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Thursday, November 4.—First Session of Conference, 3 p.m. Second Session, 7.30.

Friday, November 5.—Third and Fourth Sessions at same hours.

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1. The Moral Responsibility of Physical Mediums.
2. The Importance of the dissemination of Spiritualism as a Religious Influence.
3. Healing Mediumship.
4. Reincarnation; the theories it involves, and the evidence in support of it.
5. The unreliability of Spirit-communications, and how far this arises from ignorance, carelessness, or deception.
6. The British National Association of Spiritualists—its objects and interests.
7. Popular errors with regard to Spiritualism.

Other papers on kindred topics are also invited.

All essays to be sent in to the Secretary, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C., not later than Saturday, October 30.

Admission to Conference, Free, by Tickets, to be had on application to the Secretary.

All Spiritualists and inquirers are invited to take part in the conference. Further particulars in future advertisements.

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

VOLUME SEVEN. NUMBER SEVENTEEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22nd, 1875.

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The BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS is formed to unite Spiritualists of every variety of opinion for their mutual aid and benefit; to aid students and inquirers in their researches, by placing at their disposal the means of systematic investigation into the facts and phenomena, called Spiritual or Psychic; to make known the positive results arrived at by careful research; and to direct attention to the beneficial influence which those results are calculated to exercise upon social relationships and individual conduct. It is intended to include Spiritualists of every class, whether members of Local and Provincial Societies or not, and all inquirers into psychological and kindred phenomena.

The British National Association of Spiritualists was formed in the year 1873, at a national conference of Spiritualists held in Liverpool, at which all the great Societies of Spiritualists, and the Spiritualists of the chief towns in the United Kingdom, were represented. The amount of the annual subscription to the National Association is optional, with a minimum of five shillings a year. Each member has a single vote at the general meetings, and is eligible for election to all offices.

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The entrance to the offices is in Woburn-street.

"THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, PRICE TWOPENCE.

ESTABLISHED IN 1869.

THE SPIRITUALIST, published weekly, is the oldest Newspaper connected with the movement in the United Kingdom, and is the recognised organ of educated Spiritualists in all the English speaking countries throughout the Globe; it also has an influential body of readers on the Continent of Europe.

The Contributors to its pages comprise most of the leading and more experienced Spiritualists, including many eminent in the ranks of Literature, Art, Science, and the Peerage. Among those who have published their names in connection with their communications in its columns are Mr. C. F. Varley, C.B., F.R.S.; Mr. W. B. Crookes, F.R.S., Editor of the "Quarterly Journal of Science" (who admits the reality of the phenomena, but has, up to the present time expressed no decided opinion as to their cause); Mr. Alfred R. Wallace, the Naturalist; Prince Emile de Sayn-Wittgenstein (Wiesbaden); The Countess of Cathness; the Duke of Leuchtenberg; Mr. H. G. Atkinson, F.G.S.; Lord Lindsay; the Hon. Robert Dale Owen (New York); Mr. Epes Sargent (Boston, U.S.); Sir Charles Isham, Bart.; Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Marryat); Mrs. Makdougall Gregory; the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor, and Chevalier of the Order of St. Stanislas (St. Petersburg); the Baroness Adelmara Vay (Austria); Mr. H. M. Dunphy, Barrister-at-Law; Mr. Stanhope Templeman Speer, M.D. (Edin.); Mr. J. C. Luxmoore; Mr. John E. Purdon, M.B. (India); Mrs. Honeywood; Mr. Benjamin Coleman; Mr. Charles Blackburn; Mr. St. George W. Stock, B.A. (Oxon); Mr. James Wason; Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe; Herr Christian Reimers; Mr. Wm. White (author of the "Life of Swedenborg"); Mr. J. M. Gully, M.D.; the Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D., author of "Unorthodox London"; Mr. S. C. Hall, F.R.S.; Mr. H. D. Jencken, M.R.I., Barrister-at-Law; Mr. Algernon Joy; Mr. D. H. Wilson, M.A., LL.M.; Mr. C. Constant (Smyrna); Mrs. E. A. Nosworthy; Mr. William Oxley; Miss Kishlingbury; Miss A. Blackwell (Paris); Mrs. F. Showers; Mr. J. N. T. Martheze; Mr. J. M. Peebles (United States); Mr. W. Lindsey Richardson, M.D. (Australia); and many other ladies and gentlemen.

IS EVIL A REALITY?

In Dr. Sexton's discourse on "The Doctrine of a Final Cause," a report of which was published in the last number of *The Spiritualist*, he argued that the examination and contemplation of the works of nature give no evidence that the Great First Cause thereof is a God of love. After eloquently describing a landscape, as seen from a mountain-side upon a summer's day—a scene radiant with flowers and beauty—he pictured a storm at sea, in which, in the words of Mahomet—"Billows were riding upon billows below, and clouds above; one darkness on another darkness," lit up occasionally by the lightning's flash, accompanied by peal upon peal of heavenly artillery; and he told how a ship labouring in this storm, with five hundred living souls on board, was suddenly struck by lightning and all hands sent to the bottom, leaving wives and children to mourn their loss. In circumstances such as these, argued Dr. Sexton, man can gain no evidence from nature that God is a God of love.

The position taken up is open to question. Electricity obeys fixed laws, and because these laws are fixed and understood, man is able to send telegraphic messages from one end of the earth to the other, whereby wars and misunderstandings between nations are to a considerable extent prevented, and peace and goodwill among men encouraged. If electricity were not governed by fixed laws—if it were capricious, doing one thing at one time and another at another—this system of telegraphy could not exist, and as the same laws which govern electricity when a message is transmitted also govern the passage of a lightning flash, the lesson to be derived from the destruction of the ship, seems to us to be, not that God may be evil, but that men, by not using due care, and by not providing the ship with proper lightning conductors, reaped the fruits of their own neglect; also that it was better for the human race that the sailors should so suffer, than that electricity should be governed by capricious laws. Dr. Sexton further assumes that drowning is a dire calamity. Is he so little of a Spiritualist as not to think it probable that most of the sufferers found themselves an hour afterwards in a happier state of existence than before? He may plead that it might have been no fault of the men that the ship was not provided with proper lightning conductors, in fact, it might have been destroyed and gone to the bottom before lightning conductors were known. But in such case, had men in those old-fashioned times reverentially studied the works of God as exhibited in nature, instead of accepting on the voice of authority that which their fellow-beings asserted to be revelation, they would have discovered all about electricity and lightning conductors several generations previously. The reason they did not do so was because theological influence—of which Dr. Sexton is now a

mouth-piece—had such a strong hold upon the minds of men as to stop scientific investigation, to imprison Galileo, and to roast alive an Italian astronomer.

Spiritualism teaches that there is compensation for every trouble. If people live lives of sin, starvation and degradation here, because human laws and human customs are bad—made for the benefit of the few rather than for the good of the many—nevertheless, every man will have to atone, either in this world or in the next, for all the wrong he has done; consequently, a time of recompense is coming for those who have been injured. Dr. Sexton may point to the tiger, and say that the existence of a fierce animal such as that is evidence that God is not good; still, the facts may be contemplated from two standpoints. In the first place, the tiger does not hold that opinion, but in eating his dinner is supremely happy; and who can say whether the temporary fright and pain of the animal eaten are so dreadful as they appear to be? May they not be more than compensated by the happiness enjoyed by the creature during its term of life? Many of the lower animals have not such a fine nervous system as man, and are not so sensitive to pain; moreover, when the feelings are worked up to a high pitch of intensity, it is well known that sensitiveness to pain frequently decreases. Take, for instance, the case of Cranmer at the stake, who voluntarily burnt off his right hand to give emphasis to the opinions which he expressed at the time.

What men call "evil" is for the most part caused by themselves, by their own laws and customs; and this so-called evil is a strong incentive to good; without it life would be very much what light would be without darkness, or a picture without any shadows in it. Indeed, if a perfectly good man were to come to earth with no evil in him, he would have so little in sympathy with human nature that we should have no kindred feeling towards him; his presence would therefore be so unbearable that men would have no alternative but to crucify him. Those modern philosophers who have deeply studied the works of nature have come, as a general rule, to the conclusion therefrom that God is good, and have adopted the same argument that Dr. Sexton, unfortunately for his case, himself employed in another part of his lecture, when he admitted that it was impossible to stand under the broad canopy of heaven, watching the suns and planets wheeling through the heavens in majesty, without feeling awed into silence, and coming to the conclusion that some great and good Cause must be behind all this wondrous machinery.

To prove the existence of absolute evil from the phenomena of nature is exceedingly difficult, and the facts most likely to prove it, if it can be proved at all, seem to us to be furnished by the lives of London cab-horses. They do no harm to anybody; they wear out their lives in never-ending drudgery, which kills them before their natural time, after which every atom of their carcasses—skin, bones, flesh, and tail, are boiled down to serve the purposes of their slave-owners. Now if cab-horses have no life after death, wherein are they compensated for whole lives of undeserved suffering? Here are some very substantial facts on which to found a theory of the reality of absolute evil. One way to escape from the dilemma may be to find a future existence for cab-horses; another may be to adopt, with Berkeley, some theory to prove that cab-horses are not realities at all, but

exist only as impressions in the human mind. Scientific Spiritualism proves that death, the "king of terrors," has no reality—there is no death, nothing but eternal change—and by a kind of scientific faith in God, deeper and stronger than that of the orthodox, because drawn from the study of the works of the Deity, men may intuitively come to the conclusion that there is no evil, although they may be unable as yet to prove it in all cases. There is no place for absolute evil in a universe governed by a good and an Almighty God.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.*

No. XLII.

[I had read something about India as the cradle of races and religions, and something had been said about the subject at one of our meetings. I inquired further.]

WHAT was said is true. India is the source from which is derived much of the religious idea which pervades your faith. From India the chain has been perpetuated through many nations of antiquity. The myths which have centred round the plain truths of revelation owe their origin to India. The Messianic legends date from the earliest days. Men have always pictured to themselves a Saviour of their race, and the best record of your gradual growth is to be found in tracing the early religious history of India. As the study of Indian lore bears much on the scientific aspect of language which you have studied and taught to others, so is the study of the religious aspect of Indian history in the far, dim past, essential for yourself now. Direct your mind to it. We have those with us who can aid you.

India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Judæa,—of these and of God's dealings with them in revealing the Divine Ideal as man has been able to grasp it, it behoves you to know. You must learn how Djeminy and Veda Vyasa were the predecessors of Socrates and Plato. You will be told of this by those who know, and whose earth-life was spent at that epoch. But first you must labour to gather up for yourself such knowledge as is stored up. That done you will be guided further.

You must learn too from similar sources how that man in every age has felt his need of a Saviour outside of himself, and how the legends that cluster round these Messiahs repeat themselves from time to time. The mythic source from which many a legend sprang you will find in the story of Christna, the miraculous son of the pure virgin Devanagny. Hence you will get light on subjects yet dark to you. This is the special information of which we spoke long ago,

* In *The Spiritualist* of August 15th, 1873, an account was printed of some remarkable *seances* held at the house of Mr. Stanhope T. Spoor, M.D., Douglas-house, Alexandra-road, St. John's-wood, through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life who does not wish his name to be published. It will be remembered that most of the spirits gave their names and proved their identity; also that the extracts they gave from their writings were found, after laborious search in the British Museum Library and elsewhere, to be true. Hence there is evidence that spirits can give teachings through this medium free, to a large extent, at all events, from colour from his own thoughts; consequently the "spirit teachings" printed above, obtained through his mediumship, may be assumed to be to a considerable extent reliable. It is proper to state that these communications are selected in chronological order from a mass which has been given continuously for the past six months. Many of the originals are of such a personal nature that they are necessarily omitted, otherwise no change is made. The communicating spirits are many; each gives his name and details of his earth-life very fully. These facts, in all cases unknown to the medium previously, have been invariably found to be correct in every particular. The handwriting peculiar to the communicating intelligence is always preserved and the individuality remains throughout the same.—Ed.

but which the peculiar attitude of your mind, combined with its black ignorance on these subjects, compelled us to withhold.

We have still much to clear away before we can build safely. There is much in the mere outlines that will be strange to you, and you must be familiarised with them before we can go into detail. You must know that Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome, the great kingdoms of the world, owed their philosophy and religion very largely to India. Manou, the great Indian reformer and teacher, reappears as the Manes of Egypt, the Minos of Greece, the Moses of Hebrew story. The name is impersonal, and is the appellative "man" in its simplest form. The great pioneers of truth to their respective peoples were called, by emphatic eminence, "The Man." They were to their fellows the highest embodiment of human power, dignity, and knowledge.

Manou of India was a learned and erudite scholar, a profound student of philosophy, more than three thousand years before the Christ was born among you. Nay, he in his turn was but a late reformer compared with those whose words are written in the ancient commentaries which belong to venerable Brahminical lore thousands of years before Manou expounded philosophically the mysteries of God, of creation, and of man's destiny.

To him Zaratushta or Zoroaster owed whatever of truth he taught of old in Persia. All the sublimest conceptions of God date from him. The influence of India on all ancient races, in legislation, in theology, in philosophy, in science, is as surely proven to you as the fact that the language which you use is the same tongue as that spoken by Manou himself. The adulterations of modern times have so changed it that you can hardly trace the resemblance, yet your learned philologists will tell you that it is the same. The religions of the world bear to a superficial eye no apparent identity with the ideas which are enshrined in Brahminical lore, yet they are derived frequently from those primitive teachings which Manou systematised, which Manes naturalised in Egypt, and which Moses introduced among the Hebrews.

Hindoo ideas permeate all systems of philosophy and theology. The Devadassi, the holy virgins who in Hindoo temples devoted themselves to the pure worship of the Supreme, according to their idea of Him, have had their successors in the consecrated virgins of the Egyptian temples of Osiris, in the inspired pythonesses of Delphi, in the priestesses of Ceres, in the vestal virgins of later Rome.

This is, indeed, but a solitary instance of what we wish to point out to you. We do but direct your mind; and our bare sketch will be plentifully filled in hereafter. You are not yet able to comprehend more than the outline.

[*Certainly I am ignorant enough. You speak as if man was a mere vehicle for spirit; more or less perfect, and so more or less instructed.*]

We have told you frequently that all knowledge is from us. With us is the substance, with you the shadow only. Even as in your world, they learn most who are most teachable, so in intercourse with ours. We can teach, if you are willing to learn.

[*Not much merit in man, then.*]

The merit of obedience and humility. So he best grows in knowledge.

[*And suppose his teachers teach him wrong?*]

All truth is mixed with error. The dross will be purged away.

[*All spirits teach differently. Who then is right? What is truth?*]

It is not so. We teach independently, and so details vary while the broad outline remains the same. You will know one day that evil, as you call it, is but the reverse of good. You can have no unmixed good in your present state. It is an idle dream. Truth to you is relative, and must long remain so. Be content to crawl before you walk, to step before you run, to run before you soar.

PRUDENS.

[*Feb. 26th, 1874. At one of our circles we had had a piece of direct writing of which we could make nothing. It was written in curious hieroglyphics. I inquired about it.*]

The writing, though unintelligible to you, was the work of a high intelligence, who on your earth was incarnated amongst the nation who was then most spiritual, the great nation of the Egyptians. They had a more real belief in the existence and intervention of spiritual agencies than you now have. They cherished a firmer belief in the immortality of the human spirit, and of the indestructibility of all spirits than your wise men have yet attained to. Their civilisation you yourself know to be vast; their erudition such that they were the depositary of the knowledge of their age.

Aye, verily; and they had knowledge which a material age has lost; knowledge which illumined the souls of Pythagoras and Plato, and which has filtered down to you only through their teachings. The ancient Egyptians were wise and erudite philosophers, and our friend may well teach you much of which you are yet ignorant. After an interval of three thousand years and over, one, who in his earth-life knew of God and the hereafter, comes to witness to the abiding nature of his faith. The time—so long in its seeming to your contracted vision—during which our friend has been a denizen of spirit-land, has served to open new vistas of truth, to remove old errors, to throw light on old speculations, but it has served also to deepen and confirm faith in the Supreme, and in the immortal destiny of man's spirit.

[*I suggested that I still did not see why he should write unintelligible hieroglyphics; and asked his name.*]

You shall know of him; but his earth identity is long lost, and you would know it no more than you know his signs on the paper. He knew even in the body that bodily life was but the first short stage of perpetuated existence; and he has gone onwards, as he believed, upward to Ra, the source of light, to whom his gaze was turned.

[*I inquired if he believed in absorption into the God-head after a course of progress.*]

The Egyptian faith was of some such sort. Their philosophers believed in gradual progress until the dross was purged away and the spirit completely purified. His religion was one of faith in future progress, and, for the present, of high morality in life. Duty to man and to self was not forgotten, and religion was made a business of daily life. We may touch on this again as we develop in you a wider knowledge. For the present it is enough that you know that the special peculiarities of Egyptian theology—the sanctity of the body—had its true and false side.

The Great God was to them represented by every living thing, and the human body was so sacred that it was preserved from natural decay as far as might be;

and so well was this done, that some still exist among you. The undue care of the body was error, but the due preservation of bodily health was true and wise. When they saw God in everything, they did well; when they reduced Him to bodily form, their care for the body misled them. Their doctrine of transmigration through vast ages and cycles was an error which symbolised and typified eternal and unceasing progress. These errors, which led to the worship of animal life in all its forms, as symbolising the Creator, and as being the future home of the spirit in its manifold transmigrations, the spirit unlearns as it progresses. But it preserves the great truth of progressive development and growth in presence of the Great Creative Force, of which they were the outward symbols.

If it seem to you foolish and unwise to worship animal life, as needs it must, remember, too, that worship may be directed through an external symbolical manifestation to that spiritual essence which it typifies; and that errors which enshrine truths are husks which die in time and leave the kernel safe. Ideas, germs of truth, never die. They may be viewed through a distorted medium, and so take a disproportioned form; but when the distorted medium is removed, the true form is seen. So our friend and his brethren see now that all nature in your world is a phenomenal manifestation of the Supreme; and that if life in all its varied forms may not be held up as an object of adoration, still the groping spirit who strives to reach up through nature to its God is not to be visited with unreasoning blame. Do you not see this?

[In a way. I can understand the use of all helps to realising God. But I thought that Egyptian theology was material and earthly compared with that of India. The communications which you wrote out as to the religions of the world,* left on me the impression that Egypt reacted from India. I suppose all error includes some truth, just as every truth has an admixture of error, both terms being relative and not absolute.]

We do not now dwell on the characteristic points of Indian theology. What you say is true. We only desire now to show you how, under forms most repulsive to your present ideas, there was a lurking germ of truth, and that such truth, known to the ancients, has in many cases perished from among you. It is well that you learn to be modest in estimating both your own knowledge and that of the ancients.

[Yes; I am not aware that I have any particular knowledge except of the prevalent ignorance touching these matters. And it is silly to laugh at any form of religion. Our friend lived long since. An Egyptian priest, was he?]

He was one of the prophets of Osiris, and was in his time learned in the mysteries esoteric and unmentionable to the vulgar. Osiris, Isis, and Horus—this was the Trinity he worshipped. Osiris, the Supreme; Isis, the All-Mother; Horus, the Child sacrificed for human sin. He knew God as your sacred historian revealed Him, in terms borrowed from Egypt—I am the I Am—the Universal Essence; the Source of Life and Light. This title of Jehovah, Moses borrowed from the priests of Thebes.

[What was the original name?]

8 N U K . P U . N U K . I A M T H E I A M .

* Omitted from their proper place in order to preserve the continuity of the teaching.

He who inspires this communication was Prophet of Ra, at Ou, the City of Light, which the Greeks call Heliopolis, City of the Sun, and he lived sixteen hundred and thirty years before the era which you call Christian. His name was Choni, and he speaks to you a witness for immortality from the ages that have long passed. And I bear him witness that his testimony is true.

+ IMPERATOR.

MANIFESTATIONS WITH THE FAKIRS IN INDIA.

NO. II.

BY DR. MAXIMILIAN PERTY,

Professor of Physical Science, Berne. Translated from "Psychic Studies."

SUDDENLY it seemed to Jacolliot, as though a gentle wind passed through his hair and over his face, like the evening breeze of the tropics after sunset, and yet the curtains between the pillars of the verandah were not stirred; the same sensation was repeated several times. About a quarter of an hour had elapsed, and the fakir had not changed his position; then the fig-leaves began slowly to rise up the wooden staves, and to descend again, while the observer, coming nearer and finding no connection between them and the fakir, felt a certain uneasiness; the leaves did not cease to rise and fall, although he interposed himself several times between the pots and the fakir. Jacolliot then, having first obtained free permission, took the leaves from the staves and these again out of the pots, and emptied the mould out on to the ground. Jacolliot then rang for the cook, ordered him to bring seven glasses from the kitchen, and fresh earth and leaves from the garden, himself divided a bamboo stick into seven portions, which he stuck into the glasses; on these he fixed the perforated leaves, and now asked the fakir, who stood about four yards distant, and had been looking on motionless, whether he thought that his spirits would still be able to operate. The Hindoo did not answer, but stretched his hands again as before towards the glasses, and not more than five minutes elapsed ere the rising and falling of the leaves began again. Jacolliot thereupon inquired of the fakir whether pots and earth were necessary for the production of the phenomenon; and on being answered in the negative, Jacolliot caused seven holes to be bored in a plank, and stuck the bamboo sticks into them. In a short time the results followed with the same regularity, and continued for two hours in every variety of manner, until at last Jacolliot was fain to ask himself, whether he was not under some strong magic influence. Then said the fakir, "Hast thou nothing to ask of the invisibles, before I separate myself from them?" Jacolliot had heard that European mediums make use of the alphabet in their so-called communications with spirits; he therefore informed the Hindoo of this, and asked if it would be possible to establish a rapport with them by similar means. The fakir answered in these words, "Ask what thou wilt: if the spirits have nothing to say to thee, the leaves will remain motionless; but if they who control the leaves have any thoughts to communicate, the leaves will rise up the staves." Jacolliot drew an alphabet hastily on a sheet of paper, when another plan struck him. He possessed some copper letters and figures fastened to zinc plates, which he used for printing his name and official number on his books; he threw all these pell-mell into a little bag, so that he could take them out one by one. The fakir resumed his invocations, Jacolliot thought of a friend who had been dead for nearly twenty years, and took out one zinc letter after another, watching the letters, numbers, and the leaves at the same time. He had already taken out fourteen, when at the letter A the leaves ran quickly up to the top of the staves, then fell down again and lay motionless on the board into which the staves were stuck. Jacolliot was struck, for A was the first letter of the name of his departed friend. When the bag was emptied, it was refilled with the type, and by degrees, letter after letter, the observer received the sentence: *Albain Brunier, mort à Bourg-en-Bresse, 3rd Janvier, 1856.* His eyes began to swim when he saw these results, and feeling incapable of continuing his observations, he invited the fakir to visit him again on the following day.

After having thought over these things during a great part of the night, and after repeating, at the subsequent sitting, the phenomena of the previous day in a similar manner, Jacolliot asked the fakir to begin all over again, resolving to follow a particular plan of action. He made an alteration mentally, preserving, as he thought, the same letters, but altering their position in the sentence; then, after the usual proceeding, he received the name, *Habin Prunet, mort à Bourg-en-Bresse, 3rd Janvier, 1856.*

Jacolliot tried also to alter the name of the town, and the day of death, but did not succeed, and received as before, *mort à Bourg-en-Bresse, 3rd Janvier, 1856.*

For fourteen successive days Jacolliot received the fakir, who behaved with the greatest submission, and continually varied his experiments. At one time there were alterations in the letters of the name, till it was no longer recognisable; at another, modifications in the day, month, and year of death, but never any change in the name of the town, from

which Jaccoliot concluded, always starting from the hypothesis of a natural force forming a connecting link between the fakir and the leaves, that he was not able to free his mind sufficiently from his knowledge of the true spelling in regard to all the words in the sentence. He therefore repeated the experiment frequently at various times and with various objects, without, however, obtaining any different result. Whereas on the one hand the material phenomena were constantly reproduced, there was, on the other hand, as constant a variety following the action of the thought, either as willed by him, or differing from that which he had willed.

In the last sitting the fakir made the empty plate of a scale sink under a peacock's feather, while the other was weighted with eighty kilos; by a simple placing of his hands on a wreath of flowers it rose in the air, indistinct voices were heard, and an ethereal hand wrote luminous signs in the air—phenomena which Jaccoliot held at that time to be pure phantasmagoria, and to which we shall return later. In the above material phenomena no deception could be discovered, in spite of the severest testing. In the case of the psychological ones he could get nothing certain or invariable, and he is inclined to the view, exclusive of all supernatural influence, that the phenomena are due to a "fluidic sympathy" between himself and the operator. His legal duties, added to his studies of ancient India, did not leave him free to pursue these investigations, but he carefully noted all that had reference to the doctrine of the *Pitris* and the belief in spirits, as well as all he could learn of the material operations of the fakirs, with a view to a future publication of these strange facts, always preserving the attitude of the historian, being unable, as he expressed it, to come to any "scientific conclusion." Jaccoliot believes that in nature and in man, who is but an atom in the world, there exist boundless forces whose laws are as yet unknown, but which will be discovered; that in the future things will be proved to be realities that are now held to be delusions, and that phenomena will appear which we cannot now so much as imagine. It may perhaps be objected that the Hindoos have not been able in thousands of years to establish the laws of these phenomena, and that it is not worth while to waste any more time over the matter. But among the Brahmins, who have brought everything under the rule of religious belief, there exists, on account of that faith, neither experience nor scientific proof; "and what," asks Jaccoliot, "have the Middle Ages, building on principles drawn from the text of the Bible, done to forward the cause of science? The power of steam was known in their pagodas, and used for exploding their vessels; certain observations were made on electricity, but they never came so far as railways or telegraphs, which were certainly even in our day asserted to be swindles by very learned societies." That which he saw in India forced Jaccoliot to the decided opinion that a specific force exists in man, which works under some unknown and unintelligent direction, a force whose laws ought to be studied by unprejudiced minds. And is it not after all the same power which the priests in the ancient temples trained and directed, and which thus enabled them to impose upon the people with their so-called miracles? There would then be a basis for much that is presented to us in old traditions, and side by side with superstitious representations we should find the real workings of a natural force.

Jaccoliot had written a whole chapter on these subjects in 1866 at Pondicherry, and intended, when he came to prepare the book for the press, to suppress it entirely, because he, who had resolved to be simply a recorder of facts, found himself inclining towards the belief in a power which in his opinion was a natural one, but in reality produced supernatural effects. At that time he received, through the kindness of Dr. Pnel, Crookes's well-known article on the so-called psychic force in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, which had appeared during his residence in India, and was astonished to find that the famous English chemist formally asserted, as the result of his researches, the existence of a force in man, the very thing that he, Jaccoliot, had only suspected. This decided him to let the chapter in question remain as it had been originally written, and in accordance therewith to communicate his later experiences.

Under the glow and splendour of an Indian sky there is greater danger than with us of sliding out of plain, objective language, into that of sensational effect. On the 3rd of January Jaccoliot travelled in a *dingy*, a native craft provided with a little cabin, from Chandernagore on the Hoogly, and arrived fourteen days later at the sacred city of Benares. Two natives, a serving-man and a cook, accompanied him; one boatman and six rowers of the fisherman's caste formed the crew. Jaccoliot describes with enthusiasm the magnificence of the great pilgrim city of the devotees of the Brahman religion, where innumerable pilgrims from distant parts of the country come and go, with its temples, with the minarets of the Mohammedans towering over the mass of palaces, and the countless majestic flights of steps (*ghats*) which lead down to the Ganges, on whose winding shores the town extends to the distance of nearly two miles. Everywhere are long arcades supported by pillars, high quays, terraces with balconies, and in between these luxurious trellises of baobabs, tamarinds, and bananas, covered with hanging blossoms of every hue, gardens full of flowers, and wide alleys. Mohammedan and Indian architecture are wondrously blended in this irregularly-built city, in which the productions of India and Asia come streaming in, and in which toleration is so excessive, that the Moslem and Brahman servants perform their washing operations in the same sacred stream.

Jaccoliot had made the acquaintance of a Mahratta prince in Chandernagore, who had retired to Benares, and who now offered him quarters in his splendid seven-storied palace on the river, to the left of the famous mosque of Aurangzebe.

SPIRITUALISM IN HUNGARY.

THE National Hungarian Spiritual Society at Buda-Pesth, which is a well-organised and harmoniously-working Association of Spiritualists recognising the necessity and benefit of united action, has entered into official alliance with the British National Association of Spiritualists. Although in some points of doctrine the Hungarian differ from English Spiritualists—being, for instance, decided reincarnationists—yet the Spiritists of Hungary do not allow this difference of opinion to act as a barrier to friendly intercourse and co-operation where opportunity may offer.

The Society of *Spiriter-Forscher* (Spiritual Inquirers) at Buda-Pesth is in one sense the most complete and perfect organisation at present in existence. It was first formed in the early part of the year 1871, and consisted originally of about twenty members. In the following year the society was severely attacked by the newspapers in Pesth and Vienna; the members took up the gauntlet, and the result of the fray was that the society increased to so great an extent that before the end of the year it was enabled to hire a building constructed for its own purposes by one of its members, and having submitted its rules and regulations to the approval of the Hungarian Government, was registered by the same, and now stands under its protection.

The society holds regular *seances*, at which spiritual communications are given through various trance and writing mediums. The best of these are selected and published once a month in a little pamphlet, neatly got up and printed by the society on its own premises, under the name of *Reflexionen aus der Geisterwelt* (Reflections from the Spirit-world). The Baron von Vay is the honorary president, and all instructions for the guidance of the society are given through the mediumship of the Baroness. Dr. Adolf Grünhut is the acting president.

The *Reflexionen* consist of moral teachings, personal test-communications, answers to questions, and various communications of a special character. Some of these records consist of conversations with intelligences calling themselves "nature-spirits," who wrote through the hand of the medium Adelpa (Baroness von Vay). Unhappy spirits also manifest, and declare themselves much raised and benefited by their visits to high-toned circles. Latterly communications have been received by a honorary member of the society residing near Vienna, purporting to come from Daniel Hornung, formerly of Berlin, who by his investigations with the psychograph, about eighteen years ago, elicited from spirits a mass of interesting and valuable information, which was published in volumes between the years 1857 and 1862.

Daniel Hornung the spirit, informed his friend of circumstances relating to his own death which were quite unknown to that friend at the time. The conversations with this spirit are deeply interesting, and are said to be only a small sample of the spirit-communications written down by Herr Stratil, who possesses thirteen large volumes of MSS., the fruit of nineteen years' experiments with the psychograph through various mediums. During this period more than 26,000 answers of interest are said to have been received from 348 different intelligences. Of these, two copies have been made by Herr Stratil, one in order of time, the other of subjects, so that there exist on the Continent, in consequence of the greater development of writing mediumship, materials for a spirit-literature of no ordinary dimensions. Herr Stratil has promised further extracts for the *Reflexionen*, the interest of which is much enhanced by his contributions.

PRINCE WITGENSTEIN, who is now in Switzerland, will leave shortly for Russia, and hopes to be in St. Petersburg when the Scientific Committee of the University is investigating spiritual phenomena, in which case he may perhaps be present at the *seances*.

SUNDAY LECTURES AT THE CAVENDISH ROOMS.—On Sunday last Dr. Sexton delivered two discourses as usual in the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, Regent-street: that in the morning on "The Relation of Christianity to Work," and in the evening on "Creation by Law and Creation by God." The evening services prove the principal attraction, and the audience was a good one. The speaker took for his text the following passage from Isaiah—"I have made the earth, and created man upon it; I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." He took as the basis of his text the five definitions of "law" given in the Duke of Argyll's work on the subject, expatiating at some length upon each, and showing that the operation of law involved the action of an agent by which the various changes taking place were effected. He enlarged upon purpose and function, pointing out that it was impossible to form a clear conception of the latter of these without some reference to the former. The discourse seemed to give satisfaction to the listeners. Mr. Parkes being still unwell the whole of the two services devolved upon Dr. Sexton. On Sunday next the subject will be, in the morning, at 11, "The Relation of Christianity to Worship," and in the evening, at 7, "The Religion of Astronomy."

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS.

It is now fully recognised that the annual Conference of British Spiritualists is a meeting of great importance, not only to those within our movement, but to a considerable margin of outsiders. Many have dated the rise of their interest in the subject of Spiritualism from some point which they first heard mooted or discussed at the sessions of the Conference, which they had attended certainly more with a desire to scoff than to pray, and had left with the idea that there must "be something in it." The meetings having been fixed for a later day this year than usual there will probably be a good attendance of London Spiritualists, and many country members and friends of the Association will also be present. Papers on various subjects have been already sent in, and others are promised. The subject of healing mediumship, which is of such paramount practical importance, will doubtless call forth an interesting discussion, and it is hoped that all those conversant with this phase of spiritual phenomena will give the meeting the benefit of their experience.

The meetings will take place on the premises of the British National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, on the 4th and 5th November, immediately following the date of the opening *soirée* of the Conference, to be given by the Association in honour of Mr. J. J. Morse, at the Cavendish Rooms. Friends who intend contributing papers to be read at the Conference are requested to inform the secretary to the National Association at as early a date as possible of the subject of such papers, and to send them in not later than Saturday, October 30th. If any contributor desire that his or her name be not published in connection with a paper, it is requested that it be sent in confidence to the secretary, as no anonymous writings can be received. No paper should occupy more than ten or fifteen minutes in reading.

The admission to all the meetings of the Conference, with the exception of the opening *soirée*, will be free. For further particulars see advertisements. In the evenings, when friends are more engaged, the attendance at the Conference meetings is likely to be much larger than in the mornings, so it is probable that different papers will be read at the same time in different rooms, under the presidency of separate chairmen.

SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES BY MR. MORSE.

The National Association of Spiritualists has appointed a committee to arrange four Sunday evening services during the month of November, in London, for the delivery of addresses through the celebrated trance-speaker, Mr. J. J. Morse, on his return from America. The Cleveland Hall has been engaged for the series by the committee, which met last Tuesday night at 38, Great Russell-street, and the lectures will commence on the 7th November. The committee will be glad to hear of any ladies or gentlemen who are willing to form a choir for leading the singing, and request that any such will send in their names to Miss Kislugbury as soon as possible. Any friends wishing for reserved seats are also requested to communicate at once with the secretary, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

BRIXTON PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

A *seance* was held with Mr. Williams, at 6, Loughborough-road North, Brixton, on Wednesday evening, Oct. 13th. Present—Mr. Fitz-Gerald, Mrs. and Miss Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Francis, and about sixteen members of the society besides. As compared with other *seances* with this medium, the results were not of equal power, but they were of sufficient interest to amply repay the patience of the sitters.

The first part consisted of the ordinary dark sitting around a table, with hands joined, the medium's being held by Mr. Fitz-Gerald on the one side, and Mr. Grey on the other. Not long after the company had commenced singing, brilliant meteor-like coruscations, or "spirit lights," were seen travelling hither and thither, while a bell, from its sound, appeared to follow them. It sounded in unison with the voices. Several of the company had their hands shaken by a spirit hand, and they were touched. Mr. Fitz-Gerald was affectionately patted by hands, and was informed of a relative who had passed to the better land; Mr. Francis's hand was taken and pressed more than once, and the last time he had to mount the chair, to follow the warm and soft hand that had taken his and was lifting him up. Having raised his hand to the utmost, he had three gentle taps by way of adieu. The cheery voice of John King then spoke, and a conversation was carried on between him and Mr. Fitz-Gerald. He said he would try to materialise. This ended the first part of the *seance*.

A short adjournment and the company sat again. A cabinet had been improvised by suspending curtains, breast high, across the end of the room. It was suggested that the medium should have his coat sewn to the under garment and also to the sofa on which he reclined. This was done, not for the satisfaction of the sitters present, but that inquirers who might read of the manifestations should know that a crucial test had been tried. After the lapse of a long time the tiny voice of Peter was heard, and a most brilliant light was seen at the top of the curtains, revealing to those who had the good fortune to sit near, the faint outline of John King, and

the shadow of the form on the window curtain. It speedily vanished, the medium was thrown violently off the sofa, and this terminated the *seance*.

BOY MEDIUMS.

LAST Tuesday night a private *seance* was held in the *seance* room of the National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, London, with two new mediums, recently discovered by Mr. Martheze at Southport, and sons of Mr. Bamford, of Macclesfield. Walter Bamford, the stronger medium of the two, is thirteen and a half years of age, and his brother Joseph fifteen. Besides the two mediums, the spectators present were Mr. Martheze, Mr. Bamford, Mr. Albert Snow, Miss Kislugbury, Mr. Dufort, and Mr. W. H. Harrison.

The boys were first tied in the cabinet, when handkerchiefs were shown at and thrown from the apertures. Afterwards, while the spectators were seated round the table, an accordion was played beneath it with great power. The two boys were then tied with tape by hands, feet, and waist to chairs, and left at one end of the room, while the company sat at the other, with the lights out. Under these conditions musical instruments were played, writing done, an iron ring put on and off the arm, and other of the usual physical manifestations exhibited, lights being struck every one or two minutes, to show that the mediums were tied as at first. The powers of the two boys have only just begun to develop, yet are already exceedingly strong.

ARRIVAL OF MR. MORSE.

To the Editor of "The Spiritualist."

Off Irish Coast, Steamer *Baltic*,
Sunday, Oct. 17, 1875.

DEAR SIR,—Just a line to say I have arrived all well; passage good, weather fair—some stiff breezes, though, and heavy seas.

I expect to reach Liverpool by 9 or 10 p.m. to-morrow (Monday), landing early on Tuesday morning.

My farewell in Boston was a grand success, *vide Banner of Light* Oct. 9th.—Truly yours,
J. J. Morse.

On Tuesday morning Mrs. Morse, Mr. Coates, and Mr. Schwood went to the Liverpool landing stage, where the tender of the S.S. *Baltic* hove to with Mr. Morse on board, apparently not much the worse for his voyage. A reception, inaugurated by the Liverpool Psychological Society for him, will come off to-night, and he will deliver an address in their rooms on the evening of Sunday next. Mr. Morse will probably be in London on Monday or Tuesday.

THE SPIRITUALIST NEWSPAPER.—The little book by Mr. W. H. Harrison, entitled *Spirit People* (London, 1875), contains the following paragraph about the founding of *The Spiritualist* newspaper:—"In the spring of 1869, interesting conferences in connection with Spiritualism were held regularly at Lawson's Rooms, Gover-street, London. Some of the foremost workers in the movement, such as Mrs. Hardinge, Mr. Luxmoore, Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Enmore Jones, Mr. S. C. Hall, and others, addressed the public from its platform. Most of the interesting experiences related at those meetings are now lost, because no records were taken, except shorthand notes of one or two by Mr. Tapp, which may or may not be now in his possession. Several of the speakers therefore complained from the platform of the want of a newspaper in the spiritual movement to publish records of such meetings, so as we had no newspaper at that time, there being nothing but monthly periodicals filled with magazine literature, I resolved to bring out a newspaper which should give news and reports of meetings, and, furthermore, should be adapted to meet the requirements of minds of a scientific order. *The Spiritualist* newspaper was accordingly first published in the course of 1869, as a fortnightly journal, with the announcement in its first leading article that it would be brought out weekly as soon as such a step was considered to be reasonable. Afterwards, in the natural course of events, other newspapers came into the field, but when the system was introduced by them into our movement of asking money from the public to keep them going, I held aloof from the subscription system because I did not like asking for money, and had never had anything to do with any newspaper which was a financial burden to the general public. The consequence was, that for three years thousands upon thousands of pounds of the money subscribed with the best intentions by Spiritualists were sunk in competition with me, without even my private friends being told what heavy financial injuries were thus inflicted on me, and I worked for and paid out for years single-handed all the expenses thus quite unintentionally and with the best of motives inflicted upon me. I do not say this by way of complaint against anybody, for if I had spoken of the injury the public were doing me, they would probably have provided a remedy, as a few kind friends have recently done. It was my own fault for not speaking out sooner; I kept silence for three or four years, in consequence of being full of Utopian ideas about Spiritualism being too sacred a subject for the introduction of the grievances or sufferings of individuals."

"SPIRIT VALE."

AN ENGLISH BARRISTER AT THE EDDY BROTHERS' HOMESTEAD—
MRS. HUNTOON AS A TEST MEDIUM—MATERIALIZED SPIRITS.

From a critical examination of many reports in American newspapers, of marvellous appearances of materialised spirits, through the mediumship of the Eddy brothers, we long since found out and published that the accounts were mostly of an exaggerated nature, made by enthusiastic persons not recognised by the public as good witnesses, and that the chief fact suppressed in such reports was the feeble amount of light at the *seances*—so feeble that the features of the "recognised" spirits could not be seen by anybody, except an old Mrs. Cleveland and a Mr. Pritchard, who were allowed to approach near enough to see the faces, and who gave the rest of the company their testimony as to the features. Of course this testimony may have been reliable, but at the same time the two witnesses may have belonged to a class of enthusiastic souls who sometimes attend *seances*, who would readily recognise pocket handkerchiefs as the veritable faces of their departed grandmothers, or who pass so freely under mesmeric influence as to see miraculously things beyond the range of ordinary eyesight. On rare occasions, when some witness known to Spiritualists attended the *seances*, such as Dr. Ditson, and Miss Lizzie Doten, a tone of disappointment characterised their accounts, and they usually honestly recorded the fact of the small amount of light; still, as they only attended one or two *seances*, their reports were not worth much; at least a dozen *seances* should be attended to get accurate ideas of the average nature of the manifestations through any medium. Why do not American Spiritualists, who have such good mediums, engage good witnesses to observe the manifestations? If gentlemen whose testimony carries weight on both sides of the Atlantic, such as Mr. Epes Sargent, Dr. Crowell, and Colonel Olcott, gave their valuable time and recorded most of the facts witnessed at *seances*, on what a very superior footing to the present American Spiritualism would stand.

Colonel Olcott is a solitary good witness, who perseveringly attended the *seances* of the Eddy brothers; he once briefly mentions in his book that the light was so bad that he did not see the features of any of the recognised spirits, and this is the vital point of the whole narrative, easily overlooked by casual readers, but detected by the *Athenæum* reviewer. Thus, so far as test conditions are concerned, the most remarkable circumstance is the vast multiplicity of dresses in which the spirits appear; but then the cabinet ordinarily used is not a test one, and hard, sad experience is daily proving to Spiritualists in the case of mediums of the Holmes, Melville, Fay, and Von Vleck stamp (or perhaps more truly of the spirits governing them), that it is not safe to publicly endorse any physical manifestations not produced under test conditions.

A few weeks ago a clever English barrister, who does not as yet wish his name to be published, called upon us before leaving England for the special purpose of spending the long vacation in the observation of the manifestations through the Eddy Brothers, at Chittenden, Vermont, U.S., the result up to the present time being that he is disappointed in what he has seen of the materialisations through one of the brothers, yet very pleased with the mediumship of the sister, Mrs.

Huntoon. Still, he has not as yet observed the materialisations through William Eddy so long and perseveringly as did Colonel Olcott, nor will he have much opportunity of seeing anything hereafter, for his published testimony about Mrs. Huntoon will make the brothers furiously jealous—a failing which too often accompanies powerful physical mediumship—so the observation of their manifestations by the English witness may be assumed to be at an end. Here is his account of what he has already seen, copied from the *Rutland Daily Globe* of Sept. 30th, and every line of it contains internal evidence of the reliability and honesty of the narrator:—

Berwick House, Rutland, Vt., Sept. 27th, 1875.

EDITOR OF THE RUTLAND GLOBE.—Having travelled about 4,000 miles for the express purpose of witnessing, and, if possible, forming a correct judgment upon the "spirit materialisations" at the Eddy homestead, made famous by Col. Olcott's critical investigation, I naturally felt some curiosity to learn the opinions prevalent about them in this city and neighbourhood. I have found many differences and some indecision. Nor am I surprised, for though the Eddy brothers, supposing mediumship to exist, are probably the most powerful mediums in the world, they are not, at least at home, test mediums. I do not in the least blame them, after all they are said to have gone through in this way, for not submitting themselves, every day and in their own homes, to the often cruel and unreasonable caprices of sceptical investigators. But I do think that they might voluntarily give more satisfaction in the way of tests than they choose to do; and therefore I could not recommend others, whose object, like my own, is to verify a fact, and not merely to witness the most developed phase of a phenomenon still problematical, to seek conviction at the Eddys'. But I certainly am astonished that the extraordinary powers, as a test medium, of their sister, Mrs. Mary Huntoon, should have escaped public attention. The names of William and Horatio Eddy are heard wherever Spiritualism is mentioned; while this sister, who would convince, if he were at all open to conviction, the most hard-hearted sceptic in a single sitting, remains in obscurity. I was a week at Chittenden before I even heard of her.

As an English lawyer, with, I am afraid, the worst possible opinion of human nature, to whom the fallibility of human testimony is one of the first principles of judgment, sceptical by disposition, and with some experience in this investigation, I have, in this matter, trusted to nothing that I have been told, to no observations and to no precautions but my own. I have attended six *seances* at Mrs. Huntoon's, with the result that the question of spirit materialisation is settled with me for ever. On the ground floor are only three rooms—the kitchen, dairy or larder, and the bedroom, thirteen feet by seven, which serves as the cabinet. Above are only the roof and rafters, without partition, of an unfinished room. Below the larder is the cellar, not at all under the bedroom. I did not, of course, accept the statement that there was nothing under the latter but the ground, but examined every board of the floor. These boards are continuous pieces, running under the partition from the kitchen the length of both rooms. Each is firmly and closely set to its neighbour. Two of the walls of the bedroom are outer walls, and I scrutinised the boards outside, and the plaster within, which was without seam or rent, as also the plaster of the partitions from the larder and kitchen, and of the ceiling. The bedroom has only one window. The lower part of this was nailed inside; outside I had nailed mosquito netting, the tacks being driven up to the heads in spots selected by myself, and under my own eye. I went out with a lantern and examined this netting three times, (1) just before the sitting commenced, (2) immediately after the manifestations had fairly commenced, (3) at the close. On the bed were lying Mrs. Huntoon's two younger children. I took the elder to be under three years old, but she tells me he is three years and four months. We took the bedding to pieces, blanket by blanket, mattress by mattress. On only one night of the six was the eldest child, five years old, left in the bedroom. The bedroom has only one door, that into the kitchen, where we sat. Across the door the curtain was hung.

So far, of course, I had only provided against access to the room by an accomplice. But now comes the crucial test—the ability to stand which distinguishes Mrs. Huntoon's mediumship from that of every other, with the exception, I am told, of Mrs. Stewart, of Terre Haute, Ind. During the first part of the *seance* Mrs. Huntoon sits outside the curtain, in the kitchen with us, no part of her person being in the bedroom. The light, though not good enough to discern the features of the apparitions, is sufficient to make perfectly observable the smallest movement of the medium. I could see the time by my small watch by it. We sat 7½ feet from the curtain. I was quite satisfied with these precautions. A gentleman with me, however, was not, at least for the purpose of reporting, though he agreed with me that they were perfectly sufficient for our own satisfaction. Accordingly we tied Mrs. Huntoon's hands securely to the back of her chair, and her feet to the legs of the chair. Now, under these conditions, faces began immediately to appear, sometimes

two at a time, through the curtain; a fiddle in the bedroom was played, and while Mrs. Huntoon sang "John Brown," a voice from behind the curtain, stronger than hers, accompanied her. On other occasions, after all the foregoing precautions, with the exception that the medium was not tied (though it must be distinctly understood, visible to all of us), the full length form of a young man emerged from the side of the curtain furthest from Mrs. Huntoon, and stood before us for several seconds. The same spirit has come several times, under conditions, however, not so rigorous. By and by, the power becoming exhausted under these trying tests, a voice from the bedroom calls Mrs. Huntoon behind the curtain. And then the manifestations become much stronger; but, as the test is at an end, to recount them is not within the scope of my present object.

One warning I wish to give visitors to Mrs. Huntoon and every other medium. Do not mix up the question of spirit materialisation with that of spirit identity. Faces and figures purporting to be those of spirit friends will come to you. Your dear relatives will manifest the utmost eagerness and impatience to be recognised, but when you come to put the simplest test question, they will, unless you have been fool enough to blab out particulars about them beforehand, either fail to answer, or answer wrongly. That is my experience; I do not say it is invariably the case. Unless proper precautions are taken to exclude such an explanation, people, of course, go away with the notion that it is all fraud and personation by the medium. Much of it I am nearly sure is fraud and personation, *not by the medium, but by spirits, possibly not even human spirits.* But I am verging on deep and difficult speculations. To return to Mrs. Huntoon. She has offered to come to any room in Rutland I may select for the purpose, and there to hold a *seance* under any test I may impose. I am satisfied already, and have declined the offer. Investigators will, she assures me, and I quite believe her, experience from her a cheerful compliance with any tests not absolutely cruel, not, of course, inconsistent with the invariable conditions of spirit materialisation. You have two things only to guard against—confederacy and personation by the medium—with Mrs. Huntoon, but with very few other mediums, it is the easiest thing in the world to take perfect precautions against either.

Excuse, sir, this long letter—I have no interest in its publication. I write it at the request of Mrs. Huntoon, made after I had avowed myself completely satisfied and convinced, a request which I thought I could not in justice refuse.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

AN ENGLISH BARRISTER.

Postscript.—I have said the Eddys are not test mediums, but I should qualify this statement as to Horatio, whose light circles ought to give satisfaction to any close observer. I referred to Williams's materialisation circles.

TESTIMONY OF A NEW ZEALAND SPIRITUALIST.

A COPY of the *Otago Times* of Aug. 26th, sent us by the last mail, contains a letter about the Eddy manifestations by Mr. W. H. Moody, formerly of Dunedin, and well-known to New Zealand Spiritualists. It will be noticed that in stating what brought conviction to his own mind of the identity of the spirits, he lays emphasis on the impossibility of strangers gaining access to the cabinet, instead of upon the distinctness with which he saw the features of the spirits. What has the legal witness already mentioned to say as to the reliability of the following testimony by Mr. Moody?—

I have paid another visit to the house of the Eddys, and have talked, laughed, and shaken hands with the fully materialised forms of our deceased friends. We left Greenfield on the 10th of May, and remained at the Eddy homestead in Vermont nearly three weeks. During that time I attended fourteen *seances*, and saw no less than two hundred and twenty materialised forms, many of them in full light. They conversed with us, laughed, sang, danced, and smoked as naturally as we do in the flesh. The *seances* are held in the same room as before. The cabinet in which the materialisations take place is 2ft. 3in. wide, 6ft. long, and 7ft. high. Usually, from 12 to 23 spirit forms appear in the space of an hour. The room is partially darkened at the commencement of a *seance*, as that is one of the conditions under which force is more easily gathered. If I meet an intimate friend in the street I know him from the cut of his countenance and the rig of his coat. Well, I have seen here, in full light, my old friend, Mr. C. Redding (well-known in Dunedin), twelve times. He spoke to me one evening; called me by my name, and requested me to tell his wife that he was happy, and wished her to come and see him. He came out dressed in five different suits, similar to those he used to wear when living here on earth. I knew him; I could not be mistaken. There he was, as natural as life. I lived in the house, which was scantily furnished. I knew every nook and corner in it, and I was certain that no human being, resembling Redding in every particular, could have been concealed there. What hallucination could there be about it? I saw my own father four times, my sister six times, my old Ballarat partner, Rufus Smith, once. All these I saw in full light, and how could I be mis-

taken, or how could the Eddy Brothers personate them? An old lady (Mrs. S.) and her daughter, from Romeo, Michigan, came while we were there. After they had been there a few nights, the spirits asked the old lady to take a seat on the platform, close to the cabinet. Soon after taking her seat the form of an old gentleman walked out of the cabinet and shook hands with her, and she called him "father." He retired, and in a few minutes a young man appeared, and shook hands with her; and then a young girl, and soon afterwards another young man. Each shook hands with the old lady. After the *seance* was over, I asked her if she was sure those were her friends. She said she could not be mistaken. The first was her father, the second her son, the third her granddaughter, and the fourth a man who used to work for her. I ask any reasonable being if that is not good evidence! One night we heard a baby crying in the cabinet. Soon a lady appeared holding a baby in her arms, and judging from the noise it made, it had splendid lungs, and no mistake. Houto, an Indian maiden, frequently danced. One evening she came to the floor where we were seated, put her hand on the railing and jumped back to the platform. Stooping, she seemed to pick up something, and shaking it out, it was a large shawl. She made use of them, 3 by 5 to 4 by 9 ft. She plucked a white rose from a bouquet on the platform, and beckoning to me, I went up, and she gave it to me out of her own hand, which I felt. One night a young lady about twenty and a little girl about two years old appeared, and were recognised by a man from Maine as his two daughters. He called them by name, and the eldest took the younger in her arms and walked partly across the platform. The little one held her hands out towards her father, and they both seemed pleased to see him. A good many Indians appeared in the full light, and remained out for some time. An Indian girl, "The Lady of the Lake," was one of the most beautifully formed beings I have ever seen. She was dressed in white tights, with a snow white tunic that reached almost to the knees, a belt, and long black hair. She came to where we were sitting, and danced across the floor several times. Mrs. Eddy, the mother of the Eddys came out and thanked the lady from Michigan, Mrs. S., for her kindness to her (Mrs. Eddy's) daughter. Two gentlemen from Utica, New York, fully recognised their brother, who passed on about a year since. A Mrs. Cleveland, a near neighbour of the Eddys, lost her husband last February. He came back several times, and was recognised by several in the room. He was the one over whose corpse a materialised spirit delivered a funeral discourse in the presence of about twenty of the neighbours. I had this from the lips of a dozen reliable persons who were present.

SPIRITUALISTIC FUNERALS.

THE first Spiritualistic funeral which ever took place in England was that of Mrs. Ritchie, in Kensal Green Cemetery, about five years ago. Mr. Cromwell Varley, Lady Gordon, Mrs. E. M. Cox, Mr. Enmore Jones, Mr. D. D. Homo, Mr. Epes Sargent, and Mr. Harrison, were among those who followed her remains to the grave; there was little or no "mourning" in the shape of dress, most of the ladies especially being dressed in the brightest colours, and carrying flowers, which at the close of the service were showered upon the coffin. Spiritualistic funerals are superior in every respect to those of the ordinary kind, and must be more pleasing by far to the bright "risen ones," who are not buried with the cold clay. The Scriptural quotation read in the Church of England Burial Service is most painful: in it Paul in one place calls his fellow-creatures "beasts," and in another, when an honest inquirer asks a sensible question about the resurrection, begins his reply with the words "Thou fool;" then proceeds to say that the dead sleep until awakened by the last trumpet; which Spiritualists know to be not true.

Mr. B. S. Naylor, the chief pioneer of Spiritualism in Australia, has passed to the better land. He is well known in Pembroke-shire (and some other parts of South Wales. For many years he was managing agent to Colonel Greville, who single-handed made a branch of the Great Western Railway from Johnstone to Milford Haven, through his own estates, to develop the resources of that noble harbour, a gigantic and an unselfish work for one man, but a work of which Pembroke-shire in the next generation will reap the benefit. Mr. Naylor and Mr. Harrison became acquainted with each other at Milford, before either knew anything of Spiritualism, and the former afterwards left this country for Australia, for the benefit of his health. While Mr. Naylor had no actual knowledge of the nature of the future existence of man, he was, nevertheless, unable to accept the orthodox teachings of the day, so did much by his contributions to local literature to promote freedom of religious thought among an agricultural population so completely under the thumbs of preachers, lawyers, and hereditary landowners as to possess no souls or opinions of their own, or hope of anything better in the future.

FUNERAL OF MR. B. S. NAYLER.

This veteran labourer in the cause of Froethought and Spiritualism passed quietly away to the spirit-world on the evening of Wednesday, June 23rd. Mr. Nayler was born at Darlington, in the county of Durham, England, in March 1796. He resided in Holland for upwards of twenty-five years, and was for some time English professor to the University of Amsterdam. At the age of twenty-eight he married the daughter of an eminent Dutch painter, named Liernur. Mrs. Nayler inherited the gift of her father, and produced during her married life many excellent pictures, her forte being principally fruit, flowers, and birds. They were deeply attached to each other, and celebrated their golden wedding early last year, Mrs. Nayler passing away a few months after. Mr. Nayler commenced the investigation of Spiritualism, and having assured himself of the fact of spirit intercourse by opening up communication with several of his departed friends, he was not slow in taking steps to proclaim the new gospel, and delivered a series of lectures at the Mechanics' Institute, Melbourne, commencing August 11th, 1869. The lectures were well attended, but the lecturer's religious opinions were too radically Unitarian for the majority of his audiences, and much opposition was shown both to him and the cause he advocated. The lectures were afterwards published in pamphlet form and had a considerable circulation. During the latter part of 1869 he started the first Spiritualistic paper in Victoria (*The Glowworm*), but the circulation was inadequate to sustain it, and after a six months' struggle it succumbed. Mr. Nayler lectured occasionally for the local association of Spiritualists, and about three years since accepted an engagement as lecturer for the Stawell Lyceum, which he filled until the end of last year. At the beginning of the present year Mr. Nayler came to Melbourne, where he was provided with means to end his days in comfort. He was not, however, the man to remain idle, and within a fortnight of his death he published a pamphlet criticising the creeds of modern Christendom, and proposing a scheme for the establishment of an association of Freethinkers. He is also the author of the book *A Discussion on the Unity, Duality, and Trinity of God*, published by Trübner and Co., of London, and other works.

Mr. Nayler's last appearance in public was on the platform of the Temperance Hall, on the 13th ult., where he gave the preliminary reading to Mr. Hughes's first lecture. He was in our establishment four days before his death; but though his faculties were clear and bright,—as they remained to the last,—it was evident that the tie which kept him in the body was very weak. The immediate cause of death was congestion of the lungs, the system being too weak to throw off the congestive fluid. In accordance with the known wishes of the departed, the funeral was exempt from any of the ordinary insignia of mourning. We annex a brief account of the proceedings:—

The funeral was appointed to leave Victoria Parade at half-past two on Saturday, June 26th, and shortly before that time about fifty friends of the deceased arrived, and took a last view of the body, which preserved the same calm, placid expression it had in life. No signs of discolouration or decomposition were visible, and no odour save that of the beautiful flowers which filled the interstices of the coffin. At half-past two the coffin was closed, and the procession, which consisted of a hearse and four mourning coaches, accompanied by a number of private vehicles and cabs, proceeded to the cemetery. No plumes, hatbands or gloves were to be seen, but a little sprig of rosemary (indicative of remembrance), fastened with a yellow ribbon (symbolical of spirituality and wisdom), was worn upon the left breast, and many had small bouquets in their button-holes. Arrived at the cemetery, the procession was joined by about fifty more friends, including the choir of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists, who on the coffin being deposited in the grave, sang the following beautiful hymn of Longfellow's:—

"Take them, O Death! and bear away
 Whatever thou canst call thy own!
 Thine image, stamped upon this clay,
 Doth give thee that, but that alone!
 Take them, O Grave! and let them lie
 Folded upon thy narrow shelves,
 As garments by the soul laid by
 And precious only to ourselves.
 Take them, O great Eternity!
 Our little life is but a gust,
 That bends the branches of the tree
 And trails its blossoms in the dust!"

Mr. Ross spoke of Mr. Nayler as a man of very remarkable character. He left this world in his eightieth year, and according to usual notions he might be considered as a relic of the past, to which all his sympathies might be supposed to be confined. Not so with Mr. Nayler. Never behind the age, but

generally in advance, he was ever the champion of reform, and everything human had his warmest sympathies. A friend of old and young, ever ready to form new associations with the freshness of a youthful mind. Those who knew him through his vigorous and uncompromising writings only, might form a harsh opinion of his character; but those who have had the great privilege of knowing him in the privacy of his own home, proved him to be a heart overflowing with the genuine "milk of human kindness." Mr. Nayler was married to a talented lady not less remarkable than himself. They celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding day last year, at Stawell, and soon after, on the 28th July, after much trouble and sorrow, Mrs. Nayler departed to a "better world." As soon as convenient thereafter Mr. Nayler came to Melbourne, where he was received with warm affection and solicitous regard. Before his arrival an arrangement was come to whereby his future wants and comforts were to be attended to, without compromising his independence, which he was jealous in preserving. Although no blood relations then surrounded his grave which received his mortal remains, few indeed have departed this life leaving behind them such a sense of bereavement and regret for lost opportunities, as were experienced by many who had the pleasure and profit of Mr. Nayler's intimate acquaintance.

The choir sung Byron's fine hymn "Immortality," at the conclusion of which they and others threw their floral offerings into the grave till the coffin was almost hidden with flowers. This concluded the proceedings, and the friends dispersed to their several homes.—*Harbinger of Light*, Melbourne.

Poetry.

A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE.

All needful works accomplished and endured,
 Nearer, and yet more near, my God to Thee;
 Touch we the things that are with hand assured,
 With hand relaxed, the things that seem to be,

Lest, like the expiration of a breath,
 Which a child breathes and watches on a glass,
 Our breath of being all absorbed in death,
 With all those things that pass away, we pass.

For where the treasure is the heart also
 Is; and where is the heart the life has root;
 And in what soil soever ye may sow—
 There—and there only, may ye seek your fruit.

And many seeds men sow in many soils,
 Watering the ground about with many tears
 And sweat of brow, who yet from all their toils
 And sorrows, pluck no other fruit than fears.

For so is man, as one who in a dream
 Of pleasantness would fain see all as sooth;
 Yet knows the things he sees are things that seem,
 And dreads the hour of waking into truth.

For what is truth? The altar, or the fire;
 Blood, or the life; the sabbath or the rest;
 Words, or the thought; the deed, or the desire
 The expressive symbol, or the thing expressed?

Is it the furtive hour on drowsy wing?
 Is it the dial whereon the sunbeams play?
 That is the truth? Is time the real thing?
 Time, or the shifting sand that marks its way?

Aspiring to the home from whence it came,
 The spark of life, lent only and not given,
 Plays o'er the altar-stone of time in flame,
 Consumes the form, but clothes the soul for heaven.

Wherefore, dear child, live in the soul of things;
 There is thy home; thence is thy place of birth;
 So to the parent sun all flame upsprings;
 While earthy things but gravitate to earth.

From *Aurora*, by A. A.

Correspondence.

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

INSTANTANEOUS POETRY.

SIR,—As many very striking verses are now being written through the hand of Miss Showers, and as she is rapidly developing into a medium for a different class of manifestations, I beg you will be so kind as to publish the following lines. They indicate a peculiar phase of spiritual control, are for the most part at variance with her own religious opinions, and offer a direct contradiction to the statement that strong physical manifestations are only obtained by media who are controlled by an unintellectual and low order of spirits.* The verses are given off instantaneously, without a

* We believe that "John King," who gives this poetry, has given no physical manifestations, and has from the first asked Mrs. Showers to send away the chief spirit who produces them.—Ed.

moment's thought, in answer to questions; and this subject is worthy of attention, because I have never heard of another similar instance. My experience of mediums is, however, necessarily limited as I see such wonderful and varying phenomena constantly in my own house that I never care to seek them elsewhere.

The following poem was delivered in a trance state. The control was at first accompanied by symptoms of suffering, which gradually disappeared. The medium rose slowly and with difficulty to a standing position, the countenance became transfigured, the voice trembled a little at first, but ultimately became firm, impressive, solemn.

There's a path—it is smooth, it is slippery,
And dark with the blackness of night,
And poor sinners who follow go blindly,
For they know not the beauty of sight.

'Tis a path that to follow bewilders,
More deep its intricacies grow;
For no light glimmers far in the distance,
Nay, nothing but sorrow and woe.

There's a den—in it demons are howling
Fiendish howls, for their malice is great,
And they jeer at the lost ones' impatience
To enter the infernal gate.

And the tempters have urged and are urging
The weak and the frail from their rest;
But they shun all the good and the noble,
For they know *them* the Saviour has blest.

But the blind ones proceed, all unconscious
Of the terrors for them laid in store,
Not dreaming they've parted with mercy,
To find it again never more.

I have told thee of sin and of sorrow,
I have hinted at something far worse;
I implore thee to pray, lest to-morrow
Should send thee a terrible curse.

A curse which thy prayers cannot banish,
A curse which is ever the same,
A curse which I know will not vanish,
A curse both in deed and in name.

Now, is it not better to worship
What we feel is divine and sublime?
And should we not turn to religion?
For that is the ladder to climb.

And we know, too, where glory awaits us,
We who stand on the far border land;
And we know 'tis the Saviour who'll greet us
With His fair and His shadowy band.

"John," I asked, "is your name really King?"

Yes, King is my name, and with kingly power
Will I watch by thy side through the dreariest hour.

Another time he "wrote," on seeing me somewhat depressed and desponding—

Does thy heart feel sad and weary?
Does thy journey grow too dreary?
Turn to Him who watches all,
He'll not let the sufferer fall.

"There are so many difficulties and perplexities in Spiritualism, John," I said, "still I feel certain that it conveys a firm hope of another life. Is it not so?"

Ho who has seen the sufferer die,
Has helped to close his glassy eye,
Has heard his voice in accents soft,
Implore his spirit to soar aloft—
Can he forget what he has seen?
Does he not know what all must mean?
His friend is happier far than he,
And sorrow for him no more can be.

Still, death remains a terrible, an inscrutable mystery.

Death, to the loved ones who linger behind,
Thine is a sorrow that bows all mankind;
Ah, 'tis a suffering, and worthy the name
When it breaks the sore heart with its agonised pain.
And thou, too, hast felt it, and suffered alone,
For friendship is nothing wherewith to atone;
For remorse, when consigning thy son to the clay,
Thou durst not e'en murmur, "To God will I pray."

Can you tell me what the remorse was about?

It is not I, child, who can comprehend thee,
But 'tis the Great God—'tis He who doth send me;
He bids me watch o'er thee, and keep thee from wrong,
For He knows the sweet cadence I have in my song.

Is the Catholic religion the true one?

Think'st thou it possible He can be bought
By the false doctrines that priests have taught?
In bygone years He hold his sway;
'Tis o'er—the Church rules strong to-day.

The priests are many; their power is strong;
They tell you you must not do this—it is wrong:
And then you listen, but seldom seek
To find out where their point is weak.
But God, the merciful, looks down in anger
As He marks your deplorable languor;
Were He to speak, I'm sure He would say,
"Be free, and worship Me in your own way."

Do you know anything about the devil? Can you tell me about my son?

In a bright star, ah me, how fair,
Thy son with God doth dwell;
He bids me watch o'er thee with care,
And knows thou farest well."

Is he happy?

Happy! In that hallowed spot
Can he be otherwise?
Wilt thou not pray to share his lot?
Is it not paradise?

Will you ever bring him as you promised?

Ask not, for time alone will show
That which, just now, thou may'st not know.

Did he die a Christian? I am anxious to know.

He died believing in God's word,
And angels gathered near and heard.

Would you advise us to embrace the faith of the Church again?

Nay, do not let thy reason bow
Before the Church's proud array;
It might be well for thee e'en now,
But ere thou doest it—wait and pray.

Prayer is of much avail then?

Pray with a fervour firm and strong—
Pray that thou may'st not be led to do wrong:
Pray to be guided by God's blessed hand;
Yea, thou hast only to ask and command.

With this counsel, Sir, which I recommend all who are in trouble and affliction to follow, I conclude for the present.

FREDERICA SHOWERS.

TESTS.

SIR,—The proposed crucial glass-shade-pencil-test seems to recommend a general suspension of the conclusions, arrived at by the laborious experiments of Messrs. Crookes, Wallace, and others, until the final signature of the pencil puts a seal to them. But there is another £50 note in Paris, deposited by a truth-seeking Englishman to be picked at by a number-reading clairvoyant. After these feats are performed the mediums may be permitted to be free from the suspicion of being conjurers, and many a respectable family will be relieved from the painful anxiety, caused by their now sheltering dangerous swindlers among their own members, babies included. Still some work is left to be done. I have a friend who will not give in, until, holding both hands of the medium, his great grandmother passes from the other side through a wall two feet thick. In vain I argue that she, living in spheres of higher intelligence, may possibly not like to descend to regions where such tests are required; nay, that even the separation from her relative may form an essential part of her happiness. He insists obstinately on his request. The pencil-test in question, however, ought to settle all doubts, after all, especially if it would, after writing in the presence of witnesses, finish up with a little lively ballet dancing. Then the pencil and glass shade should be placed in a shroud in the British Association, and pilgrimages uniting all shades of belief, inaugurated to pay homage to the wonderful relic!

Manchester, Oct. 15, 1875.

CHRISTIAN REIMERS.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA AND CONJURORS.

SIR,—Having read a letter written by W. A. Dixon in your paper of October 8th, headed "Spiritual Phenomena and Conjurers," I beg to state that I attended Dr. Lynn's *seances* in Hastings myself, and with a Mr. Neile stepped on to the stage to try and find out the *modus operandi* by which the various tests were accomplished. First the medium's hands were tied firmly behind his back by myself and two other gentlemen with what is termed a "reef knot," and by means of a piece of stout rope; another gentleman tied two more knots on top of that. I then tied the other hand behind his back with what is called a "running bolin," and then tied three more knots on the top of that, so that it was impossible for the so-called medium to untie them while his hands were thus behind his back. I then tied one of his legs to the chair; another gentleman tied the other. Two bells were placed behind the screen; the curtain was then drawn, and in one moment we saw a hand over the top of the screen and the bell ringing at the same time, and as the curtain was drawn the bells were dropping. The medium was in the same position as when he first started. On examining the knots they were the same as we tied them. I then said to Dr. Lynn that the medium had passed his hand over his head. He replied that I might

take two handkerchiefs and bind his arms to the chair. I did so. An iron ring was given me to examine; it was perfectly sound, and I marked the ring with my knife; it was placed on the medium's head, and in a second it was on his arm and not one knot touched. The curtain was then closed and the ring thrown over. We examined the knots again, and they were still the same. The chair used was one taken from the auditorium. While the other gentlemen were examining the ring I placed a small piece of paper between the medium's hands and the rope, by which means I could tell if he moved them. If he had moved, the paper would have dropped to the floor. The next test was taking his vest off. We were asked by Dr. Lynn to tie the button-holes of his coat together with a piece of list; we did so, and then sealed the knots, and tied another piece of rope around his body. The curtain was closed, and he took off his vest in one second. The curtain opened and not one seal broken, and the little piece of paper in the same place; the coat was also removed from the medium's back, so that we could examine the vest. How to account for all this puts me in a fog. Is it really Spiritualism or trickery? If a trick it is the best I have ever witnessed. My only excuse for intruding on your valuable space is that I may hear more about the facts. J. W. WHITE.

Pilot Inn, 15, St. Andrew's-road, Hastings, Oct. 17th, 1875.

THE VOCATION OF THE SPIRITUALIST.

SIR,—Such is the title of a lecture to be delivered at Islington Assembly Rooms, Liverpool, next Sunday evening, by Dr. Hitchman, and surely of all subjects it is the most deeply interesting for that class of thinkers who occupy themselves with the religious aspect of Spiritualism.

What is the vocation of the Spiritualist? Verily, methinks the question involves so much, that a daring hand, and a soaring mind are required to deal worthily with it. Our friend Dr. Hitchman possesses both, and if he succeeds in impressing on the Spiritualists of the Liverpool Psychological Society the responsibility of their position, morally and religiously, he will have achieved a great work.

What is the vocation of the true Spiritualist? To me it seems that ever and always he should aspire, even if he fail in attaining it, to that state pointed at by the greatest Spiritualist, when he said, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect"—to sink every lesser object in the one great aim, the spread of truth; but greater even than this, for it involves all the rest—should not the Spiritualist adopt also this divine precept of our immortal poet—

"To thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

How many, or rather, how few, perhaps, live by these rules of purity, none can tell excepting those denizens of the other world, some of whom are always near us, and who behold us not as we seem, but as we are, and to whom it is given to see the secret motive underlying every word and deed. Methinks that it is the vocation of the Spiritualist to have ever before him the things which he knows to be facts, but which the outside world, not having yet received the truth as the Spiritualist has received it, but dimly guesses at.

Again, to recollect ever that the purity of the thoughts and the motives are now building the spiritual home of each one, are now fashioning the spiritual body of the future life, which will be beautiful or the reverse in exact accordance, not with the seeming life as it has appeared to the world, but with the hidden life from within.

The theme of the Spiritualist's vocation is a lofty one, and leads in its elaboration to many other thoughts than can be dealt with now. That our lecturer may be inspired to press home to his hearers the importance to themselves and to the world of their vocation, is the earnest wish of
E. L. S. N.
Liverpool, Oct 16th, 1875.

"AURORA."

DEAR SIR,—I have not yet seen in your valuable journal any notice of the exquisite volume of poems, entitled *Aurora*, recently published by Messrs. King and Co. A volume so truly spiritual in teaching, and—whether acknowledged as such or no—so full of spirit inspiration, should be in the hands of all Spiritualists.

An appreciative review of this book, written by Dr. Theobald, appears in the *Nonconformist* of October 13th. I fear you could not find space for the whole, therefore I forward you the following extracts, by the perusal of which your readers may form some idea of the treasure now within their grasp. F. J. THEOBALD.

Hastings.

"With this unpretending title we are introduced to one of the most remarkable volumes of poetry we have met with for some time. It is the work apparently of two authors, who sign their poems respectively A. A. and A. M.; and, we believe, we are not mistaken in identifying them with the son of a poet who died some years ago, and the daughter of a pair who are still living and have been well known by their literary and poetical writings for more than a generation. There is one spirit common to these two contributors. Both are fond of dwelling on the hidden meaning of

things—the mystic influences and forces that underlie common life—the strange, fantastic visions of dream-life—the higher life that is dawning now, and is awaiting fuller development in future generations. The opening and closing poems are both entitled *Aurora*, and are both by A. A., and the bright, prophetic spirit of eager expectation which finds glowing and rapturous expression in these two poems is to some extent the key-note of the volume, and is the inspiration which lights up other themes, and touches them with a warm and attractive radiance. . . .

"Most of these poems will not disclose their wealth of meaning to a hasty and unsympathetic glance. Some are exceedingly difficult to interpret, and we are not always sure that we can find the key that unlocks them. But they are poems which one can linger over with a certain sense of exhilaration, as one sees definite ideal shapes slowly loom into distinctness as we patiently watch them. Thus gazing, the luminous mist that envelops them gradually changes from a cloud which hides the thought into a glorious and resplendent canopy that crowns and adorns it. Poetry has a charter to venture into that dim and bedded region which science is equally justified in ignoring, because it has no latitude or longitude, and cannot be mapped in distinct outline. Yet it is absolutely true that no one of us, however prosaic, can be faithful to his own inner life unless he too has a retreat which the vulture's eye hath not seen, where he moves and converses with strange, weird essences that his practical reason can give no account of, and which consequently remain locked up as a sacred secret within his own bosom. When the poet visits this mystic region, and seeks to fix and arrest its phantasmal shapes by use of language that is partly illusive, partly symbolic, often audacious and unprecedented, he will only be understood by those whose experience can supply a key to interpret his words. What is so delicate, refined, and abstruse, can only be approximately uttered in language—and that language must be essentially poetry, whether it takes the form of verse or not. The poems before us dwell very much amidst what Lord Lytton expressively called the *half-seen*, and any one who reads them carefully, and with that reverence that any deep and full nature has a right to command, will find much that immediately meets the best experiences of his inner life, and may reasonably hope that what is at first dim will become luminous as his nature expands and his self-knowledge ripens. A symbolic utterance may remain an unsolved mystery for years, till a sudden flash of perception illuminates it, and the mystery vanishes at once and for ever. Readers of *Aurora*, while finding much that is immediately available for use and culture, may lay up a store of these sphinx-like sayings, which will enrich the mind even before they are completely grasped, and become, each of them, a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, as their secrets are successively disclosed when life's progress brings us abreast of them."

Provincial News.

PORTSMOUTH.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL CURIOSITY—A SPLENDID RING TEST.

The Rev. Thomas Colley, curate of Portsmouth, in continuation of his narrative of last week, writes as follows:—

"I must not omit to notice other tests which were afforded the other day at dinner table. Dr. Monck was, in the process of natural deglutition, suddenly controlled, and gave a characteristic message to one of the ladies, purporting to come from her late husband. That this was the case was rendered conclusive by various communications then rapped out, for his name, and place of death, and number of the house, and name of street were given (19, Hertford-street, Coventry), all of which were correct, none of which were known to the medium, and some of which were unknown to myself. The peculiar name, also, of a suburban part of the city where the lady lived after her husband's death was given, in this case verbally by Dr. Monck. His utterance was suddenly controlled, and he was forced to say 'the Butts.' 'Why you were not . . . in the Butts.' He could not understand the allusion, for, being semi-conscious when the statement was made through him he thought the peculiar name of the district indicated had reference to the garden water-butts; and touching the truth and aptitude and pertinence of the assertion made I can testify, and do solemnly declare that Dr. Monck could have had no knowledge whatever regarding the private matter in question.

The intelligence that this wrought through the medium, and which was assumed to be the spirit of the father of one of the ladies, gave other communications—to wit, his trade and calling in this life, the name of a Manchester firm with which he transacted business, the street in which the warehouse was situate, the christian name and surname of the proprietor, the speciality of his manufacture. Moreover the name of a brother of this Manchester merchant was given. "John also" was spelt out by way of supplement to what had previously transpired; and, in a way difficult to describe, the manifesting intelligence or spirit-friend wanted us to remember, and successfully brought to our minds the fact that he had transacted business not only with the one first-named, but with the brother *John also*.

"Thus during dinner was this intelligence or invisible spirit-friend

with us as one of ourselves, taking part in the conversation, and giving us tests and messages of the most important and convincing nature, both by raps and the medium's controlled utterance. He addressed his daughter in a pet name, spelt as he was wont to spell it, which was the unusual way, and manifested a knowledge of the most secret matters of the family that bewildered us. Now these were arcana utterly beyond the possibility of Dr. Monck having the remotest perception of, who clandestinely heard more than he felt at liberty to tell the ladies, but which he afterwards confided to me, the whole of which I knew to be true.

"But out of the many marvels that transpire in the presence of Dr. Monck, perhaps none are more scientifically interesting than one I witnessed the other evening. Dr. Monck threw down on the table an ordinary white handkerchief, and in view of all, in a good light, this was seen to rise and fall as though some animate object were beneath it. We, with others, were requested to place our hands upon it, and felt a throbbing substance there, which after a time seemed to melt away. Dr. Monck then placed his hands upon it for a moment, and this appeared to restore the power that moved the handkerchief, and the pulsations beneath it grew strong again. The medium then asked me to hold my hand over his hand, which was held about three inches from, that is over, the handkerchief, and this considerably increased the motive power. An after occurrence called our attention to the fact that it was the left hand in both cases that was thus used, for as I chanced during this experiment to hold my right hand over Dr. Monck's left, we perceived a sudden diminution of power. Following up the inquiry in the direction thus suggested, we made a pile of left hands over the handkerchief, with the space of about two inches between each hand. This psychic force inflated the handkerchief to such an extent that it rose as if filled with gas, and actually left the table, and hung for a moment in suspension an inch or so above it. I then substituted my right hand for the left, and down fell the handkerchief, the dexter power of one hand apparently overcoming the sinister power of several. This was observed repeatedly, and various experiments were tried that seemed to show that an attractive force attended our left hand, and a repellent power the right. So a circle of left hands was now made round the rim of a tambourine, about two inches above it, and, in a short space, so strong was the attractive power upon the instrument that it rose from the table bodily, and floated as if on water.

"The latest wonder we have had is the ring test. This in various forms has been afforded at nearly every sitting with Dr. Monck. But the special marvel of this sort happened on Wednesday last. The circle was composed altogether of scientific gentlemen. I had in my possession a mahogany curtain ring, that would not pass over my hand, and as Dr. Monck's hand is larger than mine, I was sure, and have since had proof, that it would not go over his. Yet at this moment it is on Dr. Monck's wrist, and will have to be sawn off. A gentleman of practical and scientific knowledge, and large experience in mechanics, filling an important post under government, held the medium's left hand, and another gentleman held Dr. Monck's right hand. The first-named gentleman had the ring in his keeping, holding his hand upon it as it lay on the table, while at the time the medium's hand was resting on his. Then instantly, as the light was turned down, the left hand of the one was grasped by the right hand of the other. Without losing contact for a second, and ere another moment had passed, the ring was on Dr. Monck's wrist. In the process of the mystery, the medium whispered to the gentleman referred to, and said he clairaudiently heard his control say, "I am going to do what (so-and-so) could never do;" indicating, with a peculiar test in the term used, a gentleman of high scientific position under Government, who was sitting opposite. Dr. Monck was in ignorance as to the meaning of the term employed, which the gentleman spoken to took pains to hide, lest the other should take offence. The ring was then inspected. I have had it for some five months, and first procured it for the purposes for which it has now been used, only that I had hoped to be the wearer of it under the same extraordinary conditions. I therefore know every mark upon it, and am assured it was never out of my possession or off the table for a moment. A surgeon has in the presence of three of us examined it, and the medium's hand and wrist; has tried to take it off, but cannot, and says it can only be done—if it is not sawn off—by putting Dr. Monck under chloroform, and using other surgical means that would take time to effect, and even then he is doubtful whether he should not hurt the hand in the process. So Dr. Monck still wears the ring."

ACCRINGTON.

LECTURE AT THE PEEL INSTITUTE.

ACCORDING to previous announcement in the local papers Mr. J. Coates delivered a lecture on "Spiritualism: Why I like it," in reply to the Rev. Mr. Ashcroft, a local preacher, whose remarks on the subject of Spiritualism are not of the most flattering description. Mr. Coates said that his public statements in connection therewith were free from much foundation in fact, although it is quite possible there may be some accurate information in some things, he said; for it would be almost impossible for a man to talk for two hours steadily without his observations possessing a little reliability. Mr. Ashcroft asserted that Spiritualism is pretentious

and bombastic; it is frivolous and ridiculous; it is unscriptural and anti-Christian; it is grossly immoral and blasphemous, and no man of any standing in science, philosophy, or religion would have anything to do with it. It was a frightful delusion, the hearts of men becoming desperately wicked and led away by seducing spirits in these latter days; he himself would not have anything to do with these deeds of darkness, and earnestly advised his hearers, as they valued their eternal happiness and the salvation of their souls, to have nothing to do with it. Mr. Coates added that he did not forget in this remarkable tirade to attack the alleged flight of Dr. Monck, and some of the sayings of the guides of Mrs. Tappan, about comets and the light towers on the planet Venus during the period of her transit. These seemed to be the principal items of Mr. Ashcroft's lecture on "Spiritualism: Why I object to it."

The presence of Mr. Ashcroft at the lecture by Mr. Coates was respectfully invited, and he or any able opponent challenged, but he did not put in an appearance. Mr. Coates dealt with the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Running rapidly down the changing scenes of time, glancing at the various opinions of the great thinkers in all ages, as well as the pent-up throbbings and aspirations of the soul of man everywhere—at the shrines of Buddha, of Brahma; also in Nature's amphitheatre where the red man adores the Great Spirit and looks forward to a happy transition to the hunting grounds of life. He said that in this our Christian land are thousands who ask the question, but get no answer. Ask the Church, she cannot answer; spiritual gifts have departed from her, wrapped up as she is in ritual and ceremony, fighting within and without over beliefs fossilised, and dead creeds. The inquirer, he said, must seek elsewhere. He goes to the man of science, but he cannot answer, because he has not commenced to delve into the realms of mind. Unfortunately, for this reason, he sometimes assumes more than his physical facts warrant, by declaring man not to be a living spirit, and God a figure of speech, immortality a figment of a diseased brain, or a relic of superstition—an exploded dream of the past. Spiritualism, said the lecturer, does not can answer the question, beyond the shadow of a doubt. The naturalist demands proof—it gives it; the man of lofty ideal looks for superior teaching to that found in the churches, based on the dead past, not sufficient for the living present—it gives it. It truly becomes all things to all men that it may win some. After answering several objections and questions contained in Mr. Ashcroft's lecture, and demonstrating the efficiency of Spiritualism in its modern phase to answer the great question of the nineteenth century—If a man die shall he live again?—Mr. Coates said that was why he liked it.

An invitation was given by the chairman to any one who felt disposed to ask questions. Several were put and answered. The meeting passed off pleasantly; perfect order seemed to reign. Dr. Brown ably occupied the chair. Mr. Meredith read the Scriptures, and kindly assisted in leading the singing. Mr. Spencer T. Hall, the mesmerist, of Sherwood Forest, was present.

NORTH SHIELDS.

THERE are a few Spiritualists here, and, in fact, some are to be found all along the banks of the Tyne. Spiritualism is beginning to show itself. In Walker and Jarrow there are circles. Mr. Robson, of North Shields, is an active member of the Newcastle society, and a few weeks ago he took a number of his workmen to a special *seance* with Mrs. Petty, since which they have formed a circle to investigate for themselves, but did not get anything to their satisfaction. Mr. Robson then induced Mrs. Rhodes to attend as a developing medium on Wednesday evening, October 13th, on which occasion two of the members showed signs of mediumship, and they obtained the ordinary table movements even while Mrs. Rhodes was away from the table. Mr. Rhodes was controlled, and by impersonation was made to show one of the sitters his right arm, which for the time being was useless; the gentleman present recognised it at once as a test from a son of his in the spirit world, who had a broken arm, the position and attitude being identical. It is needless to add that the medium had no knowledge of the matter whatever. Mr. Lambelle, of South Shields, the new trance medium, is announced to address the members of the Newcastle society on Sunday evening next.

NEWCASTLE.

M. AKSAKOF has had several special *seances* with the Petty family. He returned to London on Tuesday night, and has since had a *seance* with Mrs. Marshall, the right medium for the St. Petersburg committee.

SEANCE AT WEIRS COURT.—The usual Tuesday evening dark circle was held last week at the Society's Rooms, when about six-and-thirty members were present, including our Russian visitor, M. Aksakof. As soon as Miss Wood was entranced by "Pokey," the latter became very inquisitive with the illustrious stranger, made humorous observations about his personal appearance, and promised that if he was a "good boy" she would try and materialise herself on another occasion if he attended. The manifestations were of a physical nature, and of the ordinary power and rapidity. The singing of the well-known verses, "Ring the bell, watchman," was accompanied by the spirits ringing the bells in remarkably good time, and with effect.

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