

The Spiritualist.

A RECORD OF THE PROGRESS OF THE SCIENCE AND ETHICS OF SPIRITUALISM.

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THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

THE Dialectical Society was founded early in the year 1867 for "the philosophical treatment of all questions, especially those which lie at the root of the differences of opinion which divide mankind." The formation of such a society was felt to be desirable, because most bodies of a kindred nature exclude religious, political, and a few social subjects from consideration from fear of popular prejudices or other reasons. The founders resolved that in the discussions of the Dialectical Society sectarianism of every kind should be rigidly excluded; that all distinctions founded upon social condition, occupation, and the like should be disregarded; also, that the only recognised qualifications for membership should be an unstained character, and a genuine desire to promote the objects of the society. Another principle adopted was the most absolute freedom of debate, and it was agreed that no subject whatever should be excluded from consideration, except upon the ground of its triviality.

The founders of the Dialectical Society in their prospectus say:—"The London Dialectical Society will have effected much good, if, by its means, persons are made to feel that to profess a belief on a disputed question with regard to which they refuse to examine the evidence, is an act altogether unworthy of a rational being; and that the only method of arriving at truth is by submitting one's opinion to the test of unsparing and adverse criticism. Freedom of speech and thought are (not less than personal freedom), the natural birth-right of all mankind. To refrain from uttering opinions because they are unpopular betokens a certain amount of moral cowardice, engendered by long-continued persecution. To state fearlessly the truth, or what we believe to be the truth, even though it be held only by a few, is the act of all who consider the exercise of private judgment a right, and the extension of human knowledge a duty. But society generally has not yet reached such a stage of progress as to allow individuals to give expression to their honest and deliberate convictions, without inflicting upon them penalties more or less severe. The effect of this is to deter men from expressing opinions which might be corrected if erroneous or accepted if true. In the London Dialectical Society, however, not only will no person suffer obloquy on account of any opinion which he may entertain or express, but he will be encouraged to lay before his fellow-members the fullest exposition of his views. . . . Let us be mindful of the fact that throughout the whole history of the world the voice of authority has constantly opposed new truths; and, with an earnest desire both to learn and teach, let us zealously follow the practice of dialectics, unaffected by the praises of some, undeterred by the denunciations of others, but conscious of honesty and purity of motive, and desirous for the wisdom and happiness of man."

Here, then, was a society formed upon upright and pure principles, ready to receive truth with open arms, however unpopular that truth might be. When the radiant and powerful young science of Spiritualism gained a footing in these islands, ready to teach the dwellers therein that a telegraph can be established between themselves and the loved immortals whom the world calls "dead," where could it submit its claims to honest investigation? Not to theological leaders who have lost their ancient standing, and no longer hold the confidence of the nation as its best guides in matters appertaining to science, literature, or art. Among these leaders are many who are most deservedly loved and respected for their promotion of active deeds of charity, but beyond that there is too much fighting among theologians for dying creeds of words, for high salaries, for political power, and for landed property. Neither could the young science go to the natural and proper place for its reception—the Royal Society—for the Royal Society, with its high honours and its immense brain force, has become sufficiently corrupted by power to omit from consideration facts which are unpopular enough "not to be respectable." Of late years, also, it has shewn a bias towards exclusiveness, and towards the acquisition of political power, as well as towards the elucidation of scientific truth. Up to about two years ago the Royal Society might have said, with truth, that too little was publicly known of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism to make it reasonable to suppose that such phenomena deserved investigation.

This plea has long been untenable, notwithstanding which many years probably will yet unnecessarily elapse, before anything appears in the *Philosophical Transactions* about the wonderful facts of the occasional movement of solid objects without contact with human beings, or with any visible appliance competent to produce such an effect. The Royal Society is too dignified and respectable to investigate natural phenomena, if such phenomena have to be observed beneath the fire of popular ridicule. Cannot a man be found in its ranks who will make the Society irrevocably commit itself by rejecting a paper on "Certain remarkable Phenomena called Spiritual Manifestations?" The Royal Society is now in such a state that if Diogenes of old were to apply for admission into its ranks he would be told that he must first give up his tub, then gain plenty of very respectable associates, and, finally, have a moderate balance in the bank. Socrates would most certainly be snubbed by the Royal Society as a low street preacher. Let a peer of the realm, quite guiltless of a knowledge of science, and a meritorious man of science of more than average capacity, stand at the door of the Royal Society and knock, the former would most certainly be admitted to the rejection of the latter, and every member of the council knows this statement to be true.

In thus criticising the faults of the Royal Society, its virtues are most freely admitted. Although it is as yet too low spiritually to rise much above the fashionable vices of the age, intellectually it is without a rival as a public body, and the researches of its members have been of enormous practical value to the world.

There is no necessity to call attention to other learned corporations in London, none of which were ready to open their doors for the reception of the science which will in time throw a bridge across the wide and deep chasm of the grave, and establish communication with the shining hosts on the other side. The Anthropological and Ethnological Societies ought to do so, but the council of the former has sacrificed its historical reputation in this respect, and the latter has made no sign, whatever its president may have done.

So the young giant, who in twenty years has wrought such wondrous changes in American thought, found no scientific body of men in England acting upon sufficiently pure principles to consent to examine his credentials, except the little and almost unknown Dialectical Society, which, verily, has "received an angel unawares." And the young visitor will put the alleged principles of the men composing the society to the severest of tests, for great will be the popular abuse if they do not bend more or less to the worthless opinions of the millions who have not investigated the subject. Some little evidence that they feel an improper pressure upon them is visible in the fact, that in all the accounts which have been published of the manifestations seen by their sub-committees, the names of the Society's witnesses have not been given. If the very eminent legal practitioner, who, on behalf of the Dialectical Society, saw a chair rise in the air, without contact with anything, and then fall on the top of a table, had permitted his name to be published along with his statement, what a noise there would have been among the lawyers! This remarkable withholding of the names of official witnesses of interesting facts, is a suppression which perhaps has never before been paralleled in the investigations of any scientific body, thereby proving that there is something very exceptional in this case, and that the inquirers feel themselves to be working under great pressure. Whatever the Dialectical Society may say or do their decision will have no influence whatever over the established phenomena of nature, in the shape of Spiritual manifestations, and the chief action of their report will be to test their steadfastness to their own principles, and to determine whether they as men are made of true steel. Should their report attempt to demolish the facts of Spiritualism they will be flinging a moral boomerang, which cannot possibly annihilate the laws of nature, but which will return after the lapse of a certain time, and make short work with the reputations of the throwers who did not act up to their professed principles. As yet, however, we know of no evidence that the investigators will not draw fair conclusions from the evidence which they have so patiently collected.

THE WEIGHT OF AUTHORITY.

OUR friends of the *Spiritual Magazine* a few months ago inserted an article on theological subjects, which gave rise to "the Bible-Spiritualism Controversy," in these columns, and to a controversy of a less friendly description in *Human Nature*. The article which thus gave rise to so much work for the printers, laid much stress upon the value of the teachings of Tertullian, who is one of the "church fathers."

Uneducated people, who have not the power of thinking for themselves, are easily kept down by the authority of great names. When they have to be depressed for theological purposes, the names of living celebrities are not usually chosen wherewith to perform the crushing operations, because the lives of such persons are open to some extent to accurate observation, and awkward facts are liable to crop up, to prove that they are but ordinary mortals. Hence designing leaders of the populace speak much of the "perfection of antiquity," that is to say, of the perfection of men who lived when we Britons were very little above the level of savages. The ignorant person thus taught, attaches an ideal image to the great name which is thrust upon him, and the imaginary personage he conjures up of course differs much from the real individual.

Hence, when the name of one of the "church fathers" is used to create a superstitious reverence in the minds of the unthinking, it is useful sometimes to convey matter-of-fact prosaic ideas, of what the men really were. In the article in the *Spiritual Magazine*, Tertullian was the venerable individual selected to close the mouths of those who wished to reason on the subject, we will therefore let Tertullian speak for himself, to prove his own character.

Tertullian advised his followers not to go to theatres or other public spectacles, and comforted them for not doing so on the plea that hereafter they would have a more joyous entertainment than any upon earth, for they would then see their fellow countrymen writhing in the torments of hell. "What," he exclaimed, "shall be the magnitude of the scene? How shall I wonder? How shall I laugh? How shall I rejoice? How shall I triumph when I behold so many and such illustrious kings, who were said to have mounted into heaven, groaning with Jupiter their god in the lowest darkness of hell! Then shall the soldiers who had persecuted the name of Christ, burn in more cruel fire than any they had kindled for the saints. . . . Then shall the tragedians pour forth in their own misfortune more piteous cries than those with which they had made the theatre to resound, while the comedian's powers shall be better seen as he becomes more flexible by the heat. Then shall the driver of the circus stand forth to view, all blushing in his flaming chariot, and the gladiators pierced, not by spears, but by darts of fire. . . . Compared with such spectacles, with such subjects of triumph as these, what can prætor or consul, quæstor or pontiff, afford? And even now faith can bring them near, imagination can depict them as present."

Tertullian also wrote that the Almighty would never pardon an actor, for actors try to "add a cubit to their stature" by wearing high-heeled boots, in express defiance of the teachings of the New Testament.

Another of the church fathers—St. Chrysostom—declared a woman to be "a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, and a painted ill."

MR. HOME'S READINGS.—The public readings at the Hanover-square Rooms, which have been just given by Mr. D. D. Home, have passed off very successfully, and greatly pleased the listeners present. The slight weakness of voice at one time noticed by Mr. Home's friends, has passed away. Among the journals which at different times have spoken in high terms of Mr. Home's readings are *The Morning Post*, *The Court Journal*, *the Daily Telegraph*, *Illustrated London News*, *Morning Advertiser*, and *the Era*. The *Era*, a journal conducted by experienced theatrical critics says: "The strong feeling displayed in the reading of Tennyson's poem of the 'Grandmother,' the dramatic ability and impressive delivery of Edgar Poe's 'Raven,' would be quite sufficient to place Mr. Home in the foremost rank of public speakers." Last Thursday night, as will be seen in a report upon page 68, Mr. Home gave some readings at Dr. Newton's reception *soirée* much to the pleasure of the listeners. He is about to give some more readings at the Hanover-square Rooms.

* Tertullian, *De Spectac.* cap. xxx.

Reports of Meetings.

ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

INSPIRATIONAL LECTURE ON THE USES OF SPIRITUALISM.

ON Thursday, April 21st, Mr. J. J. Morse, trance medium, delivered a lecture "under influence" before the St. John's Association of Spiritualists, St. John's Hall, Corporation-row, Clerkenwell. Mr. C. W. Pearce presided, and made a few introductory remarks.

Mr. MORSE then passed into the trance state, and under the controlling influence of his guardian spirit, Tien Sien Tie, was made to deliver the lecture, of which the following is a summary. The controlling spirit said that in bringing the subject of the uses of Spiritualism before the notice of those present it would be well to remember that man is dual in his composition, that he has within his body an active mind, which often wanders away from the beaten tracks of thought, wanders on into the dim future, trying to gather fragrant flowers or truths from the plains beyond. History discloses that the true strength of any nation depends upon the free expression of individual thought, but reason should always govern thought. History also shows that everything out of the beaten track is at first condemned, and then looked upon as a delusion and a snare, more especially if it deals with the religious nature of man. Man should not however be treated with sops, but be permitted to think freely; he is too often held down with bands forged and fettered by his fellow man, yet all the time the world talks of brotherly love.

Spiritualism brings before the mind of the thinking man certain occult phenomena, of which he had previously been ignorant. To the religionist it brings support of his belief in a future existence, and it brings knowledge to those who study the ills of body and mind. It sweeps away many of the errors of past ages, and substitutes facts for fallacies. A great deal is said in the religious world about "revelation," and if we ask how this revelation came, we are told to rest, and not to be too presumptuous, but Spiritualism brings us face to face with the facts of past ages. There are many diseases quite beyond the grasp of the medical profession, but the clairvoyant or spiritual medium, takes the hand of the patient, and traces the disease back to its source; when the whole thing is thus spread out before the spirits, they can prescribe either to cure or to relieve the pain. In all this there is instruction, and where knowledge is gained there must be elevation.

When the religionist, bowed down with grief and unnumbered sins, sees death approaching, he fears him, for he fears to leave his wife and children, and he has a confused misconception of a future life. But Spiritualism abolishes this fear, and by its phenomena shows its one great use—namely, the power of proving that there is an existence beyond the grave. He who examines the phenomena and analyses their teachings, finds plenty of confusion and contradictions, but at last the truth becomes clear to him, and he proclaims the truth that man lives beyond the grave, and that the Great Father is truly a being of love. There is use and elevation there.

Some spirits are clever at science and inventions, and by the aid of mediums now and then assist some branch of manufacture. Here is something done that helps man—something done with a good intention—not always, perhaps, the best that could have been done; but still there is a use, and a service.

Spiritualism reveals to us that we are self-dependent, that we must work out our future for ourselves, and that we should not waste time by trying to hammer our own opinions into other people's heads. Whatever exists is noble, and spiritual phenomena being entities should be studied, and can be known. Every subject requires conformity to certain conditions before it can be known; and spiritual things are no exception to this rule. If the external man be subdued, the spiritual state can be entered, and as the spiritual state is around us, it is not necessary to leave the body to gather knowledge about it; but a power like this must be worked for, just the same as any other. This state may be induced, yet at first the liberated mind will fail to impress its ideas on its outer consciousness, but at last it will make its outer consciousness aware of what it sees and understands. As man has a double consciousness there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that this can be accomplished. Those who listen to a clairvoyant should not believe everything he says, because there may be conditions unknown to the hearers, causing him to say certain things in his own light, or by hereditary bias. Even the ordinary manifestations are affected by the condition of the medium and of the people about him.

The student of nature finds much to delight him in the phenomena, and his heart therefore opens to the Giver of all good. The clairvoyant gives him a vast knowledge of the earth and its inhabitants, and proves how everything is continually growing, from the hard granite rock, to the walking machine called "man," thus unfolding the law of progressive development. He finds out also that he has more or less power to relieve pain. This is no new thing, it was known to the ancient Egyptians, and is still well-known among eastern nations, but for the present purpose it may be considered to be a new power, enabling the operator, who is sometimes assisted by invisible friends, to effect great and marvellous cures. In this there is a use, great and good.

One branch of the science of Spiritualism, namely mesmerism, shows how one man can affect others in his company, and produce marvellous results. Is it wonderful when one man can thus influence another, that many run into errors or so-called sins? The negative mind is drawn on by the positive mind, and at last gets lost in dissipation. Then the world gives its verdict, from which there is no appeal. But those who understand the science will view this aspect leniently, will view it quietly and gently, will see extenuating circumstances, thus teaching another lesson of brotherly love. There is a use in this.

Spiritualism is preeminently a science—the science of the study of man. It shows the relations of a brother to his brother man and to the world which he inhabits; but to develop this science, years of patient toil will be required. It will give man a knowledge of the invisible world, and of the divisions of society in the spirit land. It will reveal to him his duties as a rational intelligent being, it will aid in his work of toning down this scolding world, and in subduing error and dogmatism. Surely there is a use in all this? Here is study for the scientist, for the materialist, for the religionist, and even for the listless who considers it a bore to live. It shows us that there is a natural religion, but that religion by itself is a poor rope to trust to, it is only one strand of a good rope. Religion without knowledge is dogmatism, and the one must support the other. Spiritualism

throws away the mystery hitherto hanging over religious teaching, it impresses the mind with kindly feelings and noble thoughts, and a thing which has such power must be useful. The power must also come from a good source, for "by their fruits ye shall know them."

There are men who seeing so much misery and suffering in the world, say "Why does God permit it?" and then they drift away from all religion, although they had better eling still to that feeble strand than to none at all. They never ask why the evil is there, they do not see that the things which men call "evil" have a relative use tending to the general good. But he who knows the causes of an effect has the key in his hand. Many sensitive media have the power of pointing out the origin of certain evils, to the benefit of those who hear and use the knowledge given, instead of going away and forgetting it. The sensitives who give these truths to the world have their trials, many sink under them like the gentle Nazarene, and cry "*Eli, eli, lama sabaethani.*" The gentle Nazarene was a man born before His time. He saw the causes of wrong but had not the power to apply the remedy. Another man may be born who may have greater power of execution, for in the coming time the power of love and sterling merit shall rule the world, and have dominion over class and caste. Here is another use.

The business of life and the duties of home should not occupy the time of men and women, to the utter exclusion of that which belongs to the inner nature, for the man within governs the man without. If the man within goes wrong, the man without must go wrong, and discord will prevail. Spiritualism teaches man many of the laws of his inner nature.

What is the tendency of all these uses? Is it to produce power? Is it to make tyrants? No; its tendency is to improve the mind, to clear away thoughts which press upon the minds of men, and to let the pure sun of reason shine with full lustre. This must tend to give all minds knowledge and wisdom. The man who has the power of healing must be inspired with love and kindness. The tendency of Spiritualism with the religionist is to increase his sense of religion, to make it strong and durable, and to add new fuel to the sacred fire within, for it shows how kind the Great Source has been to humanity, to permit the veil to be raised, to let men see beyond the tomb, and to let them speak to the loved ones who have gone before. His reason then takes the hand of his religion, and pale-eyed charity comes along the road. He sees how grand are the laws which govern religion, and how ignorant he had previously been—how he should ever act so as to preserve the sacredness of life on both sides of the silent river. Thus will his reverence be increased for the Great Creator.

Mortals, I never yet knew a man or woman who in the inner heart believed in utter annihilation, because such belief does not naturally exist. When the cares and troubles of life are laid aside for a time, and all is hushed, the spirit wanders into the dim unknown, but the flesh will not hear the still small voice within, and it becomes confused. The man then feels "Well, I don't want to think about it," and then he dismisses the subject, though he wishes that he could believe the spiritual manifestations in the sacred volume. But when the modern manifestations came under his own scrutiny he stands upon the shore free from doubt and from the waves of difficulty; he knows that he lives for ever, and he thanks God for it.

No subject will produce a favourable impression upon him who thinks it is a bore to live. Spiritualists should never condemn this brother, who pays no attention to anything beyond himself. Endeavour to improve and to till the land which has lain fallow so long, plant in his soul some germs of reason, stir up his stagnant mind to action, let him know that he will have a reckoning to pay, not to a bar of justice, but to one of the sternest judges of all—his own conscience. Conscience will smite him hard when he has to look back upon such a life.

The existence you are now enjoying, with all its beauties, with all its glories, is but the commencement of the course which you will have to run. Here you can draw within yourselves that which will assist you in future ages, by spreading happiness, by gaining knowledge, and by spreading good around you. This is the school where the infant is trained. Woe to the infant if he neglect his schoolhouse! He must suffer, and he alone. Do not condemn a brother hastily, but have charity and brotherly love. Spiritualism instructs and lifts the mind; it tends to draw the man onwards and upwards to that source from which we all come. We always feel ourselves drawn to it, but never near enough to comprehend that which is above the scope of our own intelligence. Try to lead useful lives, for such a course will draw down blessings from friends in the higher life, who see you both in the rum shop and upon the rostrum. Many of you would not offend your earthly friends, and because you cannot see them, why should you offend them when they are gone? Farewell.

Mr. Morse having sat too often for manifestations for some time previously, the spiritual control during the delivery of this lecture was much weaker than usual.

SPIRITUALISM IN STRATFORD.

ON Sunday afternoon, May 1st, a public meeting was held in the Working Men's Hall, Stratford, Essex, to consider the subject of Spiritualism and its teachings. The Rev. T. Crow, Unitarian minister, presided.

Mr. Collier, of Forest-gate, had undertaken to be present to answer any questions which might be put about Spiritualism, he having lectured there on the subject on several previous occasions; but he was unable to attend the meeting now under notice, because of severe inflammation of the right arm. Consequently, at the invitation of the President, Mr. Bassett consented to take the place of Mr. Collier. A variety of questions of a more or less elementary nature having been put,

Mr. BASSETT said that before answering them he should like to make a few introductory remarks. Two years ago he had taken part in a similar discussion to the present one, and then he did not believe in the truth of Spiritualism, although for some years previously he had been acquainted with the phenomena. Two years ago he had publicly stated that he should like to give believers in it six months in a lunatic asylum, so he should not be at all surprised if many of those listening to him, were now wishing him the same fate. After five years of thorough investigation he became a believer. After much inquiry his difficulty had been "Why cannot I get these phenomena alone, by myself?" He put this question at a spirit circle, and he was told that he could get them by himself if he became a medium. He then asked, "Am I a medium?" and the spirits said "No." "Oh, then," he thought, "it's no use pursuing the subject further," but then he remembered that his wife was with him at the *séance*, so he asked, "Is Mrs. Bassett a medium?" The reply was, "Yes." Accordingly they went home and sat for manifesta-

tions by themselves, in a room free from springs and man-traps; night after night did they sit and get nothing, but at last faint raps were heard, which at first he put down to the cat. They continued their sittings, the raps grew louder, and at last the table began to move. Sometimes when they were not sitting for manifestations or thinking of Spiritualism, the table would move about with all the tea things on it, and this in broad daylight. Once, when it was moving and had nothing upon it, he asked, "Is any spirit present?" and the table turned upside down. (Laughter.) They might laugh, but it was true. He witnessed the phenomena for a long time in his own home, and at last became convinced that they were produced by spirits. He had known spirit hands and arms to be formed, and to touch himself, with nobody else present but his wife. It was true that the hands were formed in the darkness, but he knew that his wife did not produce the effects, because he held both her hands, and while he did so the spirit hands were passed over his face. He had also heard the spirits talking with audible voices, just as human beings still in the body talk to each other. Electricity could not produce hands and audible voices. He stated all these facts to show that he had not jumped to a conclusion on the matter all at once. Mr. Bassett then proceeded to answer the questions, some of which were put to elicit information, and some were framed on the supposition that Spiritualism is all imposture. While answering the questions the speaker said that in very many cases three of his senses had been influenced by the phenomena at the same time—namely, feeling, hearing, and seeing. In answer to the inquiry when the phenomena first appeared, he would reply—"To Adam and Eve in the garden of Paradise." He could hardly say whether the communications were good or bad, for it is a great question "What is good and what is bad?"—but he knew that good Christian spirits came and told him that they are now happy and reaping their reward, and others who were not Christians while upon earth, say that they are now not happy in consequence. There is no eternal punishment.

Mr. COCKETT said that he did not like the assumption that Spiritualism is an imposture, which had been implied in some of the questions put to Mr. Bassett. Their friend Mr. Collier was known to be an honest man, and to regard Spiritualism as such a serious thing, that he made it a subject of prayer, so he thought that to laugh at it was not right. And the statements made by Mr. Collier were of the utmost importance, for he said that he had direct knowledge that in the next world the destiny of man is eternal progression, and there is no eternal punishment. Mr. Collier had also stated, on the authority of Professor Hare, that in America about 25,000 hard-headed sceptics had become Spiritualists; he (Mr. Cockett) should like to know how far these statistics can be verified. He should like to ask what good to mankind is likely to be derived from Spiritualism? One of the banes of Spiritualism is that it seems to make men think so much about the far away spirit land and future life, to the forgetfulness of their present duties, and if this be the case, it will do no more good than the ordinary Trinitarian religion.

MR. TAYLOR asked how Mr. Bassett knew that electricity did not produce the phenomena?

MR. BASSETT said that Mr. C. F. Varley, who knew as much about electricity as anybody, had stated distinctly that the phenomena are not of an electrical character.

The PRESIDENT said that although objections had been made, he thought no day so fit as the Sabbath to discuss questions bearing upon religion, or upon the facts which underlie all our religious beliefs. Our great poet has spoken of "That bourn from which no traveller returns," and we all feel that it is an unknown land. If, then, Spiritualism can prove that there is communication with the unseen world, what a priceless boon it will be? He believed that Spiritualism could not make good its professions. While we may be troubled, and not know the nature of the laws which govern the real though strange phenomena of Spiritualism, we do know that they are not produced by existences in another world. It had been asked, "When did the phenomena first appear?" and he would reply that they were known as far back as prehistoric times; the Bible is full of them, and he thought that Spiritualism is making us understand certain things in the Bible, which otherwise would be inexplicable. In the Bible there is much about people who went into trances, and had communications from spirits, and after receiving these communications they went forth to assume authority over their fellow men. If Spiritualism were real, what ought it to have done? After existing, as it has done, for the last four or five thousand years in every country under heaven, if the communications had been real they would have given us a history of the world beyond the grave, of its constitutional government, and of the state of its society and laws. It would also have given us a history of the lives of our remarkable men after they reached the other side, and their present doings would form the subject of many of the telegrams coming from the other world. Yet they give us absolutely no information about that world. The men who have these manifestations get into a terrible jumble; they say what they have seen, and then get their ideas into a muddle. They are not clear-headed people, although there are some exceptions, for Robert Owen was a convert to Spiritualism before his death, and it made him believe in a future life. He never found that a belief in Spiritualism made a disbeliever any better. He knew a man who once did not believe in a future state, but who had since turned a Spiritualist, but he is no better Christian now; he never enters a church, and he has not joined himself to any of the religious bodies. He never saw anybody any the better for Spiritualism. He knew that every Spiritualist finds that the spirits teach his own ideas of what is right; a Calvinist, for instance, finds Calvinism in full bloom in the other life. All these things are reflections from the man's own brain, and—

MR. BASSETT—You are wrong, sir. Allow me to contradict that.

The PRESIDENT—Well, it is so as far I can learn. He then continued that another fact was that the teachings do not agree with each other. He thought that the true explanation of much of this will be learnt when more is known about the human brain. Physicians know what intangible phenomena are presented by the brain, and what a difficult part of the system it is to attempt to understand. God may find room to construct a universe on the point of a needle, but man, when he tries to follow these wonders, finds his powers too feeble. Probably, spiritual manifestations will in time be traced to brain force; still, he must admit that Mr. Bassett had stated things which the brain force theory does not explain, and probably never will explain. He fully admitted the phenomena to be true, and the imposture theory to have no foundation; even if people were discovered now and then playing tricks at spirit circles, it proved nothing. The character of the witnesses was often beyond question, and they had nothing to gain in the matter. It was true he did not

know much of Mr. Bassett, still he was somewhat a judge of character, and saw no reason for supposing he should state to the meeting what was not true; then, as to Mr. Collier, he knew him well, and believed him most thoroughly. Brain force and mesmerism will explain many of the facts, but not all, and until a theory can be found to fit all of them, it is the wisest plan to suspend judgment. (Applause.) The proceedings then closed.

DR. J. R. NEWTON'S RECEPTION.

THE RESTORATION OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND—THE IMMEDIATE CURE OF A DYING MAN LAST SUNDAY IN LIVERPOOL—AN ANECDOTE BY LORD LYTTON—DR. NEWTON'S FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND—OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE AT PHILADELPHIA OF THE REALITY OF DR. NEWTON'S HEALING POWERS—THE USE OF FARADAY'S DISCOVERIES—CURE OF PARALYSIS—THE LOVE OF THE SPIRITS TO MAN—MR. S. C. HALL ON SPIRITUALISM.

LAST Thursday night a public reception was given to Dr. J. R. Newton, the eminent American healing medium, at the Assembly Rooms, Harley-street, Cavendish-square. The meeting was in every respect a truly representative one, the leading and most active workers in the movement in London being present with scarcely an exception. The rooms were well filled by the ladies and gentlemen present, who unanimously invited Mr. Benjamin Coleman, of 1, Bernard-villas, Upper Norwood, the convener of the meeting, to preside.

The PRESIDENT, in his opening remarks, stated the object of the gathering, and informed Dr. Newton that those ladies and gentlemen whom he chiefly recognised in the meeting before him were, for the most part, Spiritualists who had no hesitation in avowing their belief; the meeting also represented all shades of opinion among Spiritualists, who had met there on the common ground that "man is a spirit, and that he expects a future and progressive state of existence." Further than that, there might be differences of opinion on various points, and it was not his duty on that occasion to encourage discussion of religious subjects; he believed, in fact, that Spiritualism belonged to all religions. He knew people of many religions who were Spiritualists, including even Roman Catholic priests. Four contributions towards the expenses of the present meeting came from clergymen of the Church of England—one of them a vicar; Spiritualism, therefore, does not mean any special creed; it means only that man believes in a future state of existence. There were also present a few who were not Spiritualists, and there was a desire to help them in every possible way. There might be one or two among these strangers who had come to scoff, who desired to tell the world to-morrow that Dr. Newton is a very peculiar man, and that his appearance is not that which they would think worthy of commendation; who also wished to bring ridicule upon a subject which they did not understand. The subject, however, was not one which should be made a matter of indifference, and to obtain just conceptions of it should be the desire of everybody. He thought that outsiders should not place too much confidence in men who knew nothing whatever of the subject. Of the many phases which Spiritualism has exhibited, that of healing is perhaps the greatest boon which has been given to man. It is a gift which was practised by the Saviour and His apostles and it has come down through all generations to the present time. In Germany, Switzerland, France, England, and America there have been at various times men who possessed the power of healing. In America Dr. Newton stands pre-eminent for his healing powers, as proved by recorded facts spread over the last seventeen years, and many of the cures effected by him were of a very wonderful description. He (Mr. Coleman) had himself heard in New York and Boston of Dr. Newton's powers in this respect. One gentleman had told him of a case where Dr. Newton had restored sight to a blind man, who had been unable to see for seven or eight years previously, and who was cured by Dr. Newton in a few minutes. Dr. Newton only arrived in Liverpool last Saturday, May 17th, and on the following day, Sunday, he was asked to go and see Mr. Ashley, of that town, who had been afflicted with a very serious illness for some time, and Mr. Watson, who was present at the meeting that evening, had given him the following statement about what took place:—

"Mr. Ashley, a retired merchant, has authorised me to give publicity to the following facts:—Mr. Ashley resides at 5, Catherine-street, Liverpool. On the 27th December last he was at Oxford and broke a blood-vessel in the lungs—then in delicate health, and supposed to be consumptive. A leading medical man, Mr. Freeborn, was called in, who prepared Mrs. Ashley for the worst, and told her that there was no hope; that her husband would go off in a rapid consumption, and none could say how soon; he advised that he should not be removed to Liverpool, as his strength was not equal to the journey. Mrs. Ashley prayed fervently for Divine aid, that she might be comforted and directed according to her trial, feeling assured that her husband would shortly depart—and turning to her Bible, opened it at a venture, and found her finger, she knows not how, on the text in St. John, where Jesus, speaking of Lazarus says, 'This sickness is not a sickness unto death, but for the glory of the Lord.' From that moment she felt assured that her husband would not die, and she told Dr. Freeborn her strong impression. Some little time after this Mr. Ashley was removed to Liverpool on a bed fitted up in a railway carriage. For nearly or about five months he was confined to his room, no one expecting his recovery except his wife. Once Mr. Gardner carried him like a child down stairs, and had great difficulty in getting him back, and fears were entertained that he would not recover the shock. Last Saturday, May 7th, he was again taken with spitting of blood, and spat nearly a pint of blood and mucus during the day and another during the night. Dr. Simmons prepared Mrs. Ashley for the worst, and intimated that the great change might take place at any moment. Last Sunday, the 8th of May, Dr. Newton and myself went in a cab to Mr. Ashley's, the Doctor went up stairs to Mr. Ashley's sick room, requesting that none should follow but Mrs. Ashley. In about five or six minutes, Dr. Newton brought Mr. Ashley down stairs, and took him into the open air and said he was cured; he told him that he could walk a mile and a half, which he urged him to do, and to eat a beef-steak and drink a pint of ale for dinner,—although his doctor had fed him on soup for the last five months. Mr. Ashley came to the evening service and stood alone a considerable time, whilst Dr. Newton told the audience of the case, which Mr. Ashley confirmed in all respects. Mr. and Mrs. Ashley gave me this account yesterday (Monday), at their house, after Mr. Ashley had been out, and eaten a mutton chop with pudding and ale, and after a longish walk. To-day I called, and Mr. Ashley was in a sound and comfortable sleep on the sofa, after a meat dinner, and ale, and a walk. Previous to Dr. Newton's seeing him, he had not been out of his bed for five months."

This was a very good proof of Dr. Newton's powers as a healing medium, but he could not in that short address give one-hundredth part of the cases on record, some of which have taken place very recently. One gentleman, an American, who came over to England with Dr. Newton, had told him (Mr. Coleman) of a case of an individual who had lost the sight of one eye, in consequence of a piece of steel getting into it by accident; inflammation set in, and he lost the sight of the other eye. Two years ago, the wife of the sufferer was impressed, she did not know how, to induce her husband to go with her to Montreal from New York, to visit Dr. Newton. They arrived in Montreal as Dr. Newton was on the point of leaving the town, and directly Dr. Newton saw the patient, whose eyes were covered with a bandage, he told him that he would do good to one of them, thereby showing a knowledge

that both of them were not in the same state. He then removed the bandage, and said, "You can see, can't you?" and although he had only been in the room seven minutes, he found that he could read small print. Mr. Watson, who was present, could testify to the truth of the facts. In London Dr. Newton would doubtless encounter plenty of opposition; if he does not succeed the medical profession will call him a sharper, and if he does succeed they will call him a lunatic; they are sure to say that he is mad, because he has announced his intention not to charge any fee to anybody during his stay in England. He knew nothing personally of the actual practice of Dr. Newton, but he was one of those who could accept testimony, and in this case it came in such overwhelming profusion that the facts could not be doubted. He did not believe that Dr. Newton could cure everybody, nor indeed half of those who called upon him, unless he saw it done; but there is no doubt that he can produce very wonderful cures, and that he has a great work to do in this country. The *Cui bono* of Spiritualism is often asked. This question is of more importance even than Spiritualism itself, and the circumstance that power is given to some mediums to alleviate human suffering, furnishes materials for a satisfactory answer. Spiritualism is now progressing rapidly in all directions. He would narrate an anecdote which was told him several years ago by Lord Lytton; it was not told originally under the seal of secrecy, and it might be interesting to those present. Lord Lytton said that some years ago he spent some little time in Nice, with the intention of selecting a residence there, and while walking in the neighbourhood of the town with a friend, a chateau was pointed out to him, as a place which would suit him very well if he could get it. The occupant, the Chevalier D'Arson* was reported in the neighbourhood to be a great magician; he held himself aloof from all the world, and was said to have discovered the philosopher's stone. Accordingly, Lord Lytton made his want of a house an excuse for asking permission to call upon him, and an interview was the result. The remarkable owner of the mansion had a Jewish countenance, was very reserved, and altogether lived the life of a recluse. He, however, received his guest heartily, said that he was glad to see him, and told him the reason why he did not answer his letter sooner was that he never took any step of the kind without first consulting his invisible guide, who, in this case, gave consent to the entrance of Lord Lytton, together with permission to occupy the chateau if he liked to do so. The guest then told him of the rumours in the neighbourhood, and asked him about the philosopher's stone. The Chevalier laughed, and said that the rumour was absurd; he knew that people were curious about his private studies. Then he told Lord Lytton that he had been brought up well, and had been the recipient of a large fortune which he spent very quickly and very foolishly, and when he was brought down nearly to his last shilling, a "voice" from an invisible personage told him that if he adopted the advice of the said unseen guide, his fortune would be made once more. He was then advised by his monitor to enter into certain commercial speculations. He did so, and reaped a rich harvest. Lord Lytton accepted the terms and took the chateau. The Chevalier D'Arson appeared to be a believer in the transmigration of souls, and his daughter certainly held that belief. Not long after the interview, the reputed magician invited a large company to meet him at the house where he had lived in seclusion so long, and he told his guests that he had brought them together to explain his history, and why he had not been able to mix with society. He added that he had been informed by his guide that he was about to quit his earthly life for seventeen years, that his bed was to be made in the adjoining chapel, and that on the following Friday night he should cease to live. He *did* die on the following Friday, as indicated. Such was the story told to him by Lord Lytton, and of course there were many present who would not believe it. A lady who had lived at Nice once told him that she did not believe it, as she had never heard of the circumstances while there, but a little while afterwards she wrote to him, saying that she had made inquiries into the matter, and that the story was quite true. Of course that statement did not vouch for the waking up again—(laughter)—and he did not know whether the seventeen years were up yet or not. These accurate predictions of coming death, which are not uncommon, show how the phenomena of Spiritualism crop up in various ways, and the recovery of a lost commercial position by spirit aid, shows how there is use in Spiritualism even in a worldly sense.† Dr. Newton had told him that it was his intention to stop six months in London, and to take a large house, wherein he will receive all the afflicted who come to him for relief. He thought that everybody would find Dr. Newton to be as kindhearted and good a man as ever they met. He would close his remarks by reading the following address, which it was proposed to present to Dr. Newton:—

To Dr. J. R. Newton, of Newport, Rhode Island.—It is our pleasant duty on this occasion to give you a most cordial and hearty welcome, to express the admiration with which your labours have inspired us, the fame of which is not only wide-spread in your own land, but is familiar to all who are acquainted with the philosophy and literature of Spiritualism. You have been the means of alleviating and removing human suffering, and curing long-standing and terrible diseases, as is abundantly shown in public journals and records, and as thousands who have received the benefit of your treatment have testified and are willing to testify. We appreciate these great services which, to the poor, have been rendered freely, "without money and without price," and we anticipate with the most lively satisfaction the prospect of a similar good work being effected amongst ourselves through your instrumentality. We know that this is the hope and purpose which has prompted your visit amongst us. God grant that you may meet with a full measure of success in this your high and noble mission in our land. Most deeply do we sympathise with you and appreciate your aims, and desire, as far as we may, to aid and co-operate with you in their prosecution. Your long and honourable career has forcibly illustrated, beyond all cavil, the practical and beneficent character of Spiritualism, which, like your own kindly feelings and generous efforts, knows no distinction of class, sect, or creed; but recognises in every man a brother, and especially delights in the relief of suffering humanity. Those of us who are honoured with your personal friendship desire further to express our high respect for your private worth no less than great public usefulness; and we are sure that we express not only our own feelings, but those of many, very many, who are unavoidably absent, in assuring you of our sincere and grateful feelings toward you, and that you have our best wishes for the success of your humane and generous purpose. May God and the good angels speed you on your way.

Signed on the behalf of the meeting,
BENJAMIN COLEMAN,
Chairman.

London, May 12th, 1870.
At the request of the Chairman the auditory expressed their approval of this address, by standing up simultaneously.

* This name is spelt as pronounced, but may not be literally correct.
† Experience in America shows that in the majority of cases where people follow up Spiritualism from nothing but worldly and commercial motives, they are misled, and reap nothing but ruin and trouble. We have been told by a Californian Spiritualist how some Californian gold-diggers consulted the spirits, who told them where to dig, and what they would cut through before reaching the gold. They found all the statements true, except the last, for after performing the work they found no gold to reward their efforts, and at last the light dawned upon them that spirits do not primarily come to earth to aid men in such matters. In some cases where such aid has not been sought, it has been given. We could give several authenticated cases.—Ed.

MR. THOMAS SHORTER said that he had had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Dr. Newton on the occasion of his first visit to this country in the autumn of 1864. He was then deeply impressed with the singular simplicity and gentleness of character, and with the ingenuousness which he manifested. Little previous notice had been given of his arrival, so that there were few to meet him, or to hold out the hand of welcome. However, Dr. Newton, a genuine man, with a high sense of duty, was not easily disconcerted, and his first reception had not prevented him from paying another visit to England, under happier auspices. He did not say these things out of compliment, for he thought that the large-heartedness of Dr. Newton had much to do with his success as a healing medium. Since 1864 the position of Spiritualism in England has changed very much for the better; public opinion on the subject has grown and ripened; publications and books have multiplied, platform and press have aided the movement, and societies and individuals have been stimulated to investigate. To-night, instead of the few friends who welcomed Dr. Newton on his first visit, he was glad to see so goodly an assemblage. He trusted that the work which Dr. Newton had begun so well in Liverpool would be continued in London, and that he would be as successful in curing disease in England as he had been in America. Here, in England, we are still engaged in what may be called "the battle of the evidences." We are extending our lines, and dislodging the enemy from his earthworks of stolidity and ignorance; there is also springing up in our midst a deeper desire to show not only the truth of Spiritualism, but its good, and its practical value. This may be done in various ways, not only by appealing to the primary convictions upon which all religious truth must rest, but in those things which come home to our palpable and immediate interests—to those things which deal with the sufferings of humanity—such for instance as the power possessed by Dr. Newton of curing many diseases without physis and pill-boxes. The majority of mankind believe that nobody can be cured without a rush to the apothecary, for there is a medical orthodoxy as well as a religious orthodoxy; such people set their faces against all novel blessings, and would much rather that a man should be respectably killed, than be cured by an unlicensed practitioner. (Laughter and applause.) It is singular that people who profess to be Christians, and who say that they believe that curing by laying on of hands was practised by their great Teacher, should be scornful and incredulous, when such things are said to be amongst us at the present day. (Applause.) History knows of no line of distinction between apostolic times and our own, and there are instances of the healing powers possessed by individuals all down the whole series of Christian records; there are such instances in plenty in the history of France, Switzerland, England, and other European nations, as well as in America, but one of the most distinguished and successful of healing mediums was their guest of that evening. He would refer to one proof of a well known and established character. While Dr. Newton was in Philadelphia he was much persecuted by the medical profession for curing diseases without a license, and he was brought before a local tribunal on various frivolous pretexts; the result was that the court, with all its entrances, was thronged with about 1,500 people, who came forward, unsolicited, to give evidence of the genuine character and reality of the cures which Dr. Newton had effected. Thus the prosecution was made perfectly harmless and powerless. He would refer to one other case much nearer home. The Revd. F. Rowland Young, pastor of the Free Christian Church, Swindon, was not only a preacher of the Gospel, but a believer in it, for he believed in the power of healing by the laying on of hands, as narrated therein. He had been afflicted for many years with neuralgia, and physicians could do nothing to give him ease, so he went on purpose all the way from England to the United States to see Dr. Newton, who cured him at once, and not only did he do so, but Mr. Young acquired in consequence some of the same healing powers. He (Mr. Shorter) had recently been to Swindon to see Mr. Young, and met there with a poor woman who told him how she had lost the use of her eyesight for many years, and had been cured by Mr. Young after his return from America. Whether Dr. Newton would be as successful in England as in America he could not say. The materialism of the people makes the conditions unfavourable, mentally, physically, and spiritually—all the more credit to Dr. Newton, who, in the face of these repellent influences, has ventured to come amongst us. The least we can do is to acknowledge his great kindness in coming amongst us and doing his best, irrespective of all considerations of sect, country, party, or creed. He was sure that Dr. Newton's endeavours would meet with a hearty and ready response. He was sure that he only expressed the fervent wishes of the meeting when he expressed to Dr. Newton the warm interest which all present took in his work, and how they all wished him "God speed!" (Applause.)

Mr. TEBB spoke in favour of the address, and expressed his pleasure at seeing such an audience present. He said that it had been related of Faraday that when he made any new discovery, he would go about explaining its nature with great delight to his friends, which delight they very often could not appreciate. They often said "What is the use of it?" and his reply was, "Wait, and we will find some use for it." If the phenomena of Spiritualism were confined to table motions and raps, there might be some difficulty in answering questions as to its use, but when it is seen how certain mediums, like Dr. Newton, have the power of healing, whilst others, like Mrs. Hardinge, have the power of inspirational speaking; and others again, like Mr. Shepard, have the gift of music, there is no difficulty in giving satisfactory proof that Spiritualism is a good unquestionable. He thought that they were much indebted to the early supporters of the cause of Spiritualism—to such men as Judge Edmonds, Governor Tallmadge, Professor Hare, Professor Mapes, and many others who have devoted their lives, their reputations, and all that they possess, to the cause, and who have suffered what all must suffer, who attach themselves to unpopular truths. He thought that Spiritualism was the only solvent of the pernicious materialism of the philosophical world, and of the Protestant churches. As truth, when once accepted, cannot be withdrawn from a nation, any more than political freedom when once it has been enjoyed, so Spiritualism—with its kindly manifestations, with its reverence for the oldest, as well as its welcome to the newest—is our inheritance for ever.

At this point a noisy personage in the rear of the audience made attempts to interrupt the order of the proceedings, but the audience supported the Chairman in the request that he should "be quiet," and he subsided accordingly.

Mr. J. M. PEEBLES said that he felt some embarrassment in making any remarks, as that was a meeting of noble-hearted Englishmen to welcome a distinguished friend of his own from America. He was exceedingly happy to be in their midst, and especially to be upon that platform alongside a

friend and a brother, whom he had known, loved, and respected for many years. He thought that if more Americans would visit England to see its ruins, its paintings, and its libraries, and if more Englishmen would visit America, it would lengthen the chain of friendship and baptize with peace and goodwill the hearts of all those who speak the English language. Truly it is often asked, "What does Spiritualism do?" It gives demonstration of a future existence, for even now clear-headed men often ask the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Once upon a time, he, as a minister, attended a funeral in the town where his friend Mr. Watson, then upon the platform, came from. It was an only child. His text was "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The whole of his sermon was about "faith," but as the mother baptized the coffin with her tears, she turned and said to him, "Tell me what you know about the immortal world, my aching heart seeks for more than faith—for knowledge." She added "Tell me what you know of that world; shall I know my child? Will my child know me?"—and he was dumb. But now, since he had talked with the angels, and heard their lute-like voices, he no longer talked about "faith," for now "We know that we have a house eternal in the heavens." The truths of Spiritualism teach us therefore that there is an immortal life beyond the tomb. Spiritualism is spreading to the ends of the earth. He had found its phenomena in Smyrna, in Constantinople, in Athens, and upon the Pacific coasts; in fact wherever thinking men are found, there is this living truth proclaimed. He knew much of Dr. Newton, for hundreds had clasped his hands who had been healed by him. If he tried to pick out solitary instances from among the large number, it was like trying to select some specially bright star from the thousands in the midnight heavens. In Buffalo several years ago, he was present at the house of Dr. Newton, when a gentleman was brought in upon his bed, who for years had had paralysis; Dr. Newton looked at him, simply laid his hands upon him and said, "Disease, I bid you depart. Arise, you are well," and the man left the bed and crossed the room, then stood before Dr. Newton weeping with joy. "Stop," said Dr. Newton, "It is not I; it is the spirit power of which I am but the humble instrument." On another occasion a lady could not get near him, and Dr. Newton's spirits impressed him to say, "It does not matter, she is well," and she was cured. He had cured the lame, the dumb, and the blind, and did not Jesus say that these signs should follow those who believe? If his hearers would lead more of the Christ life, and not be so scheming, and artful, and worldly—if they would go about doing good and would lead pure lives, so surely as God's words are true, would they receive some of the wonderful gifts which were given to the Apostles. For at least 300 years after the time of Christ, visions, and trances, and wonderful healing gifts were known in the Church, but when, under Constantine, religion became national, and pride was introduced, the angels left it. What is wanted is a life more devoted to the principles of Spiritualism. Mrs. Hardinge stands at the head of American inspirational speakers, and Dr. Newton stands at the head of all the healing mediums connected with the movement. Before him disease departs, and when it does not depart at once it sometimes departs very shortly afterwards, because of its cause being removed—a stream will flow for a little time after its sources of supply have been cut off. He had great faith in Dr. Newton's cures, far more faith than expressed by some of those who had spoken before him, because he had seen more of Dr. Newton's works than they had. He blessed his Father God, that such men were to be raised up, not for selfish objects, but to remove disease, and to help men and women on their way to these holier plains of beauty, love, and truth. He knew that Dr. Newton would nobly do his work, and that he would be blessed by God and His holy angels; he trusted that all present would extend to him love and warmth of soul. Personally, the more time he spent in England, the better he could comprehend and love Englishmen, and he wished to bespeak for Dr. Newton cordial welcomes and greetings while he remains in the country. (Applause.)

Dr. J. R. NEWTON then rose amid loud and continued applause. He spoke under spirit influence, with slowness and frequent pauses, and he said that he felt overwhelmed by the cordial welcome. He stood before them as a plain man, and felt like a little child. He was a practical Christian, and was ready at any time to make a sacrifice of himself for the sake of Christianity. It was a wonder to him that few men ever try to live daily as Jesus lived. When he became moral and perfectly Christian in his life, the spiritual powers were showered upon him, and this was as wonderful to himself as to those whom he addressed. He believed in spirit communion and he knew the names of some of the spirits who controlled him in the exercise of his gifts. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you, embracing all the law and the prophets, that ye love one another," and that was the advice which he gave to those before him. He loved every man, woman, and child as much as he loved his own children, not that he loved his own children less, but because he loved mankind at large more. Men and women should all do the best they can, for it is by good works alone they will receive their reward; everybody should be kind and loving. He felt that he loved all, that he loved everybody in that assembly, and as to the power of healing, it is merely an illustration of the power of love. When any sick person comes before him, he laid his hands on that person and felt that he loved him, and if the patient were not antagonistic, he was almost sure to be healed; he told them that he loved them, and when this opened their hearts to him the disease must depart. True religion is very simple, plain, and easy. He made no profession to be a public speaker, for there before them he was entirely under the control of the spirits, and what he was then speaking was spirit. At the time of his birth a tree of life was planted, since then it had been growing in all its beauty, and it blossomed that night. It is a tree for the healing of the nations; its fragrance is great, and the atmosphere around it is bright, and all nations are directed to it. In the bright spirit land to which we all shall go, there are houses, and trees, and birds, just as there are here, and to this beautiful tree the birds of all nations fly, and legions of spirits fly to see this beautiful tree.* He would give a few lines of poetry as they were given to him by the spirits:—

This beautiful tree is the Tree of Life,
It is for all nations free,
Its leaves are a balm for every wound,
And it blossoms, dear ones, for thee.

* A possible explanation of the beautiful symbolical illustrations often contained in the higher spirit communications, will be found in Mrs. De Morgan's book *From Matter to Spirit*: Longmans.

This power of healing the nations applies not only to the ills of the physical body, but it will help to heal such every breach among nations, such, for instance, as that caused by the *Alabama* case. He could not say that he had come to England at any sacrifice, because he believed it to be the will of his Father that he should come. He always lived as if each moment were his last upon earth, and for the last ten years he had not done or said anything that he was sorry for. He did not come to London to make money, and he would receive rich and poor alike; he purposed to hire a house, perhaps in the course of this week, and next Sunday evening [to-night] he would be at the lecture of Brother Peebles' at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, where he would give more information than he could do at that moment. The welcome he had received prevented him from speaking as freely as he wished to do. He had much to say, but he felt overwhelmed at the reception. He was heart and soul with them. Love is a positive substance; he felt it; and those present might feel it as well as himself. If anybody listening to him had a pain it was now gone, and he believed it to be just as easy to heal many as to heal one. It was done partly by his own will and partly by spirit power. He knew that Jesus was with him, and so were many other beautiful spirits like unto Him; we should love all the spirits, as well as all humanity; we are all brothers and sisters, and should love each other. It was not a matter of belief with him that spirits controlled him—it was knowledge. Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato walk the earth to-day, and so do all the great and good men who have gone before us. He (Dr. Newton) was forty-nine years old, yet he was only twenty-one, (laughter), he was blessed with perpetual youth; he never had any pain, and if he did not look in the glass, he should hardly know that he was so old. A short time ago he met a little boy, fourteen years old, who was a seeing medium, and he said to him, "Your hair is dark, and parted in the middle, it hangs down on your shoulders." Mr. Watson was present at the time. The boy's remark was true, and he knew perfectly well how he should look as a spirit. He would meet them again next Sunday, and gave them many thanks and blessings for their kind attentions. (Applause.)

Mr. J. M. PEEBLES then rose and proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman. He said that he knew that before Dr. Newton had been long in London, people would say that he was insane; Dr. Newton, as of old, would enjoy this very much, and he (Mr. Peebles) would enjoy it too. "This much is true, that Dr. Newton is almost continually under a strong spirit influx from the next world, and sometimes it is so strong that mediums are raised into a higher state by the mere touch of his hands. People who do not know that they are mediums sometimes find that they have mediumistic powers after they have been a short time in his presence. Dr. Newton's advice was good, and as Jesus once said, 'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one for another.'" He had much pleasure in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Coleman, who had presided over the meeting with so much ability.

Dr. EVANS said that the power of healing was great but that the power of prevention was greater. To the Lord Jesus was given the power of healing the bodies of mankind, but if men would live up to the true principles of Spiritualism they would have no disease. In time every man must submit to the Divine power, and to Christ at the head of the divine power; those who do not submit will go into judgment, and be punished.

Mr. SHORTER put the vote to the meeting, and those present responded by rising from their seats.

The President gave a brief acknowledgement of the vote of thanks which had been passed. He said that he well remembered when he first had the pleasure of introducing Mrs. Emma Hardinge to them in that room, and how her talents were so greatly appreciated, that the purposes for which the rooms had originally been taken were put on one side to listen to her lectures. He regretted that she was not there, but was very pleased to see that her mother was present. He hoped that her mother would convey to Mrs. Hardinge the feeling of the meeting towards her, and say how they hoped that she would shortly return to this country. Mr. Hardinge's *History of American Spiritualism* is one of the most valuable books ever contributed to the literature of the subject. Those who know nothing of the subject will find it to be a complete history of Spiritualism in America. Mr. Shorter had said that Dr. Newton was an "unqualified practitioner," but it might be as well to state that he had taken out a certificate in America as a qualified M.D., although doubtless he would throw all medicine into the sea, were it not for a kindly feeling towards the fishes. (Laughter.) He took out the degree to save himself from persecution in the courts.

Mr. S. C. HALL, F.S.A., Editor of the *Art Journal*, said that before the meeting closed he should like to say a few words. He came there with no intention to make a speech, but he should like to say a few words of congratulation to Dr. Newton. He believed that he expressed the sentiments of all Spiritualists when he said that it was their desire to give a cordial greeting to all Americans; and that it is a great duty to bring Americans and Englishmen closer together, that they may understand each other better than they have hitherto done. (Applause.) They had all seen great manifestations of Spiritualism, and he thought that they were all impressed with, not the belief, but the knowledge that Spiritualism is an accomplished fact, and he should not have risen at all, except to call attention to one point. He wanted to tell Dr. Newton that great progress is being made in this country among great men, and great thinkers, and men who will become great authorities. He rejoiced to tell him that a society the other day called witnesses before them, and made clear and close inquiry; that that society is about to send forth a report which will do much good among outsiders, for he heard that they would bear testimony that the assertions of fraud and delusion in connection with this subject must be put aside for ever. (Applause.) Thus two enemies of Spiritualism will be entirely removed out of the way. Then those who know that there is no fraud or delusion will find it a comparatively easy task to spread conviction as to its truth. He believed that truth to be essential to national happiness, and to dispel those doubts which afflict the intellectual portion of society more than any other, as to the reality of a continued existence in a higher and holier state. He believed that the great source of human happiness was embodied in the teaching "Love one another." He trusted that all present agreed with him that their course is much easier now than it was three or four years ago, when they first met in that room. He believed that the report of the society would go far towards the removal of the chief obstacles in the path of Spiritualism, and that it would make it easier to help on our divine belief. They would then be, he trusted, the humble instruments in God's hands of destroying the Materialism of the present age, for this he considered

to be the great purpose of Spiritualism, and that God's revelation has one great object at present—that of convincing man that there is an hereafter, and that although the body which we see will become dust, the spirit which inhabits it will be lifted into a higher sphere, where there is eternal progression; also that there are as many states above man as there are conditions below him. (Applause.) He himself had full knowledge of the truth of Spiritualism, and he hoped that many who were not Spiritualists would take his testimony as worth something when he expressed that certainty of belief. The more Spiritualism has been inquired into the more its truth has been exhibited; he thanked God for having given opportunities of proving that which they knew and believed. Dr. Newton has reached London at a good time, with less difficulties than of old to encounter, and with less probability of being considered mad or dishonest. (Applause.)

The business part of the meeting then came to a close, and it assumed the character of a *conversazione*. Miss Katherine Poynts and Mr. Maltby favoured the company with some singing, and Mr. D. D. Home gave two recitations in a high-class style; the subject of the first one was "Jane Conquest," and of the second "Widow Bedott." The latter caused much amusement. Mr. S. C. Hall spoke of the duty on the part of Spiritualists of rallying round Mr. D. D. Home, and supporting him well in his public readings, remembering that in this way he was working most honourably for a living, and that he never had taken and never would take a single farthing from anybody for the privilege of witnessing those wonderful manifestations which take place in his presence.

The refreshment department was well patronised; in fact, all the arrangements were well planned and neatly executed, proving that there is nothing to equal a "committee of one" to execute good work, when that one person is competent to perform the duties he undertakes.

Among the representative Spiritualists present at this meeting was Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, F.L.S.

PRIVATE SEANCES.

MR. PEARCE'S CIRCLE—DEDICATION OF CHILDREN TO THE CARE OF GUARDIAN SPIRITS—A FAMILY CIRCLE UNBROKEN BY DEATH.

On Good Friday, the 16th April, many friends met at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pearce, 19, Hargwyne-street, South Stockwell; for the purpose of assisting in the dedication of their children to the loving care of their angel guardians. The party consisted of Mr. C. W. Pearce, Mrs. Mary Pearce, Mr. J. M. Peebles, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, Mr. A. C. Swinton, Mr. N. F. T. Daw, Miss Shaw, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pearce, Mrs. Maggs, and Mr. Harrison.

Amongst the spirits known to be present were—Edward N. Denny (author of *The Alpha*, and of a course of twenty-five lectures, edited by Mr. A. C. Swinton, now in the hands of Mr. J. Burns, for publication); Tien Sien Tie, the Chinese philosopher, who instructs Mr. Morse; Annie Blore, the guardian of Mrs. Everitt; John Watt, who controls her circle, and some of his friends; Powhattan, an Indian friend of J. M. Peebles; Robert Shaw, late of 5, Cambridge-road, Kilburn; Mary Swinton, mother of Mr. A. C. Swinton; Richard, Susanna, Richard, and Nahar Gill, grandfather, grandmother, uncle, and brother of Mary Pearce; John and Martha Bream, grandfather and grandmother (on mother's side), and Sarah Pearce, grandmother (on father's side) to Mr. Charles Pearce; also, Frederick Pearce, his uncle; Clara, his sister; and Florence Mary, a daughter, who about three years since exchanged the earthly life for the higher existence; Felix, an eastern sage, who frequently visits the circle of Mr. and Mrs. Pearce. There were present likewise many others, friends of the above, who accompanied them, to witness the dedication.

Mr. J. M. PEEBLES conducted the proceedings, which were very touching and interesting in their character. The friends present were arranged in a half circle form, and Mr. Peebles was between the poles.

After reading an appropriate passage from the Bible a hymn was sung and an aspirational prayer to the Almighty was offered, in which was recognised the indivisible oneness of the whole human family, whether found upon this or any other world in the boundless domain of the universal Father. Then, taking Edward, the eldest, Mr. Peebles placed his right hand upon his head, and with his left uplifted commended him to the tender care of his loving friends above, who signified their acceptance of the charge by loud "raps." Then Mr. Peebles was inspired, in feeling language, to acknowledge the love which brought Florence Mary, the second child (for nearly three years a resident in the Spirit land) to join in the ceremony, that the family circle might be complete. Annie Martha, a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked girl, between three and four years of age, was then taken and in the same manner offered, and accepted. Next, Bertie, a boy of two years, went from his mother's arms into Mr. Peebles' and nestled there, as if sensible of the overshadowing influence of the angel band who took him into their society; last, Ernest, a babe of four weeks, apparently unconscious of external surroundings, was dedicated to those whose faithful love will follow him and his brethren until united with them above.

This is the first time that any dedication analogous in some few respects to a "christening" ceremony, has taken place within the ranks of English Spiritualists.

THE *Liverpool Mercury* of last Tuesday has a long article about the cures effected by Dr. Newton in Liverpool last Sunday and Monday.

SPIRITUAL PERIODICALS.—An idea is prevalent that it is the intention to bring out a weekly paper in connection with this journal. This supposition has no foundation whatever, for the notice recently given of the securing of the copyright of *The Spiritual News* refers only to a little journal which will be brought out once a month in the next London season, that subscribers may not have to wait a whole month for news. If any subscribers have had any difficulty in getting the *SPIRITUALIST* they should write to the publisher; from the first it has been brought out punctually on the day of publication, and any delay in receipt is not due to the London agents.

THE TRANSMISSION OF MESSAGES BY SPIRITS.—With reference to the article on this subject in our last, wherein "a black spirit named Zambia," appeared at the same hour to some Spiritualists in England, and to some Spiritualists on board a ship on its way to New Zealand, it further appears on comparing the records made by Mr. Everitt and Mr. Meers, that Zambia told both of them that "although he had a black skin, he had a white heart." This still further completes the chain of evidence. When by research more is known of the conditions necessary to enable spirits to communicate, may it not be possible to increase the precision with which messages are given?

CHARGES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS.

1. Advertisements of Public Companies, Half-a-guinea per sixth of a column, or every portion of sixth of a column.
2. General Advertisements, Five Shillings per twelfth of a column, or portion of twelfth of a column.

Note.—Advertisements at the foregoing rates will be "displayed" so as to occupy the full space paid for, but advertisements at the following rates will be in closely set type:—

3. General Advertisements, Half-a-crown per first five lines or portion of five lines, and Fourpence for every line in addition.

4. Situations Wanted, or Apartments to Let, One Shilling per first four lines, or portion of four lines; Threepence for every line in addition. Ten words are allowed to the line, and six figures or initial letters count as one word.

When five or more insertions of the same advertisement are paid for, twenty per cent. reduction will be made in the above rates.

The power is reserved of refusing to insert any advertisement. Advertisements and remittances should be sent to the Publisher, Mr. E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, St. Paul's Church-yard, London, E.C.

To Correspondents.

All letters should be brief and to the point, as the amount of space available for correspondence is at present small.

Communications intended for the Editor should be by letter only, addressed to the care of the Publisher, Mr. E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, St. Paul's Church-yard, London, E.C. Until the Spiritual movement in England, together with this journal, have both grown considerably, time cannot be spared for personal interviews on subjects connected with the literary work of THE SPIRITUALIST, but all letters will meet with careful consideration.

THE SPIRITUALIST is a periodical intended to give great freedom of expression to all the different shades of opinion to be found among Spiritualists. There will therefore be very little uniformity in the ideas promulgated in this journal, more especially in the correspondence columns. Under these circumstances every reader will find occasionally something in THE SPIRITUALIST which he or she does not like, but the right of reply remains. This freedom of thought given to others, the Editor claims for himself, and those who do not like the contents of leading articles can write against them in the correspondence columns. This plan is thought better than that of reducing the contents of the journal to a pale weak mediocrity, by inserting only those contributions which please everybody. The preceding remarks are not intended to imply that those who have crochets which they cannot get printed anywhere else, can find an outlet for them here, for none but those letters which are considered worth publication will be inserted.

Notices of Public Meetings in connection with Spiritualism should be sent to the office several days in advance.

To Subscribers.

The first twelve numbers of THE SPIRITUALIST will be forwarded regularly by penny post to subscribers, who remit four shillings in payment to Mr. E. W. ALLEN, Publisher, Ave Maria-lane, St. Paul's Church-yard, E.C. No notice will be taken of orders received unaccompanied by a remittance. When the day of issue chances to fall upon a Sunday, this journal will be published on the preceding Saturday.

The Spiritualist.

SUNDAY, MAY 15, 1870.

SEEING MEDIUMSHIP.

WHEN the knowledge is gained that spiritual manifestations are real, intelligent investigators usually attempt to learn something about the principles which produce them. Evidence is soon obtained that the communications are much coloured, as a rule, both by the mind of the medium, and by the tendencies of the thoughts of the members of the circle, although an independent intelligence is at work foreign to both. The thing required to be known is the message of the communicating spirit in its original purity, free from the colouring it has undergone in traversing that wide and deep chasm of the grave, which our friends on the other side are working so hard to bridge over.

For this reason it is necessary that the amount of error introduced by the transmitting instrument shall be known. In the endeavour to eliminate this source of unreliability, we once attempted to question the spirits at all circles as to how they produced the manifestations, but a very great expenditure of time at this work produced very meagre results, for the simple reason that other persons at spirit circles had their own questions to put upon other subjects, and the time of those present could not be monopolised to carry out the views of any one individual. As it is only possible at miscellaneous circles to put questions of this nature at rare intervals, we hit upon the plan of getting different seeing mediums to watch how the manifestations were produced, and to note all the particulars. To begin with the alphabet of the phenomena, they were first asked to give especial attention to the common table tiltings.

The result was a most complicated mass of contradictions. One medium saw arrangements below the table, and spirit hands, by means of intermediate contrivances, forcing up the table from below. Another saw spirit hands touching the table from above, and moving it by a lifting process. Another saw a spirit floating above the table, and every time the spirit raised and depressed her hand the table rose and fell, whilst a stream of blue light seemed to connect the hand with the table. A fourth saw a luminous cone above the table. Andrew Jackson Davis corroborates this statement to some extent, for he says that he has seen a luminous cord stretching from the table to a band of spirits seventy or eighty miles above the house, which cord widened into a cone before it touched the table. Another seer, again, said that he saw the communicating spirit with his hands on the shoulders of the medium, and moving the table by the exercise of his

will. Amid all these disheartening contradictions two facts stood their ground most firmly. In the first place, the table did actually move in the presence of many witnesses, without the intervention of imposture; in the second place, seeing mediums did actually sometimes see spirits so as to be able to describe departed friends in a recognisable way to strangers whom the mediums had never seen before.

After following up this method of research for some time, somewhat conclusive evidence was obtained that the majority of seeing mediums have their organs of sight acted upon by independent spirits, and what the spirits wish them to see they actually do see, just as a biological lecturer can make his sensitives see what he chooses. Should this explanation be true, it follows that communications through seeing mediums may be reliable or unreliable, and must be subjected to the test of reason, just the same as messages received by tilts or raps. Mrs. De Morgan narrates how the spirits told her that seeing manifestations are produced by a spirit standing near the medium, and that what the spirit thinks the medium sees. We once mentioned all these circumstances to Mr. Peebles, because his long experience of spiritual manifestations in America makes his testimony of value. He said that in the majority of cases spirits make the medium see what they choose, but some mediums have the power of independent spirit vision. Such independent and reliable seers may be distinguished from others, because they have the power of seeing spirits at all times, and look upon their neighbours with pity as half-blind individuals, because they cannot see their departed friends. The ordinary seeing medium can only see now and then, when his clairvoyant powers are temporarily developed at a spirit circle or elsewhere, and then what he sees is probably under the control of his attendant spirits.

Should these ideas be correct, it follows that many of the things observed by seeing mediums are not actual facts, but mental impressions; that the communications made by means of their organs of sight may be truthful or untruthful, and must be subjected to the test of reason and common sense before they can be accepted either as truths or falsehoods. A low spirit, for instance, may make the medium under his control see demoniacal-looking beings round some particular person, and thus raise a repulsion in the mind of the medium towards the society of that individual. In this hypothetical case an untruthful idea is communicated by seeing mediumship, just as effectually as by a deliberately false message spelt out by raps.

In the first experiences of mediums which have been recorded in these pages, it will be noticed that at the outset the communicating influences were very frequently of an unpleasant nature, but that a gradual improvement took place. The first stages of seeing-mediumship are sometimes unpleasant, probably because an undeveloped spirit makes the medium see repulsive things. When a case of this kind appears among those who know nothing of the phenomena of Spiritualism, the doctors of course are called in. They find the patient perfectly sane on all subjects but one. "I see these things," says the patient. "You do not see them," say the doctors. "But I do see them," reiterates the patient. Whereupon the doctors sign a certificate, the medium is sent to the nearest lunatic asylum: there, worse psychological influences than were in the home of the parents or friends surround the patient, who is very shortly driven mad by them in real earnest, in consequence of want of knowledge of these subjects among members of the medical profession. When a case of a similar nature occurs among Spiritualists, the patient is taken to a spirit circle where there are good influences and a powerful well-developed medium. Here the unseen individual who caused all the trouble is usually sent about his business or taught better by the higher influences, and the freed medium learns something of the bright side of the gift of seeing-mediumship, which, in time, permits him to see and communicate with friends and relatives on the other side of the grave, to the satisfaction of observant individuals who will carefully investigate such cases. The liberated medium should then take care to lead such a life as to offer no attraction to spirits like the one who first annoyed him, and not to live with relatives or people who are surrounded by spirits of a

malicious or revengeful nature, because his sensitive organization renders him liable to a possible return of the persecution.

HALIFAX PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—At a social meeting of this Society on Good Friday, about sixty Spiritualists sat down to tea, and afterwards gave attention to some of the business of the society, as well as to a few songs, recitations, and glees. Mr. Henry Ambler, president, occupied the chair. A good inspirational address also was given through the mediumship of Mr. Wood. On the following Sunday, at a gathering of the Halifax Spiritualists, an interesting address was given through the trance mediumship of Mr. Wood to an crowded audience. Subject, "He shall go in the spiritual power of Elias."

SPIRIT MESSAGES.—The *Banner of Light*, of April 30th, 1870, contains the following message, given through the mediumship of Mrs. J. H. Conant, 158, Washington-street, Boston, United States:—"I suppose my friends will not have heard of my death. But we encountered a gale three days out from Newcastle, England, and were lost. We were bound for New York. [Was the vessel and all lost?] Yes, all I know of. I am William Benson. I have a family in Liverpool, and I want to send some word that I can come back, and that this life where I am is not so much separated from the earth-life after all. It was the ship *Myra*. Say that I want to talk—not here again, but there if I can. [You wish to go to some medium there through whom you can speak.] Yes. I was thirty-one years old. Say we went easy, and they must not mourn.—Feb. 21." The same paper of April 23rd, contains the following message to Miss Houghton, of 20, Delamere-crescent, Paddington, W.; it was given through the same medium, but by writing instead of by trance speaking:—"My beloved sister, I rejoice to be able to return testifying to the truth of your beautiful faith, in which I could not believe when on the earth. Oh! bear for me my blessing to my dear wife and children, and say I will not rest until I have given them some light. I have met your friend, Miss Elizabeth V. Ingram, here in America, and she has kindly called me to return to those I love. Georgiana, forgive me if I could not understand you, and have patience with my dear ones, and believe me to be ever near to aid you. Clarence Houghton, to Georgiana Houghton, London, England, February 17."

SERVICES IN THE CAVENDISH ROOMS.—The Sunday evening meetings in the Cavendish Rooms have been continued as usual under the ministrations of Mr. J. M. Peebles. On Sunday evening, May 1st, during the absence of Mr. Peebles in Yorkshire, Mr. Edmund D. Rogers, a literary gentleman, of Norwich, officiated in his place. Mr. Rogers is a Swedenborgian, and in his address he tried to reconcile the opinions of Spiritualists, Swedenborgians, and orthodox Christians, on the subject of death-bed repentance. Citing the case of the dying thief upon the cross, as stated in the New Testament, his chief endeavour was to produce evidence that the thief was in reality not a thief, but a political offender, who might, therefore, have been as good a man as Garibaldi. The Sunday afternoon conferences in the Cavendish Rooms are also continued, but they are very thinly attended. On Sunday, May 1st, Professor Blackie, F.R.S.E., was present. Somehow or other the discussion turned upon the enormous amount of pauperism and misery caused in the United Kingdom by the present English land laws, which have long since been abolished in France, Belgium, Russia, and most civilised nations. Professor Blackie said that Spiritualism should be investigated, and that he was in favour of the abolition of the laws which favour primogeniture. Professor Blackie is now delivering a course of lectures at the Royal Institution; his style of speaking is eccentric, and he detains the listeners considerably beyond the time fixed by the managers for the conclusion of lectures. On one occasion he stated the interesting fact that "the Word," in the opening chapter of St John's gospel, is a mistranslated passage, and the verse should read:—"In the beginning was reason, and reason was with God, and reason was God," which explanation makes good sense of a passage which, as it stands, has no meaning at all.

MR. MORSE'S MEDIUMSHIP.—The *Medium* states that at one of the weekly public *séances* held at 15, Southampton-row, Holborn, W.C., on Friday evening, March 18, 1870, a spirit who spoke through the trance mediumship of Mr. J. J. Morse, said that his name was Edward Moore, and that he was killed at Helmsdale's Works, Samuel-street, Spitalfields, by an accident with machinery. Mrs. Main, of 321, Bethnal-green-road, inquired into the matter, and found the statements to be correct. On another evening, a spirit, who gave the name of Best, stated that he died in the second week of February last, and that his address was Christleton Lodge, Chester. This was published in the *Medium*. The editor of the *Cheshire Observer* inquired into the case, and published the result as follows:—"Mr. Best did not die in the second week of February, but the fourth; the name of his residence is spelt Christleton and not Christleton, and there is no resemblance whatever between the spiritual handwriting and that of the deceased gentleman when he wrote in the flesh. With these exceptions, the spirit's account is quite correct." The preceding circumstances, together with others which have been published in these pages, tend to prove that most of the names and addresses given by the spirits who speak through Mr. Morse are correct, but that some of them are altered more or less by the difficulties besetting the transmission of the messages. His mediumship, therefore, is very much of the same character as that of Mrs. J. H. Conant, of Boston. The messages sent through Mrs. Conant are published regularly in the *Banner of Light*, and two of them will be found in another part of this issue. An experiment was made a month ago to ascertain Mr. Morse's powers as an inspirational lecturer; he gave an address by invitation to the St. John's Association of Spiritualists, but the control was very weak, partly from the unpleasant closeness of the room, and partly because he was somewhat worn out by previously sitting too much for manifestations. Doubtless, when his power is stronger, another trial will be made. Since then he has received the following message from his guardian spirit:—"It is our request that you abstain from holding any private circles during the summer months, until you hear to the contrary. Attendance to the above will be productive of benefit to yourself and your friends, otherwise we shall be compelled to withdraw ourselves from you.—TIEN." Mr. Morse's weekly Friday evening public *séances* are still held at 15, Southampton-row, High Holborn. His guardian spirit, Tien Sien Tie, says that he and other immortals come down to earth in the attempt to teach its inhabitants, thus withdrawing themselves from their own pursuits and aims, because of the love they bear to those still on this plane of existence. He says that by the law of "eternal progression" man must rise, even did he receive no direct spiritual teachings from higher spheres.

Poetry.

ARISTOCRATS.

The poet Bailey describes noble men as those who have

Vulgarised sublimity,
And brought up truth for the nation, parted it
As soldiers looted once the garb of God.
Men who have forged gods, uttered, made them pass;
In whose words to be read with many a heaving
Of the heart, is a power like wind in rain,
Whose thoughts like bars of sunshine in shut rooms,
Mid gloom, all glory, win the world to light.
Who make their very follies like their souls,
And, like the young moon with a ragged edge,
Still, in their imperfection, beautiful.
Whose weaknesses are as lovely as their strength,
Like the white nebulous matter between stars,
Which if not light, at least is likeliest light,
Men whom we build our love round like an arch
Of triumph, as they pass us on their way
To glory and to immortality.
Men whose great thoughts possess us like a passion,
Through every limb and the whole heart, whose words
Haunt us as eagles haunt the mountain air.

* * * * *
Who shed great thoughts
As easily as an oak loosens its golden leaves
In a kindly largess to the soil it grew on,
Whose rich dark ivy thoughts, sunned o'er with love,
Flourish around the deathless stems of their names.

Correspondence.

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

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION OF THOUGHT.

SIR,—I am an advocate for freedom of thought, but that, like freedom of action, must be under the control of knowledge and wisdom. Thought without action is useless; action without control is lawlessness—twin-brother to murder. The assertion of one active speaker, that he would encourage at Spiritualistic meetings the “wildest theories that they may be disputed,” may answer the purpose of spouters, but for those who go to meetings to obtain exact knowledge, and for guidance on the heart and brain questions: Is life after death true? Is special providence a truth?—to workers who object not to give up a portion of their time to the public on the platform for the purpose of giving such knowledge—such wild freedom of speech—is an annoyance and a blight.

To such “freemen” I say: Start and carry on as many meetings at your own expense, and at your own appointed places for “wildest theories” as you please; but, I pray you, let us adopt the ordinary business-like habit of convening a meeting for a specific subject, and keep to it, be it astronomy, geology, or Spiritualism. This plan is a practical one; it is adopted by all sections of Protestants; and the result is, that the Church, the Independents, and the Methodists, sell their 20,000 to 50,000 copies of weekly newspapers and monthly magazines, while Spiritualists are almost nowhere either on the platform or in the press. Why is it? Because the rampant nonsense uttered by speakers and writers is put down, and steady facts and arguments in the groove of their several specialties are adhered to. In like manner let kindred Spiritualists cease to bombard Christianity, but devote themselves in public to their primary work; then your public meetings will be crowded, and your literature sought for. You will then obtain the co-operation of thousands of those who at present refuse to be led by inexperienced leaders.

America is said to contain several millions of Spiritualists; if so, where are they? What are they doing? They are scattered to the winds—have no cohesion, because the “wildest theory” men leap on to the platform and bear sway. Men of knowledge, of sense, retire, and refuse to co-operate. It may be said, that American serial literature consists of only one weekly journal, which has a weakly existence, because it has been and is a cesspool of theories. JOHN JONES.

Enmore-park, South Norwood,
May 2nd, 1870.

P.S.—Considering THE SPIRITUALIST a scientific journal, why not instruct Spiritualists by taking the physical structure of man as a combination of chemical elements, producing during combustion unseen emanations which have a powerful effect as illustrated in mesmerism, biology, clairvoyance, &c. Let communications, experiments, &c. be recorded. You would raise the minds of many and enable them to perceive the rays of power which unite us to man as a spirit denuded of his seen physical structure. Such subjects treated in a popular style by correspondents would be interesting to thousands, and enable them to understand why they are in affinity with angels, and from them receive so many substantial benefits.—J. J.

[With reference to the excellent suggestion in the foregoing postscript, there is no doubt that newspaper space is better utilised by letters on scientific experiments instead of upon theological disputes. Will Mr. Jones follow his own advice, and publish in any of the spiritual periodicals detailed accounts of his experiments as to the action of the emanations from minerals and shells upon clairvoyant sensitives? The spiritual journals, so far as we know, are supported in proportion to the present dimensions of the movement. It is not reasonable, while we Spiritualists have not a single building of our own in this nation, to compare us with religious denominations of ten thousand times our numerical strength. ED.]

THE BIBLE-SPIRITUALISM CONTROVERSY.

SIR,—If Parliament be sincere in its desire to afford the young true religious education, it must first define religion, before it can direct its teaching.

What is religion? Theoretically, it is a knowledge of the relationship existing between man and God, and the duties arising therefrom.

It is said by those interested that the only way to teach religion is by making the Bible a class book, with full liberty to expound it. If Parliament sanction this, the effect will be—and you know it—that sectarian creedalism will be taught, and every sect will be ESTABLISHED.

But what is THE BIBLE, that it should be selected? “The inspired Word of God,” say they who profess to teach religion. Then if it be the expression of Infinite Intelligence, all its statements will be demonstrably true—self-evident TO ALL. If it need an interpreter—a fallible man—then the expression of Infinite Intelligence is the expression of the mind of the interpreter, and the “Infallible Word of God” is nothing more than the opinion of fallible man.

Further, every well-read man knows the “Bible” to be simply a selection from the writings of Jewish reformers, made by various Ecumenical Councils, the decision of the first—the Council of Nice—being reversed many times by other Councils, before the final settlement of the Canon. Thus, again, what is, and what is not the “Word of God,” being decided by man's opinion.

Seeing this—as a true man—expose the imposition: refuse to allow the Bible to be used as a class-book: refuse AUTHORITY to dwarf the expanding intelligence of the young mind, by indoctrinating it with lifeless and soul-degrading creeds. Strip religious teachers (so called) of all POWER. Then, and not till then, will the Divinity within the Soul appear, and the first step be taken towards attaining that social Millennium whose LAW will be—“As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also unto them,” the fulfilment of which is PRACTICAL Religion. I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

6, Cambridge-road, Kilburn, C. W. PEARCE.

May 1st.
P.S.—A copy of this letter has been sent to each member of the House of Commons.

To shun evils as sins, is the very essence of the Christian religion.—Swedenborg.
Divinity in its central life is love. In this truth you behold the source of “salvation.”—A. J. Davis.

SIR,—I have but little reliance upon discussion as a means of conviction, yet if you will allow me space I will make a few remarks upon the Bible letter in your last by Mr. Pearce. At the beginning he puts in the mouth of Swedenborg as a “majestic utterance,” a statement the seer never could have thought of. If he did not believe any proposition to be true unless he saw (that is “knew”) it to be so, then he did not believe in anything. We cannot be said to believe what we know. Whatever we believe, the converse thereof must be possible and thinkable. Swedenborg of all men, depended more and trusted more the intuitions of his mind, and therefore had a larger belief than any other man. He saw clearly the compound nature of the mind, and repeats to weariness how much the power of the mind to see truth depends upon the state of the affections. The seat of the feelings is the chamber through which all existence must pass to the intellect. Swedenborg was like all men compelled by his constitution to believe upon authority. Every mind will have its own quantity and kind of authority. In experimental and exact science, an intellect with power and a fine edge is sufficient, but with all social and moral questions contingent in their character, “a clean heart” is as necessary as a clear head in order to arrive at right conclusions.

In reply to the second paragraph, where it points to those who “desire to follow Christ, &c.,” and also deem it a duty to believe every word of the Bible, I consider all who have after mature thought attached themselves to the Christian symbol, believe the Bible, because in it they find their best spiritual food, and that they are better for its use because they find its principles in harmony with the condition of things, because it teaches that we have the power to rise into the highest field of active goodness, and thus assist in the elevation of the species, or we may sink by selfishness and thus assist in the degradation of the species; and further, that while we are here in a natural world, we are at the same time inspired by a spiritual one. I believe the Bible because after twenty years trial of the positive philosophy I found my inner constitution starved, and on being drawn back to the philosophy of the Bible, I found in it all that my spiritual nature required.

I do not enter into the historic or traditional argument because in one sense, it is of little concern to me who wrote the Bible or when it was written; whether the Jewish Christ materially lived at all or not. All that concerns me most as a Spiritualist, is that the true Saviour does now live and has ever lived, and that His spirit and philosophy only have the power to restore the world.

What does Mr. Pearce mean by saying “thus they stultify their own God-given power-reason, and deface the glorious image of God—intelligence in which they are created.” Does reason lead to the conclusion that man was created intelligent? Mr. Darwin is of a different opinion. Whatever reason may or may not do, Christianity teaches that in the image of God goodness must be the crowning attribute, and intelligence the guiding light. Looking at man as he now plays his part in the wonderful scheme of things, if as Mr. Pearce states it, God gave man the faculty of reason, it is a sad pity He at the same time withheld the power to be reasonable. Reason pure and simple, if logically followed, has but one landing—utter scepticism.

I will leave the third and fourth paragraphs, except the last two clauses, in which he says “and reject all that nature, God's unerring word, and reason show to be inconsistent with our highest conceptions of Deity.” Will Mr. Pearce oblige us with his conception of Deity from the pure reason and nature stand-point? By reason and nature I do not believe it possible to find out God. Or in other words, the mind can only be conscious of its own impressions, and has no faculty whereby to transcend the realm of natural phenomena. When God comes to us it is as a feeling, not as an intellectual perception. We simply have faith that He is, and that He is “Our Father.”

What Mr. Pearce says of inspiration is simply a misapplication of the term. No one can feel their conscience bound by what they know to be untrue.

From Mr. Pearce's stand-point, the book called “Divine Revelations” written under remarkable conditions by a youth who had had little means of culture previous to that time, was no more inspired than the “Origin of Species.” The latter being the result of immense intellectual resource, the former inbreathed where there was no condition but that of spiritual fitness for the work of inspiration. Nay, if Mr. Pearce is right, a simple induction arrived at by a conscious, intellectual process, is as much the result of inspiration as Hamlet, Paradise Lost, or the etherial breathings of Keats or Shelley.

Neither can I with Mr. Pearce believe in the “equal divinity of all mankind.” I think that all are, or rather may be, the “temples of the living God,” yet I conceive that just as men are relatively good or bad, so are they relatively divine. I am not here defending the Christian religion, but the religion of Christ. The “New Testament” has for its centre the person of Jesus Christ and His human nature, and there is there brought to view all the pure and noble possibilities of humanity. There is likewise the Divine nature in its paternal love and infinite wisdom. In Jesus Christ the two are united, revealing the perfect humanity and the all-perfect divinity. I do not know the amount of “Spiritual elevation” obtainable by those who deny the divinity of Christ, but I do know that Spiritual degradation is not special to those who believe in it.

I believe with Mr. Emerson that mankind, wherever found, in the Church or on the gallows, are on their way to glory, but in every sample of the race that I have yet met, I find something more deeply rooted than “ignorance or error,” something which tells us we want Divine succour and influence coming within us with creative power, not primarily to bring us into conformity with some model that is placed before us,

but to revive the Divine image within us, so that by its radiation we shall produce around us the halo of all that is Christ-like and good.”

I must touch lightly what follows. Mr. Pearce finds faith objectionable. “It fosters selfishness.” Is the experimental philosophy to take its place? If so, there will be an end to all heroism. Faith is the root of all work, faith and hope are the brilliant stars that have led to the achievement of all the good imbedded in history. The farmer and fisherman alike toil through faith. What would have Garibaldi and the noble Mazzini been without faith in God and justice? Knowledge, which means “things known,” depends much upon faith in our senses, reason has but one end, and that is “nothing can be known.”

Mr. Pearce thinks it wrong to admit for recreative influence the truly-repenting sinner. If he appears to be honest, who is to be his judge? He then concludes by telling us that Spiritualism had opened his eyes, and he had discovered that there is no evil in existence, that the “heart of man is not wicked,” but in all cases sweet and pure. Mankind are not liars, they only commit errors, only make mistakes. The only difference between the angel and devil is that the former has a little more knowledge. To tell me there is no evil is like telling me the snow-drift is not cold, nor the sunbeam warm. My Spiritualism on the contrary tells me that evil does exist, and that to a terrible extent, that it is deeply rooted in the will or heart of man, and that we are liable to error of intellect but evil can only be predicated of the will or motive, therefore I hold all intellectual states to be equally honourable or equally honest. I have far exceeded my limits, and must stop. JOHN BEATTIE.

2, Westbourne-place, Clifton, Bristol.
May 3rd, 1870.

SIR,—I cordially agree with you as to a doubt of the propriety of discussing the theological phase of the Spiritual subject publicly; such was your suggestion in the last number of the SPIRITUALIST. I am constrained, nevertheless, in justice to myself, to correct what appears in my letter of last month to have occasioned some unpleasant feeling, first, with regard to your intimation in the “Answers to Correspondents,” that the letter of “A. B. T.” “presses severely” on me “personally;” I can only say that I am unaware of anything in my own letter deserving the same, and I must also observe that no one is fit to conduct any disputation, written or otherwise, who is unable to avoid personality, for the cause of truth gains nothing by it. It is by placing circumstances in a reasonable form before the minds of men that they are led to conviction; therefore, the argument which requires abuse or mere sarcasm, however polite, to sustain it, cannot be a sound one.

I now proceed to notice the criticisms of Mr. Pearce. After cavilling at the Nicene creed, he says in a short paragraph, which I quote, “My courteous opponent, Mr. Gerrans, reveals this absurdity when he speaks of rescuing a sinful world from its lost condition” by “such a trifling operation as the impregnation of the germ of a human being.” The word “trifling” is, as may be observed, in italics. What meaning is intended thereby I do not know; but if there be any doubt of my own meaning in first using the term “trifling operation” I now say that the accomplishment of the fact was, as a fact, most certainly trifling in comparison with the vast operations of creative power exemplified in the formation of the universe; and that the great Father of Spirits could set aside the ordinary operations of nature when a special purpose was to be served. And what was that purpose? The personal manifestation of Himself to mankind. Now we are at that dreadful stumbling-block in the path of Unitarianism—the Immaculate Conception. The usual plan of attack on this point is to sneer at the Athanasian creed and the Nicene council. But this proceeding only hampers the question, and to no purpose, as the fact of the Immaculate Conception holds quite good enough without it. The divinity of Jesus Christ was taught by the Church from the first; long before the council of Nice was thought of. The creed itself is repudiated by a vast proportion of thorough believers in the divine conception of Jesus Christ. Swedenborg, whose name has been mentioned, refused to accept the creed. But though that enlightened theologian rejected the ordinary doctrine of the Trinity, and substituted his own enlightened views thereon, he fully agreed with the scriptural statement of the Immaculate Conception, explaining it as the supernatural influence of God Himself on the Virgin Mary; the result being Jesus, the God man, who, after His death and resurrection, was taken up by the Father into heaven.

Mr. Pearce intimates that the Bible is unworthy of confidence, as it is a selection by Ecumenical councils; and that one council after another reversed its predecessors' decisions. An answer to this sweeping assertion would involve references to Mosheim and Milner to give the reasons for all this, and the procedure would take up more room than can be appropriated to this letter. In examining the authority for our Christian belief we have no necessity to trouble ourselves with councils; we have in the four gospels and the different epistles abundant evidence for the truth of Christianity. And unless any one is in a position to prove that the writings of Moses are forgeries, and that the Apostles (without whom the world of that period would have known nothing of Christianity) could have so stultified themselves as to traverse various countries, and without the slightest prospect of worldly advantages, to become exposed to discomforts, dangers, and martyrdom in preaching Christ the Son of God, crucified and risen from the grave, culminating in His glorious ascension, had they not by ocular demonstration been certain of the fact! The attacks of gainsayers on the truths of Christianity are fruitless.

Mr. Pearce has made some severe remarks on the forgiveness accorded by God's ministers at the bedside of a dying sinner. No matter how wicked his life may have been, if he does not believe in the Nicene creed he will not go to heaven. Now, whatever may be the practice of the Romish church, I believe this absurdity is not maintained by Protestant ministers. A man with a guilty conscience, when stricken down by disease and hanging over the verge of the grave, will cling to hope for mercy, and God's ministers direct him to God for that pardon which is promised to every repentant sinner. Protestant divines discourage the dependance on death-bed repentances, and hold that righteousness of life is alone the best and surest warranty for the happiness of heaven. They urge, on the contrary, the danger of procrastination to the uncertainty of the last days or hours of mortal existence. Ministers preach faith certainly, but then it is in connection with works, the fruits of faith. And what says St. James on this very question of faith. “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” The

* The suppressed letter of A. B. T. was a well-written one in every respect, but had a sarcastic tone. It was not the kind of letter which Mr. Gerrans supposes it to have been.—ED.

divine sermon on the Mount of Olives as recorded in Matthew is an eloquent display of every requisite for man's spiritual nature, fitting him for every moral and social condition; and faith in the divine teacher, if thoroughly realised, is a security for the practice of righteousness. Thus faith, it will be seen, begets holiness of mind, and holiness of mind—a good life.

Having said thus much, Mr. Editor, I beg to conclude with a few observations in connection with this subject. As Spiritualism is to be found in the Old and New Testaments—especially the latter—there is no reason why it should not exist in the present day. There are but few Christian believers who would discourage the idea. For conceding it to be a reality, it does this good: it confirms the gospel testimony by proving an existence beyond the grave; and, therefore, neutralises the pernicious Materialism prevalent in the philosophical world by showing that man possesses an immortal soul. I do hope, then, sir, that this controversy will cease, for most assuredly if Spiritualists make infidel attacks on the orthodox belief of Christians, believers will set their faces against Spiritualists and the extravagancies of Spiritualism.

7A, Wyndham-place, April 25.

J. G. GERRANS.

SIR,—You say my letter presses "personally" upon Mr. Gerrans, but as I have no personal knowledge of that gentleman, I could hardly have had any motive for personal pressure upon him. But when an opponent shuts your mouth in argument by an imputation of inconsistency in the disbelief in miracles, upon the ground that everything is possible to God, what figure is so appropriate as sarcasm in reply? Of course, on the assumption of a supernatural God, no absurdity in the way of supernaturalism is too huge a camel for the popular swallow; and the test-of-reason argument is therefore deemed presumptuous.

Mr. Gerrans has evidently, however, a lurking misgiving of the efficacy of his supernatural argument, although he candidly admits that the "immaculate conception" must have been a miracle, and "contrary to natural law," for he yet endeavours to reconcile the dogma with natural law by telling us that he "could by a little anatomical and physiological detail, place the matter in such a plain and simple point of view" that it "could no longer be considered such a great mystery and improbability." But if "contrary to natural law," what else can it possibly be but a mystery, and, to the rational mind, an improbability? And if it be not the latter, but only a simple scientific fact which he is in a position to elucidate on principles of natural law, what then becomes of the "knot" which he says is the test-of-reason Spiritualists are straining at.

It is true that such superstitions contain within themselves the seeds of their own downfall, as Mr. Pearce justly argues; but yet it is surprising what a vigorous and hardy weed superstition is. Roman Catholic countries groan under the accumulated mummies of its influence,—it takes the place of science,—and the deductions of reason are set aside for the stupid drivellings of folly!

As you have, through your columns, tacitly imputed to me "a tendency to get angry" over the "Bible-Spiritualism" controversy; and as my sole aim is rational argument for the elucidation of truth, I trust to your courtesy and sense of justice in giving equal circulation to my reply.

A. B. T.

17th April, 1870.

[The relationship of Spiritualism to the Bible will be a battle field in England for many long years, so that any discussion on the subject is manifestly interminable. Free expression has been given in these columns to thoughts now prevalent on this subject, and it is right that such thoughts should have been put on record for historical purposes. Not to bring the controversy to too abrupt a conclusion, we will give space in the next number to a few more short letters, but then stop, for a season, the publication of communications on the subject. Further letters should not be more than a quarter of a column long.—Ed.]

A YEAR-BOOK OF SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—The efficiency of an army is often enhanced by individuals knowing its numerical strength, and the capabilities of the officers in command. This thought made practical upon a higher plane, has induced Hudson Tuttle, the well-known author and editor of the *American Spiritualist*, in connection with myself, to undertake the publication of a Spiritualist annual, or handbook of Spiritualism throughout the world for the present year, containing original matter and statistical information relating to Spiritualist books, periodicals, mediums, séances, lecturers, trance-speakers, and organisations, with the number, or proximate number, of believers in Spiritualism in all portions of the world. It is desired that Spiritualists in all countries should have a copy of this annual, and your aid is earnestly solicited to promote its circulation.

In Constantinople, Smyrna, Athens, the Grecian Isles, and other portions of the East, last season, I met a number of devoted Spiritualists: will such, will you, dear reader, give us full information relative to the introduction of Spiritualism into your country and vicinity:—1. The names and post-office addresses of those interested in the subject in foreign lands. 2. The number of believers, and their methods of disseminating the principles. 3. The number and kinds of mediums, and the number of organisations or societies. 4. And will you, further, furnish us a short original essay, or, at least, a paragraph, or sentence, relating to the Spiritual philosophy?

The annual will be out in Autumn, 1870, and for sale by liberal publishers in America, and by Mr. J. Burns, 15, Southampton-row, London.

15, Southampton-row, Holborn, W.C.

J. M. PEEBLES.

THE LATE MR. ROBERT SHAW.

SIR,—I beg leave to state that though the report of my husband's death and after manifestations, contained in your last issue, was strictly accurate, a mistake was made in stating that he was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. He was buried in the cemetery at Willesden, and it seems desirable that the error should be corrected.

CHARLOTTE SHAW.

5, Cambridge-road, the Junction, Kilburn, N.W.

April 7.

THE *Globe* of last Thursday evening contains a short article on Spiritualism and the *Medium* newspaper.

THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.—During the past four weeks other meetings of the Dialectical Committee on Spiritualism have been held with closed doors, without the members being able to agree as to the report which they will issue. All the reports of the experimental sub-committees have however been received and adopted. These all bear strong testimony in favour of the reality of the manifestations, and a report based on the reports of these sub-committees, is now in process of preparation.

SPIRITUALISM IN BRADFORD.

ON Thursday night, April 28th, Mr. Peebles gave the first of a series of four lectures on Spiritualism in the Mechanics' Hall, Bradford, Yorkshire, to a small but attentive audience.

The burden of his observations was to prove the fact of Spirit Communion. At the commencement the chairman gave an intimation that any question given in at the close of the lecture would be answered if it were put without comment. The first questioner was a "Secularist," who broke through the regulation by prefacing it with a speech. Mr. Peebles having answered the question, Mrs. Low, another Secularist, rose, and without asking the permission of the lecturer or the chairman walked coolly on to the platform, and commenced asking a string of questions in a speech of a quarter of an hour's duration; neither was she interrupted, but no sooner did Mr. Peebles commence to answer her than she interfered with remarks. Bradford Secularists deny the existence of spirits altogether.

The lecture on the following night was on the Bible proofs of Spiritualism. The visions, trances, and healing gifts of the present the speaker compared with those of the past. The audience was a small one, and at the close of the lecture, which was listened to with great interest, a few questions were put to Mr. Peebles and satisfactorily answered. On Saturday evening the subject of the lecture was "The Judgment Day: When is it, Where is it, and Who is the Recording Angel?" The lecturer said that the popular belief in a general Judgment is a fallacious notion, and that sin is tried, judged, and condemned, and punished, beginning at the time it is committed. The audience was a small one, but very attentive. A few questions were put and successfully answered. On Sunday morning Mr. Peebles gave his fourth lecture in Mr. Pullan's new music hall, Bradford, on "Salvation and Punishment: What are their True Meaning?" On this occasion the attendance was much better. In the afternoon upwards of one thousand persons were present, and they patiently listened to inspirational addresses from some local mediums, Messrs. Blackburn, Wood, and others. In the evening Mr. Peebles gave his fifth lecture to about one thousand very attentive listeners—subject, "Heaven and Hell: What and Where are they?" On Monday evening he spoke on the subject, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the Sepulchre?" The room, which has been provided by Mr. John Bowling for the especial use of the Spiritualists, was crowded to excess. Harmony was the characteristic of the gathering, and this no doubt assisted Mr. Peebles to a considerable extent. Mr. John Culpan, of Union-street, Halifax, who has favoured us with the preceding information, says that "Spiritualism in Bradford has many votaries, but none prominent in literature or lofty in material possessions. A debt of gratitude is due to our esteemed friend, Mr. Peebles, who, from his gentlemanly and peculiar way of answering the queries proposed to him, has done more to raise the subject of Spiritualism in the estimation of outsiders than could have been expected in years by the exercise of local talent."

Among the more remarkable mediums in Bradford is Mr. Thomas Tate, a working man, who appears to be under the influence of Indian spirits principally. He is a healing medium, and cures by the laying on of hands. Elizabeth Sagar, a physical medium, has many striking manifestations as stated in the last issue of this journal. Mary Anne Illingworth Bowling is a remarkable medium as a speaker, considering her uneducated mind; she can neither read nor write. She is much influenced by a spirit known as "Dr. Hardaker," who prescribes for patients after having examined them during sleep. Mr. Culpan says that he has obtained through this source more than two hundred prescriptions for persons never seen by the medium or himself, and in every case, when the Doctor has intimated a recovery of the patient, it only required obedience to the advice given to ensure a restoration. In several instances, where this has not been attended to, the patients have gone to the spirit land, but before their bodies have been interred they have spoken through this medium, and owned that had they taken the medicine prescribed they would have been living amongst their friends. Unbelief and the fear of Mrs. Grundy deterred them from so doing.

MORE SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS.

MR. G. W. KETH, M.D., of Delphi, Indiana, writes to the *Banner of Light* that "the people of the Hoosier State have two or three recently developed spirit artists, who bid fair to become as successful as Mumler. One of them, Mr. A. D. Willis, of Crawfordsville, I met while engaged in healing the sick in that city a few weeks since, and had an ample opportunity to witness the *modus operandi* in the management of this end of the wires which connect its rude machinery with the finer of the spiritual "behind the scenes," and also to learn the history of the artist's development, as well as that of his experiences in general prior to receiving this new and beautiful gift. Mr. Willis is a native of Indiana, and so far as I could learn has always borne the reputation of being an honest, truthful, industrious young man. Notwithstanding the limited advantages the small towns in this State afforded in his boyhood for acquiring an education, he succeeded in gaining a pretty thorough knowledge of all the branches which were then taught in the common schools, and for several years performed successfully the part of pedagogue in the county districts in Montgomery County. About six years ago he learned the art of photography, and has ever since carried on the business in Crawfordsville, with a degree of success that has made it sufficiently remunerative to afford himself, his wife and child, the indispensable things of this life, food, raiment, and shelter. Up to the first of last July he had never noticed any unusual phenomenon in connection with his profession. At that time he began to experience peculiar sensations while standing at the camera, and when he went into the "dark room" to develop the picture he would find the plate had the appearance of having been smoked, and soon after he discovered the faint shadow of a human form upon the plate at the side or back of the sitter, which had the effect of frightening Mr. Willis, and arousing in him feelings of superstition to an alarming extent. Mr. Willis is a member of an orthodox church, and thought this must be the work of the devil, who had come to torment him for some sin which he had committed, although he was not conscious of having been the author of any crime for which justice could inflict so severe a punishment, so he prayed often and fervently that this cup might pass, and what he then believed to be ghosts and demons might be driven back to their home infernal, and no longer permitted to interrupt him in his laudable attempt to please his patrons by producing good pictures of themselves, and of themselves only. But his prayers were of no avail, for those whom he and his brethren in the church had believed were sleeping their last sleep would, against his will and pleasure,

his prayers and threats, still persist in giving evidence that they still live, by appearing as before upon the picture plate beside the sitter. For several weeks he succeeded in keeping the facts from the public eye by destroying every plate whereon the impression of spirit forms could be traced before coming out of the dark room, and in some instances, after repeated failures to obtain a picture without the spiritual result, he would say there was some trouble with his chemicals, and would advise his customers to go to some other artist, but after awhile the secret leaked out. And so the work went on and every day the spirit pictures appeared more distinctly, and many a sorrowing heart was filled with joy unspeakable, by receiving a picture of some dear friend who had 'crossed the river,' and the astonished artist was compelled to believe 'they are the living, they alone whom thus we call the dead.'

"Mr. Willis is now producing a great many very fine spirit pictures. His rooms are constantly thronged with persons who are anxious to obtain the likeness of some dear friend. As yet but a small percentage of pictures are recognized, I think about one in ten. A distinct spirit picture is developed upon the plate in at least three out of every four sittings when that result is desired. I understand that Mr. Fisher Doherty, of Crawfordsville, one of the oldest Spiritualists in the State, and a pioneer, an earnest worker in every reformatory movement for the past twenty-five years, is making arrangements to travel with Mr. Willis through Indiana and Ohio, lecturing and giving exhibitions of spirit photography by the oxy-calium light. They intend to stop three or four days in each town, operating in the gallery of some artist in the place during the day, and lecturing and exhibiting spirit pictures."

"If any friend wishes for more facts in relation to Mr. Willis's experience in spirit photography, I should be pleased to respond to their inquiries."

MR. J. M. PEEBLES.—Rumours have reached us just before going to press that Mr. J. M. Peebles intends to return to America next month. Should this be true, it will be a great loss to Spiritualism in the United Kingdom, that the only speaker in the nation who devotes his time entirely to the platform work of the movement should go from our midst. This is speaking from a utilitarian point of view, quite apart from the kindly feelings which his warm-heartedness and freedom from petty and sectarian feelings, have inspired in all who know him. It is to be hoped either that he is not going, or that he will remain until the winter months.

CHANGES IN THE EARTH'S SURFACE.—Professor Huxley, in a recent address, delivered by him as President of the Geological Society, said:—"If the doctrine of evolution is sound, it is clear that the present distribution of life on the globe is the product of two factors; the one being the distribution which has obtained in the immediately preceding epoch, and the other the character and the extent of the changes which have taken place in the physical geography of the earth between the one epoch and the other. The existing four primary distributional areas for the terrestrial vertebrata are—first, the Novo Zealandian, or the New Zealand province; secondly, the Australian, including Australia, Tasmania, and Nicot Islands; thirdly, Austro-Columbia, or South America and North America to Mexico; and fourthly, the rest of the world. In all these provinces the animals of the pleiocene and pleistocene deposits are closely allied to those now inhabiting the same provinces, and conversely the forms of the other provinces are absent. The law of succession therefore holds good as far back as the pliocene, and in the miocene it is also to be readily traced; but in the miocene epoch North America possessed elephants, horses, rhinoceroses, and a great variety of ruminants and pigs absent in the more recent fauna. Europe had apes, elephants, and numbers of other animals now extinct there; and in Northern India the African types of the hippopotamus, giraffe, and elephant existed, mixed with the Asiatic types of the latter and with camels. There is every reason to believe, on other grounds, that Hindostan south of the Ganges, and Africa, south of the Sahara, were both separated by a wide sea from Europe and Northern Asia during the middle and upper eocene periods; and it hence is highly probable that the well-known similarities, and no less remarkable differences, between the present fauna of India and South Africa have arisen from an upheaval of the nummulitic sea in a direction from Abyssinia to the mouth of the Ganges. There seems to be also little doubt that there was also during the miocene epoch a continuity of dry land between Eurasia and North America, though there is at present no evidence to show at which side of the western continent this existed. There are also good grounds for believing that the Australian and the Indian and South African provinces were cut off by sea from the rest of Arctogonia before the miocene epoch. The professor reasoned out his case, and illustrated it by the geological evidence of the distribution of the fauna of the different provinces, and declared that the result of the whole investigation favoured the doctrine of evolution, and that in fact no other theory could satisfactorily account for the past and present distribution of life on the globe. Going back to the relations between the miocene and the upper eocene, the materials, he said, were small as compared with those obtainable in higher strata, but so far as they were available they still favoured the theory. In speaking of mammals of the Stonesfield slate, he said he was disposed to believe that at that early period the Australian province was one of the largest, as it is now one of the smallest divisions. He gave a description of the mode in which certain of these districts might have been gradually united and disunited. In conclusion he said that it was in favour of the hypothesis that it was consistent with the persistence throughout of a general uniformity of the direction of the great masses of the land and water, and it required no supposition that the rate of change in organic life had been greater or less than at the present time."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

In reply to several correspondents, it may be stated that Professor Max Muller's four lectures on the "Science of Religion," are now being published verbatim in *Fraser's Magazine*. They will all be contained in the April, May, June, and July numbers.

J. B. (Southampton).—Crowded out this month.

C. A. R. (Hackney).—A package has been sent you. We are obliged to you for your good wishes.

M.D.—Mr. Wallace, F.L.S., is stated to be "an avowed Spiritualist," because about a year ago he spoke in favour of Spiritualism to a public meeting at Lawson's Rooms, Gower-street, and because his name is printed in the *Spiritual Magazine* for October, 1869, as one of its contributors. We do not know what he has written on the subject, but can inquire.

J. C. (Halifax).—A portion of your communication is kept over till next issue for want of space.

* * * Correspondents are requested to make their letters shorter, because their length this month has forced us to leave out some reports of séances.

FACTS FOR NON-SPIRITUALISTS.

THE phenomena seen at spiritual circles are so extraordinary, and so unlike those coming within the ordinary range of human experience, that it is quite right not to accept them on the testimony of others. Each individual should witness and test them personally, and believe nothing until the absolute knowledge is gained that denial is impossible.

EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

The testimony of reliable and respectable witnesses that the phenomena of Spiritualism are actual facts, and not imposture or delusion, has of late years so accumulated as to possess very great weight. In the case of Lyon v. Home, Mr. Robert Chambers, Mr. C. F. Varley, Dr. Gully, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, and others, all made affidavits strongly in favour of Mr. Home. The following was the affidavit of Mr. C. F. Varley, C.E., F.R.G.S., M.R.I.:—

"I, Cromwell Fleetwood Varley, of Fleetwood House, Beckenham, in the County of Kent, Esquire, make oath and say as follows:—

"I have been a student of electricity, chemistry, and natural philosophy for twenty-six years, and a telegraphic engineer by profession for twenty-one years, and I am the consulting electrician of the Atlantic Telegraph Company, and of the Electric and International Company.

"About nine or ten years ago, having had my attention directed to the subject of Spiritualism by its spontaneous and unexpected development in my own family in the form of clairvoyant visions and communications, I determined to test the truth of the alleged physical phenomena to the best of my ability, and to ascertain, if possible, the nature of the force which produced them.

"Accordingly, about eight years ago, I called on Mr. Home, the defendant in this suit, and stated that I had not yet witnessed any of the physical phenomena, but that I was a scientific man and wished to investigate them carefully.

"He immediately gave me every facility for the purpose, and desired me to satisfy myself in every possible way, and I have been with him on divers occasions when the phenomena have occurred. I have examined and tested them with him and with others, under conditions of my own choice, under a bright light, and have made the most jealous and searching scrutiny. I have been, since then, for seven months in America, where the subject attracts great attention and study, and where it is cultivated by some of the ablest men, and having experimented with and compared the forces with electricity and magnetism, and after having applied mechanical and mental tests, I entertain no doubt whatever that the manifestations which I have myself examined were not due to the operation of any of the recognised physical laws of nature, and that there has been present on the occasions above-mentioned some intelligence other than that of the medium and observers.

"The subject of course offers many opportunities and inducements for fraud, and I only speak of what I have myself seen and tested. Since my acquaintance with Mr. Home began I have pursued the enquiry, and I have found engaged in it able, learned, and scientific men, who are convinced as I am, that the physical manifestations are but the introduction to an extensive field of mental and physical knowledge which will in a great measure explain and reconcile the beliefs of all ages and nations. I know of several instances both in Europe and America in which this course of study has awakened the perception of the purest and loftiest truths and principles. There have been no doubt cases in which the intellect has been too feeble for the stimulus, and has been overpowered by it, just as frequently results from excessive application to religion and other exciting topics, but such cases have not come within my own observation.

"Mr. Home, like several other non-professional mediums whose cases I have studied, was passive during the occurrence of the manifestations. He, like the other mediums, is extremely susceptible to external influences, and has a mind better suited to receive impressions than to prosecute enquiries. I willingly testify my entire conviction of his truthfulness and honesty.

"C. F. VARLEY

It also came out in the evidence given at the trial, that Mr. Home had been the invited and unpaid guest of the Emperor and the Empress of the French, the Emperor, Empress, and the late Empress Dowager of Russia, the Grand Duke Constantine, the King of Prussia, the late King of Bavaria, the late King of Wurttemberg, and the Queen of Holland. Mr. Home says that all his life he has never taken a farthing of pay for his sances. In March, 1869, the *Spiritual Magazine* gave the names of the following gentlemen as those who have long been investigating the subject:—

"Cromwell F. Varley, Esq., Fleetwood-house, Beckenham; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., 9, St. Mark's-crescent, N.W.; Professor De Morgan, 31, Adelaide-road, N.W.; Captain Drayson, R.A., Woolwich; Dr. J. M. Gully, The Priory, Great Malvern; Dr. J. J. G. Wilkinson, 4, St. John's-wood-villas, N.W.; Dr. Dixon, 8, Great Ormond-street, W.C.; S. C. Hall, Esq., 15, Ashley-place, Victoria-street, S.W.; Newton Crossland, Esq.; William Hovitt, Esq., The Orchard, Hare-green, Essex, Surrey; Robert Chambers, Esq., St. Andrew's, Edinburgh; H. D. Jencken, Esq., Kilmorey-house, Norwood; J. G. Crawford, Esq., 52, Gloucester-crescent, N.W.; W. M. Wilkinson, Esq., Oakfield, Kilburn; Lord Adare, 5, Buckingham-gate; The Master of Lindsey, Grosvenor-square."

Mrs. De Morgan has written a book, entitled *From Matter to Spirit* (Longmans), where she gives many interesting particulars, the result of ten years' experience in Spiritualism. Professor De Morgan, President of the Mathematical Society of London, in his preface to the book, says:—

"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."

Dr. Hooker, in his opening address, as President of the British Association at Norwich in 1868, spoke very highly of the scientific attainments of Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, F.R.S. Mr. Wallace is an avowed Spiritualist. Professor Hare, of Philadelphia, the inventor of the Hare's Galvanic Battery, once refused to witness spiritual phenomena, alleging that Faraday's "unconscious muscular action" theory explained all the facts. A friend wrote to him detailing things he had seen which were inexplicable by that theory. Hare at once, like a sensible man, went to see for himself. The result was that he came into communication with some of his own departed relatives. He then made mechanical telegraphic machines, which were intelligently worked by spirits while the apparatus was screened from the sight of the medium, and he wrote a book recording all these facts. That book is now in the British Museum Library. Judge Edmonds, of New York, is another

very eminent American Spiritualist, who has also written interesting books on the subject. Recently, in England, Viscount Adare has written a book bearing testimony to the truth of Spiritualism, and it has a preface by Lord Dunraven. This book is printed for private circulation only, which is an error in judgment. Valuable evidence in favour of Spiritualism is given by John Wesley and his family; for spirit rapping and movements of wooden materials by invisible agency occurred in their own house. Documentary evidence of what they witnessed was drawn up and signed on the spot, and is published in Southey's *Life of Wesley*. Signor G. Damiani, a Sicilian gentleman living at Clifton, has written a pamphlet, still in print, in which he severely censures Professor Tyndall, Mr. G. H. Lewes, and others like them, for refusing to investigate the subject. He further offers a reward of 1,000 guineas to any respectable, scientific or educated man, who will investigate the subject and prove it to be an imposture. The following are his words:—

"I now offer you two challenges.

"First, I challenge you, or either of you, or any of the public who, like you, disbelieve in the genuine character of spiritualistic phenomena, to deposit in the hands of any well-known London banker whom you or they may name, the sum of five hundred guineas; and I pledge myself to immediately deposit in the same bank a like amount—the ownership of such sum of one thousand guineas to depend upon my proving by evidence sufficient to establish any fact in history or in a criminal or civil court of justice.

"First—That intelligent communications and answers to questions put, proceed from dead and inert matter in a manner inexplicable by any generally recognised law of nature.

"Secondly—That dead and inert matter does move without the aid of any mechanical or known chemical agency, and in defiance of all the admitted laws of gravitation.

"Thirdly—That voices appertaining to no one in the flesh are heard to speak and hold rational converse with men.

"A jury of twenty-four gentlemen, twelve to be chosen by each party (such jury to consist exclusively of members of the learned professions and literary men), to decide whether or not the facts contained in the above propositions are conclusively proved *per testes*—i.e., by witnesses of established character. A majority of the twenty-four to decide. If the verdict be that these facts have not been established, the thousand guineas are to belong to the party accepting this challenge; if the verdict be that these facts are established, the thousand guineas to be mine.

"Secondly—Immediately after the above wager being decided, either way, I offer a like challenge of five hundred guineas (to be met on the other side in like manner as above)—the ownership of the second sum of one thousand guineas to depend upon the establishment of the facts contained in the propositions already given, by experiments conducted in the actual presence of the twenty-four gentlemen who have decided the previous wager; the verdict of the majority to decide in this case likewise.

"In either case, the sances are to be conducted in any public or private building which the jury may select, and which may be available for the purpose.

"The result of these challenges (if accepted and decided) to be advertised by the victorious party, at the expense of the defeated party, in all the London daily papers.

"I hope this is plain English.

"Awaiting a reply to this letter, and to the challenge with which it concludes, I am, gentlemen, your obedient servant,

G. DAMIANI.

"Clifton, Oct. 1, 1868.

"P.S.—Letters addressed 'Sigr. Damiani, care of Manager of West of England and South Wales District Bank, Corn-street, Bristol,' will always reach the writer."

In addition to the above evidence, there is the testimony of numbers that the modern spiritual manifestations are realities. Mr. Hepworth Dixon in his *New America* estimates the number of Spiritualists in the United States at rather less than three millions, and this is about the lowest estimate that anybody has made. There are no accurate statistics, and different authorities vary in their estimates from three to eleven millions.

When reports of the speeches of spirits are printed in this Journal, non-Spiritualists should understand that spirits out of the body are wise or foolish, truthful or untruthful, just the same as spirits in the body. Moreover, they are but individuals, so do not know everything. The statements of a spirit are but the assertions of an individual; but by comparing the statements of many spirits, it may in time be possible to discover in what points they agree, and to sift out the unreliable communications. Many spirits cannot see each other, any more than we can see them, and as some of them are thus in different states of life, it does not follow that contradictory messages are therefore untruthful. Spirits are of different religions, consequently their teachings do not altogether agree; there is no more uniformity in the next world than in this one. It is the business of this journal to report facts, so we are in no way responsible for the religious, scientific, or any other teachings given by individual spirits.

HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

An experimental trial at home, among family friends and relatives, often gives the most satisfactory evidence of the reality of spiritual phenomena. At the same time, as no fully developed medium is present among those who have never obtained manifestations before, the probability is that there will be no results. Nevertheless, it is a very common thing for striking manifestations to be obtained in this way at the first sitting of a family circle; perhaps for every one successful new circle thus started without a medium, there are six or seven failures, but no accurate statistics on this point have yet been collected. When once manifestations have been obtained they will gradually increase in power and reliability at successive sittings. The following is a good plan of action:—

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle. Wet, damp, and foggy weather is bad for the production of physical phenomena.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm, but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, very considerably delays the manifestations.

3. Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead-pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communications that may be obtained.

4. People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums; it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is a weakening influence.

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle is likely to attract a higher and more pleasing class of spirits.

6. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tiltings or raps.

7. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion, let one person only speak, and talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

8. Afterwards the question should be put, "Are we sitting in the right order to get the best manifestations?" Probably some members of the circle will then be told to change seats with each other, and the signals will be afterwards strengthened. Next ask, "Who is the medium?" When spirits come asserting themselves to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as spirits out of the body have all the virtues and all the failings of spirits in the body.

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance. Information respecting the many kinds of mediumship will be found in Mrs. Professor De Morgan's book, *From Matter to Spirit*, published by Longmans; and this is a good book to read before trying to start a new circle.

There are in England several very interesting circles for physical manifestations, where the spirits speak with audible voices, but, unfortunately, total darkness is a necessary condition. Non-spiritualists who are inquiring into the subject should have nothing to do with dark sances, which should be held only by those who know each other, since they offer so many facilities for fraud. When any circle regularly obtains powerful physical manifestations, they may desire to sit for the voices. The very slightest glimmer of light must be excluded from the room, while the members of the circle sit round the table in the ordinary way. One or two paper tubes, each twelve or eighteen inches long, with an orifice about an inch-and-a-half in diameter, should be placed on the table. They may be readily made by rolling up a piece of music and tying a few pieces of cotton round the rough tube thus formed. In the early stages of a voice-circle these tubes are necessary for the use of the spirits, but afterwards they may be dispensed with except when the weather and other conditions are unfavourable. When first trying to obtain the voices the spirits may not be able to lift the tubes from the table, afterwards they often get them up in the air a foot or two and let them drop again. When they get full control over them they can carry them about up to the ceiling and to all parts of the room, and they talk to the members of the circle often while floating about above their heads. Very beautiful luminous phenomena are sometimes shown by the spirits at dark circles. While sitting for the voices, the spirits will tell by the ordinary table signals how they are progressing in their work of getting control of the tubes.

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