

‘A few weeks afterwards my father came to see us, and my aunt truly divined his errand. He had received

a letter from the captain of the ship in which her son was sailing, stating that the unfortunate lad had fallen from the mast and fractured his skull. While lying on his deathbed he directed the captain to write to my father, whose address he named. The dates of this misfortune and of her hallucination corresponded precisely. The deceased was a clever, amiable, and handsome youth, and his mother never completely recovered her animation after his death.' *

It is very desirable in this inquiry, to find instances of reappearance in which the complete identification of the spirit by one having the faculty of mediumship may connect the spiritual manifestations with that world into whose partially opened door we are trying to get an insight. Such, given us by words, is the experience of a friend whose interest in the phenomena is well known to a large circle of inquirers, to whom also his name, if it could be given, would be sufficient guarantee for the truth of any narrative, however extraordinary. The medium or seeress is a lady whose gift consists in remarkably clear vision in every degree. The bright letters in which the spirit appeared to write his name will remind the reader of the inscription read by Miss L—— in the crystal.

Another very interesting feature of this case is the introduction of a new law, that which governs names and associations, as an element in the question.

* Vol. ii. p. 21.

‘Some few years ago I was in frequent communication with a friend, a clergyman, who was much interested in geology, and who had some original views connected with the causes of the various changes discovered in the earth’s surface. After a month had elapsed, during which no letter reached me from him, I received an intimation from his family of his sudden death. On the evening of the day on which this intimation reached me I was engaged to meet a friend at the house of a lady who had given some very convincing proofs of her power to communicate with those mysterious beings, or powers, commonly known as “spirits.” I was desirous of testing whether a spirit lately entered upon the spirit-world could or would immediately communicate with a friend on earth. I therefore adopted the following course. Having conversed for about an hour upon indifferent subjects, I at length asked the lady if she saw near me any spirits whom she had never seen before? After waiting a few seconds she replied that she did see two or three, all of whom had only lately entered the next world. She then described the appearance of one, whom she said called himself B——, and who intimated that he had died a violent death. That this person was then dead I was not aware, but some weeks afterwards I discovered that this statement was true, he being supposed, at the time of his appearance, to be a prisoner in the East.

‘The second spirit the same lady described as looking

older, rather tall, and with a clerical appearance about him. But she remarked *that he did not know how to communicate with her*, as he was evidently ignorant of the very elements of the laws by which spirits in and out of the body can exchange ideas and thought. After a few minutes' disappearance the same spirit reappeared, and with him the spirits of two eminent *Geologists*, both of whom had before communicated with the lady whose powers were being thus tested. By their evident direction (according to the lady's description), my friend then wrote letters and words, which were described as light brilliant words, and said, "When on earth I was known as the Rev. — —, of — —," and then he added that he had much now to tell in connection with a scientific problem (in which we had been much and mutually interested), and which problem his change of state had enabled him, in a great measure, to solve.

'The principal points of interest in this investigation appeared to me to be : first, that the young lady did not personally know the clergyman in question, nor did she know of his death ; secondly, the Christian name, surname, place of residence, personal appearance, and profession of the person, were correctly given ; thirdly, the immediate reference to a scientific investigation which we had ceased to write about only when he died ; fourthly, the fact of his finding a difficulty in making his thoughts palpable to the lady, or, in other words, in communicating with her, until he was taught how to

do so by those more experienced than himself. Thus appearing to indicate that there is a law in these matters and conditions which must be fulfilled, just as certain laws must be obeyed in all sciences, in order to obtain constant results.'

Within the last few years an incident involving some amount of evidence occurred among the circle of friends mentioned as having been deeply interested in the manifestation. A member of one of the families was taken away. Some little time after the name was given, as in many other cases, with accounts of the spirit's progress and state. One day the appearance of a light which was said to be seen by two persons, and which was asserted by the writing to be occasioned by the presence of the spirit, excited some attention, and a letter was written to Miss S——, at that time in the north of England, telling of the occurrence. *The day after* this letter had been sent, the spirit told, through the writing, of having been to see friends on earth, and among others named Miss S——, who was said to have been visited on the Friday before at twenty minutes after eleven in the evening.

Q. '*Was it in a dream?*'

A. '*No, she was awake, and I think she saw my atmosphere.*'

It will be remembered that no part of this had been communicated to Miss S——, from whom, however, a letter came in answer to the one sent, from which the following is an extract:—

‘What you tell me of the sight seen by —— and —— determines me to mention a little incident which I hardly liked to name to you, thinking it too slight to trouble you with. One evening last week, I was sitting alone by the parlour fire rather late, about eleven I think, thinking of —— and very earnestly wishing to see her, or some indication of her, and wondering, as Swedenborg says that “thought is presence,” whether my musings would have brought us nearer each other. I was conscious of a *very* strong desire to see her, and exclaimed involuntarily, “Dear ——! *Can you give me a sign?*” or something to that effect, and looked up. At that moment I saw a round golden light, silvery at the edges, a sort of dazzle rather than a shape (the writer afterwards described a rapid radiating or corruscating appearance in the light, of which other instances occur in the course of this narration). Having looked up so suddenly, I fancied it might be the sudden movement of the eyes that had created the appearance, especially as I doubted whether —— cared enough for me, to be likely to give me a thought. It was but of a few seconds’ duration, yet perfectly plain, and reminded me of a magnificent golden rosy glow I had seen, but *then* with my eyes shut (though wide awake), after my father’s death.’

In the ‘Spiritual Magazine’ for January 1863, is a very interesting letter from the father of a young, innocent, and happy spirit, whose affection for his

earthly friends led him to give a farewell look to them before he sought his new home. From long acquaintance with the family I am certain of the good faith of the narrator, and can have no doubt of the accuracy of the statement. It will be seen that in *this* appearance there was nothing painful or horrifying, but that the idea of sunshine was connected with the visit of the spirit on the seer's mind. Mr. Barth says :

‘ On May 14, 1861, our son George, a most excellent and religious youth of 19 years, was removed from this to the spirit world. Perceiving that the time of his departure was near, his mother and I alone watched by his bedside. When the last breath had been taken in and expired, I quietly remarked, “ He is now gone.” His mother inquired the time, and then, seeing the rising sun shining over the blind of the room, which had an aspect to the east, she said : “ See, the natural sun is just rising as our dear boy is rising to his heavenly home.” I have an object in noting the rising of the sun at the moment of his departure.

‘ Mr. Williams, a highly intelligent and worthy man, is united to our eldest daughter. At this time he was staying at his house in the city, his wife having been only a few days previously confined. He was sleeping in a room the windows of which faced the east. He states that he was soundly asleep, his hands outside the bedclothes, when he was suddenly aroused by feeling each of his hands firmly grasped and pressed. He

instantly sat up, and by the bedside stood George, holding his hands, and smiling in his face with a look of peculiar sweetness and kindness. George was attired (seemingly) in his night-dress. Mr. Williams was not at all alarmed; he knew it was George in the spirit, and his presence filled him with a calm feeling of peace and happiness which remained for many hours.

‘They thus held hands and looked on one another for a minute or longer, then the grasp relaxed, and George’s spirit faded away. Mr. Williams noticed that the rising sun was shining into his room over the blind. His impression was and still is, that he saw George by this light and not by any other. At 8 o’clock, Mr. Williams went to his wife’s room and told her, in the presence of his mother and the nurse, that George was dead. “Have you heard from my father?” was the natural query. “No, but I have seen George, he came for a minute this morning at sunrise.” Mr. Williams, finding that his wife was quite incredulous, for she did not believe her brother so near the end of his earthly life, only quietly repeated what he had said, and expressed his belief that a letter would be received from Mr. Barth. In an hour later Mr. Williams received the letter which he expected.

‘Mr. Williams and George were mutually much attached, in all his boyhood anxieties his brother James was George’s confidant and friend. Hence a parting visit, and a parting smile, and a last friendly grasp of

the hand was that which a departing spirit might be glad to give to his friend and brother, but he could not go in the body, nor give it while his body kept him.'

'There is little, very little in this narration to those who sneer "at the credulity of some people" who mistake the coincidence of a dream with a death for a fact; but there is much, very much in it, much matter for thought and speculation to those who can believe the apparition to be a genuine reality. Was George seen? Were his hands felt? Why did he come in his night-dress? Why could he not stay or speak? These are all serious queries, and many other serious questions might depend on the replies, if we could ask and give them. If the evidence be accepted, it proves that the spirit lives on when the body is dead. The spirit was able to be visible and tangible, it had form and features spiritually resembling those left on the bed. How did it pass through the intervening space of three or four miles? Why did it go away, and where did it go to? Answer these queries, and next comes, Where is this spirit now?

'George appeared twice afterwards to a lady at Highgate, walking into her dining-room at mid-day, and bringing with him two of her spirit children, one in each hand. He was grateful to her while in the world for many kind attentions. The lady saw him quite distinctly floating a little above the floor with her two dear departed children, and smiling on her. She knew

at the time they were all three spirits, but they gave her no alarm. . . . George also appeared to our friend and former servant Anne, who lived with us as cook for twenty years, and now resides at Hounslow. He appeared to her at her bedside in his night-dress, before she heard of his decease.

‘A few nights after the funeral, a Mrs. H—— who was an inmate of our house, and who was sleeping in the next room to George, often visited him at night if she heard him coughing, and did many kind attentive acts, was awakened by hearing most extraordinary and beautiful music. (George was a fine pianist and musical enthusiast; in fact his devotion to music hastened his removal from this state.) She got out of bed and opened her bedroom door to listen, wondering that my two girls should be at music at that hour, but all was quiet. She went back to bed, and presently the music recommenced, wonderful music she says. She got up and opened her window, and saw by the gaslight people walking about, but the music was not in the street. Again she listened in the house and out of the house, and the music ceased. When she was quiet in bed it recommenced and she fell asleep listening to it. Whence came this unearthly music? * * * GEORGE BARTH.’

The last instance is in the words of a mother who received comfort from the vision she describes, from whose own writing it is here copied.

‘On the —— of —— it pleased the Almighty to

remove from us our greatly beloved child Anne, after a severe illness of about three weeks. For long after I could not alas ! reconcile myself to the bitter thought that I was never more in this life to behold her who for nearly eight years had been the object of such tender care ; at length one strong desire took possession of my mind, namely, that I might see her in a dream. Day after day it seemed strange that she who was ever present to my waking thoughts should never be present to my imagination when asleep. At length I laid open my heart before the Lord who commands us to make known all our requests to Him in prayer. I made it a subject of daily supplication that he would grant me this consolation, but week after week passed, month after month and my petition was still unanswered, and I began to fear it was a presumptuous prayer and not according to His will. Under this impression I cast myself again before Him, declaring these my doubts, imploring forgiveness if I sinned, and once more as if for the last time offering up my petition. This was nearly seven months after our sad bereavement. That night I went to bed and to sleep, when towards morning it appeared to me that I awakened, the room was quite light, and on looking towards the doorway I beheld three figures, the two outward ones were clothed in long loose white dresses, and on their heads, completely covering their faces, were white hoods. Between them stood my blessed child, clothed also in white, but her head and

face were uncovered, and her fair hair long and in waves upon her shoulders and sparkling with light, as was also her face, where heavenly joy and happiness were strongly marked. Her head was thrown back and her eyes raised towards heaven; nor did she cast one look upon the earth. Her affections seemed placed on things above; where her treasure was, there her heart was also! It appeared as if she had unwillingly left her heavenly abode, and anxiously longed to return to it. She was raised a little above her companions; her feet were not visible, but seemed as if wrapped in a white cloud. Her face and form were just what they had been when she inhabited this earth, and yet there was this remarkable difference that she was every way larger and the countenance was expressive of a more matured intelligence than could belong to one so young. There was, besides, an indescribable something not belonging to a world of sin and sorrow. I was in the act of stooping forward in order to gaze more earnestly on this lovely vision when all disappeared and I saw nothing but the light of day shining into the room.'

In the lowest class of spirits we find the strange and hideous forms. Among those who are not evil, though held to earth by the recollection of earth-life, as also in the recently departed, are the spirits who are recognised by the dress they wore when in the body. These last, the 'ghosts in costume,' have excited a great deal of ridicule; but their appearance may be readily

explained on the principle to which I have adverted in the chapter on *The Home of the Spirit*. We have, in speaking of the manifestations, said that 'Whatever the impressing spirit thinks, the medium sees,' and the same idea may be conveyed by saying, that, as every thought or feeling in the earth-life leaves its impress on the soul, that soul, when it becomes the body of the spirit, has only to recall the memory of any particular condition to produce the appearance desired. An instance of this may be found in the officer's uniform and the antique ring shown to the medium Jane, and recognised by the wife of the spirit.

The lower the spirit, the more material are its conditions, and the more *easily* and outwardly is its appearance impressed on the seer's eye. Sometimes indeed, it seems as if little more than external sight is required for the perception of the apparition. But as we rise in the scale, we find that the internal sight or vision of the soul must be opened. The spiritual eye is needed to discern the objects of spirit-life, and every ascending degree in the next state requires for its perception, a corresponding increase of internal vision.

It is a noteworthy fact too, that in all these manifestations the sensation produced in the seer is one of pain or pleasure corresponding to the state of the spirit and its nearness to, or exaltation above, this earth. The low, haunting spirits, produce headache and a sensation of horror, of which an example was seen in

the witnesses of the phenomena in the haunted house, and in the statement of the gentleman who saw the apparition like a calf, who was seized with a horror such as he had never felt before. The sceptical man J—— felt a painful electric shock. Mr. C—— fainted, but, whether from surprise, or the earthly tendency of the spirit, I have no means of knowing.

But Miss S—— derived nothing but pleasure from the light that dazzled and scintillated before her spiritual eye; Mr. Williams, to whom the good and pure young George Barth paid his parting visit, '*was filled with a calm feeling of peace and happiness which lasted many hours;*' and though the mother, whose lovely vision of her child is last in the series, does not speak of happiness, her words express the delight she felt in the answer given to her anxious prayer.

Having already spoken of the magnetic state of the atmosphere as a possible condition in the production of these phenomena, we may indicate to future observers the *hour of day* as an element in the question. It may be that, as dark midnight, and the sun's absence are favourable for the appearance of the earth-bound spirit, the bright sunrise, as in the case of George Barth and the mother's vision, is both a favourable condition and a natural correspondence for the appearance of the rising angel.

Its full and specific meaning is seldom, if ever, given,

to the Apostle's description of the kinds of bodies in which spirits of contrary direction are clothed. 'As is the earthy (like earthy material) so are they which are earthy. And as is the heavenly (spiritual essence) so are they which are heavenly.'

CHAPTER XIII.

CORRESPONDENCE AND DEVELOPEMENT.

ALL the various communications which I have ever seen, professing to come from spiritual sources of a higher character, agree in stating that no true knowledge of the nature of spiritual impression can be attained without a clear idea of the agreement by *correspondence* between the natural and spiritual worlds. That this truth involves a doctrine which at first sight appears mystical and imaginary cannot be denied. It is, however, intelligible enough, and as certain as any branch of knowledge which can be deduced by well-marked steps from indisputable principles. The very clear explanation of correspondence given by Swedenborg has not received the attention it deserves, partly perhaps from the *positiveness and great copiousness* of his style, and partly from the difficulty found in apprehending the reality of the doctrine by those who have had no conscious experience of spirit-life. But after the inquirer has found, as we did, that this principle of correspondence, and *this only*, furnishes a key to the

difficulties of all spirit communication and inspired writing, he cannot do better than turn to the pages of the neglected *Mystic*, where he will find a coherent explanation of a system of which only the very simplest elements can be given here.

It has been partly the object of the foregoing pages to show that every human being has within himself different degrees of life to be developed and matured in succession. Within the body is the soul, which, according to the teaching of Scripture, passes away at the first change, death, and, animated by the spirit, becomes the body of the next life. And the spirit, by which name we recognise the intensest life now known to us, is to become external as we approach the higher states. In this world, impressions made on the soul through what is called *memory* remain, and pass with it into the next life (for if this were not the case, our conscious identity would be lost); and, being gradually radiated or thrown off from the centre, they become the external of the spiritual being. Thus we see that the *internal* of the man, is the *external* of the spirit, and extending the principle from individuals to the mass, we find that the inner state of the material world forms the outer or phenomenal form of the spiritual sphere. Every feeling or thought hidden in the depths of the spirit, passes with the swiftness of lightning into the soul, and thence by the nerves into the body, where it is manifested by its appropriate action. Between each of these

different degrees of feeling or thought a resemblance or correspondence exists, so that, to a person in whom the spiritual degree is opened, as in a state of clairvoyance arising from mesmerism or accidental trance, that which is *felt* in the material body shows itself in action in the soul or spiritual body, because, in the internal state, the soul is seen as the body of the man.

Clairvoyants always assert that their perceptions resemble those of persons immediately after death, when the soul has become the body, and the entranced person holds converse with those dwellers in the spirit spheres with whom he is in harmony or affinity.

Thus the whole of the inner spiritual world, underlying and pervading the world of matter in which, as in a husk or shell, it is enveloped, must correspond to its external in all its details, as soul to body and as spirit to soul. A few instances from the visions and writings already repeated here will illustrate this truth more clearly than any explanation. The clairvoyante girl * who mentally visited the house at which my friend was dining saw one gentleman 'looking' at her mesmeriser, while the other was 'pointing' to herself. She had no idea that the process of mesmerism and the curious phenomena she exhibited were the subject of conversation between the gentlemen, nor could we, when afterwards told of it, imagine the how or the why of what

* Page 48.

she described, till a better knowledge of correspondence furnished the key to her vision.

The symbolisation will undergo a greater change but will be more complete in itself, as the lucidity of the subject increases, or, in other words, as he rises to a higher state. The young lady* who described the two little children in a beautiful garden, wreathing a lamb with flowers, saw then heavenly or spiritual bodies; and their surroundings corresponded to the state of happiness and innocence in which she found them. Flowers are always spoken of by the spirits as the correspondence of the first natural truths of the spiritual world—the wreathing them together is the combination of this knowledge; and the dressing of the lamb symbolises their adding this wreath of spiritual growth to the innocent purity of their own hearts. If this is thought fanciful let it be remembered that she spoke it as she saw it, and that similar imagery has been seen by all mediums and seers, and explained in all instances as I have explained this.

If the different degrees of spiritual and material perception were not very distinct in life, we should be always in danger of confusing the perceptions of the two states, as is indeed sometimes done by imperfectly developed clairvoyants, who cannot tell whether a scene is presented to the bodily or the spiritual eye; and who

* See page 51.

are often reproached for falsehood when they describe truly what they see.

The seer to whom the fair young girl Ellen appeared among green slopes and ferns, and by the rose bushes, saw her in the abode which the feelings and memories of a pure young soul had prepared, for each of these objects of external nature correspond to some spiritual state. I shall be able to make this clearer in speaking of universal correspondences and representations.

I have said how greatly we were at first puzzled by the seemingly discordant statements given through different mediums on the condition and progress of spirits, and how it was gradually found that the same fact was asserted by all, though clothed by each writer or seer in the imagery peculiar to himself. How, in short, the brain of the medium, or rather that of which it is the organ, qualifies and lends its own type to the elementary truth. We had also found that, to enable a spirit to communicate through a friend on earth, a certain amount of resemblance or agreement of character was indispensable; so, whether the imagery presented by the medium's mind be simple or elaborate, the impressing spirit must not only be able to enter into it but to carry it out through all its adaptations and combinations. If the *thought only* were imparted, it can hardly be supposed that, as in the case of rapping or tilting, and even of writing, every letter should be given, and corrected if not properly transmitted. But that any

thought can exist in the mind, unclothed in some form, has been doubted by many philosophers, and is positively denied by all spiritual seers; and this denial is supported by every fact connected with clairvoyance and spirit mediumship. A lady of great intelligence and truthfulness, who has carefully observed the working of her own mind during spiritual impression, declares that with every change of thought and words she is conscious of a series of images or pictures passing through her brain. Our word *imagine* has arisen from some dim perception of this truth; and the word 'idea' is derived from the Greek *to see*, for spiritual sight corresponds with earthly knowledge. I must not, however, venture to advert to language in connection with spirit, for proofs of the spiritual origin of words are endless, and not till we ascend to the first divine stream whence all the rivers of tongue have flowed over the earth's surface, shall we be able to arrive at a true philosophy of language.

We have reason, then, to believe that the spirit or communicating power is cognizant of *all* the different forms in which truths may be conveyed through a variety of mediums, but that each medium is chosen for a special quality which enables him to transmit the sentiments required. In this world, ideas conveyed from one person to another must always fall into language comprehended both by speaker and hearer, but the same thought would be expressed in very different terms to a child and to a philosopher, supposing the speaker

able to perceive and meet the requirements of both minds.

If, therefore, we in this life thus adapt our speech to the hearer, how much more must this adaptation be required when the communicant is raised a degree in existence above the recipient. For the language is different. In the case of communication from spirit to mortal, the *imagery* or *ideas* contained in the medium's brain takes the place of words. And each medium furnishes a different capacity for the transmission of feeling or thought, and a different *vocabulary* or series of images, in which to embody it. But, by what we have already seen, both elementary thoughts and varieties of imagery must exist in the mind of the higher being, and as we have seen that in the next world the *subjective* becomes *objective*, both are real existences in that world, in which all thoughts and feelings are realities more glorious and more abundant than the external objects of the material state.

Swedenborg treats of the subject of correspondence at length and with great clearness of illustration, but even while he shows its value as a key to the difficulties of all inspired writing, he is quite aware of its obscurity. Mystical and obscure as it is, the notice could not be omitted in a narrative of the manner in which spiritual knowledge is believed to have been attained by gradual steps from material manifestations. Every vision seen, and every communication made, has been set forth in

such imagery as could be explained on this principle of correspondence and representation, and became intelligible and coherent on this principle only; and every explanation given has declared that the place and condition of every being in the world of spirits takes its form according to the law by which the external of one state agrees with the internal of that below it. Many persons will be able to recall deep and vivid dreams, in which they have felt themselves near to lost friends. Perhaps a river has parted the dweller on earth from the dweller in heaven, or perhaps the spirit in the body has looked up at the liberated bright ones, who stood above on an ascent which he could not climb. This is a common experience illustrating the law. Whenever a true correspondence can be traced in dreams, the imagery will be found to be qualified by the state and character of the dreamer.

The language of symbolism or correspondence, then, is the language of spirit in its communication with material beings; and the character of the symbolisation, besides being modified by the mind through which it falls, is also subject to variations of form, as the more and more internal degrees of spirit-life are opened in the recipient, whether by writing, drawing, vision, or any other form of communication. This process of *opening* from the outer to the inner, or, if we choose, ascending from the lower to the higher, takes place with every kind of variety during the developement of

mediumship. But though there are varieties in the developement of individuals, one orderly law of ascent, which may be traced in each person's experience, prevails. When raps or movements have been given for months through a medium, they will sometimes cease suddenly, and their place will be either taken at once by another form, such as writing, or the whole influx departs; and when it returns again after a season, which the medium feels to be a blank, will reappear with great energy in a higher mode of manifestation. After the medium *Jane* had been the channel for the transmission of raps for many months, the sounds ceased and her hand wrote, 'There will be no more raps in this house : they have done their work and been of great use ; but we must now turn to higher things.' This could not be ascribed to Jane's own will, for while the rapping mediumship lasted, she was taken notice of by many of my friends, and more than one person, not perfectly certain of her good faith, offered her money to reproduce them. The experience of many mediums will confirm this fact of cessation and reappearance. I am not sure, however, that the disappearance of a lower phase of mediumship on the appearance of the higher is universal, for Mr. Home, besides his more wonderful gifts of vision, hearing, &c., seems also to have the same remarkable external manifestations as he had years ago. Something of this may be due to his having been born with all the conditions of a medium, while in most

persons they are a gradual growth. It is the fact that those whose spiritual education has begun on the most material plane, are carried up higher and higher, till the most internal state of which the subject is capable is reached, and as each degree is opened, the manifestations in those below it usually disappear. The original magnetic or physical condition necessary for impression of any kind, is *one*, perhaps the sole element possessed in common by the inspired prophet and the table-moving medium. It is of the upward process that we have now to speak, and we will suppose it to begin on the lowest plane. After it has been found that a person is endued with medium power of an external character, the form will sometimes change suddenly and quickly. In such a case I have seen every limb thrown into strong convulsive action, as if the unseen influence must permeate every nerve and fibre before the power wielding it could obtain full control of the wires of the human electric telegraph. A sleep or trance often ends the process, which is of the same nature as the ecstasies and convulsions occurring during revivals and in times of religious excitement. After the spirit has thus taken possession, its presence is manifest in all the different ways described. This action on the nerves seems to be the *physical* part of the unfolding, the operation by which the harmonious action of spirit and body is established; but much more is yet to come.

When the process of developement has begun in a heaven-seeking soul, the road is far from being smooth or strewn with roses, for the living spirit within, tending outwards from its central stream, meets those channels of impression from external nature whose images are the types of its essential thought and feeling, and a struggle often ensues, before spirit, soul, and body can be made to act in unison. If we hesitate and ponder over this, deeming it a mere fanciful metaphor, let us compare the process of which I have spoken with those of which indeed it is the higher counterpart, namely the two first stages of earth-life. All are equally holy and wonderful, and if I have called the spiritual developement the higher, it is only in obedience to the recognised law of gradation from matter to spirit.

In the first state of earth-life, the nine months of organic existence, the vital germ draws from its surroundings nourishment whereby the new being is formed which, on entering this world at birth, casts off the envelope through which the component particles had passed into the frame. Then a fresh process of attraction and assimilation begins, lasting through *this* life, till, on its entrance into another state, the body, that material residuum or envelope, which has served the same purpose as the former, but for which there is now no farther use, is thrown aside. The uniformity of these two processes has been touched upon before in considering the birth into spirit-life: I bring it forward again in illustration

of the spiritual developement, by which each one ought to be, and at some more advanced time will be, prepared during this stage of existence for an entrance into the next.

The internal attractive force corresponding to the germ of animal life, then, is *spirit*, which, as the seeress says, is '*begotten from God.*' And the surroundings which are to convey nourishment to this infant spirit till it reaches the full stature of a son of God, are the thoughts, knowledges, and feelings gathered by the attractive mental powers from the whole Book of Nature. The soul is as a mental and moral storehouse, supplying material to the spirit from its garnered harvests; and by the quality of ideas, images, and feelings with which we nourish and invest the heavenly germ, we determine our future angel-rise in the world of light, or descent and extinction in the Abyss of Darkness.

The conscious developement of spirit-life in a medium differs only in *degree* from the less strongly marked spiritual experience gone through by all souls upon earth. The two ought to unite and run in one stream as in the case of Swedenborg, who would have been held in honour for Christian goodness and scientific acquirement even if he had never risen beyond the material plane, and seen the forms of all his earlier intuitions in the spirit-world. It is of the conscious developement of spiritual action that I have now to speak, and, having slightly sketched the nature of developement as it has

been imparted by the unseen teachers, to give what account I can of the sensations accompanying the process, from the descriptions of those who have experienced it.

A very interesting account of such an experiment is given by a lady who signs herself 'Comfort,' in a letter to Mrs. Newton Crosland. It is so much to the purpose, that its entire omission here would be Shakespeare's grandest play without its chief character.

'It is just a year since my hand was first guided by spirit-power to write. The discovery of this new influence dwelling within one, and softly propelling the hand to write words and sentences foreign to the ideas existing within one's own mind, must certainly be one of the most astounding moments in a human life. I know that to myself the surprise was beyond description, especially as I had been very sceptical regarding all that I had ever heard of "spirit-mediums." It is true I had *heard* only of spiritualism and its manifestations through table-tilting, rapping, and occasionally of writing, but had never seen nor had communication with any spirit-medium until this mysterious influence showed itself in our family circle, first in a younger brother, and then in myself. We had for years believed in the phenomena of mesmerism, and I immediately felt that this was a kindred phenomenon. The surprise and interest excited by the discovery it is scarcely possible to describe.

'Of the true nature and of the sacred mysteries to

which the writing, or, in fact, any branch of mediumship, tends; of its dangers, its trials, and of the laws which guide the developement of spiritualism, we were all then entirely ignorant, and to this utter ignorance must be ascribed several months of the most painful bewilderment and extremest distress of mind. Had we been enabled to profit by the experience of other mediums, my early initiation would probably have been of a far less painful character; but there must be the pioneers in all new discoveries of untrodden lands, and happy indeed those who through suffering are enabled to save others from suffering! The first communications written thus mysteriously through my hand, and with ever-increasing sensations as of a most powerful mesmeric influence over my whole frame, were given, as usual, in the names of beloved departed friends and relatives, and were simple messages of affectionate greeting. Believing that communications proceeding from a higher state of spiritual developement than that of our earth, must be heavenly, pure, and true, I of course at first implicitly believed every word written by the spirit-power, believing also every word *literally*, not even *symbolically*. Little were we any of us aware that the intensest antagonism between truth and falsehood, between light and darkness, encounters the astounded and unprepared pilgrim upon his first entrance into the realm of spirit. The very slightest veil but separates man in the natural world from the

spiritual world, which encircles him; and when that veil is raised, as it has been occasionally by the Divine wisdom in many previous ages, even as now in our own time, the soul discovers itself surrounded by a host of new and terrible enemies, as well as by hosts of all-powerful angelic friends. But the language at first even of the angelic host is an incomprehensible mystery, for it is a language of symbols, which the newly-born child of spirit learns to construe only by slow and painful degrees.

‘Within a fortnight of the day when spirit-mediumship first came through the writing to myself, a gradual and marked change in the communications had set in. Painful messages connected with the temporal life were written, instead of those simple greetings of love from departed friends, which had first arrived. At the same time with these temporal communications came also very lovely explanations of various passages in the Gospels which had always been obscure to myself, and the most earnest commands were given to pray unceasingly to Christ as the Saviour and to trust in the Almighty’s “eternal love, mercy, and peace.” The darkness was to come. Angelic love, however, hastened to place as guides in the hands of the ignorant traveller the staff of prayer and the lamp of faith. By-and-by the messages became more and more painful, more and more temporal and exciting in their nature, because connected with my own family circle and

dearest friends. At length, written in the beloved name of a departed brother, came announcements of the approaching deaths of those dearest to myself, accompanied with the most painful details, and with directions for all the various medicines which would be required to ease their approaching change. . . . The physical mesmerisms upon me at this time were extraordinary; I felt frequently as if enveloped in an atmosphere which sent through my whole frame warm streams of electricity in waving spirals from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet; and occasionally, generally at midnight, I was seized with twitchings, and convulsive movements of my whole body, which were distressing beyond words. All these symptoms at length came to a crisis in a frightful trance.'

The writer recovered from this trance, went into the country, and regained a calmer state of mind, with a return of physical strength. She continues: —

'Being too much distressed at the issue of my first experiment in spirit-writing, I was not inclined to return to it, even had I not given my solemn promise to avoid all relapses into the mysterious experience. And thus several weeks passed on. Soon, however, I discovered that the mesmeric life was, though latent, still an ever-present guest within me, a guest who would assert his presence. My hands, either the right or left (for the influence affected both nearly equally), if lying passive on my lap, or upon a table, or book,

would begin to be moved to write ; often half a word, or a whole one, or a name, would be written before I could stop them. I found that the tip of my finger placed upon a flat hard surface, would convey ideas and sentences to my brain, as though words were written through the finger instantaneously upon the hard surface. I hardly knew whether I felt the words or read them. Also, strange knowledges regarding the medical properties of plants and their spiritual significations came to me if I held them or rubbed them upon the palm of my hand. I felt as though my palms had become clairvoyant, as in fact I had in an earlier stage discovered that the region about my heart possessed the same singular faculty when the point of my fingers was pressed against it.

‘The strange idea thus began to dawn within me, that revelation of the most sacred and spiritual knowledges can come through many other portions of the body than those usually employed to read printed books or even the book of Nature. I began to perceive that the fleshly tabernacle is of so wonderfully spiritual a constitution that every portion of it can reflect the knowledge of the external world through its walls for the edification of the indwelling soul, its guest, whilst the soul can call forth from the invisible world knowledges unrevealed to the ordinary senses, and pour them through every portion of its tabernacle for their manifestation to the external world. This was a lovely

belief, and came in the train of many other beautiful ideas, clearing away much which had been always stumbling-blocks in my entire belief in the Scripture, and the possibility of *immediate* revelation. But pain, darkness, and terror accompanied the light and the beauty ; and I did not then, nor till long after, arrive at the blessed assurance that antagonism is, under the divine command, one great means of all progression, especially in spiritual and mental things. These new trials came in terrible words, referring once more to those deaths so much dreaded by myself, being written *within my body*, spite of my most earnest struggles against the power, sometimes when my eyes were closed. The words were written in white or grey lines upon a dark ground. I felt them within my eyelids, or upon my breast, or within the palms of my hands. I found my physical organism become a mystic book upon which an unknown most subtle and omnipotent power could write His will. These words would often fill me with the greatest horror, and, to prevent their being inscribed, I have many and many a time started up and walked rapidly out into the fresh air, using every power of my mind to withdraw myself entirely from the inner into the external life ; but in vain : a power far mightier than my own will had commenced its lovely mysterious work within me, and was moulding my mind and body into that mystic organism for which we at the present day have no other term, or perhaps dare use no other,

than medium of spirit. So many of these organisms are being developed at the present time, that it is the bounden duty, especially of medical men, to calmly and philosophically investigate the phenomena. . . . But to return to the inward spiritual writing. The writing developement, no longer permitted to find its natural outlet through the hands, had now become *inward*. But painful as this was, and produced by a checked effort of nature, still a fresh spiritual manifestation developed out of it, the mediumship of *drawing*. Together with the inward written words or sentences, now came single figures and groups of figures, all in outline of white or grey upon a dark ground; the explanations of which were written above their heads, beneath their feet, upon their robes, or on scrolls in the heavens, or upon the earth, upon their hands, upon their swords and shields, or even sometimes as if proceeding from their lips. I could not wake in the morning without these figures instantly being drawn within my brain, over and through my heart, or within my hands. They were at once a torment and a delight—they were such a wonderful experience, so new, so awful, often of the most portentous nature, and had a character about them very much akin to Michael Angelo's Creation. Three groups I especially remember—the “Descent of the New Jerusalem” (a majestic woman clothed in wonderful draperies studded with jewels, and wearing many crowns, and a singularly

beautiful breastplate), the "End of the World," and the "Last Judgement." Also a less majestic figure painfully affected me at this time. Waking in the night, the strange drawing process instantly commenced, and I felt and saw within me the figure, whose countenance greatly resembled that of Christ, descending from a morning sky towards me, and bearing upon his shoulders a large cross, whilst from his lips proceeded these words, "Love, Mercy, Peace; but not till after death." Again my soul trembled with anguish, for that strange portentous word *Death* was ever written within me or without.

'About this time I took a pencil one day to make a sketch; and whilst talking to a friend who came to speak to me at the table where I was drawing, my hand rested listlessly upon the paper before me for a minute or two. To my surprise, my hand was moved and began drawing, *not* the design that I had had in my mind to make, but a little head, and then a very curious initial letter, like, and yet not quite like, an initial letter in some old missal. I was surprised indeed, as I had never heard before of spiritual drawing. This, surely, could not bring with it pain like the writing, nor yet bewilderment. How little did I comprehend the new class of instruction which was now awaiting me! The first drawings were very rude indeed, like the uncertain tottering lines of a child, and also singularly resembling the designs of the very early

Italian painters—heads of Christ, angels, and curious female figures seated within spheres and hearts; and always these drawings were accompanied with strange ornaments of spiral and shell forms, with dots and scroll-like ciphers, which I thought odd at the time, but only months afterwards, when accidentally referring to them, discovered to be the first undeveloped attempts at writing one of the “spirit languages,” so frequently I know to be referred to in your book. . . . At times the power was withdrawn, and some other branch of spiritual developement would take its place. Often, too, when I most earnestly desired to have a spiritual drawing given me, nothing but the merest scribble came. The fear also of the bewilderment of the spirit-writing accompanied me for several months whenever I drew, for at times my hand, while drawing an angel’s robe, would have written through it, in curious ornament or pattern upon the drapery, words which made my soul die within me. There was always that terrible word *Death*. At length, through God’s blessing, and in His own time, the key came to me. What was this word when translated into the language of heaven — not of earth — of immortal, not mortal thought? *Change* — change of state—of life—a birth into another life! And then many words and sentences began to assume other significances than those we generally assign them. And ideas of most lovely new truths gradually unfolded themselves, and old truths breathed upon by spirit were

no longer dry bones, but clothed in the blooming freshness of immortal life. But all had to be learnt through prayer, faith, love, and obedience. . . . COMFORT.'

In this instance we find a narrative of the different stages of the process in the order in which they were developed in a graceful, sensitive, and highly educated mind. But it retains its general features in every case that I have seen; or rather, whenever the development is to be *complete*, and the influence of the highest character. Of this more in the chapter on Inspiration. In the first instance come the names of dear friends and relations, and even in *their* varieties a law of affinity may be traced corresponding with some of the higher and more hidden degrees of our relationship to each other and to our Heavenly Father in the spiritual church or mystical body of Christ. To this wonderful *affinity* I will if possible return. And not only are the names of those near and dear to the medium given, but numbers of ancestry of whom the writer has perhaps never heard and with whom there has been no attraction of affection; the magnetic *rapport* of family descent taking its place. When a question was once put to the influences giving these names, as to the *reason* of their visits, the reply was, 'We shall meet you in that order in the next life.' And do we not enter *this* life welcomed by the nearest? It is only a regular developement of the same law that brings the dearest as the nearest—first the family

* See *Light in the Valley*, p. 114.

affections which are next to earth, then affinities which have less of the material and more of the spiritual element. With the near relations, or sometimes, when there are none, almost taking their place, come a tribe of strangely mixed influences of the most incongruous kind, and from these are received numberless false and contradictory statements. I believe these spirits to be of the class described by the spirit (p. 205) as gossiping worthless beings who gladly take the opportunity of a return to earthly companionship. These are the *débris* in the valley, which must be passed before the mountain can be ascended; and the only safeguard, the staff on which the traveller must lean as he traverses the rugged path, is unbounded faith in the Heavenly Guide and Saviour. After these seemingly purposeless writings, come another series, of a class a degree higher. Each of these is signed by some name which may be considered a generic term for some species of *intellectual* influence. Of these are the Byrons, Shelleys, Goethes, Luthers, and others; they bear some kind of mental relation to the medium, and take that part in his spiritual developement which is represented by his ruling mental quality. Again, they have to give place to a higher order of influences, emanating from beings whose personality is lost in the names of those holy societies to which they are sympathetically bound, for the spiritual as well as the material world is governed by the laws of orderly affinity. Thus *Love, Hope, Comfort, &c.*, are the

names given in the more advanced stages of influx, and, even as in the earlier times of the world's spirit-history, a Name higher and holier than all has sometimes been attached to the counsels of Love and Purity. I hesitate to mention this, from the apprehension that those from whom the things of the spirit are as yet hidden may think that I deal lightly with the holiest of subjects; but when we remember how often, in the last days of good men and women on earth, the visible presence of the Lord has been granted to the inner sense, we must be content to receive the fact with reverence, and to trust to time for its explanation. Whenever the name of Christ is given in writing, or the form is represented in drawing or vision, the description or picture is exactly that image which the medium's mind has been accustomed to contemplate as the likeness of the Saviour.

'Comfort' has spoken of the fact that most mediums whose aspirations are high, and whose state and progress is guarded by *earnest prayer*, are told of their own approaching death and that of their friends. But as all the language used by the higher spirits is correspondential, this is liable to great misunderstanding if interpreted literally. Unless it be a real prediction, by a spirit still very near earth, of the material change of the medium, the death foretold is that withdrawal of the soul from its earthly loves which must precede its regeneration. The material death may be truly foretold by a low spirit whose clairvoyance resembles that

of a person in the body, but such a spirit never gives any but an earthly name, and its character has been already sufficiently dwelt on for recognition. But the *death* foretold and insisted on by the higher and purer influences is that 'death unto sin,' of which the Apostle Paul writes, and which is followed by a new birth unto righteousness. The prediction of death, then, is the announcement of the first step in a journey whose every portion has its distinct phraseology in the symbolical language of spirit. That soul, whose religion is of an intellectual and moral character, is said to be still '*sojourning in Egypt.*' All the trials, backslidings, and encouragements attending a rise into a higher spiritual state, are marked, as the events of a weary pilgrimage through the desert. I have known many instances of this, and have heard a medium or clairvoyante asked to describe the spiritual state of a person, when, without any previous reference to the language of Scripture, the answer, if a verbal one, has been couched in words borrowed from the journey of the Children of Israel to the Land of Promise. Egyptian darkness, Egyptian bondage, and the Exodus into the Heavenly Canaan, are not merely historical facts of Scripture, or fanciful allegories thence derived by Bunyan and by the early Methodists, but are true symbols, having their deep internal sense in the very heart of our spiritual life, which *is* life *itself*.

There is an element in the process of developement,

which requires deep attention, for it will be found to throw light on all questions connected with spiritual influx. Each developement, in whatever form it takes place, consists of stages or series, corresponding to the flowing and ebbing waves of influx, of which the regular *fanning* already spoken of, is a miniature representation. At the commencement of each series, or at the beginning of the whole, come visions or writings, in which are embodied, swathed up as it were, in simple and perhaps grotesque form, the whole of the series of revelations which are to follow. It is as if the teacher should say in simple words, 'I am *going to teach you on such a subject.*' Then the outline or epitome of that subject is set forth; the chrysalis form is shown in rough and bold but undeveloped state. Gradually, and in its own order, each portion is drawn out, and a series of pictures or writings, showing the forms and relations of all the parts, is made; and at length the most perfect tracery, the most delicate shades of which every touch has its meaning, form the whole into a symbolism as wonderful in its perfection and coherence as the grandest allegory ever composed. I do not mean to imply that either the execution or the imagery is always beautiful or perfect, but that, with reference to the medium's power, the coherence of the symbolisation and the relation of each part to the other is *complete*.

Mr. Wilkinson, in the course of a description of drawings by the hand of his wife, says :—

‘Since I commenced giving this narrative, a new developement has shown itself in the nature of the drawings. The flower forms have ceased, and churches, temples, and buildings, have been drawn, and after being sketched my wife has been impressed to begin to paint them, which she has done already with some success, being told in writing what colours to use, and feeling the brush sensibly moved through her hand. . . .

‘In all the drawings, from the commencement to this time, there is markedly *a series of progression or developement, so that the whole of them are wanted to tell the story they would convey to us.*’*

I may refer to the drawings of ‘Comfort’ and to those of Mrs. William Wilkinson in full confidence that all persons who have carefully examined both will see how fully they confirm my words.

In its more outward bearing it is exceedingly interesting to watch the progress of a spiritually drawn picture. Its growth from the smallest original germ, its gradual expansion, and enlargement at the extremities or circumference, might suggest thoughts to a physiologist on the production of perfect forms from a simple cell. The first mark which appears under the pencil is perhaps a dot. This is gradually increased till it becomes a large circle, from which other circles are expanded. The first becomes a head; the last, body, arms, and legs; and in every portion of the figure, when

* *Spirit Drawings*, p. 34.

complete, may be traced its derivation from the original germ in the first expansion of the circle. Often the process is more complicated and curious, and the unsuspecting artist is made to depict many forms, each complete in its kind, before he arrives at the last. And throughout the whole drawing every part, which has been traced, shaded over, and erased, till it assumes the *last form given*, contains within itself or has passed through a whole series of correspondential figures, rising from the lowest to the highest degree which is arrived at, or which the medium's mind is capable of transmitting. It seems that in spirit manifestation nothing stands alone or without direct reference to its 'antecedents and sequents.' So we do not find any drawing or vision without meaning, or without the characteristics which mark its place in the scale. The different degrees must be passed through before the guiding influence can arrive at that one which is to be represented.

Hence many drawings (and every phase of mediumship partakes of the same character) are prophetic, rising from the present to the future state of the subject. Some are retrospective, having their subject and origin earlier than this state and time, reaching it gradually, and perhaps even passing beyond it. There is a peculiar *interference*, if I may so call it, to which all medium developements are subject. This arises from the introduction of a fresh influence, which we must suppose to be more powerful than that moving the hand or

impressing the vision, and which at once takes the place of the controlling spirit. A hand may be moving to draw part of a series of pictures, descriptive of some spiritual truth. A stranger suddenly enters the room—the images alter at once, and not until something is drawn plainly intended for the new-comer, does it become evident that *his* state is now the one illustrated. The efflux from the more recent sphere has overpowered the former guiding influence. This impression by atmospheric efflux seems to be perceptible sometimes in the natural degree in other spiritual gifts, and to give the power of seeing the antecedents or the futures of those with whom the seer is in magnetic relation. The well-known story of *Zschokke*, who saw all the former life of a young man whom he met with accidentally, is a case in point. *Zschokke* says that it often happened to him, while talking with a stranger, to be so impressed in this way that the words and features of his companion were hardly perceived, and he seemed to himself as if contemplating, in a kind of dream, the person's whole foregoing history.

I believe that this impressibility to atmospheres which constitutes a medium is possessed by gypsies in a great degree. The gypsy as often tells the past as the future of the person consulting her. But she has the clairvoyante perception usually in the *natural* degree, like *Zschokke*, and this distinguishes her '*fortunes*' from the visions or drawings of a spiritual

medium, through whom they are given correspondentially. I once asked a gypsy *how* she saw the fortune by looking at the hand. She began to tell me a long history about planets &c., which I cut short by talking of crystal visions. 'Ah, then,' she said, 'you know as well as I do. We see it all *in ghost*.' 'All at once?' I asked. 'No, as the things come, one after another, in clouds; but differently with different people.'

It is more difficult to trace the developement of spiritual hearing than of the other forms, because, except to the medium himself, the progress cannot, as in the case of the drawing or vision, be made apparent to others. I have been told of strange sensations at or below the pit of the stomach, and an extraordinary unformed gurgling rising up till it reached the head of the medium, when it seemed to form into a clear and audible sound. The conflicts and struggles described in all these processes are not absent in this form of developement, and, as in the others, they are of two kinds, or rather degrees; one being produced by the antagonism, in a physical sense, of the bodily organs to the spiritual action, the other, the constant combat between good and evil by which every step of the road must be conquered and held, in the process of regeneration. Many persons, when the *mediumship* is established, hear often a tempting insidious whisper prompting to evil, and, following this, the voice which is recognised as coming

from the angel-giver of all good counsel. Literally the 'two Voices.'

The observation of this fact ought to be turned to practical use. It is not at all uncommon for confessed murderers to declare that they were urged on by a *whispering voice* to the commission of the deed. Such assertions cannot palliate guilt, but they are numerous enough to claim serious attention, with a view of ascertaining both the nature of the phenomenon, and the conditions which favour its occurrence.

In the instance of the hissing whisper heard by four persons at the door of the haunted house, there was every reason to believe the spirit of so *very* low and earthly a character, that none of his most unpleasing demonstrations required an internal opening for their reception. His voice was like the whisper of a wicked degraded being in the flesh, yet had enough of that which was unearthly to show that it came from no mortal being. The dæmon of Socrates was an instance of a guardian spirit, but its efforts seemed to be confined to warnings, and the mediumship, as far as it is recorded, did not rise much above the commonest manifestations.

In the developement of *hearing*, the order in which the names of impressing spirits appear is the same as in the other forms of mediumship.

To give an idea of the immense variety in *drawings*, *visions*, and *hearing*, is impossible, for their number is,

as the varieties of feelings and perceptions in mediums, modified by every degree of opening between the material and spiritual states.

All this will sound absurd and fantastic enough—but the chronicler who narrates experience truly, and tries thence to deduce a theory according to which all the phenomena may become intelligible, must not be afraid of a few startling assertions. The announcement of most useful discoveries has been as startling to minds unsuspicious of their causes, and perhaps as opposed to scientific conviction, as are these guesses at spiritual laws to the advanced science of our time. But scientific men must not forget that till the first facts in any study have been ascertained, inquirers are not in a position to judge of inferences. Let the first experiments be tried; we may then argue fairly about conclusions.

A more complete view of this subject of correspondence in its relation to mediumship, may be gained by altering the light in which it was first looked at. I have tried to show, that both by reasoning from the phenomena, and by the assertions of the unseen influences, we are led to conclude that the world of spirit is as the vitalising and forming *soul* of which the outer world is the material husk. If this be so, it follows as a consequence that every object in creation outlies and typifies its animating cause in the world of spirit. And so every created thing represents some

spirit-power, each *power* being a modification of the one great central force, whose origin is in the will of the Most High.

Each mind has its own peculiar set of symbols, but there are some representations common to all, for all have perceptions of nature, and elementary spiritual truths, in common; and the correspondence of natural objects with universal spiritual truths cannot be confined to individual perceptions. A few of these universal symbols have often been used in the writings and drawings, and by tracing them through all their combinations, we shall find that the laws regulating the spirit-world are, *in their degree*, the perfect counterparts of those governing the universe of matter. It could not be otherwise, as a little thought will show, but these truths are little suspected. When, for instance, we hear the yearnings of friends for those who are gone, and the painful anxiety with which they ask, '*Shall we really be together, and recognise and love each other, in the next life?*' it is plain that they have not made their own the grand fact, that throughout all creation sympathy and affinity are the only bonds of union; and dislike and unsympathy the powers that repel and create distance. That which in matter is chemical attraction and affinity, in spirit is love and sympathy; and when men's minds are in a condition to compare the two, I believe it will be found that every property of matter, ascertained in every direction of

scientific inquiry, has its corresponding phenomenon in the inner world. Not to multiply instances needlessly, I will mention one or two universal symbols; the thought can be traced out by each one for himself; but to some minds, the combinations will occur readily, while to others the idea will seem valueless. The perception and appreciation of different truths appear to depend on mental elements, whose proportions and combinations are shown by the form of the brain. In the next chapter I shall try to glance at the subject of phrenology in connection with influx.

- The most important, as it is the most universal spiritual symbol, is the Sun, which is used as a representation of the Divine power in its direct action on the spirit. In other words, it typifies the LORD the *Living World*. I once asked a spirit impelling the hand of a child, ‘*How does Jesus Christ appear in your world?*’ It was written, ‘*He gives the life to our Sun.*’ At this time the statements of Swedenborg, though known verbally, were unintelligible to me. But I soon found a wonderful agreement in all *good* spirit communications on this subject. We are told in the Revelations that in the sphere to which the holy John was raised in his glorious vision, ‘*The Lord was the light thereof.*’

A very little girl who had the gift of vision was once describing to a friend and myself what she saw. We had listened with great interest to her description of very beautiful imagery, wondering at the symbolisation,

of which the little seer never suspected the meaning, when she said :—

‘*Now I see the Sun, and in it a most beautiful face.*’
‘*Whose face?*’ we asked. She hid her own and replied, *that she must not say the name*, but that she should soon see something more which would tell us. She was silent for a minute or two, then said :—

‘*I see a very kind-looking man sitting down with some dear little children beside him. One is on his knee, and he is kissing it.*’

No child could have invented this vision with its gradual descent from the high internal degree in which she saw the Word as the divine life-giver, to that in which He was manifested to her spirit as the Saviour who loved and blessed the little children. This child was too young to have been taught any doctrine about the divinity of Christ. She had been told to obey and trust Him, but beyond the natural love which the gospel narrative inspired, her belief was of the simplest possible kind.

The Sun of our system is conjectured to be one of the many centres round each of which circle systems of worlds. Inasmuch as from the sun of each system are poured down the life-giving rays on surrounding worlds, we trace in it the material of which our Father’s love and wisdom constitute the internal soul; and of that love and wisdom in its action on our own spirits we find the embodiment in the Son of God, the *Word made flesh*. From this central type all others may be traced. As

the sunbeam falling on different objects is divided into its component rays, so that one thing reflects the red, another the blue, and another the yellow light, with all their varieties of combination, so is the action of the divine light, the *Word*, upon all spiritual natures of every degree, and their appearance in the world of spirit is according to laws exactly parallel with our laws of optics. The evil spirit who is always seen as black or grey, or of a leaden colour, cannot reflect the light of heaven which, being received according to every possible variety by the heaven-tending spirits, gives every possible variety to their appearance. The loving nature reflects the red element, the intellectual the blue, with all their intermediate shades and degrees. Let anyone listen to the description of a clairvoyante in a high degree of spiritual developement, and he will receive a fuller and more convincing illustration of this law of correspondence than any I can give. The young lady who 'found' the two children often gave wonderful explanations of her correspondential visions. But her knowledge was gained from spiritual sight and not from education. She always described herself as passing from one degree to another in a series of ascents. In the first she went through lanes, groves, and gardens, like those of earth, 'only clearer and brighter and *more real*.' Then she rose one degree and entered the gold and silver garden, in which all the colouring of the vegetation was of the brilliancy of metals. Her last and highest degree was

the jewelled garden where all the plants and trees, gloriously clear and delicate, shone with the rich splendour of diamonds and coloured gems. In all these she told of the spirits who dwelt there, and the explanation of this wondrous imagery formed one of the most beautiful and coherent lectures I ever heard. Every portion of the dress of these dwellers in the spirit-spheres shone with the glow and colouring reflected from the 'Light of the world;' and not only the robes, but the crowns, clasps, and gems had each its own special significance, whether in relation to the part of the spiritual body which it adorned, or to the Sun whence all the glory and splendour was derived.

Of the same character is the following vision of Elizabeth Squirrell, published in the 'Spiritual Magazine' for May 1863.

'The first time I saw a spirit, or into the spirit-world, was on the afternoon of the third Sunday of my illness, when I had a vision, but of such glorious beauty and truth, that I can render but a faint reflection. I was only twelve years old when this vision occurred. . . . An hour before the vision I had as little conception of what was awaiting me, as if I had never even heard of existence beyond the natural one; I had always, however, considered intercourse with spiritual beings possible, but this was wholly an intuitive conviction. I will describe, as well as I am able, my first vision, and you will then have some idea of the nature of all my spirit-seeings.

‘I have always looked upon that first vision as the truest and most beautiful of all the spiritual scenes I have witnessed. It came to me when I was in an agony of mind consequent on a dread of death which lay on me continually for many days like a nightmare. I thought I was a great sinner, and that because of it God could not love me, and I imagined, whenever I thought of dying, hell with all its horrors yawning at my feet. On the afternoon of the day of my vision I lay on my sick bed in unusual weariness and listlessness of body, but with the fullest and deepest tranquillity of mind. I was so peaceful that I could have fancied myself on the eve of an everlasting rest. There was no gloom of doubt hanging over my soul, no fears brooding within it, nothing came between it and its glorified Redeemer. Everything about me tended to enhance this pure celestial joy. It was early evening, and within my room the sun shone, not with his most vivid glory, but with a gentle fervour. The part of the sky visible to me where I lay was of a stainless blue, while in strong relief to its thrilling clearness stood ranged, as far as my eye could look, a long line of tall green poplars. By my bedside were seated my father and my brother. I had held a long conversation with my dear relations which had exhausted me, and I had lain quite calm and still for many minutes in order to recover myself. As I lay thus unmoving with my eyes closed, my friends, thinking me asleep, suspended their talking,

and throughout the apartment there was a dead silence. I was, however, thoroughly awake. I was so far from being in a dreamy unconsciousness, as to be almost preternaturally wakeful, and being painfully cognisant of all surrounding objects and motions.

‘While lying in this still and thoughtful position, my attention was suddenly arrested by distant sounds as if of human voices singing. These voices were indescribably sweet and mellifluous, but carried to such ethereal heights as to induce in the listener a “tremulous felicity of fear.” I listened with my whole soul and sense absorbed in what I heard. The singing ceased not for many minutes; and when it did cease, such an excessive brightness of light so filled and illumined the whole room, that my friends were hidden from me, and I only saw one unspotted space of colourless brightness.

‘A moment it remained full and fixed, and then it parted and dissolved on either side of me, while I felt as if rapidly ascending upwards higher and higher. I seemed to ascend with full consciousness about me, until I felt as if finally leaving the earth and winging my way to God, and with a mortal’s fear I shook with amazement and apprehension. As I faltered, my ascent was stopped, and I stood in a small enclosed space with nothing remarkable about it save one very large window which fronted the place where I stood, and through which was pouring a flood of brilliancy utterly overwhelming. I seemed to wait here a long while, and

feeling that I was in His hand, I prayed to God that if it were His will to show me further of His mysteries, He would enable me to endure their presence without shrinking. Before I had ended praying, I was aware of a presence beside my own in the place, and looking up I beheld a person of majestic mien and stature, gazing on me with looks of anxious and troubled tenderness. He did not speak until I asked him fearfully and humbly, "Where am I? Tell me, I beseech you, Sir, to where am I brought?" "Ah poor distrustful child," replied the spirit, "can you not trust in Him when your God is pleased for an instant to separate you from your earthly friends and habitation? But come with me, for I have much to show you, *but if you fear, you cannot receive any truth aright.*" I answered that I would have courage, and taking me by the hand he led me up a long and narrow ascent, on the top of which stood a large mansion. A house it certainly was, though unlike those we inhabit here. It appeared reared of the choicest and fairest marble, was vast but most exquisitely proportioned, and altogether lovely and pure in appearance. An extensive portico was supported on either side by four colossal pillars, each of which was thickly studded with what seemed diamonds; the entire top of the portico was wreathed about with white blossoms. As we neared this lovely palace I grew too happy for containment, and cried out with rapture to my guide : —

“Surely this is the house called Beautiful! it must be angels alone who could dwell here!”

‘On entering this lovely palace to which my spiritual guide had brought me, a scene burst on my bewildered gaze, which could not be depicted so as to be realisable by any except with the pen and spiritual knowledge of an angel. Of its solemn grandeur, mighty vastness, and surpassing glory and beauty, I can give no adequate description whatever; did I make an attempt, I should be only wasting words in vain speech. We were ushered into what seemed a temple, for an immense concourse of persons were assembled as if for worship. I can give you no idea of the space occupied by this assemblage, or of the number of the assembled. The former appeared to be illimitable, and yet to be travelled over at a glance, while the latter was so great that the mind could not calculate it. The persons of the assembled were all so perfect, pure, and beautiful, that I felt assured that I was in the midst of a company of that heavenly host we read of in Scripture as “encamping round those that fear the Lord.”

‘Every individual of this vast congregation was arrayed in a garment of purest white, while girdles of gold encircled their waists, crowns of gold their heads, and each held a book and a stringed instrument. On the latter they with one accord performed, accompanying the music with their voices.

‘I, a poor frail child of earth introduced into such

hitherto unimagined glories and felicities, stood still, speechless and afraid, not daring to utter a word. My guide saw my amazement, and, taking me aside, spoke unto me as follows. "You are afraid," said he in tones of great severity. I dared not avoid a reply, and said, "Forgive me! You are a spirit, perhaps indeed an angel, and such scenes as these are your daily meat and drink. With me it is otherwise." To this my guide replied: "You ought as a Christian to possess unlimited confidence in the good providence of God, knowing that all things shall work together for good to those that fear Him: not even a sparrow falls to the ground without our Heavenly Father's notice; He has numbered the very hairs of our heads. But come," added he, "come with me: we must give you spiritual instruction, and so help you to gain the necessary confidence in our Lord." And again taking my hand, this spirit led me into an apartment, small, but the perfection of beauty and order. In this room a few persons were convened, bearing a close resemblance to those of the larger congregation. In the centre of this group, and in the attitude of one who teaches, stood a man of most solemn and heavenly bearing. Before him lay an open book, apparently the word of God; his right hand reverently grasped its leaves, while at intervals he stooped and touched it affectionately with his lips. The preacher, for such he evidently was, was descanting on the love and wisdom of God, as seen in the

creation and preservation, and then in the redemption and regeneration of man. I listened breathlessly, for the words seemed as if spoken exclusively to me: I listened, and presently my terror had fled, my assurance was full and unbroken. Presently the preacher ended his discourse, the assembly dispersed, and again taking my hand, my guide led me forth into a place or state even more glorious and grand than I had seen. There were mingled young and old, all uniting in perfect peace and harmony, although variously employed. Some were formed into groups, whence they sang and read together from the word of God; some were dictating spiritual exercises and lessons, while others were instructing little children in the way and work of God. Every individual was beautiful—not one deformity of face or form was distinguishable of all the myriads that were here convened together. Every face was a sure index of its possessor, and reflected back nothing but the light of a pure, holy, and loving soul: none were unemployed, all were in happy joyous activity. There were no bickerings, no angry contentions; here each acted towards the other with perfect charity and love, and with all meekness, patience, and gentleness; wisdom and intelligence in their brightest array beamed from every eye and sate upon every brow. There was no subject of a moral, spiritual, or celestial interest, of which they could not converse, and with the fullest understanding of what they uttered. I can still remember

the substance of what they spoke; but to reproduce it in their own language, would be beyond a mortal's power. Whilst I waited in this heavenly abode, a company of spirits came round me, and, conversing gently with me, gave me much spiritual counsel, and even temporal advice. They told me the nature of my illness, and what would be the best treatment for me to receive. They assured me of many strange conditions of body into which I should relapse, and of much persecution and contempt of which I should become the subject. "But," added they, "be assured that everything will ultimately tend to the glory of God, and to the progress of your own regeneration."'

In this last description of a vision, which seems to have closely resembled an awakening after death, we find the order of developement the same as that given by Swedenborg and other seers—the hearing first, then the vision. This is the opening from within outwards, not, as in the growth of mediumship, the gradual penetration from without to the inner sense. The *window* opening on the second degree is an example of the kind of symbolism so often mentioned.

Water is one of the symbols common to all mediums and seers, and all agree in assigning the same meaning to it. It is *truth* in every degree, whether forming a stream or river to be crossed—which is a new truth or degree of knowledge gained before another state can be entered—or springing up as a fountain, such as the

young spirit described as having risen up in his house.

The good spirit, whose face Miss L—— recognised in the photograph, first announced his presence by drawing a well, from which a man was winding up buckets of water. He said that he had been '*working hard, drawing much water and drinking some.*' His ideas of spiritual life while upon earth were possibly very different from those which awaited his earnest, truth-loving mind on his entrance into the next life.

I have spoken of the *Exodus*, and must recur to it, as to other forms of symbolisation, in treating of the correspondences in Scripture. But there is one other image equally common, the fitness of which will be at once recognised. Spiritual developement, as has been said, is in its degree a process like birth in the material plane. If, therefore, the law of symbolisation holds good in all its relations, we must expect, by tracing this correspondence into its different relations, to find the material symbol answering to mediumship. And no one type, through all the range of experiences, is used so often as that of a child. I have known very many persons, who, before the opening of any spiritual degree, have wondered at the number of times they have dreamed of young infants or little children. Everything connected with the care and growth of infants gradually appears in these dreams, and the appearance and character of the little subjects of the dream corre-

spond to the kind of mediumship about to appear. It would require many pages to enter fully into this most wonderful yet most coherent portion of the subject. Let it be remembered that the promise of a child is the prediction of a spiritual opening in an individual, and then it will be seen how deep a signification is borne by the prophecies of Scripture on the birth of Our Lord, Himself the focus and embodiment of all spirit-life in its descent on earth. In the language of correspondence, the birth of a child typifies the growth and unfolding of the spirit. Had the followers of Joanna Southcot been able to interpret this inner tongue, they would not have brought ridicule on themselves and their cause by confounding the symbol of spirit-life with the conditions of the outer world.

Such visions as those of Elizabeth Squirrell partake of the character of dreams, of which it seems the place to speak here. I believe that it will be found that the conditions under which dreaming takes place are very like those of some other forms of mediumship. The dream is an opening, in a greater or less degree, of the inner sense during sleep, and to gain some idea of these degrees of opening, we must consider the phenomena of clairvoyance. It generally happens, when change of state is complete, that the clairvoyante forgets on awakening what has been said or seen in the trance. But this must depend on the *completeness* of the opening or closing; I have heard a clairvoyante say, ‘De-

mesmerise me thoroughly when you awake me: I do not wish to remember what I have seen when I awake.' And impressions are often made, the effect of which remains on awaking, though the clairvoyante has *then* no idea whence they came. All mesmerists would confirm this. I have seen a girl who had an habitual nervous catch when awake. In her lucid state she promised her mesmeriser that she would not twitch her arm. When awake, she found herself unable to do so, but did not know what prevented her. In these cases the change of state seemed to be complete.

I was once told by a patient who remembered everything on awaking that in her case the streams of mesmerism only went a very short way into the brain. Had they penetrated to the top and back of the head—she pointed to the organ called firmness—all would have been forgotten.

All these degrees of penetration and opening of the inner sense, with the remembrance or forgetfulness, may be applied to dreams. I know many persons who, on going to sleep, feel a sensation like *fanning* or mesmerising. After this they are impressed in different degrees, sometimes only having a kind of idea, sometimes a dim vision of scenes and figures following each other and melting away in turn like dissolving views, and sometimes falling into a sleep more or less deep, in which all the scenes and pictures become more vivid and real. In the deeper state resembling trance, the dreamer

enters as a clairvoyante into the spiritual state, of which the incidents are probably more often forgotten than remembered.

On the *physiological* conditions by which these remembrances are regulated I will not presume to give an opinion. They must be investigated by those whose scientific knowledge of their brain and nerves will give them an excellent foundation for experiments in the higher branches of psychology, when attention is systematically directed to the meeting-point of the two. It is quite certain that deep spiritual dreams are sometimes recollected, but in this case they may perhaps be called trance visions. Such, too, are those in which the dreamer or seer seems, like E. Squirrell, to pass from one state to another by well-marked degrees, each state being a farther advance than the preceding, into the spirit-world. Of this kind are those which are sometimes remembered as a 'dream within a dream,' and on awaking the outer dream is remembered, but the inner dream sometimes lost. 'I once,' said a friend, 'wished much to understand some spiritual truth which seemed to me to defy explanation. One morning the whole of what I wished to know became quite intelligible; the difficulties had disappeared, and a clue unsuspected before seemed to have been given. I could not help connecting this enlightenment with my dream of the previous night, or rather morning, in which, after going through a gate, I found myself walking in a pleasant

field. Beside me was a much esteemed friend who had lately left this world, and, as he walked along with a bright countenance and elastic step, I wondered that he whose death had so lately caused our sorrow, should be so well and strong. My companion opened another gate, telling me that he was going to take me to a house hidden behind some trees, where some friends of his would give me what I wanted. I was conscious of great delight in the society to which I had been admitted, but remembered nothing more, and the awakening was sudden and complete. It hardly seemed as if I had slept at all.' This last remark reminds one of the return to outer life from clairvoyance, when the mesmerised person will often feel quite certain he has never been asleep. The first gate in the dream implied the change to a state like the spirit's most external one; the other gate which he opened was a degree still deeper.

Many really prophetic dreams arise from the opening of a degree in which some spirit conditions, such as the substitution of *state* for *time and place*, are attained, but the dreamer, still among objects of this world, is in the situation of an earthly clairvoyante. There are some strange grotesque dreams having also something of the prophetic character, which arises from the annihilation of that perception of sequence which constitutes Time, and which have a kind of symbolism of the very simplest character. Of this class are the dreams spoken of in

dream-books, and interpreted after a lawless fashion by ignorant people, who however perceive, in their constant recurrence in connection with some event of life, a coherence claiming a nobler origin than the pork chops and other indigestibles which have been made answerable for them by the learned. For example, we often hear even educated persons say, 'Whenever I dream of such an object or fact, a certain event happens.' The object or fact symbolises the event, and the symbol, often a strange or familiar one, is remembered but not understood. Such is the dream of stale meat or decaying flesh, so generally believed to precede a death. I am speaking now of the belief gained from dream-books, and held by the uneducated; but it is easy to see that this stale meat is a universal symbol for the very lowest material view of the change into another state. A person whom I know to be truthful has many times announced to me that a death would be heard of, for she had been dreaming of being at church. At first I took little notice of this, but found at last that her expectation was always confirmed by the reception of the news. In her case the symbol of death was a degree higher than the meat, for she was a religious but not an enlightened woman, and her idea of death was connected with some indefinite notions of religion. All dreams of every degree which are not merely derived from confused action of the brain, as sleep is coming on (and which of course compose the greater number) occur after the brain and nerves have

been calmed by the first sleep. Hence the saying that 'morning dreams come true.'

There is one deeply interesting question allied to the subject of dreams. When we seem, in sleep, to be with friends who are gone, *are they really with us*, or do their *images* only recur, in either a typical order or an incoherent jumble, to our minds? If my attempt to trace some of the simplest laws of spirit-life has not been altogether a failure, this question is answered already. I have endeavoured to show that (independent of revelation) there is the strongest presumption of the continued existence after death of all human beings; that we, during this life, under certain conditions, pass into a state, something like that of those who are gone; that this occurs in clairvoyance, dreams, &c.; that the risen being passes from one state to another of glory and happiness, or the reverse; and that our ability to perceive beings and objects in these different states depends on the seer's capacity for entering into deeper and deeper degrees of inner life. When to these we add the fact, proved by so much experience, that affection and sympathy are affinity and attraction, and thought, presence in the spirit state, we find the strongest reason for believing that dear friends are really present with us in our dreams. Indeed, it is only strange that we are not more often conscious of their presence: but this unconsciousness is not a proof that they are not there, for they may be with us, yet unable, from the failure of

magnetic conditions, to make their presence apparent ; or, the conditions being favourable, we probably often receive from them comfort and counsel, the memory of which is lost. If our friends sometimes appear to us in dreams under strange aspects and circumstances, this is but an illustration and confirmation of those laws of correspondence which I have tried to explain. We see a dear sister, or brother, looking younger and brighter than when on earth, but we cannot reach him, or perhaps he cannot speak to us, though we speak to him. Or perhaps he stands on a hill which we cannot climb, and we wonder, if his love is like ours, that he does not come nearer. All these varieties of perception are caused by varieties of state, and the symbolical form assumed by all communications from a spirit in the next to one in this state. We began this chapter with symbolism, and to that universal law we have returned. Many and various are the hidden spiritual treasures which will be brought to light when the knowledge of Correspondence is gained. Only its simplest elements can be attained in this life, but as the window* opens wider between this state and the next, the objects of the spirit-spheres will become more clearly visible.

The difference of perception in the two states is expressed by the apostle: '*Now we see as in a glass, darkly (or in symbols—the Greek word is enigmas), but then, face to face.*'

* *Window*, in Hebrew, is a word formed from one expressing spiritual vision.

CHAPTER XIV.

INFLUX AND INSPIRATION.

I HAVE already made large demands on my reader's power of belief, but for every inference hitherto drawn there has been a foundation of some kind in experience. If the theory of Inspiration in the following chapter should seem more systematic and complete than is justified by facts, I beg to be understood as only offering thoughts suggested by much fragmentary information gained from various sources on an obscure subject. If I can thus give a new direction to an inquiry, which must be completed by better and more advanced thinkers than myself, some indulgence may perhaps be extended to errors which will soon become apparent, but which at this stage of knowledge are unavoidable.

We have seen that all communication from the spiritual sphere is couched in the language of Correspondence (though in simple messages from spirits near to earth this may not be at first apparent), and that, in the developement of mediumship, the character

of the impressing spirit rises with the gradual opening of the inner sense. The symbolism also consists of different degrees, rising from the representations of objects near to earth—which express good or ill according to their characters and the character of the spirit whose surroundings they are—to the glorious imagery of the highest angel world. Two conditions are necessary—the character of the inspiring source, and that of the medium or channel of communication; for by both these acting together the quality and form of the message is determined. Not that the human vessel alters the heavenly stream, but that each current has its separate source and its appropriate channel, and the most direct channels must be traversed by streams from the purest fountain before the work of spiritual regeneration is complete. To attain this state of receptivity, a purifying process is needed; but the amount of purification required varies in different individuals, and this explains the fact that to innocent loving children* visions and communications of the highest character are sometimes given, confirming the words of the Psalmist, ‘*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, Thou hast revealed strength;*’ and the assurance of our Lord, in speaking of little children, that ‘*Of such is the kingdom of Heaven.*’

Before going farther into detail as to the elements of character required for each degree of communication,

* See page 301.

I must say a few words on the division of the brain by phrenologists, involving a mental analysis so wonderful, that had it been the result of thought and invention only, its author would have been set on a pedestal as a philosopher, instead of rather being held worthy of the pillory as a quack. But Gall did not invent, probably no human mind *could* invent the marvellous grouping of mental elements which his system displays. He simply observed patiently and carefully, what mental and moral tendencies were found united with certain forms and proportions of brain, and when his arrangement of faculties was completed, the whole, barring some imperfection inseparable from a first work, displayed such a harmonious system as no mental philosopher has ever tried to frame without falling into a hopeless confusion.

The lower range of organs in the head contain that portion of the brain which is used in the reception of impressions from earth. They form the animal elements of character. Sensuality in every form, Combativeness, Destructiveness, Secretiveness, Love of Gain, &c. These are the organs ministering to self, needed in due proportion in this life, but sadly overgrown through indulgence, and requiring all the restraint that conscience and religion can impose, until their power shall be diminished, by that conquest of evil by good, which the fuller developement of their superiors will effect. These self-organs do not lie in the forehead. The

lowest range there consists of susceptibilities of the very simplest impressions from the outer world. Form, Size, Colour, Sound, Number, and Language, the last being behind the eye, which itself corresponds * with intellectual light.

These are the mental perceptions needed for carrying on material life, and many of these as well as the less exalted feelings, are shared with us by the animal creation in their different degrees. Above the lowest, at the back of the head, comes a range one degree higher. They are the affections, binding us to our kind; Adhesiveness, Love of Children, Love of Home, Caution, &c. In the front, the higher intellectual organs are compounded of the lower and simpler ones. The powers of observing events and individual things are centred, as might be expected, between and above those perceptions of which the knowledge of individuals and events is formed. Ascending one step we find Comparison immediately above the last named, and in the middle of the forehead. The function of this organ is analogy and classification, *the perception of objects in space*, according to some metaphysical writers; and its situation directly above the perception of complete objects, and slantingly above *Locality*, the perception of relative place, shows how well it was so designated.

* I think it is Mr. J. D. Morell who remarks, that the nerve of sight is nearer the intellectual region, and the nerve of hearing nearer the affectional portion of the brain.

Comparison, when fully developed in an intellectual brain, gives a perception of analogies, and, united with a neighbouring organ, the perception of differences,* a power of classification.

Causality, on each side of Comparison, is always defined to be the power of tracing cause and effect. This power has been called by some of the best mental philosophers, the knowledge of objects in *time*. I prefer this last definition. It is situated above all the simple perceptions and immediately over *Time and Order*. It is a complex perception, uniting the functions of all below it. Close above this is the Perception of Differences already mentioned, and ascending a step on each side, the portion of brain which has been called Ideality, whose function, however, seems hardly to be as yet understood, and to which I must return after the examination of those in the top of the head. And here on the vertex as a centre, to which all others should converge, we find that organ whose work it is to convey impressions to and from the Highest. Veneration is the name given. I believe that just as the Philoprogenitiveness conveys those impressions from parent to child, and vice versa, of which the parental feeling is composed, so does the high and central organ communicate with its Holy Object. It is the perception and

* No. 20 in Gall's numbering. This was named, Wit or Humour, because it gives that needful element of humour, a quick perception of what is incongruous, but its elementary function is simpler and higher.

impression of our relation with our Heavenly Father. But each organ has different degrees of action, and though the highest impressing power of Veneration is divine, yet that organ is, like the others, open to action from lower sources.* On each side of Veneration is Hope, the perception of the future; in its proper and highest function, the knowledge of our next state. In front of Veneration and between it and the higher intellectual organs lies Benevolence, whose function is the conveyance of all kind and good feeling among men. On each side of Benevolence is Sympathy, called from its lowest form of action Imitation, and above this and between Hope and Ideality lies the organ of Marvellousness, giving in its higher action a relation with the inhabitants of the spirit world; as Hope which it immediately adjoins gives the perception of our own future. In its lowest form of action and poverty of combination, Marvellousness degenerates into wonder-loving and

* Whenever it is possible I am glad to confirm a theoretical statement by a fact, and facts illustrating this scale of influences may be found in the phenomena of *Phreno-Mesmerism*, or excitement of the different cerebral organs of a sensitive person while under mesmeric influence. I once asked leave of a patient to try some experiments of this kind. The eyes were tightly shut, and I pointed to some of the organs: when my finger was directed to Veneration, the patient said, 'I don't know why, but I feel as if I must *get up and bow to you*,' and the action would have followed the word if I had not desisted. This was one of many such instances. The feeling induced by spiritual action on an organ is that which necessarily follows from the relation of the recipient with the giver of the influx.

superstition. The poet's especial organ of Ideality, above Constructiveness and adjoining Marvellousness, seems to consist in a redundancy of imagery borrowed both from below and above, for its power of adaptation and putting together arises from Constructiveness, and its *material* may be found both in the earthly perceptions and in the spirit spheres.* Behind Veneration is an organ whose name must I think at some time be changed. It is called Firmness, and is supposed to give persistency of action or feeling, which in truth it does, but only in its lower form: and on each side is Justice, giving a perception of the relative rights of our fellow beings. I have passed

* That combination of organs by which the poet's gift is secured seems to give rather an intense perception of harmony between the inner and outer worlds than any special redundancy of ideas, though this last forms a mighty element of power. All the undefined charm of real poetry arises from the correspondential element, which gives to the simplest utterances the depth and beauty of their internal sense. Wordsworth is an instance of a writer whose verse is less melodious than that of many less impressive poets, but its soul-touching character is due to this internal perception. The absence of the quality makes his often quoted man who could look at every object only in its earthly aspect:—

‘ A primrose on the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.’

And Dante, though with a more dramatic and less analysing eye, saw, like Swedenborg, the visions of another state, is not only the seer describing what he really perceived in the world of spirits, but the poet, who, if his internal sense had not enabled him to recognise the realities of that world, would still by his indwelling faculty have given a true imagery to his grand Drama.—P. 12.

these last organs over quickly, as my object in giving the slight sketch has been to show the gradual ascent from the lowest and most earthly feelings to those which place us in relation with the highest spiritual spheres. The lower form the animal, the higher the angel. And their place in the head corresponds with the work they have to do.

It will be said, what has all this to do with inspiration? Truly, I could not write of inspiration without having secured an understanding on the part of my reader of the degrees of receptivity in the brain corresponding with the character of influx from a spirit source.

Appended to Mrs. Crosland's *Light in the Valley*, are some little diagrams drawn by a spiritual medium illustrating the direction in which the influence comes from the spirit to the medium at the different stages of development. Such diagrams are probably not exact representations, though at page 54 they may be the best illustration that can be given of the subject. In the earliest stage, the influence falls in a horizontal direction; the spirits, though not necessarily evil, are near to earth. They give earthly names, and act on that part of the soul of which the affectional portion of the brain is the organ. Of these are all the near friends and relations; they generally convey their messages in very simple imagery; and with them, as if taking advantage of the opening of the inner sense, come the worthless and mischievous beings, who, like the bad

spirit in the diagram, mesmerise the basilar region of the brain.

After this series, the direction of influences as given in the diagram is diagonal, falling from above sideways on the head. This comes from the second order of spirits, described before, as giving the names of those who when on earth were distinguished by some strongly marked feature of intellectual or moral character. These spirits are represented as acting on those portions of the brain which are fitted to receive the higher order of impressions from earth, and the names they give correspond with their work. Sometimes these are of poets, and sometimes philosophers or philanthropists, each having some general affinity with the character of the medium, and showing by the name both the spirit's own character and that of the society or order to which it belongs. For we are told, that in the state in which sympathy is as nearness or affinity on earth, spirits fall as by natural attraction into those groups in which they find companionship; as we do here whenever the conditions are favourable. By the hand of a writing medium, who is an admirer of Moore or Campbell, some kind of imitation of their lyrics may be written, with the signature of either poet, and the writer, till the matter is understood, glorifies himself accordingly. But the pleasure taken in any one phase of mediumship short of the highest, is a halting on the middle step of the ladder, and will hinder progress.

So the direction of influence gradually rises, till at length it falls vertically into the top of the head, and then the highest and holiest names are given as the sources of inspiration.

While all these different currents are at work, good and evil contending for mastery, all sorts of cross-magnetisms occur, and the spiritual growth is a struggle and a process in which we may trace an order analogous to that of the moral growth and intellectual developement of every human being.

It is this struggle of contending forces which is represented as the exodus of the spirit, when it comes out from the Egypt of intellectual labour into the wider land of spiritual knowledge, and those ideas and perceptions which had been the object of its striving in the first state have become the instruments for embodying the more enlarged perceptions of the next.

The word *Influx* includes every degree of spiritual impression: *Inspiration* should I think be limited to the direct action of the Holy Spirit upon the spirit of man; and the inner breathing, which in different degrees accompanies every stage of developement, is most silent and deep when coincident with impressions from the Highest Source. It is the effect of *Inspiration*.

As the typical people could not have their ark of the covenant, or their holy of holies before the exodus from Egyptian bondage was complete, so must each soul get beyond the bondage of ideas gained by its own

intellectual effort before he can be enlightened by the communion of the Holy Ghost. The process of liberation which I have described as a struggle, includes both the conquest of self in the most internal feelings, and the perceptible action of spirit influence. Neither can be well or safely accomplished without constant and earnest prayer, which is as sending up a vessel to receive the heavenly current, whose gentle but irresistible power will purify body, soul, and spirit, bringing all into perfect harmony with the will of God. When the soul has thus been made ready, swept and garnished, the sunlight will fall direct from above as into a temple whose roof is open towards heaven ; while into the earthly tabernacle whose windows open towards the world, it will enter through the mist and smoke of earth, refracted and dimmed by every material object.

A young child has all the mental and moral elements of character from the earliest period, but all are not matured at the same time. The physical senses first become receptive and are strengthened by impression suited for their exercise.

The simplest mental perceptions come next, and then, as needed by the increased requirements, all the others in turn ; but the more complex the receptivity (for I conclude those generally named reasoning powers among receptivities, or perceptions) the longer does it take in gaining strength and maturity ; and I believe it will be found that the simpler mental perceptions grow

faster than even the earliest affections. There seems to be in each life a fixed period for the strengthening of different elements of character, and the growth of the portion of brain by which impressions forming that element are conveyed. Wrong training and forcing, as in the vegetable world, may give an under-growth and prematurity to any organ, or set of organs, but it should be the teacher's study to find out the heavenly or natural order, and when his teaching is added to the teaching of nature, to supply the growing soul with those impressions only which can give it strength and nourishment. When God's will is thus carefully obeyed in education, we shall cease to see young brains crammed to insanity, by an excess of indigestible food, and young brains strained and worn out by the effort to carry burdens beyond their strength, till the whole system, if it survive the one grand triumph of a college honour or a gold medal, falls prostrate on entering the threshold of life, unfitted for that real labour, for which these early triumphs ought only to have been the preparation. It is not only the stronger brains of men that are thus sacrificed. The institutions called Ladies' Colleges might, but for this infraction of God's law, be a boon to women, and an instrument of great good to the world, but by the forcing system which is encouraged by the directors and teachers, young girls whose brains, like delicate quick growing plants, need warmth and ease, and sunshine to strengthen the fibre for future

work, are urged to compete in examinations, till ambition takes the place which more genial womanly feelings should have filled, the time is fully occupied by preparing for classes. Life, if this is, becomes a burden, instead of a delight, and mind and body, both of which should have been strengthened by a timely alternation of nourishment and rest, become weak and inefficient, through the undue demand made on their powers. We may hope that our great-grandchildren will be wiser than ourselves. If they are so, what idea will they form of their ancestors' wisdom, when they hear that in 1863, young girls were in the habit of attending as many as seven classes at a college, and spending eight, ten, or even twelve hours out of the twenty-four, in the brain and nerve-destroying work of passing for examination?

The passions are to the moral nature, what the perceptions are to the mental. After them, the affections strengthen, as the need for them arises, and friendly affection and parental love are in full maturity, before religious feeling has attained its growth. Each age has its appointed work to do, and its capabilities prepared. Were this not the case, that wonderful adaptation which is seen throughout all God's creation would be wanting in his most complete works. As we should expect, in the natural order of developement, those feelings which form the link between us and Heaven are the last matured, and they must come into full exercise

as we approach the change for which all earlier developements are intended to prepare us. It is a melancholy reversal of orderly growth, when the religious life is weak in the aged heart.

All periods of growth, whether in the natural world, spoken of in the Hebrew as a *day*, in the spiritual *dispensations* as they are sometimes called, in the periods of a life's teaching, or in the flow and ebb of the life-stream from heaven in the soul, arise from the action of successive waves of influx from the First Fountain. The subject is too complicated to be entered on in detail, were I able to do more than give the merest outline of the teaching that has come to us. But a question arises at the outset, which must be met to avoid seeming incoherence. In what does the wave of influx which opens the perceptions to all external nature differ from that by which glimpses are gained of the world of spirit?

‘That is not first (in its earthly developement) which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual.’ The outer sense is opened first. The influx differs only in its degree of action. That which gives life to the body and opens the external perception is the tide of our every day life and growth, and falls in with our natural habits and feelings, so we find no unusual state induced by it, and hence receive all from God unacknowledged. And as the wave of influx falls into the material sphere, it gives birth to all

true discovery and real science, while the recipient who knows not whence his power is derived, believes that his own unaided genius is the cause of all his mental achievements.

With two exceptions the spiritual communications in the early part of this volume came through young or uncultivated mediums. The following through an educated mind is on the subject of influx in the natural world. It is written through the hand of Wm. Howitt, whose uninfluenced works need no eulogium from me.

‘He who bestows intelligence, who ever and anon endows the earth with a new man or a new discovery, breathing intimations of a new dawn, opening vistas into new regions of capability, and thus for ever adding to the mass of human achievement and scientific affluence, yet taking no credit for it, but allowing his children to adorn themselves in his own splendours and his own honours; shall he stint his gifts according to the laws of the world’s wisdom? Who has set bounds to his power or his will, to his munificence, or the modes of his operation? Who has issued laws of reason, and rules of logic which shall bind Him? His paths are still higher than the clouds, or the atmosphere of earth; ay, far beyond the stretch of the subtlest wit’s imagination; and as he astonished, and even scandalised the world of old by walking with the untaught, and abiding with the little ones of the earth, so now, and in many a

coming age, his footsteps will be seen amid the wilderness of strange things, and his profoundest plans shall appear but folly to the glow-worm greatness of proud dust.

‘Throw thyself boldly on the broad sea of divine bounty, and thou shalt swim in the unfailing billows of life and spirit. The world is still before the hopeful son of the infinite, fresh as when first trodden by the first man. As God perpetually clothes anew the bosom of the earth with verdure and flowers, and ripens ever anew fruits as luxuriant as at first, so does he still pour into the heart-soil of new generations the powers and the glories of new thought. Neither knowledge, nor invention, nor imagery, nor truth, nor imagination shall grow old or threadbare: whilst new years return, new flowers wave in the warm breeze, new harvests ripen, and the soul of man, feeding on the soul of the infinite, desires to grow more like its Maker, and finds in the consciousness of his blessings, an ever-expanding greatness in himself.’

‘Man, awakening to his place and progress in eternity, seems to exist in an isolated state, unseeing of more ethereal natures, and apparently unseen of them. But this isolation is only apparent; around him swarm more advanced beings, and from them he receives various and incessant aids, influences and ministrations. Through them all is diffused the infinite life and soul of the universe; the ocean of oceans, the atmosphere of

atmospheres, embracing, quickening and sustaining all things within it ; the principle of all being, spirit, intelligence, and power, the one great omnipresent soul, the illimitable and incomprehensible God.

‘Unseen, yet ever present, ever and ubiquitously cognisant, God is perpetually felt in the forces and tendencies of our nature. Whilst leaving us as it were alone, that we may assume and possess freedom, he is never absent in his vigilant and love-inspired providence, and having, consistent with this necessary freedom, in all ages made his presence more sensibly felt by prophets and saints, by dreams and inspirations, in this more advanced age, he steps, as it were more palpably from his concealment, and by the spirit of his Son, Christ the Word, and by a host of his divine messengers, converses more openly with his creatures.

‘So fail the proud in despising the treasure-chambers of humility, forgetting that their own birth is from the earth, the common matrix of the diamond, the ruby, the gold widely worshipped, the lofty priest, the infinite beauty and poetry of the flower-kingdom, and all the mineral and chemic substances with which physical science works proudly yet darkly, but on its useful way by hands whose touch it feels not. Happier far are those who are too humble for conceit—the dazzled darkness of men erring at summer-noon — but feel the guidance of angel-fingers, and fear no misleading in the garden of God.

‘The children trust and play—the blind think they see and drudge—the mill-horses of physical fixation. Better the broad hemisphere of spirit than the narrow workshop of artisan intellect.’

When the influx comes direct from a spiritual source to the spirit of men, it demands for its reception a more internal opening of the senses, and, to prevent confusion, the outer or every day senses must be closed during its entrance. Thus, inspiration in any degree causes an unusual state in the receiver, while, as has been said, the passage of the spirit through all degrees till it results in the usual cerebral action, is only the work of every-day thought and life. That which is known as genius results from receptivity of brain and temperament. The gifted man of genius may be inspired so as to become a glorious prophet, but genius is not inspiration.

The whole human race is God’s child, and, as the little crystal teaches us the form and properties of the massive rock, we may learn from the natural growth of an infant mind, the order followed by our Heavenly Father in His spiritual education of the world. This thought has been treated before by religious writers, who might, perhaps, have used it with fuller effect if they had made a clear distinction between spiritual and intellectual receptivity in education.

The young perceptions of the infant nation open, like those of a child, on the outer world, from which

impressions can only be taken in and assimilated by degrees. The period of this reception is the earliest of the world's history; all natural objects now become familiar to the race, that they may serve as the material for future knowledge; and this is the time when Adam names the creatures and the trees in Paradise. But into such simple minds the spiritual stream pours swiftly, and the rise may be rapid: and hence, perhaps, the very general idea of a golden age, when men talked with the powers of Heaven. In these early times, when the knowledge of external nature has not reached below the surface of things, the waves of influx find but a simple alphabet to write with; but though the imagery cannot go beyond the knowledge gained, it is equally good for all the purposes of spiritual teaching, and, in fact, the only form in which the Word of God can descend into the souls of men. Thus, though the early religions are expressed in the most familiar symbols, those symbols are true, and the expression is the work of the Holy Spirit, representing the internal state of the recipient. But as the age passes on, and new generations take place of the old, a deeper and better comprehension of material laws is gained, and the old symbols are cast aside as childish notions by the learned of the time, who know them only in their outer sense. On the other hand, those well-defined forms and positive expressions, which are rejected by the uninspired philosopher, become objects

of blind adoration to the uninspired devotee, who guards them jealously, believing that, were his idols cast from their altars, nothing would be left. This is the beginning of the conflict between science and religion. In the fullness of time, a fresh supply of divine life (called reaction in the world) gives light to the stored up knowledge; God breathes into man the breath of life, 'the dry bones live,' and all the outer world is seen to be in harmony with, and representative of, the spirit world within. Such a wave entered the soul of Swedenborg, and the so-called Mystics, all of whom agree in the truth symbolised, but differ as to the form in which it was made known to them. Again, the shell strengthens and becomes incrustated around its germinal idea, and the searcher into natural truth condemns it altogether as a worn-out superstition. In this manner, forms of worship grow up and decay: but throughout all the changes which follow each other in an ascending scale from the simplest idea of a higher spiritual power to the teaching of the Son of God, the symbol used wraps up and involves an eternal truth, to be gradually evolved as the prophetic mind becomes furnished with images for its expression, and as the nation is prepared to receive it.

I have tried to trace the process of developement in its different forms; in the birth of a child, in the earthly life of a man, in the growth of the soul, and in the never-ending advancement of the future life. Growth

from within, and rejection of the outer garment when it has ceased to embody the vital force, is seen in all processes and in every degree of creation. It is the law of influx, which is the same as saying it is the law of life. Compare the earlier with the later descriptions given in this book. One of the first sensations mentioned was that of regular *fanning* accompanying impression. This is produced by the spiritual influx in its simplest form, falling in regular waves corresponding to the waves of light or the breathing of the lungs, each breath bearing in a fresh supply* of vitalising power. Agreeing with this idea of growth, it is found that not only is each vision (or other form of impression) a series of scenes, but that the visions themselves follow each other in regular order, every successive series forming a necessary part of what the first vision or drawing comprehended as if in rude outline, so that no one part

* There is, I think, reason to suspect that the Greek word *αἰών* in its primary sense signified wave of influx. Its Latin equivalent *ævum* is sometimes used without reference to time, and in the sense of growth; as by Horace,

‘*Crescit occulto velut arbor ævo*
Fama Marcelli.’—Ode xii. b. 1.

Here the gradually expanding growth of a tree, to which the increase of Marcellus's fame is compared, conveys the exact idea.

Plato's well-known doctrine that God made the world by the Logos, through the Æons (*αιῶνες*) which were supposed to be spiritual emanations, becomes intelligible with my reading of the word *αἰών*. This will appear more plainly in the next chapter, in which the Logos will be spoken of. It is to the purpose that the Welsh call the stream of inspiration falling on the bard the divine *Awen*.

of the whole process could have been left out. And the character of the instruction rises by successive waves from the simplest influx to the highest and holiest degree of inspiration. A similar process on a larger scale is carried on in the spiritual teaching of nations and of the world.

Prophecy, though in later times the word has acquired a limited meaning, was not originally confined to prediction. This will be more apparent in the next chapter. The commonest forms in which coming events are seen in these times are clairvoyance or dreams ; for when the spiritual sense is opened in either state, the conditions of time and place, which are measures of our present life, disappear, and in whatever direction the spirit is drawn by sympathy, events which have not yet occurred will appear present. Persons too may be seen in a spiritual state who are at the time strangers to the bodily sense, but who are met and recognised years after. Many prophecies given in all forms of spirit mediumship are symbolical, and these are never understood till fulfilment. Of this kind were many of the prophecies of Scripture, and the predictions of the heathen oracles ; but the first, being in a higher degree, and given from a divine, not simply a spiritual source, were far more comprehensive and universal than the local or personal predictions of Delphi or Dodona.

We have always found spiritual predictions, if from a worthy source, fulfilled, though the fulfilment has taken place in a manner and at a time quite unexpected.

Time seems to be an element which cannot be translated from the spirit language into ours, and if any spirit seems to hazard an assurance that in one or two years, or days, or hours an event will occur, it may be concluded, either that the period indicated is not to be understood as an earthly measure of time, or that the influence, if a good one, has not complete control over the medium.

In times when the action of spirit was more observed and better understood, a prophet was the recipient of the wave of influx, though the form it might take would be according to his organisation and power of transmission, and as the prophet has been the receiver and transmitter, so the priest has been held to be the interpreter of spiritual symbols; hence there has always been a class possessing a knowledge of their inner meaning, and by this class the knowledge has been formed into an esoteric system. The careful exclusion from the mysteries of all but those who had been initiated was perhaps inevitable, for to most persons the inner sense would be a sealed book, and the external a meaningless or possibly dangerous rite. The Egyptian hieroglyphic is an instance of symbolical writing intelligible only to the priestly caste. And we shall find in the hieroglyphics an illustration of another statement, namely, that some objects are found to bear the same correspondential meaning in religious writing throughout the world. Perhaps the sun which is always given in

modern spiritual experience as the material outbirth of the Highest Power, the first remove from pure spirit, is the most universal of these symbols. In all heathen worship, in the grotesque and mystical Egyptian, in the graceful refined Greek, and the beautiful easily-interpreted Scandinavian mythology, every legend and fable has made the sun and his power as, *after the Unknown Cause*, first the type, and then the object of adoration. And this could not be otherwise, for till the inner essence is openly manifested the type will be generally worshipped. The religion is according to the spiritual degree of the worshipper, and there must be as great a variety in the forms of mythology as there are processes in nature and powers of spiritual reception in the medium.* To the seer of any country, the phenomena peculiar to his native land furnish the scenes and actors in his spiritual drama; but there are also elements common to all religions, and these have been thought to prove a derivation of their legends from

* Another illustration of my meaning. Each of the mythological deities personifies some manifestation of spiritual power. Thus Hermes or Mercury represents the spiritual influence in many of its well-known forms of action. Both in the Greek and Latin mythologies he is a healer; his Caduceus had the power of giving health, of inducing sleep and of waking the sleeper. He is the *messenger of the gods*, and in the Greek is called ἡγήτωρ δνείπων, the *leader of dreams*, because his office is to conduct dreams from Zeus, by whom they are sent, to the sleeper. In the ancient Arcadian religion Hermes is the fertilising god of the earth.

one another, or from a common origin. It is true that all the religions of the world have a common origin, but that lies deep in the inner spirit of mankind and its receptivity of the divine light, and is not merely the inherited legendary lore of a remoter age.

It is not doubted that even in the earliest Gentile religions a very large amount of spiritual truth underlies the now worn-out human element; when we have learned to distinguish the two, and trace the boundary line which separates them, the study of mythology will become both more interesting and more philosophical. The symbols will afford a key to the national character, both moral and mental, and their inner sense will show us to what degree the education of His children had been carried at that time by our Heavenly Father.

In these days of scientific research, when matter and its supposed inherent laws are dwelt upon to the exclusion of all that cannot be seen and heard and felt, unbelief must and will prevail for a season. But if we are now near the culminating point of an intellectual age, when some of the creeds and symbols which have embodied spiritual truth in former times are rejected as dry crusts, we are also entering upon an age of influx, when that which is superfluous and material in religious systems will fall away and perish, while all that is true will remain, a pure channel for the life and light of the WORD OF GOD.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WORD OF GOD.

WHAT is the meaning of the phrase, the WORD OF GOD? Within the churches and without the churches, applied vaguely by honest religionists, and falsely by dishonest ones, the simple phrase, which in old times conveyed the idea of the Messenger of Peace, has become the watchword of strife.

The words have lost their first import as the knowledge of internal spiritual things has died away. It is an instance of what has been already said, that with the growth of time expressions and symbols, losing their essential meaning, are ill-used by the theologian and rejected by the philosopher.

We must look to the Bible, its acknowledged record, for the meaning of *the Word*, and we may find, as in other cases, that when its specific sense becomes clear, all the learned rubbish which has accumulated round the phrase will fall away, taking with it the confusion and discord inseparable from argument unenlightened by spirit.

The Hebrew *debar*, translated *Word*, bears in its root the idea of driving, or throwing off; that is, emanation or efflux. I must beg the reader to follow me patiently through a few texts, applying this thought till the invariable use of it in the sense of spiritual influx has made its original meaning apparent. And, remembering that *the Word* is the holy influence of God's Spirit on the spirit of man, we should also bear in mind the description given in the last chapter, of the action of successive waves of influx in creation. I have spoken of its earliest creating action in the mineral, then in the vegetable, then in the animal world—higher still, its descent into the mind, where it operates as intelligence; and, finally, its more direct influx, giving spiritual life and impression to the soul of man. Every wave forms an *αιών*, an age, period, or day, and each wave, acting on the conditions prepared for it by its forerunner, leaves the world one degree higher in developement and refinement, so that the last age is always one degree in advance of the preceding.*

* Whether these effects are each respectively produced by successive waves or by one period of efflux in its different degrees, I do not conjecture. The result is the same, nor does it affect the truth of the doctrine that it was held 2,500 years ago. I have been assured by an eminent naturalist that the successive formations in the geological and zoological worlds bear evidence of having resulted from an order such as I have described. A developement by successive outpourings of creative power is very different from that by which our pedigree is traced from apes and monkeys.

In this first sense of creative energy, we find the *Word* used in the Psalms:—‘*By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them, by the breath of His mouth.*’

This is generally passed over as if meaning simply, ‘By command of the Lord,’ &c. But, if the Psalmist had a distinct meaning, he would not have said, in this general half-figurative way, that the Lord made the heavens by His command, and then breathed their spiritual inhabitants into being. I take the meaning to be—the heavens, or higher worlds, were the result of the outpouring of God’s vital power, their hosts, one degree above, by a higher efflux.

In Psalm cxlvii. 15, is another instance of the application of the *Word* to natural creation. ‘*He sendeth forth His commandment upon earth. His Word runneth very swiftly.*’ The context shows that a simple dictate or ordinance could not be meant.

Again, verse 18—‘*He sendeth forth His word, and melteth them (ice), He causeth His wind (or spirit) to move, and the waters flow.*’

In its healing life-giving character, Psalm cvii. 20—‘*He sent His Word, and healed them.* In its action on the spirit—‘*Quicken Thou me according to Thy Word;*’ and again—‘*Thy Word hath quickened me.*’

In these, which are chosen from many instances, the vital emanation from God, who is the Fountain of Life, is spoken of as *the Word*. But when we examine the

number of cases in which *the Word* is spoken of as coming to the prophets, we shall find but a small proportion in which the full sense would be attained by translating *debar* as *a word* in the sense of an audible sound, or even a command. Like all spiritual influx it takes different forms of manifestation. It comes sometimes as an audible voice, sometimes as an impelling influence, sometimes by writing, and sometimes, indeed most often, by vision. Whenever a prophet utters his inspiration (and the different forms of utterance show that by the same law which I have traced the phrases and symbols are those of the recipient), the expression is, 'The Word of the Lord' came to that prophet. The *burthen* of a prophet is the influx which presses him, that which he must utter before he can speak from himself. In Malachi i. 1, we find, '*the burden of the Word of the Lord.*'

1 Samuel iii. 6. '*The Word of the Lord was rare in those days: visions were not frequent.*' *

This clearly expresses the fact that the influence from God was at that time not often received. The history goes on to tell of *the voice* heard by the child Samuel, evidently not an alarming sound, for he supposed that Eli had called him. In Genesis xv. 1, we find that *the Word of the Lord came to Abraham in a vision.*

In 1 Kings xiii. 1. '*And behold! there came a man*

* This is De Wette's translation; the English common version differs, but is less coherent. Either translation would support my argument.

of God out of Judah by the Word of the Lord' (by the impelling influence). Here the two words used to express the divine power in Man of *God* and *Word of the Lord* are different; the prophet is a man of the spiritual powers, *Elohim*; the *Word* is from *Jehovah*, the highest name.

When Jehoram and Jehoshaphat went together against the king of Moab, and became uneasy as to the success of their enterprise, Jehoshaphat asks, verse 11,

'Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him?' (One of the king of Israel's servants tells him that Elisha is there.)

12 *And Jehoshaphat said, 'The Word of the Lord is with him.'*

The kings then went to Elisha, who after some hesitation allowed himself to be consulted, but the influx was not on him constantly, for he required the power of music to induce the prophetic state. He says, verse 15,

'But now bring me a minstrel.' And it came to pass when the minstrel played, the hand of the Lord came upon him.

In 2 Chron. xviii. 4, Jehoshaphat says to Ahab king of Israel, *'Enquire I pray thee at the Word of the Lord to-day.'*

Four hundred prophets were consulted, who delivered their oracles, but they were not trusted. Jehoshaphat asks for *a prophet of the Lord*; and Micaiah is

brought to him. The messenger who brought Micaiah, verse 12, begs him, '*Behold the words (oracles) of the prophets are good to the king with one assent; let thy word I pray thee be like theirs, and speak thou good.*'

13 *And Micaiah said, 'As the Lord (Jehovah) liveth, even what my God (El, spirit-power) saith, that will I speak.'*

Micaiah's 'Word' comes in the form of a fine symbolic vision.

16 '*I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains as sheep that have no shepherd; and the Lord said; "These have no master, let them return every man to his house in peace."*'

18 *Again he said, 'Hear the word of the Lord.'* And again the word comes to him in a vision higher in degree and more internal than the first, for the first is only earthly, the last spiritual symbolisation. In Num. xii. 6, the Lord said, '*Hear now my words. If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision, and will speak with him in a dream.*'

It would be tedious to enumerate all the instances in which the Word of the Lord is said to have come in one form of manifestation or other to the prophets. And the same prophet who uttered *the Word*, or *Words*, saw also visions. Isaiah i. begins—

1 *The vision of Isaiah, &c. Ver. 10, Hear the Word of the Lord, &c.*

Chapter ii. ver. 1, *The Word that Isaiah the prophet saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.*

Isaiah ix. 8, *The Lord sent a word unto Jacob, and it lighted upon Israel.* This last has great meaning, it is a part of the prophecy of the Saviour.

Jeremiah v. 13, *And the prophets shall become wind, the Word is not in them.*

I might multiply quotations, but these will be sufficient to prove my assertion, that the expression 'Word of God' meant originally the Holy Influx by which our Heavenly Father has in all time acted on the spirits of His children for their instruction and guidance. Plato, who seems to have risen to a spiritual knowledge beyond all except the early prophets of Judea, called this Word the Logos,* and taught that by it the world was created through the æons, *αἰῶνες*.

We will now turn to the New Testament—the history of the New Covenant, the higher dispensation and more complete union of the Spirit of God with the spirits of men than was possible during the earlier ages of the world, but for which union the whole Jewish dispensation had been the preparation. And here we find the word in Greek, the Logos, John i. 1. But we must remember, that the Hebrew *debar* and its Greek synonym *logos* comprehend every degree of efflux from the source of life, whether it result in the formation of a world, in a prophetic dream, or in a healing miracle.

* See note 1.

The Apostle John's description of THE WORD is immeasurably more perfect and more sublime than any attempt at explanation ever made by scholars or theologians.

JOHN, Chapter I.

1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

2 *The same was in the beginning with God.*

3 *All things were made by Him,* and without Him was not anything made that was made.*

4 *In Him (or in it) was life; and the life was the light of men.*

5 *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

6 *There was a man sent from God whose name was John.*

7 *The same came for a witness, to bear witness of that Light, that all through him might believe.*

8 *He was not that Light, but was to bear witness of that Light.*

9 *The true Light was that which, coming into the world, lighteth every man.*

10 *He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.*

11 *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.*

* The Greek would bear 'by it,' and this translation might suit the original meaning till after the birth of Christ.

12 *But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become children of God, and sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.*

13 *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

14 *And the Word became* flesh and dwelt with us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of an only begotten of a Father, full of grace and truth.*

Nothing can more literally agree with the explanation given of the Word than the assertion that *in it is life*, for the creating and vitalising influx is life itself, and light, in every degree, from the sun's ray and its appointed mental receptivity to the intellectual and spiritual light with which, in their degrees, the ray corresponds. John the Baptist, having the inner vision, was to bear witness, and saw in the perfect symbolism of heaven the dove alighting on the Word made flesh.

In early times the Word of God falling on the spirits of holy men made them sons of God, regenerate through the Word. But in the fullness of time, that the Spirit of God might be more closely united with the spirit of man, the divine efflux became flesh, and, having been the bearer to earth of purification, redemption, and forgiveness, ascended again to the former state, and shed forth the Holy Spirit upon all believers. This opening of the kingdom of heaven is the climax in the

* *ἐγένετο*, *passed into*, occurs 1 Corinthians xv.

history of the Word itself, but its work, in the form of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, is still going on, and of its triumphant progress a glorious vision was seen by the aged John, in Patmos.

REVELATION, Chapter XIX.

11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

12 *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

Every word of this splendid imagery has its symbolical meaning. The Word is on a white horse, i.e. supported and carried through by a pure intelligence. Perfect truth is His essence; His eyes, a flame of fire, show the brightness of spiritual knowledge; and the crowns, his manifold powers. We have still to consider *names*, and we shall find the fullness of meaning conveyed by the expression, He had a *name* written, that no man knew, but He Himself. He purifies the world, 'bearing the sword and treading the wine-press'—and this will be the work of the living Word till the conquest of all evil is complete and His name is known, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

The Word of God, then, is the phrase used in Scripture to express the outpouring efflux from our heavenly Father in its creating, life-giving, and inspiring energy, and in its redeeming and sanctifying power; and the Bible is the history of the Word in all its degrees of action and modes of manifestation, from the simple processes of magnetic healing and clairvoyance to its full and perfect manifestation in the person of the Saviour, the Word made flesh.

If this is true, we may expect to find allusions to various magnetic and spiritual processes in the Bible. And we shall not be disappointed. I will first bring together a few instances of spiritual action in its lowest forms.

In 2 Kings v. 10, we find a reference to mesmerism made in such words as to lead to the belief that it was commonly practised by the prophets, who were also in early times called *healers*. Naaman the Syrian having been sent to the King of Israel in order to be cured of his leprosy, Elisha shows him how much more powerful is the healing which he practises than the mesmerism which was expected. The prophet desires Naaman to wash seven times in Jordan.

Verse 11 *But Naaman was wroth, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and move up and down his hand [marginal reading] over the part, and recover the leper.*

We find another instance in the history of the prophet Elisha, of whom Jehoshaphat says, *The Word of God is with him*. Hearing of the death of the widow's son, Elisha first sends his staff by Gehazi, desiring him to lay it on the face of the child. (All mesmerisers have seen similar processes.) But this is ineffectual, and Gehazi returns, telling his master of the failure.

2 Kings iv. 33. *He (Elisha) went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.*

34 *And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.*

35 *Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.*

I have not referred in the preceding pages to a form of mesmerism known as Hypnotism, and practised by some persons with success. In this process, sleep, or a perfectly passive state, is induced by making the patient fix his eyes on some object held before him. During this passive or receptive state a healing influence seems to be imbibed; but I have been told that the operator is as much exhausted by the process as by regular mes-

merism. Any operation by which an internal state is induced, or, which is the same thing, by which the external perceptions are shut up, is beneficial, provided the brain and nerves are not tried during the quiescent state.

We find a striking instance of this mode of cure, with many noteworthy circumstances, in Numbers xxi. 6. The children of Israel having become discontented, on account of the hardships they endured in the wilderness—

Verse 6 *The Lord sent fiery* serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people died.* Then Moses prayed for the people, and, after the Divine direction—

Verse 9 *Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.*

Thus there was not only the operation of healing in the way described as *hypnotism*, but the beautiful symbol of the Great Healer, who was to be raised up before He could draw all men to Him. The image is very perfect, if we remember that the mode of healing produces a more internal state in the subject.

I need hardly refer to the direct healing of our Lord and His apostles. But a few words are necessary to

* See Note 2 at the end of the book.

show that even these effects of the vitalising power of the Word were processes of which the immediate cause and agency can be traced. If by *miracle* we understand an act not coming under this definition, then assuredly the cures, and even the raising of the dead by the living Word, were not more *miracles* than the birth of a child or the growth of a tree. But their cause, though real and apparent, lay far beyond the reach of educated or uneducated humanity, unassisted by spiritual power. When the Saviour was among believers, the very effort of His will, uttered in 'Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise!' poured life into the lifeless girl; and in like manner, His Word raised the widow's son and the entombed Lazarus. When He restored the man blind from birth, a process was used, and the clay which contained the vital influence was to remain on the eyes till washed off at the Pool of Siloam. But we learn in Mark vi. 5, that *He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands on a few sick folk and healed them.* The corresponding verse in Matthew says, *He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.* (Matt. xiii. 58.)

We see, then, that even the Word itself needs *something* in the recipient to make it effective. That something is *faith*, without which we can do nothing, but with which we may by God's help move mountains.

I have traced the Word of God from its lowest to its

highest degree of healing. We find it also in earthly clairvoyance and in heavenly vision. For the first, when Saul had lost his asses, he went to a prophet to find 'where they were.' And this was called *enquiring of God* equally with the most important consultations.

Saul, having his money ready for the prophet's gift or fee, asks where a prophet may be found.

1 Samuel ix. 9. *Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer: he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer.*

Samuel tells Saul that the asses about which he had come to consult him will be found, and then follows the history of Samuel's noble seership and ministry of the Word.

Every part of the Bible is full of spiritual vision in every degree, so that the enumeration of instances would only cease when the greater part of Scripture had been copied out. After earthly clairvoyance, which we find in Samuel and Balaam, we may mention divining in a cup or a crystal, for the process is the same.

Joseph's brethren had left the court of Pharaoh to return to their father, and Joseph, to bring them back, orders his steward to put money into all their sacks, and his own cup into the sack of Benjamin. The steward, who searches the sacks, is directed to say;

Gen. xliv. 5. *Is not this it in which my Lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth?*

Much has been said in the foregoing chapters on the *gradual* opening of the spiritual sense. An illustration of this part of the subject is found in the narrative of Elisha's vision of Elijah's removal from earth.

2 Kings ii. 9. *And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*

10 *And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.*

Elisha saw the chariot and horses of fire and the whirlwind which formed the sublime symbolism of the prophet's change of state.

We have seen (p. 193) that in any removal, a symbolism immeasurably lower in degree, but the same in its correspondential character, would be presented to the vision of any seer whose spiritual sense was opened to a degree in which spiritual take the place of earthly objects. Elijah, it appears, was not certain whether his successor was susceptible of as great a degree of spiritual sight as he himself possessed, and this vision was mentioned as a test by which the depth of Elisha's power could be estimated. Elisha had not, until the time of his predecessor's departure, equalled him in prophetic power, and the greater opening took place on the occurrence

of a spiritual process involving a large outpouring of influence.

Of Ezekiel's glorious visions I am almost afraid to speak. Such imagery is too high to receive a short or simple interpretation, but the vision in the first chapter is in one respect so like the developements of writing and seeing which have been described, that I refer to it. It seems to be the description of successive outpourings of spiritual power, with all their characteristic circumstances, and, following one of the laws of spirit-manifestation, it is the introduction to and epitome of all succeeding visions. The imagery is perfectly symbolical of the action of spiritual power.

Ezek. i. 13. *As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.*

Compare the description, pp. 128 and 186, of the scintillating appearance in the light* and of the luminous rays, like flashes of fire and lightning, seen by sensitives.

The picture rises to the likeness of a throne, and of Him who sat on it, and the imagery becomes grander, till in the centre of a rainbow the prophet sees the likeness of the glory of the Lord.

28 *And when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard the voice of Him that spake.*

* Note 3.

As before described, sight in this instance comes first, then the deeper state, preceded by trance, or falling on the face, and then the opening of the spiritual ear. The succeeding visions are continuations of this introductory one, which exceeds in splendour of imagery and intensity of correspondential meaning everything but the spiritual scenes in the Apocalypse.

I must not remain too long in the consideration of the Jewish Scriptures. Simple imagery, such as has often been met with in dreams and visions in these days, is found in the vision of Peter, by which he was directed to instruct the family of the Gentile Cornelius, who was himself also spiritually told where to find the welcome teacher. The whole history, contained in Acts x. xi. is too well known to be extracted, but it should be read in connection with the thoughts suggested by an examination into spiritual phenomena.

A very simple suggestive vision was given to the Apostle Paul, Acts xvi. 9, *There stood a man of Macedonia: and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.* This vision had an earthly sphere for its object, and the imagery was earthly and simple accordingly.

The sudden conversion of the Apostle Paul was brought about in a manner which is intelligible to those who have witnessed many spiritual manifestations in various forms and degrees.

The outpouring of influence was apparent to some of

the company in one way, to others in another, while Saul himself, its immediate object, received it as a stroke of lightning by which he became for a time unable to see.

Acts ix. 3—

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven;

4 *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

5 *And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

6 *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*

7 *And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*

8 *And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man, but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.*

When Paul afterwards gives a narrative of these occurrences, he says—

Acts xxii. 9 *And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.*

This seems like a contradiction, but I do not think it

is really so. Persons who have seen much of such manifestations as even those lesser ones which I have described, know how every degree and variety of sight and hearing would be opened in an assembly of people of different degrees of susceptibility on such an occasion. The first history says, '*hearing a voice* (perhaps only a sound), *but seeing no man.*' This does not imply that none of the party saw the light, but that they did not know whence it came. As in the history of Peter and Cornelius, a second person, Ananias, was at the same time called to participate in the work.

The outpouring on the day of Pentecost was attended with the usual concomitant phenomena—a rushing mighty wind, an appearance of flame or fire in the form of cloven tongues, and then the influx of the spirit.

In the marginal reading, chap. ii. 6, we find, instead of *when this was noised abroad* [Greek, *when this voice came*], which last, referring to the spiritual voice of the apostles, is no doubt the right translation. That the multitude consisted of the *devout* Jews, from every nation under heaven (ver. 5) is plain from the different languages in which the Word came to the ear of each. The faith of these devout men formed a fit condition for such reception. The sound (*this voice*) was spiritual; but as in other manifestations, each hearer's inner sense formed it into the words and phrases familiar to his ear.

The spiritual writing is mentioned in Scripture in every degree, from that by the hand of a prophet to the direct impress of the finger of God.

The highest instance occurs Exodus xxxii. 15—

And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.

16 *And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.*

There can be no question that this was direct spiritual writing in the very highest degree. Precisely the same word (for writing*) occurs in 2 Chron. xxi. 12, where we find that

There came a writing to him (Jehoram, king of Judah) from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, &c.

The margin gives, *which was written before his death*, but this is mere conjecture of the translators, who were naturally puzzled by the statement; for Elijah had been dead at the time of Jehoram's reception of the writing four years *at least*.

In 1 Chron. xxviii. we have a notable instance of spirit writing and drawing, on an occasion where symbolism of the most perfect kind was necessary. While instructing his son to build the temple, for which he had received Divine direction—

* See note 4.

Verse 11 *Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, &c. &c.*

12 *And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord.*

19 *All this (*said David) the Lord made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.*

The vision of writing, Daniel v., is another instance, and which also in many respects resembles those which have come under our notice. There is no reason to believe that the part of a hand which formed the first part of the vision, was seen by any one but Belshazzar. *The king saw the part of the hand that wrote.* The Magi could not read the writing, and it is not certain that they even saw it. But Daniel, by his inner vision, is able to interpret, and before the writing is left complete, the hand had disappeared. This is very like the way in which one part is developed from another in all the forms of manifestation.

The Temple built by Divine direction is generally believed to have been symbolic and representative, every part corresponding with some spiritual state or process. The outer court, the Temple, and the Holy of Holies typify the body, soul, and spirit of man, and the entrance of the High Priest only on rare and important occasions, denotes a periodical opening of the inner state, corre-

* These two words are interpolated, but seem to be needed for the sense.

sponding with those periods of influx from which the Jewish festivals, and thence those of our Church took their origin. Like all the other spiritual material events narrated in Scripture, the rending of the veil of the Temple, when the last breath was drawn by the Saviour, was in glorious correspondence with that which took place on the cross, when the veil which had hidden the highest influence from the soul of man, was rent apart, and the Holy Spirit was hereafter to descend on the humblest follower of Christ, without intervention of priest or ceremonial. Another beautiful material image of a spiritual event was the rolling away the stone from the sepulchre, to permit the egress of Him whose rising was as the opening of the closed tomb to all the dead, both in the body and in the spirit.

In Exodus xxviii. we find long directions for the construction of an ephod or priest's dress, but there is, I believe, only one passage which can lead to a conjecture of the manner in which it was used. This occurs 1 Sam. xxx. 7, *And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought the ephod to David.*

8 *And David enquired at the Lord, &c.*

It appears by this that the ephod was not a ceremonial robe, but a real instrument, and David could use it as well as the high priest, for he enquired at the Lord, or induced in himself a spiritual state, as we have seen

can be done, though in a lower degree, by gazing at a crystal. Whether it was a like process may be conjectured from the account given of the ephod, breastplate, and Urim and Thummim, by Josephus. 'In the void space of the garment there was inserted a piece about the bigness of a span, embroidered with gold and other colours of the oracle, and called *essen*, which, in the Greek language, signifies *oracle*.'—Josephus, *Antiquities*, Book III. ch. vii. 5.

And of the Urim and Thummim (by some translated Lights and Perfections, by others Manifestations and Truth)—

'For as to these stones, which, as we told you before, the high priest bare on his shoulders, which were sardonyxes (and I think it useless to describe their nature, they being so well known to everybody), the one of them shined out when God was present at their sacrifices: I mean that which was in the nature of a button on his right shoulder, bright rays darting out thence and being seen even by those who were most remote, which splendour was not before natural to the stone. This has appeared a most wonderful thing to such as have not so far indulged themselves in philosophy as to despise Divine revelation, yet I will mention what is still more wonderful than this. God declared beforehand by those twelve stones which the high priest bore on his breast, and which were inserted into his breastplate, when they should be victorious in battle, for so great a

splendour shone forth from them before the army began to march, that all the people were sensible of God's being present for their assistance. Whence it came to pass, that those Greeks who had a veneration for our laws, because they could not possibly contradict them, called this breastplate "the oracle." Now this breastplate and this oracle left off shining 200 years before I composed this book, God having been displeased at the transgression of his laws.'—*Antiquities*, B. III. c. iii. 6.*

Prideaux says that the oracle was given by an audible voice from the mercy-seat between the cherubim. We may well imagine it given either by vision or voice, for, as we have seen, any opening of the spiritual state may result in any mode of manifestation. We know from Diodorus, that the chief judge of Egypt carried on his breast an image symbolic of Truth with its eyes shut, formed of precious stones. Ælian says that these stones were sapphires. We have had much experience of the property of the sapphire, of very quickly inducing spiritual vision. It seems to be more powerful than a common crystal.

The teraphim formed part of the apparatus in the early times of the Jewish history. T, in Arabic, takes the place of S. I imagine that the word may be the same as

* As Josephus wrote 200 years after the phenomenon had ceased to appear, and had neither seen it himself nor had the report from eye-witnesses, we may easily imagine the description to be imperfect. He was perhaps mistaken in supposing that the brightness of the stones was apparent to *all* present.

seraphim (see Note 2), and have seen conjectures that the cherubim by the mercy-seat were of a like nature. This requires much examination, with all the other appliances and symbols of the Jewish worship, which cannot be understood until viewed by the light of the Spirit.

The laying on of hands should not be unnoticed in an enumeration of the various forms in which we have seen a resemblance between the incidents of Scripture history and the modern phenomena. I have said that the power is always strengthened, I should have said that it is often apparently communicated, by the hand of a medium laid on the wrist of another to produce writing, or on the shoulder to produce vision. A *finger* of a powerful medium will convey the current to another person. How often this fact is mentioned, or how important a part it bears in the history of the Word, I need not say. In Deut. xxxiv. 9, *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him.*

It is almost needless to quote the New Testament, for the instances are very numerous in which mention is made of the communication of the spirit, either for healing or sanctifying, in this way. In 2 Tim. i. Paul writes—

6 *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

When the spirit shall have returned, and brought

that living light into the churches by which all will be seen to have some element of truth, and which, by being common to all, will unite the members of every sect into the true church of Christ, this laying on of hands will be a powerful and holy process, not as now, a powerless though significant form. The touch of the archbishop, bishop, or priest, is effective just in proportion as he has the spirit, and the other person the receptive power ; and the degrees of both can only be known by the result.

The gradual rise and developement of spiritual influence is one of the most marked characteristics of the spiritual education of the Jews ; and for this there is a parallel in the manifestations. In every developement the names of earthly relations are first given ; then those of persons who, when on earth, bore a moral or intellectual affinity with the medium ; and afterwards, the designations of those heavenly natures known as love, faith, hope, and their modifications. These three degrees correspond with body, soul, and spirit, and the highest influx, which has its receptivity in the highest portion of the brain and the noblest part of the human soul, is the Holy Ghost, direct from the Most High. But even the lower emanations are of different degrees, as the spiritual powers from which they proceed approach the Divine essence. A long-continued communication with spirits of the lower natures, to the exclusion of the higher influences,

is a lingering on the road to that heaven which can only be attained by the communion of the Holy Ghost.

In the spirit world or state, where everything appears as it is, and is as it appears, the nature or character of any one is implied in the name—which is not given arbitrarily as names are here, but falls, as it were, naturally, on the hearer. Hence, with the ascending series of names is the ascending series of spiritual natures from which influences are received by the medium. If this is so in the spiritual training of an individual, how much more must it be traceable in the education of a nation, in which all the states and processes of individual teaching are exhibited on a larger scale!

The Jews are the type and example of all our Father's spiritual teaching, and this passage from lower to higher degrees of influence may be found in their history. The first and most marked record of a change is found in Gen. iv. 26. The preceding history is part literal and part symbolical; the second chapter especially, narrating the origin of Eve, seems to have a correspondential meaning which is more coherent than its literal one; for it relates to the developement or opening of the spiritual degree in the natural man, which was before unaided. '*Adam had no help meet for him.*' And the method by which this internal opening took place was a *trance*—for deep sleep is not the true interpretation. But I must not enter into

these difficult chapters here. The last verse of chapter iv. is, '*Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.*' Hitherto the spiritual powers to which mankind had looked were those near to them, the Elohim, *the Gods*—or in their communications Jehovah Elohim, the Lord God, or the highest spiritual power to which their thoughts could rise, or by which their susceptibilities of impression could be acted on. But after a long series of events, detailed in familiar forms and language, but all having reference to the spiritual progress of men in those early times, men began to call upon, *or to be called by*, the name of Jehovah, the Highest Name.

The marginal reading, *to be called by*, seems more correct than the text, if we understand the meaning of *call*, though, from want of the knowledge that a real spiritual process is involved, it has lost its original force. To be '*called by*,' means to be influenced by the highest degree of spirit of which the soul is receptive. The word *call* is used both in the active and passive sense—*He will surely call on the name of the Lord his God*; and, '*Then began men to be called by the name of Jehovah.*' The last expresses a change or ascent in the receptivity of influence, a higher degree of inspiration, and a better knowledge of the object of worship.

There is even at this day much mystery surrounding this holy name, which has been believed by learned

Jews to contain in its letters a mystical representation of the Divine essence. So sacred is the word held, that since some centuries before Christ it has never been pronounced on ordinary occasions in reading the Scriptures. The word Adonai, or 'Lord of the age,' or 'eternal Lord,' is substituted for it. The *tetragrammaton*, or four Hebrew letters forming the sacred word, having lost their vowel-sounds, remain only יהוה; but the vowel-points used in the word Adonai were affixed, and hence the name is spelt Jehovah; but the Jews maintain that this is not the correct sound: and there exists a beautiful tradition, that whenever the holy name shall be pronounced in the right manner the wanderers on the face of the earth will be restored to their own land.

When Moses was called by the Lord to lead the children of Israel out of captivity, Exodus vi.:

2 *And God (Elohim) spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I (am) JEHOVAH;*

3 *And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as El Shaddai, and by my name Jehovah I was not known to them.*

El Shaddai, 'the powerful,' translated 'God Almighty,' might perhaps be better rendered according to its primary meaning; *El* being always spiritual power in a good and high sense, and *Shaddai* coming from a word implying to shed, or pour out, *El Shaddai* is the pourer forth of spirit-power, the spiritual shedder. Balaam, when entranced, saw the vision of *El Shaddai*.

This reminds us of the descriptions of spiritual action given both by clairvoyantes and by the seers to whom the bright radiating or scintillating appearance was visible. Jehovah, the highest name, has a far grander and more internal signification than El Shaddai; but we must understand far more of these heavenly subjects than is known at present before we can comprehend the advance from the lower to the higher name. All the Divine teaching through the prophets was directed to keep the worship of the Jews to the Highest Name, or Jehovah. There is no doubt that by Baalim spiritual powers of a lower order are meant, and these being more accessible, the people were easily drawn away to them. They are *false gods* in the sense in which low earthly spirits are false, not in the sense of unreal spiritual powers; and all the prohibitions about witchcraft, &c., arise from the readiness of the people to trust to lower spirits. These injunctions can hardly apply to our time, if communications are sought only for instruction.

The applications of the word Name, in the sense which I have assigned to it, are very numerous in the Old Testament, not, however, to the exclusion of the lower meaning.

As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest; so didst Thou lead thy people to make thyself a glorious name.

1 Kings ix. 3. And the Lord said unto him (Solomon)

. . . *I have hallowed this house which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever.*

Psalm cxlviii. 13. *His name alone is excellent.*

All through the Jewish dispensation, the Name of the Lord indicates the spiritual degree into which the Hebrew nation have entered at the time. There is something very significant in the belief that they are as yet unable to pronounce the word Jehovah aright. In the spiritual language of correspondence the voice typifies the affection, as the name implies the character or essence. When the Jews have a true feeling of and towards the loving essence of our Father, they will regain the state originally intended for them. Will not this be when they receive His manifestation in the person of the Saviour, beholding the glory of God in the face of Christ?

The name of Jesus is said to have been announced by the angel to Mary—*‘Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.’*

And to Joseph (Matthew i. 21)—*‘And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus (Saviour), for he shall save his people from their sins.’*

This name is spiritually communicated in both instances. Zacharias, when the infant John was brought into the Temple, wrote, under the influence of the Spirit, *His name is John.* Our Lord says to His

disciples, *I am come in my Father's name. And, Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

Peter's statement on the occasion of the healing of the blind man, shows that he assigned the full import to the word Name.

Acts iii. 16. *And His Name through faith in His Name hath made this man strong.*

And the high priest's question, Acts iv. 7, *By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?*

Peter, having replied that it is by the name of Jesus Christ, of Nazareth, says—

Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

In Acts xv. 17, the Apostle James, in order to prove that the Gentile converts were not bound by the law of Moses, quotes the prophet Amos, *That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.*

We rise to the highest Name in the Christian dispensation. Paul writes (Philippians ii. 9)—

Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name:

10 *That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of (things) in heaven and in earth, and under the earth;*

11 *And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

The meaning of being called in the name is, as I have said, the same as being filled with the spirit of Christ, for holy influence can fall only into the soul whose aspirations are pure and good and holy. No hatred, no impurity, no pride, can hold its place, if the Comforter is to enter. Surely of all those moral states which act as obstacles to the influx of God's Spirit, there is one which must be most active, that of attributing to the Source of all holiness, and whose name is Love, wrath, cruelty, and revenge, and all the lowest feelings of humanity. It is true that in the old Scriptures we meet with such phrases as a jealous God, &c., but we must remember that the inspiration could only fall into the words and ideas familiar to the receivers, and these impressions were suited to the character of receptivity inseparable from the degree of spiritual education attained at the time.

We look down with supreme contempt on the heathen, who attributed to their deities actions which at this time bring men to the gallows; but for those who have seen the glory of God in the face of Christ, we are no better than the heathen. We malign and misrepresent the God whom we worship. I had lately an instance of this blasphemy of the Holy Ghost in a letter from a friend, who writes of the little children in a fishing village far from London,—

‘They are well taught as to conduct, and are good kind-hearted little creatures, who sit round and sing hymns about blood and wrath and damnation, with the utmost good humour.’

When the Saviour took the fishermen’s children on his knees and blessed them, did he teach them about blood and wrath and damnation? Those who write and teach such hymns profess to be called in the name of Christ. Let them think whether they do not take that name in vain —

For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

The trials and conflicts encountered by mediums on their entrance into spiritual life are to the temptation of the Saviour as the atom to the crystal, or as the crystal to the rock, but they are similar in kind; and so for every state and process of spiritual developement we have a type and example in the Book of the Spirit. This thought brings up a serious question; —

Is all that I have described as spiritual developement, with all its accompanying processes and trials, due to ‘unconscious cerebration,’ or self-delusion, or irregular nervous action, or imposture?

‘It is,’ will be the unhesitating answer of those whose philosophical compass points in a contrary direction.

Then the Bible is a history on a large scale, and of great antiquity, of unconscious cerebration, irregular

nervous action, self-delusion, and imposture. It is hard to say in what way those who pronounce the judgement can escape the conclusion.

But we who lean on the Book which has furnished spiritual food to all ages and conditions of men, whose prophecies have been fulfilled and are going on to their completion in the second coming of the Saviour, which is the entrance of the living Word into every soul — we need not fear that our staff will ever prove to be a broken reed.

The thought may occur—If it be true that the Bible is only a history of these mesmeric and psychological phenomena, it loses at once all its authority and its sacred character. These mesmeric and psychological phenomena are parts of a great whole, and are found to be a connecting link between what has been called the world of matter, and the world of spirit. And the ascent from matter to spirit is not difficult, neither are their respective boundaries undefined, if we remember that matter is the deposit of the life force, and that it becomes dead, and falls back into other forms, only to be acted on by new forces in the constant outpouring of spirit from the Fountain of life. We need not apprehend a diminished reverence for Scripture. The Bible will be found full of instruction, comfort, and hope for every soul in need, and in every degree of spiritual opening, and all the more when the obscure and mysterious passages whose meaning has been lost, are restored,

to life by a better knowledge of the states they describe, and when the things of the Spirit are recognised in the world as they are treated of in the history of the Word of God.

There is a deep meaning in the fact that the lowest spirit manifestations, or those in which the action of spiritual electricity on material substances is displayed, appeared soon after the means of communicating by earthly electricity were completed. We do not despise the child who first tried to catch up a thread by a piece of amber or sealing-wax, for the knowledge growing out of that simple experiment led to results which are yet far in the future. Neither should we undervalue the raps and movements, strange and childish as they appear: they form but the lowest step of a ladder whose base is on the earth, and whose top rests at the feet of the Lamb in the centre of the Throne.

NOTES TO CHAPTER XV.

NOTE 1, p. 350.

The word *Loikh* signified, in ancient Irish, the Holy Spirit. The belief in divers spiritual emanations coming in successive waves from the first fountain, and forming the *pleroma* of heaven, was not confined to the Platonic philosophy; it is found in all Eastern nations, and the Jews held it in a distinct though modified form in the Cabbala. Much of the confusion in which these doctrines are involved arises from our loss in this time of their essential spiritual truth. This, like all other such truths, is embodied in the phraseology and ideas of the people holding it, and is besides much incrustated with material growth. These two circumstances have been both cause and effect of the utter contempt with which it has been treated by the learned of modern times.

NOTE 2, p. 356.

I omitted to give in the right place a description of visions in which angels or very beautiful spirits were seen attending on a sick person. A writing medium was asked what those angels were, and her hand wrote '*seraphs*, or healing angels.'

The serpents which bit the children of Israel were *saraph*, translated fiery serpents, so, we may suppose, was the brazen one made in imitation. Gesenius says, on the word *seraphim*,

that if anyone wishes to follow the Hebrew usage of language, in which saraph is a serpent, he may render it *winged serpent*, since the serpent among the ancient Hebrews (Num. xxi. 8, 2 Kings xviii. 4), and among the Egyptians (Herod. ii. 74, Aelian, Var. Hist. ii. 17, 2), was the symbol both of wisdom and healing power. This notion is criticised very severely by the Editor of the Lexicon; but though the 'notion of winged serpents surrounding the throne of God, is wildly incongruous,' yet there is unquestionably a *something* which the magnetic serpent has in common with the glorious angel, though this something may be only a symbol.

Not one of the explanations given by Gesenius is satisfactory. There seems to be an unsuspected truth concealed in these and some other obscure Hebrew expressions, the understanding of which might throw some light on this part of my subject. I ask pardon of unlearned readers, though more apology is due to learned ones, for trying to call attention to these words in connection with spiritual processes, while I am unable to do more than guess at their specific meaning.

One derivation of the word seraph, traces it from the Arabic; if so, it is possible that it may be connected with the word rapha, to heal. I must, however, in order to justify my interpretation, 'healer,' connect the word seraph with winged serpent. I believe that the healing power of the angel, and the magnetic property of the serpent, are the attributes which have made one the symbol of the other, and that this symbolization was really used may be proved from the remains of early Egyptian worship. The seraphim, or supposed representations of glorious angels, are not originally Hebrew figures. Whatever their use, or whatever they represent, they were symbolic images derived from Egypt, and adapted to the holy worship of the tabernacle and temple. For the Cherubim of

the Temple were acknowledged by antiquarians to have been Seraphim. We find in Isaiah vi. 2 — '*Above it stood the Seraphims,*' which in the Septuagint is translated '*the Cherubim stood round about him.*' The description in the same chapter, of figures with faces and wings, identifies the two. Remembering that the Cherubim are essentially the same as the Seraphim, we may turn to some of the earliest representations of cherubim, and see whether the original identity of these symbols with that of the 'winged serpent' will not be apparent. I find in Kitto's Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature, art. Cherubim, an engraving of old Egyptian sculptures, such as are found on a tablet or shrine. One of these consists of two figures standing on each side of a representation of the Divine power (a winged globe), with wings outstretched, exactly in the position of the Cherubim in the Temple, *and each of these figures is a winged serpent*; not the serpent with its tail in its mouth, like the ancient symbol of eternity, or rather, perhaps, of an *age* or *αιών*, but a waved serpent, not unlike those in the caduceus or staff of Mercury, which also had healing power, or like the Egyptian symbol of healing. The name of the Egyptian healing god was *Serapis*, in whose temples, as in those of *Æsculapius*, the sick man passed a night, and the remedy was revealed in a dream. There is evidence that other mesmeric phenomena were introduced in the *Serapeia*, or temples of healing, but I have not the authority at hand.

It has never been clearly settled what was the nature of the teraphim, images which were used early in the Jewish worship (Judges xvii. 5).

The man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated (Heb., filled with the hand), one of his sons, who became his priest. The teraphim were used

afterwards, even as late as the time of David. We have seen that the ephod was put on to induce a spiritual state; is it not likely that the teraphim, a kind of household god, used in conjunction with an ephod, were for some similar purpose? Spencer, *De Legibus Hebraeorum*, tries to show, from the constant interchange of T and S in Eastern languages, that teraphim and seraphim are the same, or kindred words. I find in Kitto's *Cyclopædia*, that the Targum on Hosea iii. 4, calls the teraphim the expounder of oracles. The Rabbi Levi ben Gerson says that the teraphim were human figures, by which the imagination of diviners was so excited that they supposed they heard a low voice speaking about future events, with which their own thoughts were filled, &c. Many etymologists connect the word with *θεραπεύειν*, 'to heal.' As the spirituality of the Jewish worship declined, and their moral sense deteriorated, these images were formed in the most horrible way, and the adoration or invocation of them became idolatry of the worst kind, when the idol worshipped becomes the representation of an evil spirit. There is nothing wrong in the ephod or teraphim mentioned in the Book of Judges. The original use of the whole apparatus seems to involve some process of healing, and also of producing a spiritual state.

Θεραπεύειν is the Greek 'to heal,' whence our English 'therapeutics.' One sect, either connected with, or a division of the Essenes, was called *therapeutæ*, *healers*. The Essenes were a contemplative sect who had spiritual gifts. They had their name from Essen, an oracle. Here, again, we find the prophetic and healing gifts conjoined.

There is another obscure word which with its derivation seems to bear a distinct specific meaning, in reference to spiritual processes. This is the word *naphal*, translated

'to fall.' Gesenius says that it is in one sense 'used of a prophet who sees visions.' The word used to express the state of Balaam when he saw the visions of God (El schaddai) is *nophel*, 'fallen.' I think 'entranced' or 'clear-seeing' would be better. In many places *naphal* is used to express inspiration, Isaiah ix. 8: *The Lord sent a word into Jacob and it LIGHTED (naphal) upon Israel.*

The spirit of God, or the hand of God, is said to descend (*naphal*) upon anyone. Ezekiel viii. 1. . . . *the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me.* Ezekiel xi. 5: *And the Spirit of the Lord fell (naphal) upon me and said unto me, &c.* It is used for the coming on of a deep sleep (trance; the same word is used when God is represented as taking the rib from Adam).

Gen. xv. 12. *And a deep sleep fell upon (naphal) Abram.*

There are other senses in which the verb is used, but this one, which expresses spiritual influx, or its magnetising effect, seems to be the primary. We know how often mention is made in Scripture of sleep or trance, as the effect of spiritual action. It is one of the commonest phenomena described, and its occurrence is spoken of, as in the modern experience, as occurring in every degree, from the deep sleep of Adam, to the 'eyes heavy with sleep,' of the Apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration. Mahomet, who saw visions, has been supposed to have had epilepsy; in antiquated phrase, 'falling sickness.' It is more likely that he had simple trances, for the reception of spiritual influx does not depend on nor cause, epileptic attacks, though it is always found that the complaint predisposes to clairvoyance and other magnetic states.

The word *nuph*, probably related to *naphal*, means *to move up and down*. Naaman says, '*I thought he would move*

up and down his hand over the part,' &c. This is to mesmerise. Again, *nephesh* is the soul or life. Elisha, when he mesmerised the widow's son, prayed, '*Let now the soul of this child, I pray thee, return unto him.*' Is *nephesh* a kindred word?

Naphal refers especially to the influx of spirit power. My object now is, by showing that this word and the word *rapha*, to heal, are used in the same connection, to bring forward another instance in which the two modes of spiritual manifestation are attributed, in the more ancient Jewish history, to the same class of people.

In that obscure and much disputed passage, Gen. vi. 4, *And there were giants in those days, &c.* the word translated *giants* is *nephilim*, the plural of a noun made from *naphal*. The word is only used twice, and in both places is translated *giants*. The other instance is Numb. xiii. 33—*And there we saw the giants (nephilim) the sons of Anak, of the nephilim.*

But the same people are called *Rephaim*, *healers*, also translated *giants*. Josh. xii. 4—*And the coast of Og king of Bashan, of the remnant of the giants (Rephaim) that dwelt at Ashtaroath and Edrei.*

Deut. ii. 10. *The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; which also were accounted giants (Rephaim) as were the Anakims.* This is not the same attribute as the size and strength; they were tall and strong, like the sons of Anak, of whom the king of Bashan was one, and like them they were accounted *Rephaim*, *healers*. Gen. xiv. 5—*And smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim.*

I suppose the two words *nephilim* and *Rephaim* to express respectively men having both spiritual vision and healing power. There is one more word which seems to bear a

spiritual as well as a natural sense; this is Gebir, powerful; trans. *mighty*. We find El Gebor, the mighty God.

The word is also used of Balaam, 'the man (Gebir) which saw the visions of El Shaddai,' &c.

May I venture to suggest the application of these different readings to Gen. vi. 4?—*There were men having magnetic power in the earth in those times; and after that, on the marriage of the sons of God (this always means men having an influx of spirit, 'to them gave he power to become sons of God') with the daughters of men, their children became powerful prophets which were of old, men of the Name.*

It may be that the word translated *of old* is *of the age* in the sense of *αιών*—Welsh, *awen*; I know too well the misleading nature of etymologies, especially in an ancient obscure language, to do more than hint at this possible application of the difficult word *nolam*. Indeed, it is with much hesitation that I have tried to call attention to these few words in Hebrew, which have never yet received any coherent or definite explanation. There are many more such words, and I believe that their meaning, as well as that of the whole Scripture narrative, will become clear as the processes to which they relate are studied and understood.

NOTE 3, p. 360.

The moving or scintillating appearance of spiritual light has been several times mentioned in this book. It appears to be a phenomenon often visible to seers, and gives the idea of intense life. The Hebrew word *rachaph*, and its Syriac equivalent, seem to express this movement. I have lately seen it translated by a good scholar, 'to vibrate or fan.' Gesenius says it is figuratively (?) 'used of the Spirit of God, who

brooded over the shapeless mass of the earth, cherishing and vivifying.' It occurs in Gen. i. 2: *And the spirit of God moved over the face of the waters.* In Syriac it is used in speaking of Elisha vitalizing the body of the dead child, and also of a voice descending from heaven. It is the word for brooding over, and vitalizing, as a hen does her eggs.

All the above actions are spiritual, in one or other degree. The ancient Eastern nations had more real knowledge than is attributed to them.

NOTE 4, p. 364.

The Hebrew word is *michtab*. It occurs in Exod. xxxii. 16, Deut. x. 4 (in both which places it is used for the Divine writing of the law), and 2 Chron. xxi. 12, for the letter of Elijah, which I believe to have been spiritually written. On the word *michtam*, found at the heading of three psalms, Gesenius and his English editor are at variance — Gesenius believing the word to be the same as *michtab*, with the common change of *b* for *m*, the Editor approving the rather fanciful translation, *golden poem*. We know that David's hand was spiritually guided for the patterns of the Temple; does *Michtam of David* mean that the psalm was written under spiritual influence?

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