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No. 338.—(VOL. XIV.—No. 7.)

LONDON: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1879.

Published Weekly; Price Twopence.

Contents.

Organisation among Spiritualists	73
The Doctrine of the Mystics	73
The Psychological Review	74
Private Seances	75
Where is Mrs. Tranter?—Deposition of Mr. Hudson	76
Spiritual Manifestations in Cape Town	77
In Memoriam. (Poetry)	78
Correspondence:—The "Bloody Sweat"—The Religious Aspects of Spiritualism—Spiritualism in Texas—Boehme and St. Martin—The Power of the Will—Spiritualism in the East	79
The British National Association of Spiritualists:—Meeting of the Council—"Protest"	82
On Religion. By Alexander Calder, President of the British National Association of Spiritualists	84
Spiritualism in Dalston	84
Paragraphs:—The Miracle of La Salette, 78; Spiritualism in India	83

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The Spiritualist Newspaper.

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

No. 338.—VOLUME FOURTEEN; NUMBER SEVEN.

LONDON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14th, 1879.

ORGANISATION AMONG SPIRITUALISTS.

IN 1873, it was resolved to form a national organisation of Spiritualists in Great Britain. This was done at a meeting at Liverpool, to which everybody had been invited by means of advertisements, circulars, and special letters to well-known men. Thus was the standard raised—"Friendly union among Spiritualists." Fierce attempts were made to kill the organisation, more especially by the press, but the workers fought their way, and succeeded in planting a useful central establishment in London, and now and then in doing some public work in addition, more especially the founding of fortnightly meetings to consider public questions relating to Spiritualism.

If nine or ten efficient men, experienced in the responsibilities of public life, had formed the managing body, it would have been well, but that course was impracticable; the objection would have been raised—"They are ten or twelve persons setting themselves up to govern the movement." Hence it was necessary at starting to have a large ruling body, and it was composed partly of well known workers, and partly of Spiritualists who had made no mark in the movement, but who were elected on the Council simply because some friend proposed them. In a large heterogeneous body so constituted there must of necessity be differences of opinion as to the way in which the public work of Spiritualism should be carried on, and it was sometimes the case that absentee members of Council, but whose names were a strong guarantee to the public, would come in at one meeting, to undo some of the work which had been executed by some of those members of the Council who attended more regularly. This uncomfortable and time-wasting system is apparently not likely to continue. Mr. C. C. Massey points out, in another column, that the Council is too large. There is a growing feeling abroad that Spiritualists had better group themselves where they will be in harmony.

The higher the type of men, the greater is their capacity for efficient organisation, and any movement which cannot organise at all, stands self-condemned, so far as its position in the scale of civilisation is concerned. Therefore, it is pleasing to see that even so much headway has been made in Spiritualism, as has already been achieved.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MYSTICS.

BEFORE the life and the works of Madame Guyon can be read with understanding and profit, it will be necessary to have a clear and simple idea of the doctrine of the Mystics. For many, blaspheming what they do not comprehend, regard it as a mass of obscure terms and strange thoughts, which have no foundation but in the heated imagination of weak minds or of visionary women.

2. *To love God with all our heart; to pray without ceasing; to bear our cross daily:* this is the essence of Christian morality, and at the same time the substance of Mystic Theology. The Gospel sets before us love as the fulfilling of the law; constant prayer and self-denial as the two means of attaining it.

3. God loves Himself sovereignly and uniquely, because He is sovereignly and uniquely worthy of love. He loves all His creatures according as they partake more or less of His Divine perfections. The perfection of God is the rule of His love. Now, the most perfect rule of finite wills is, without doubt, that of the infinite will. People may dispute, refine, subtilise as much as they will, upon the different motives of love, but they will never dare to deny that the supreme rule of love is *to love God for Himself, and everything else for Him.*

It is an unchangeable truth founded upon the idea we have of the Infinite Being. It is the eternal and universal religion

of all intelligences. It is a duty to which the creature is bound in all times, and in all places, even on the supposition that he is to be destroyed after death, or that God will never vouchsafe him any other knowledge of his infinite perfection than what we have during this life.

The hope of the beatific vision is doubtless a Divine virtue, a legitimate motive of love, a source of infinite consolations, a strong resource in all the temptations and miseries of our exile; but it is not pure love. The Scripture distinguishes these two virtues. We must never confound them, nor, while recommending pure love, must we disregard chastened hope.

If we judge of man's capacity by what he does, and not by what he should do, we are led to imagine that man is incapable of this perfect love. Men usually act on a principle of self-love, more or less refined; and of our own power we cannot act otherwise. As man is not the true light which lightens his spirit, so he is not the cause of the perfect love which should animate his will. A power higher than man must act without ceasing in him; to raise him above himself and to make him love according to the unchangeable law of love.

4. The first means of arriving at this pure love is prayer; and the most perfect prayer consists in passively receiving the impression of God, who leads us without ceasing towards Himself. The Church does not attribute any other activity to man in grace than that of *consenting to or dissenting from the Divine action* which excites and moves him. GOD ALONE is the motive power of the soul; but it can always yield to or resist the Divine operation, and its most complete concurrence consists in allowing God to act in it.

The will, excited and broken by grace, must at first exert itself, and form a multitude of desires and distinct acts in order to turn away from the creature and towards God; but after having been long accustomed to these frequent returnings, the habit is gradually contracted of living continually in the Divine presence in a more simple, intimate, and uniform manner. The soul acts, but God alone is the principle of its action. He alone moves it, impels it, animates it, urges it; but it follows freely that which draws it. There is neither inaction nor forced co-operation, but free concurrence in the Divine action. The more the soul delivers itself up, the stronger and more vigorous does the action become, like the motion of bodies, which increases in proportion as they approach their centre.

This is the prayer of the Gospel, which Madame Guyon calls after the Mystics—*passive prayer, the prayer of silence, of repose, &c.* It consists neither in the multitude of words, nor in the effort of thought, nor in the enthusiasm of a heated imagination; but in the communion of the heart with God, of which the simplest are capable. It is not we that pray; it is the Holy Ghost who prays in us, who groans, who desires, who asks for us what we know not how to ask for ourselves. In the language of Holy Scripture, all is the action of God in man, to which man adds nothing but simple consent or non-resistance.

5. In proportion as man is thus united with God by prayer, he must be separated from the creature and from himself by Renunciation, which is the second means of attaining Divine union. The one is a necessary consequence of the other.

This self-denial of the Gospel does not consist in austerities which surpass human power, destroy health, and cause us to lead an out-of-the-way life. Jesus Christ practised none of these things. His life was ordinary as regards the outside; but inwardly it was entirely Divine. The renunciation which he sets before us leads us not only to flee from false pleasures, to combat our gross passions, to be contented with the mere necessities of our condition, but to cut off all

frivolous amusements, all mental activities, all delights of the imagination, which serve merely to dissipate us, and to keep us in the creaturely taste. The self-denial of the Gospel forbids us the least glance at the creature out of God, the least pleasure contrary to his order, the least return to a vain satisfaction with oneself. It causes us to love the lowest place, though we are born in grandeur, silence, and internal solitude amidst the noise and the crowd, poorness of spirit, and disengagement when surrounded by riches. Nor is this all. Self-denial leads us to degrade the ME—this idol so dear to man—to receive with joy whatever crucifies it, to bear the imperfections of others with patience and gentleness, our own defects with humility and peace, the purifying rigour of Divine justice with trust and compliance. Here is a universal penitence, a martyrdom of love, a mortification, or, rather, a very death which extends to the sense, to the mind, to the heart, to the whole man, and which leaves no hiding-place for the disorderly love of the creature, or of self.

6. In this constant prayer, and in this Gospel self-denial, consist all the mysteries of the inner life.

The first operation of God is sensible, agreeable, and full of pleasures. It leads the soul to act, to fight, to exercise itself in all the works of active virtue, and of external modification, in order to disengage itself from foreign objects. It is the *foundation* of the interior life, without which all spirituality should be inspected. We then feel in prayer a sweet unction and a savoury delight. We mortify ourselves with a noble and masculine vigour. The soul sees its virtue, is sustained by its work, is charmed by its courage.

7. Afterwards God begins in it another operation in which it is entirely passive, in which it co-operates only by its trust. The *me* is now to be destroyed, and God only can do this. The soul no longer fights without; God attacks it from within to cause it to die to itself. He shows it its own depths; He shows it all the convolutions of its self-love; He unveils all its mysteries. It sees itself; it is horrified at what it sees. Everything in it rises against itself; it no longer finds comfort in its old fervour or its own righteousness, all the impurities of which it now sees. It gives way in exhaustion, it remains faithful without seeing its fidelity. Nothing remains to it but the firm determination to suffer a thousand deaths rather than displease God. Still, it does not always possess the consolation of perceiving this determination in itself. The action of God becoming less trammelled, more intimate, and more central, seems more and more to disappear, but it is not less real. As that pure and universal light which lightens, penetrates, and moves all bodies, is itself imperceptible to our coarse eyes, or as the self-love which is unceasingly active in the natural man is not always to be distinguished, so the WORD, who is the life, the light, and the love of all intelligences, acts in the *supernatural man*, very really, though in an insensible manner.

8. God's design in thus acting is to hide his operation from our self-love, which having lost the taste for impure pleasures, for sensible objects, and gross passions, would establish a new empire over our very virtues, would take delight in its own excellence, and would corrupt the divine action by an idolatry of itself, all the more dangerous as it is more refined. The man would not sin perhaps *as a man*, but he would sin *as a demon* by pride and vain satisfaction. For this reason the most advanced states of spiritual life are full of temptations, troubles, privations, dryness, uncertainty, misery, obscurity, desolation and interior suffering, until the empire of self-love is destroyed, and the reign of God, who is within us, is established in the soul.

9. Then disperses that riotous crowd of vague thoughts and turbulent passions which puts the natural man in a constant frenzy. The mind is delivered from all its useless activities, the will from all its disturbing agitations, and the whole soul is brought into a peace, into an emptiness, into a divine solitude, in which the senses, and the imagination, the man's own mind, and his own will keep silence, to listen to the Eternal Wisdom, which speaks to the heart not by visions, nor by revelations, nor by sublime knowledge, nor by subtle speculations, but a language far more perfect and less liable to illusion, viz., the allness of God, and the nothingness of the creature, and the

profound homage which the nothing owes to the ALL. Then the man no longer lives of his own life, but JESUS CHRIST lives in him. He is born again and becomes a child, without a mind and will of its own.

The light of the WORD becomes his only light, and the love of the HOLY SPIRIT his only love. His life is hid with JESUS CHRIST in GOD, and this new life takes the place of the old life of Adam. This is the regeneration spoken of in the Gospel.

There are the three states of the spiritual life which the Mystics call *Purgative*, *Illuminative*, and *Unitive*, and which Madame Guyon calls active, passive, and Divine; that is, the renunciation of gross vices, the destruction of self-love, and the re-establishment of the Divine order by pure love.

10. We have given the substance of all this lady's experiences. Such was the character of her devotion. Such are the truths which fill her writings. Eternal truths founded upon sovereign reason—truths which supreme wisdom would teach equally to all right minds and all humble hearts, supposing there were no revelation; truths known from the commencement of the world to the holy patriarchs; truths drawn from the Gospel, and which would be discovered there if the seeker knew the gift of GOD, and if he resembled those *babes* and *simple ones* to whom GOD's mysteries are made known; truths which are found more or less developed in the writings of the most holy fathers of antiquity, in S. Ignatius, in S. Clement of Alexandria, in S. Basil, in S. Ambrose, in S. John Chrysostom, in S. Augustine, &c.; truths with which the great hermits have been fed in the most terrible deserts; truths with which the great founders of orders, like S. Francis of Assisi, S. Bernard, S. Theresa, the B. John of the Cross, S. Francis of Sales have in various ages renewed the fall of the Church; truths which have induced an infinite number of virgins and monks to bury themselves alive in solitude in order to give themselves up to those purifying actions of Divinity which the noise of the world and the care of terrestrial matters only too often disturb; truths taught by the most enlightened doctors of the Church, such as Albert the Great, S. Thomas, S. Bonaventure, Grenade, Rodrigues, Sylvius, Cardinal Bona, Gerson, and many others; truths, in fine, whose tradition is universal and unchangeable in all times and all places.—*Translated by A. Vacher from an old French book.*

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW.

THE first article in the January number of the *Psychological Review* is by Mr. Epes Sargent, and is entitled "Is Immortality a Delusion?" It lays bare the sophistries of Mr. Leslie Stephen, published in a late number of the *Fortnightly Review*. "Sister Celeste," the next article, depicts a character of that type of mystical Spiritualism, of gentle, kindly piety and liberal catholic saintliness, with which "J. C. E." always seems to be in sympathy. "Spiritual Philosophy in Relation to Death and Spirit Life," by John Page Hopps, is followed by "Inspiration No. II. The Work of the Symbol," by Mrs. De Morgan. This is the continuation of an article on Symbolism in a previous number, of which it is mainly a fuller explanation and amplification. "Reminiscences of the Late George Thompson," by his married daughter, Mrs. Nosworthy, is an attractive and interesting article. George Thompson was not only an earnest philanthropist and reformer, but one of the most gifted and eloquent men of the generation now passing away. He was not only a Spiritualist for more than a quarter of a century, but was so deeply interested in Spiritualism that his daughter records it to have been the most prominent topic of conversation with him. She also relates that his friend and co-worker, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, shared many of his experiences, and fully entertained his convictions on this subject. His profound assurance of the truth of Spiritualism was solemn and unwavering to the end. His last public appearance was on the platform with the well-known trance speaker, Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan, previous to her departure for the United States. "Zetaethes, the Truth Seeker," is a story which the writer tells us began and finished itself. It came from his pen, but not from his mind. It is a story, and something more, reminding one of the Vision of

Mirza, by the side of which it might not unworthily be placed as a fit companion. It is both interesting in itself and as a psychological curiosity, though probably compositions so produced are far more frequent than the general reader would imagine. "The Mound Builders," by Mr. William Denton, is an example of the wonderful power of psychometry, and it is remarkable that this strange gift, which enables its possessor to occasionally read with accuracy the history of the past, should not have been investigated more extensively to eliminate the sources of error. An article on "Montanism," and some correspondence, concludes the number.

In conclusion we quote from the *Review* Mrs. Nosworthy's description of the last days of George Thompson:—

"Last winter the various periodicals of the spiritual press, William White's *Life and Writings of Swedenborg*, and the Christian literature of the day, were all carefully read and often underlined by him. But as the flowers of spring appeared a change came over him; memory failed, and a dreamy state of the brain was evident. As summer advanced the change was more marked; and as the autumn leaves fell, I could see that my father's summons was approaching, that his transition was very near, and I determined never to leave him whilst his earth life continued; but I knew not how very near the end was when I gave him a promise to this effect in the quietude of his study where I sat reading from Lizzie Doten's *Poems of the Inner Life*. Paralysis had by this time so affected his powers of articulation that he was often speechless, and could rarely utter more than a very short sentence. Once after reading by his bedside, when he had retired to rest (as was my custom), from the New Testament, I chose John xiv., a favourite chapter of mine, in which these words occur, 'Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you,' and keeping silent for awhile, I said (not expecting an answer, for my sister and I talked to him without looking for replies), 'Papa, you are going away from us, but will you try and come again and give us tokens of your presence?' To my surprise he raised himself up with unnatural strength, and pronounced these words firmly and powerfully, 'I will come back and manifest myself if it be possible.' Another time he said, 'It is my opinion that the communion between this and the next world will become more and more intimate.' The sacred scenes between George Thompson and his children at parting will be passed by here; suffice it to say that amongst the few isolated sentences he was able to utter during the last weeks of earthly life, the two recorded were the most earnestly expressed, and the most distinctly pronounced.

"Not many days after, he was dressed and seated at his table for the last time, books and papers being, as usual, placed around him, but he took but little notice of them, and drooped so much that I supported his head for a long time on my shoulder. I saw that day that there was a great accession of feebleness, and observed, 'Dear papa, are you growing very weary, and longing to go home?' A speaking upward glance of affirmation was his reply, and he retired that evening to realise the promise on which his soul had dwelt lovingly for years, 'He giveth His beloved sleep.' He never spoke to us again, but lay tranquilly sleeping for two entire days, at the end of which his transition took place in such beauty, that I can truly apply to it some lines I find copied in his own writing in a book of extracts.

How wonderful is death!
The waker of the soul!
His eyes are full of sleep,
His heart is full of love,
His touch is full of peace.
Gently the languid motion
Of every pulse subsides,
Gliding from out the body he has worn,
Without a jar to break
The mystic strain of harmony that winds
With sense-dissolving music through the soul.
We are at liberty!

"My father was occasionally moved to throw off little impromptu poems; I offer one here which he wrote on the death of an infant at sea. It is dated 1834, and shows me that at that distant date, forty-four years ago, the tendency to Spiritualism lay at his heart.

I saw a smiling infant boy
With beauty's bloom upon his cheek.
I saw disease that bloom destroy;
I saw him wither in a week.

I saw the tear of anguish start
Into a watchful mother's eye.
I marked the workings of her heart
As the dread hour of death drew nigh.

And when the spark of life had fled,
And friends bereaved were left to weep,
I saw the unconscious waves receive
A guiltless tenant to the deep.

I thought an angel tracked the clay
To its unfathomed ocean cell;
Then mounting to the realms of day,
Brought back the tidings, "All is well."

Supremely blest and safely free
The spirit of the child abides;
Though his frail mortal dust may be
Absorbed beneath the rolling tides.

And from his radiant home on high
He sends to those who mourn on earth
This message: 'Let your tears be dry,
And celebrate my nobler birth.

And if in heaven you wish to claim
A son or brother lost below,
Have faith in Christ's redeeming name,
And you shall my salvation know.'

GEORGE THOMPSON.

"In the album where I found the foregoing verses, I also find these addressed to 'George Thompson by Wm. Lloyd Garrison,' under which my father writes, 'Applicable to no one I know so much as to

THE WRITER,'

whose language I can truly adopt towards himself.

Friend of mankind! for thee I fondly cherish
The exuberance of a brother's glowing love;
And never in my memory shall perish
Thy name or worth, so time shall truly prove.
Thy spirit is more gentle than a dove,
Yet hath an angel's energy and scope;
Its flight is towering as the heaven above,
And with the outstretched earth doth bravely cope.
Thou standest on an eminence so high,
All nations congregate around its base;
There with a kindling soul and piercing eye,
The wrongs and sufferings of thy race dost trace.
Thy country is THE WORLD, thou know'st no other,
And every man in every clime thy Brother.

PRIVATE SEANCES.

LAST Wednesday night, at a *séance* held at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, Mr. C. E. Williams was the medium. During the *séance*, which took place in the dark, the hands of Mr. Williams were held by Mrs. Wiseman, of 1, Orme-square, Bayswater, on the one side, and by Mr. Annesley Mayne, of the Junior Carlton Club, on the other. The other sitters were Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, Mr. Serjeant Cox, Miss Mattie Houghton, Mrs. Paul, Mrs. Ramsay, and Mr. Harrison.

The chief test the public would care to know about was that a materialised hand took the hand of Mr. Serjeant Cox, drawing him upwards, until he was obliged to stand with his feet on the top of the table to follow it. He then placed his hand against the ceiling, and asked the materialised hand to tap it while there. After a delay of a minute or two this was done; the sitters on either side of the medium testified that at that moment they were holding his hands.

A chair was afterwards placed on the table so noiselessly that nobody knew that it was there till a light was struck.

At a *séance* at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's on the preceding Wednesday, Lady X. (who does not wish her name to be published), Colonel Hopkinson, and Mrs. Trübner were present in addition. Mrs. Paul was absent. The spirit "Peter" showed himself well, over the table, robed in white, and with a phosphorescent-like light in his hands, by which his palpably living features were seen. Lady X. and Mrs. Ramsay testified at the time that they were then and there holding both the hands of Mr. Williams.

A materialised hand drew the hand of Mr. Cox so high in the air that he was obliged to kneel on the table to follow it.

An attempt to manifest was made by a spirit who gave a name known to one of the sitters, but without much success. Three of the sitters grew icy cold during the attempt, showing that vitality was drawn from them in some way.

WHERE IS MRS. TRANTER?

On the 15th of January, 1872, the late Mr. Guppy printed the following communication in *The Spiritualist* about the imprisonment for five years of Mrs. Tranter, for what may or may not have been true clairvoyance. At that time Spiritualism was a smaller and weaker movement than it is now, or the case would have been thoroughly investigated. Is it too late to do so now? It will be noticed that on one occasion lost goods are said to have been recovered through Mrs. Tranter's instrumentality.

About the 1st of November, I read the following in the *Daily Telegraph*:—

WITCHCRAFT AT NEWBURY.—[BY TELEGRAPH.]—Yesterday, the Recorder for Newbury (Mr. Dowdeswell) sentenced a woman named Tranter to five years' penal servitude, for having obtained a sum of money by false pretences from Emma Gregory, a woman living in a wild district in North Hants. Gregory and another woman lost some goods while returning from Reading market a fortnight ago, and, having heard of the power said to be possessed by the prisoner, who was called the "cunning woman of Newbury," went to consult her. Prisoner told them she could recover the lost goods. She went through an absurd ceremony, and pretended to bring the image of the man who had stolen the things in a glass which she produced. She said she ruled the stars, and if the nights were fine she would be able to get the lost things back the sooner. The women paid her a shilling each, and promised to give her more when the property was restored. The prisoner has been convicted on six or seven occasions for offences of a like nature. The Recorder said that such practices as those by which the prisoner had gained a livelihood for many years past were a scandal to society.

At first it appeared to me an illusion. Again and again I read it. "Five years' penal servitude!" An elderly woman, no doubt. I imagined a kind of Mrs. Gamp, taken from her comfortable home at a period of life, perhaps, when failing health demands every comfort. I began to reflect on the principles of punishment. Moses says, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Offences, I reasoned, are either against the person, property, or the interests of society; for instance, a man steals a sheep, the farmer is injured forty shillings, but society is injured, because if sheep-stealing were not punished, no man could keep sheep, and we could have no mutton. If one of those fellows who have lately received forty lashes breaks into a house, half murders the inhabitants, and steals property, there is a threefold offence—personal injury, robbery of goods, and an offence to the nation; neither life nor property would be secure, and therefore such crime must be prevented by the Government at any expense of severity. Forgery, also, though it be but for £1, and does not bodily damage anyone, would produce such baneful effects in society, that no means would be too strong if necessary to prevent it. But, I reflected, to warrant punishment one of three things must occur—damage to the person, robbery or damage of property, or damage to the nation.

Now this woman had told fortunes, or given advice, true or false, about recovery of stolen goods. A servant-maid, or a carriage lady, goes to her, consults her, and pays a shilling or half a crown. She pretends to rule the stars. Well, the Pope pretends to infallibility. However, these parties are not injured in person, and if they preferred spending the shilling or half a crown with her, or in a play-house, or in a gin-shop, what grounds for punishment exist? I determined I would go to Newbury and inquire, and, not knowing anyone there, I took the liberty of requesting Mr. Serjeant Cox to give me such certificate of respectability as would entitle me to a hearing either from the Clerk of the Court or any solicitor. Further, I asked my lawyer for an extract of the laws on witchcraft, which I here copy:—

WITCHCRAFT.—Person pretending to exercise or use any kind of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration, or undertaking to tell fortunes, or pretending, from his skill or knowledge in any occult or crafty science, to discover where or in what manner any goods or chattels supposed to have been stolen or lost may be found. Offence.—Misdemeanour.

STATUTE OR AUTHORITY.—9 George II., cap. 5, sec. 4. Triable at the Sessions. Bail is compulsory. Punishment—Imprisonment for a year, and sureties for good behaviour; or indictable, as for false pretences. Costs of prosecution not allowed.

FALSE PRETENCES.—24 and 25 Vic., cap. 96, sec. 88. Penal servitude for five years, or imprisonment not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour.

Meanwhile I fell very ill with inflammation of the lungs, which prevented my quitting the house—meanwhile, I could not get Mrs. Tranter out of my head.

If, thought I, the punishment is just, of course the life of an old woman or a thousand old women is of no consequence. But if she has done no harm to anybody, nor robbed anybody, then is the punishment of life-long imprisonment with labour, torn from all her old cronies, deprived of all the little comforts of old age—it's not a punishment; for if in the eyes of enlightened men, conversant with social science, this woman has done nothing worthy of any punishment whatever, then has a great crime been committed by the machine called "law." I do not blame Recorder Dowdeswell—he is a benefactor to his country. When General Grant was made President of the United States, he said to Congress: "The laws you enact I shall enforce, for I know of no way so effectual to procure the abolition of a bad law as the stern enforcement of it." That President Grant threw out another way of light the other day; he said that the way to advance a nation is to improve the condition of the working classes.

As my health did not permit me to go, and the sun would not permit my neighbour Hudson to photograph, I asked him to run down to Newbury, furnishing him with Serjeant Cox's letter to me, and my authority to him, and the following is his report on the case, and also a letter from Mr. Slocock, the banker:—

DEPOSITION OF MR. HUDSON.

January 6th.—Went to Newbury by the 10.15 train, and called upon Mr. Matthews, hairdresser. He told me had known Mrs. Tranter for twenty years; never heard anything against her excepting telling fortunes; said she was a sort of monthly nurse, and always willing to attend any poor person with fever, free of charge: might accept payment if the people could afford it. Said that not only he, but every one in the town, thought the punishment very severe: ought to have been two years at the outside, because she had eighteen months before.

I then went to the "Dolphin" Inn; saw the landlord, Mr. Staley, and Mrs. Staley, who said they had seen her about for a number of years; had never heard anything against her with the exception of this fortune telling. They said she was a sober, hard-working woman; was a midwife, but also went to nurse any poor persons. They directed me to Mr. Brown, builder. He said he had known Mrs. Tranter from a child; had never known anything against her; she had been his neighbour for very many years; was not given to liquor; always a respectable-looking woman; heard that she told fortunes with two glasses; he said "a sort of globes;" he had not seen them; said his opinion was that the persons who called were two detectives who implicated her; said he heard that she often had visitors, and that he had heard that carriage people called on her; said he had been on the jury previously when she had eighteen months in prison for the same thing; said that the Recorder had said on that occasion that if ever that woman came before him again he would make an example of her.

I then found Tranter, the husband, a bricklayer's labourer, who works for Mr. Brown. He said many persons called on her, some who kept their carriage, but he was never allowed in the room, nor did he know what fee or charge she made, but thinks she took anything people chose to give her; he said she had not money enough to employ counsel; he said her age was 58; that she had a son by a former marriage with a Mr. Giles, who is now in the police force in London, and a daughter who is in an asylum. He said his wife was in Reading Gaol, and could not be seen by any one till the end of three months, when she would be removed; he said that he and she would feel most thankful to any one who could procure a mitigation of sentence.

I called subsequently on Mr. Matthews, the hairdresser, who gave me *The Newbury Weekly News*, wherein is the following letter from Mr. Slocock, the banker, of Newbury:—

"THE CASE OF MARIA GILES, ALIAS TRANTER.

"To the Editor of the 'Newbury Weekly News.'

"SIR,—An impression seems to have got abroad that the sentence passed by the Recorder of Newbury at his last Quarter Sessions, on Maria Giles, alias Tranter, was unreasonably severe, and a petition was, I believe, presented to the Home Secretary for remission of the punishment, as being out of proportion to the offence. He has, however, I am informed, declined to interfere, thereby confirming, in his opinion, the justice of the sentence. Perhaps your readers are not aware that she had been convicted and sentenced to various periods of imprisonment on seven previous occasions, and on the three last to eighteen months, twelve months, and eighteen months, for similar offences, and might fairly be considered as incorrigible. I think, therefore, in justice to the Recorder, this should be known. I know that it was not without deep consideration that he felt it his duty to pass so severe a sentence. He was staying with me at the time, and had the depositions sent up to him to read, and it seemed to him so clear, after the many imprisonments the prisoner had undergone, that there was little or no hope of reformation, and he therefore determined, if she were found guilty, to pass such a sentence as would prevent the credulous being victimised by her for at all events a considerable time to come—a determination in which I confess I quite coincided. I have purposely abstained from any remark while the case was before the Home Secretary, though I could not at all agree in the propriety of the petition.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

"CHARLES S. SLOCOCK.

"Donnington, December 18, 1871.

The universal feeling of every person I spoke with at Newbury was that Mrs. Tranter was a sober, well-conducted woman, ever ready to assist sick persons—not being deterred by any sickness or fever. As regards the fortune-telling, &c., Mrs. Brian said that she believed that on one occasion the lost things had been recovered through her instrumentality. People seemed to think that she could not have got much money by it, because she could not afford to employ counsel.

I have placed the case in the most unfavourable light. Seven times has this woman been convicted, otherwise a most exemplary woman. But again, I ask, supposing in every street in London there was a cunning woman who told fortunes and gave advice about stolen property, where is the injury to person or property warranting any punishment whatever? As to witchcraft, if witches and wizards are punishable, then all the committee of the Dialectical Society are punishable.

Reading Serjeant Cox's able pamphlet entitled *Spiritualism Answered by Science*, I see at the end an advertisement of books by the same author of a work, *The Principles of Punishment*. I sent for it to-day, wishing to see how far the learned Serjeant's ideas would justify the probably life-long imprisonment, with hard labour, of Mrs. Tranter, but I am told the book will not be out for some days. My own opinion is, referring to Mr. Slocock's letter, that Mr. Bruce is not the person to go to—it's Mr. Law.

The first thing we have to find out is whether, in the opinion of highly-educated men, there was any ground for imprisoning this woman at all. If there were not, the law ought not to exist a single hour longer than would suffice to blot it out from the statute-book as a stain on the national character. And after that would come the consideration what damages should be awarded to Mrs. Tranter.

As you will not give me any more room, I defer further remarks to your next number, by which time I shall have opinions which may have greater weight than mine.

SAMUEL GUPPY.

Jan. 10, 1872.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS IN CAPE TOWN.

(To the Editor of "The Spiritualist.")

SIR,—Thinking you might consider the undermentioned account of a *séance*, held in Cape Town, worthy of publication, I have much pleasure in furnishing full particulars.

The *séance*, as will be seen, was quite an improvised one. Mr. W. Eglinton, the well-known medium, two ladies (one a medium), and myself were engaged in a rubber at whist at my house, when, as usual, "Joey," one of Mr. Eglinton's controls, made himself known by raps on the polished drawing-room floor, some distance from the medium. As we played on we kept up a lively conversation with "Joey," who seemed to enjoy selecting, in some mysterious manner, all the best cards for his medium, although I repeatedly endeavoured to thwart him. We had played about an hour, when an arm-chair, placed about five feet from the table, and known as "Joey's seat," was heard to move. We closely watched it, and found it was first moved one side forward, then the other, as if some one was pulling it near the table. Shortly afterwards the influence seemed to have gained sufficient power, and a direct forward movement was given to the chair, and eventually it was run up close to the table. We put it back again, but "Joey" emphatically demanded his seat at the table by again moving it into position. We were naturally delighted with our good friend "Joey's" presence. Shortly afterwards, as we were taking some refreshment, the table began to rock and bump about in a most delighted manner. Mr. Eglinton suggested that we should sit for further manifestations. "Joey" hammered out his approval of this, and we cleared for action. We lowered the light a little—which had hitherto been burning full light—the table was at once taken up, turned over, and evidently handled with the greatest ease by the controls. A fancy cover on one of the chairs at some distance from the table was taken off and thrown in my face, our chairs were grasped and pulled about, and each sitter was touched with hands of different strength and size. Two large volumes of *Punch* were taken up in the air, and one dropped flat on Mr. Eglinton's head and the other on my hands; the grips we frequently got were particularly strong, and I believe the hands were larger than those of any mortal. Cushions

were drawn from our chairs and thrown at us; a large chair was laid across the table, and, at our request, again taken off with ease and placed in a distant part of the room. Indeed, our friends appeared to be having a grand field day of it. The table was now drawn nearer the piano, and also nearer the light, which was still burning sufficiently for us to distinguish each other plainly. I distinctly saw a coated arm, and large muscular hand stretched out from the medium's body, and grasp the piano leg and draw it nearer the table; so plain was this that I did not think of materialisation until I felt the medium's hand on my own. I again and again saw the same hand and arm draw the piano until it was quite close to me; then it flashed across me that the arm which completely intercepted the light of the lamp was not mortal. Mr. Eglinton also saw this arm and hand raised behind the piano; the instrument now began to play, and during the evening "Joey," with single notes, played four or five different tunes. They were correctly played throughout.

After we received the signal to break up, and had turned on the full light, what a chaos the room presented: portable couches were turned up and doubled into their smallest dimensions; cushions, cards, &c., &c., strewed the floor. We got things ship-shape again, and in the light my pipe was visibly brought across the room to me through mid-air, and another object thrown at someone else.

Shortly afterwards, going upstairs to view some birds, a pack of cards, which I had left downstairs, was thrown violently against the wall opposite one of the ladies. It was "Joey" again at work. Upon picking up the cards, fifteen were found to be missing. The cards, be it remembered, were coloured pink on the backs. We again went below, but did not discover them.

Mr. Eglinton and myself now set out to escort our lady visitor home. We had got about one hundred yards from the house when something white was hurled from above down upon us. It was part of another pack of cards, with white backs. A strong south-east wind was blowing at this time, and we had a hurried scramble for the cards. We decided to go back and ascertain if we had all. We found the remainder of the pack in my drawing-room, and they completed the number wanting. We again started. Let me say I wore a patrol cap, Mr. Eglinton an ordinary hard felt hat; or, rather, he tried to wear one, for our lively friend "Joey" occasionally sent it flying off into the street. I felt it advisable myself to come to anchor and hold on, as I wondered where the power would end. Upon reaching the home of our lady friend, a black object shot swiftly past us, and fell some yards in front of us. I cautiously picked up that object, and found it was my Glengarry cap, which I know was hanging in the entrance hall as we passed through. At this moment Mr. Eglinton's hat again went off on a cruise into the street.

Bidding adieu to our charge, I accompanied Mr. Eglinton home. No further events took place, and I returned to my home delighted with the manifestations we had received. They were manifestations of a very high physical nature, and long may our good friends prove to the world that, though these manifestations may be of little value in themselves, they are invaluable as the stepping-stones in the instruction of honest seekers after truth in this wonderful science.

I may mention that the missing cards (coloured pink) were found at the medium's dwelling-place, early the following morning, before he had risen; they were neatly arranged, leaning against a book-case, with two Jacks in a prominent position. M.

Cape Town, South Africa.

(To the Editor of "The Spiritualist.")

SIR,—Knowing that the columns of your valuable paper are ever open to information and suggestions that may further the great cause of Spiritualism, I venture to send you herewith particulars of an experiment which I am ambitious enough to hope may in some degree assist in strengthening the hands of those working for our cause.

The diagram of the instrument I send you is simply a partially suspended planchette.

My idea was to construct an instrument that could be intelligently controlled without mortal contact; after several

plans I decided upon constructing the one now referred to. A few words will explain its construction.

The whole instrument is made of light, dry, and close-grained cedar wood, except the small steel pin upon which the planchette revolves, the little porcelain cup in which the point works, and three ivory wheels. These wheels, it must be understood, do not bear the full weight of the instrument; they are simply intended to take only just enough weight to prevent the disc from being influenced by any draught of air, and also to prevent the revolutions of the instrument from passing any required stopping point, which a perfectly suspended disc would do. Too much care cannot be bestowed upon this part of the arrangement.

The support is simply a square, thin piece of wood with a light perpendicular rod, at the top of which is fixed a steel pin to receive the partial weight of the planchette. Underneath the point at which the three suspenders meet is fixed a small piece of wood containing a porcelain cup. This is intended to enable the point of the pivot to work smoothly. Any similar contrivance would doubtless answer as well. The support is then passed through the opening in the centre of the disc, and the planchette hung in its place. The top of the disc and outer edges of the suspenders are painted a clean white. This enables investigators to see the instrument clearly in a very subdued light. A pointer is fixed on the disc. As seen in the sketch the planchette is arranged with a view to get the under surface of the disc as near the table as possible. The object of this will readily be understood by Spiritualistic students.

Round the planchette, printed on the table if possible, should be marked the alphabet, and any other signs and words that may be deemed necessary.

With the sketch of the instrument I give the exact size of each part, and shall be glad to furnish any further information required.

I cannot too strongly advise mediums and seekers after truth to construct, or have constructed, one of these simple contrivances, and to sit for special development in this branch of the boundless study of spirit communion.

Mr. W. Eglinton, who arrived here from England some months ago, gave many splendid *séances*, at which I was a frequent sitter. Being myself a Spiritualist, I could extend to him the hand of a brother in the cause, and as I have ever found him a man of honour and a gentleman, I have in him an unshadowed confidence. To him I unfolded the ideas connected with my little invention, and he readily and kindly offered to sit with me in my own house in order to fully test its merits. The result of our investigations I now give as briefly as possible. The sitters numbered six, three ladies and three gentlemen, including the medium. We sat in a subdued light, but quite sufficient to plainly distinguish the planchette. We had sat about fifteen minutes when the disc began to revolve. At first it appeared as if there was some difficulty in moving it, but afterwards it was swung rapidly round, stopping dead at any required position; answers were rapped out upon it, and a series of telegraphic messages was frequently and rapidly given by taps with the partly balanced disc, but which we unfortunately were not expert enough to read off. The alphabet placed round the planchette could not clearly be seen, but the words affixed on the table, "Yes" and "No," were repeatedly used by the controls, who had full power to move it, and did move it in every possible and required direction. I must not omit to say we all sat under test conditions, with hands all joined. I believe that after a few *séances* specially devoted to this experiment, it would be controlled and worked in full light of day, at least through the mediumship of such a one as Mr. W. Eglinton. I may mention that in the concluding manifestations the planchette was moved bodily across the table. The circle could not be considered a favourable one. It was not a truly harmonious one, therefore one that did not fairly assist the controls, who are ever ready to assist us in our pursuit after knowledge and instruction in this glorious cause.

CRUSADER.

Cape Town, December, 1878.

Miss Kislingbury will leave the National Association of Spiritualists on the 25th of this month.

IN MEMORIAM.

R. T. H.

Born at Milton-on-the-Hudson, November 26, 1806; died at New York, January 18, 1879.

I.

He is not dead—he sleeps; and he shall wake—
Wake to new joy, new triumph, and new power;
Wake to receive his birthright and his dower.
Soon will the everlasting morning break,
Soon will the mists and clouds his soul forsake,
And there, mid leafy glade and sunny bower,
Shall live each tree and bloom each sweet, bright flower
He loved on earth, his heart's home to re-make.
We weep; but when for him that sun shall rise,
We shall forget our grief and earth-born pain,
And watch the dawn with glad expectant eyes
That shall restore our dead to life again:
As come bright birds along the summer skies,
As bloom bright flowers after the summer's rain.

II.

I sing of joy, dear Father! all for thee.
No sob of mine shall mar the angels' song;
No tear of mine shall do thy spirit wrong.
Did'st thou not know of love's eternity?
Death hath but crowned thee, Death hath set thee free!
Thou art thyself—*thyself*, freed, great and strong,
With all the powers which to thy soul belong,
And visions which no earthly eye can see.
We knew thy truth; we knew thy heart of gold,
Rich with its wealth of love for all mankind;
Rich with its treasures of life manifold—
Those hidden treasures hard to seek and find.
In vain they tell me that that heart is cold;
In vain, in vain, that those dear eyes are blind!

III.

We know "He giveth his beloved sleep,"
And that for them a place hath been prepared.
We who with thee our earthly love have shared
Know well that Heavenly Love thy soul will keep.
Rest, rest, beloved one, in sweet slumber deep—
The sleep of earth is not to be compared
With heavenly rest which hath thy spirit snared,
And called thee hence as shepherd calls his sheep.
The pang of parting from thee lingers yet,
The joy of meeting thee is yet to be;
Forgive me if mine eyes be sometimes wet,
Forgive me if these eyes be slow to see.
When thou dost come we shall all grief forget,
For love, and life, and joy will come with thee!

IV.

Thou hast not left us. No! Christ did not leave
His loved ones lonely; surely He hath said
"Where two or three in me are gathered
Together, there am I, ye need not grieve,
The Comforter shall come, ye shall retrieve
Your losses; yea, and shall receive your dead."
And thou who did'st in His own footsteps tread
Shalt come again, we cannot but believe.
For thee we know that death hath had no sting,
No victory the grave, and blest art thou!
Therefore for thee no dirges will we sing,
But only lay red roses on thy brow;
And all sad shows of grief aside we fling—
Thou can'st not leave us, thou art with us *now*!

ELLA DIETZ.

Feb. 6, 1879.

THE MIRACLE OF LA SALETTE.—A clerical organ at Toulouse announces that the Pope has pronounced against the alleged miracle of La Salette. All representations, therefore, of the appearance of the Virgin in peasant costume to two children are no longer to be objects of adoration, but are to be removed and destroyed. It appears that Mélanie Giraud, one of the heroines of the affair, had lived for some years on the coast near Naples, and had professed to receive revelations and visions, which found many believers. The Pope lately summoned her to Rome, subjected her to a severe cross-examination, and at last extracted an admission that she and her brother had played a concocted rôle. The latter was at one time a Papal Zouave, and addicted to drunkenness; but even in that condition always told the same story as to the apparition, which was considered an additional proof of its genuineness.

Correspondence.

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

THE "BLOODY SWEAT."

SIR,—Alford, in his comment on Luke xxii. 44, says: "The intention of the Evangelist seems clearly to be to convey the idea that the sweat was (not *fell* like, but *was*) like drops of blood?—i.e., coloured with blood—for so I understand the *as it were*, as just distinguishing the drops highly coloured with blood from pure blood. Aristotle, speaking of certain morbid states of the blood, says, 'When the blood is watery grievous disease ensues; for it becomes serous and milky to such an extent that some have been known to perspire a bloody sweat.' We must not forget in asking on what testimony this rests, that the marks of such drops would be visible after the termination of the agony. An interesting example of a sweat of blood under circumstances of strong terror, accompanied by loss of speech, is cited in the *Medical Gazette* for December, 1848. It occurred in the case of certain Norwegian sailors in a tremendous storm."

I have somewhere seen this phenomenon mentioned as being well-known, and I think with cases given, but cannot now remember in what work the passage is to be found.

W. WHITEAR.

High-street, Hornsey, Feb. 10th, 1879.

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—Dr. Carter Blake being a Roman Catholic, Mr. G. Wiese cannot expect him to take any other view of Spiritualism; but I cannot agree with Mr. Wiese that "science creates conceit." I have found other persons quite as conceited as instructed ones, and have no doubt but that Christ would have been very glad of learned followers, like Paul, could He have got them, except that He was not Himself learned, though intuitively gifted, no doubt. As for morals, we do not see that either modern or any ancient Spiritualism has much to do with morals. Morality, like conceit and other natural tendencies, is very much a constitutional question, and very much independent of religious faith and spiritisms, modern or ancient. Certainly, the idea of being saved on account of belief and confession, and not on account of goodness and good works, does not look as if the Spiritualism of Rome had any special and very direct moral bearing; whilst Buddhism and the doctrines of Confucius are systems of morals without any religious bearings.

H. G. A.

SIR,—Is not the argument as to whether Spiritualism be or be not a religion based entirely on the fact that those who take the one side or the other look upon it from opposite standpoints? Emerson speaks of man as being "that central point of which everything may be affirmed or denied," and something like this is true of Spiritualism. It offers exciting mysteries to those who, above all things, like to be astonished; and, to the thoughtful, physical facts or mental phenomena for investigation and study—is merely a scientific puzzle, or the foundation of a religion, as we take it and make it. We all know that a living faith cannot be constructed from facts, as we build a church with bricks; nor can it be made up of intellectual convictions regarding these facts. It is "the evidence of things not seen." A man may be thoroughly convinced of the reality of both physical and mental phenomena, as witnessed at our *séances*, and no more build up a religion upon these as a foundation than he could upon any other scientific or psychological studies in which he might be engaged. And if we go a step further, and say that those only are Spiritualists who believe in the evidence afforded by these phenomena of a life to come, we exclude many who, without having arrived at the same conclusions, are as earnest seekers as ourselves after whatever truth may be hidden under these mysterious and perplexing facts; for are we not all, as yet, investigators only, puzzled and doubtful still on many points, and more so in some respects than we were when we knew less about these strange things? Even should we thus restrict the term Spiritualist to those who believe the phenomena to be produced by disembodied spirits, we should find some who so believe, and yet regard the power as emanating from a diabolical source, and therefore dangerous and to be avoided. And even this difference may be regarded as one of degree only, since so very many of the most faithful among us feel that Swedenborg's warning against careless and indiscriminate intercourse with returning spirits as dangerous was not without reason. We have Christians who believe in Christ as one with God, and others who regard Him as mere man, whose teachings should be followed only because they are intrinsically good and true. Christians who believe in the atonement as essential to salvation, and others who consider it a false and mischievous doctrine. Those who believe in eternal hell, and those who have faith in the law of progression, here and hereafter, for all God's creatures. While as to true religion, or morality, we cannot anywhere find greater diversity, or a sadder deficiency than exists among those known as a Christian people. We cannot draw a dividing line, and say this man is not properly a Christian or a Spiritualist, because he does not believe what *we* are sure that Christ taught, or that Spiritualism teaches; and such an one is not to be so designated because he does not, in our opinion, make his belief a true religion and the guide of his actions. So it is with every distinctive name which embraces large numbers of people. We cannot fit it to every individual, nor make all what we think that, claiming or accepting it, they ought to be. We have to bear one another's burdens in this, as in many other ways; and as Christianity is held answerable by some unbelievers for the evil which exists among so-called Christians, so will Spiritualism be held responsible, by the thoughtless and ignorant, for all that is done and taught in its name. And, after all, these things, being inevitable, should not trouble us, except as we must always be troubled by what seems to us false and evil. We can only, as individuals, strive to teach, not only in words

but by our lives, what we hold to be true and good; and in making Spiritualism, for ourselves, the foundation of a pure and religious life—the rich and well-weeded soil from which the stainless and fragrant lily of faith may spring—we shall be doing our part in purifying it from the evils which cloud its light and darken its fair fame. To save it from being tarnished by sin and vulgarised by ignorance, we cannot do. Nothing can come down into this earthly plane and be kept pure from earthly stain. Spiritualism, too, must be mocked and spit upon, crowned with thorns, and burdened with its heavy cross; and we cannot lift it above what all things high and pure have to suffer in this blind and sinful world, where prophets are stoned and martyrs tortured, and holiest names profaned to vilest uses. What we can do is to be ourselves faithful to the truths so wonderfully revealed by it to us, and to let our light so shine before men that through our good lives, and our wise and charitable words, its teachings may be justified. I think it would do more harm than good to make invidious distinctions and arbitrary boundary lines, by way of distinguishing those who should be called Spiritualists from those who should not. We all know that the faith, which alone, after all, makes Spiritualism a matter of vital import to us, does not depend on what we have witnessed in the way of facts, but on that interior, vitalised belief which is inseparable from the life of him who possesses it. I have seen a faith as beautiful and profound out of the ranks of Spiritualism as within them; and the Indian who kneels to the great spirit, or even the idolater, to whom the graven image is but the visible symbol of an unseen power, may be as truly religious in spirit and aspiration as the most learned divine or the most advanced Spiritualist. The kingdom of faith and of religion is within us; and when we better learn the power of spirit through its potent influence over that which is earthly in ourselves, then shall we gradually become more clear-sighted to see and understand the marvellous revelations of spirit power which now bewilder us; for then we shall better comprehend how will is the one central, all-controlling force, and how all that belongs to the external may be more or less directly moulded by it. We are all, I take it, more blinded by evil and selfish feeling or conceit, narrower and shallower in our views on all spiritual matters, than we can—any one of us—fully appreciate in judging our own opinions and impressions; and since none of us can see more than "a straight staff bent in a pool," we should, because we desire to become, in the highest sense, *Spiritualists*, make generous room for all who would avail themselves of even one feeble and distorted ray of that light which illumines our way, lovingly helping, by patience and a just appreciation, all who need (as we ourselves do) to be lifted higher and purged from prejudice and self-love, before they can rightly see and comprehend what is revealed to eyes and hearts spiritually opened to the perception and reception of great and holy truths.

I confess that one does stand amazed before all the wild theories, the manifold superstitions, and the contradictory assumptions which have gathered themselves together under the banner of Spiritualism! It is as if, again, men had sought to build a tower whose top might reach unto Heaven, saying, "Let us make ourselves a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth"—and, behold! their language is confounded so that they understand not one another's speech, and no name known in the language of any of them can be found by which all will agree to call themselves and one another! Still, I think we are, on the whole, too much troubled about names and opinions, and that nothing would so help us all to a clearer recognition of spiritual truth, nothing so unite us for the doing of good and useful work, as the encouragement and development among us of a more just, kindly, and patient spirit one towards another. If we speak the truth in love, and listen lovingly to the words which are spoken by those who differ with us, we shall find it easier to teach and to learn. We shall be better understood, and shall better understand each other.

It is not the startling diversity of opinion, the palpable blunders made by investigators, nor even the mischievous delusions of some of the brethren that most dismay and discourage us, but the uncharitable and even rancorous spirit manifested by not a few among those of our name and faith, both in America and here, in their discussions and dealings one with another. It is this, more than any other one thing, which needs to be amended. When we bring to bear on our thoughts, feelings, and actions a more just, liberal, and kindly spirit, we shall be less concerned and impeded by differences of opinion which must exist among men and women bound together only by interest in certain phenomena, which to some mean one thing, and to others another. Also by the help of the same considerate and tender charity shall we be better prepared to judge wisely and justly the much-enduring sensitives through whom alone we can receive those revelations we so highly prize. Open to every strong influence, tried, tempted by spirits in and out of the flesh, misjudged and insulted, unable to defend themselves by explanations because they know as little as we do of the powers acting through them, surely they need to be treated with peculiar consideration, if only because, in their case, there is so much to be considered which we do not fully understand. Perhaps the saying of these "undisputed things in such a solemn way" may appear uncalled-for, or even absurd. Let those who read all our best known spiritual papers on both sides the Atlantic judge of that.

The old, simple truths which our mothers taught us are the great truths after all, and those which, in seeking for some new thing, we are most likely to forget or undervalue. Let those of us who are wise enough to come forward as teachers, either in print or by word of mouth, or who stand prominently before the public as advocates and defenders of our faith, remember that "though I speak with the wisdom of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

LOUISA ANDREWS.

SIR,—For those Spiritualists who have not separated from the churches, and for those who probably have no other means of public worship than in the churches, I think the advantages of Spiritualism are, on the whole, set forth fairly enough by one of your valued correspondents, who writes of Spiritualism as not only "A sledge hammer for breaking the skulls of materialistic sceptics," which we have long been taught to believe; but also, "An aid to religion, in enabling us to understand conditions and doctrines of which it gives a reflection: that its progressive spirit spheres have an analogy with purgatorial states; its intercourse with spirits with the Church's communion of saints; its trance conditions prefigure religious ecstasy and inspiration; it throws in our sight a portion of that which we must still, for the greater part, hold by what theologians term faith." I am led to think that if the generality of churches, in return, would consent to take in as much Spiritualism as the above describes, it would do them a vast deal of good; and I must add that I think also they could well, as a rule, accept so much without derogating from their position as followers of the Bible, and which nothing but some single stereotyped dogma, such as everlasting punishment, or vicarious self-esteem, if I may express myself in paradox, that throw dust in their eyes for all other vision, could hinder their acceptance of with orthodox gratitude and joy, since they would then gain by Spiritualism evidence of inestimable benefits which they have hidden from their eyes, though they have it in open leaves in all their houses.

Another of your correspondents—one, indeed, whose teachings few can regard with more respect and admiration than myself—thinks that the writer who defines the advantages of Spiritualism as above, does not expect for Spiritualism anything better than that it should be a crutch to prop up all forms of faith. Still, he acknowledges that these old forms want it badly; so it would be well if we could persuade the followers of those old forms to use this crutch, which on the whole seems a good crutch, for their intellectual and moral progress. It would be short-sighted to forbid our children to bathe before they can swim, and violent transitions sometimes lead to catastrophes. But, after all, what a pabulum have we here for a hungry soul! How few English and Americans are so well fed! And yet, as I said, there is not the least reason why they should not be, without, as I remarked, transition, or in any way a transgression of Bible doctrines.

And, first, surely Spiritualism does enable us to understand conditions and doctrines of which it gives a reflection. Among its multifold reflections it certainly gives a reflection of Jacob's wrestling with an angel materialised as a man. It also gives a reflection of the angel who came materialised to Manoah and his wife—so materialised that they wanted to feed him with the flesh of a kid. The angel, however, refused food, as materialised spirits generally refuse food nowadays. Then the angel, on being asked his name, said it was a secret; that is not uncommon also at the present time. And then we find the angel going up with a flame. And now comes an incident in this most interesting history which is not reflected in the present day. Both Manoah and his wife thought that this materialised angel was God Himself; and there is not a solitary instance of a like nature in Scripture. Manoah was frightened, and thought God was going to kill him. This was not certainly an exalted view of God. But his wife sensibly remarked that the Lord would not have acted and spoken as He did if it was for their harm; and this last sentiment is reflected when Spiritualists refute the devil theory, for instance, by the same line of argument. I leave to the readers to ponder for themselves over the many other cases of materialised spirits spoken of in the Bible, as well as the many other reflections quite unconnected with materialisation; and as regards the hundreds of other reflections which this may recall, I will merely say that it is not now difficult to understand. Now Balaam could have been addressed by an angel, even through the mouth of an ass. We are waiting for greater things; but surely already reflections enough have lighted us up, even identity of phenomena; and it is not impossible but that we may understand conditions as well now, if not better, than they were understood formerly.

Next, we are told that the progressive spirit spheres have an analogy with purgatorial states. Now, one cannot but see how little the majority in England and America learn about such things in the majority of the churches; but surely it is the fault of the shepherds, not of the pasture provided, that they should hide so much provender under their bushels, in order to surfeit us with their nostrum of eternal punishment. As I have before remarked, all the churches are taught about these progressive spirit spheres in the doctrines of paying the last farthing, and the few and many stripes of the Bible. Fortunately Spiritualists, knowing these things to be true through the teachings of spirits, can utilise them without man's authority, and have much that they would be able to teach their teachers in whatever church they may remain. And here let me remark that prayers for the dead imply both progressive spheres and purgatorial states; for to pray for the dead without the belief in their progress and cleansing would be an unmeaning mockery and a cynical anomaly. And none can say that the Litany of the Church of England does not contain, at any rate, a prayer for the dead, and a very significant one, too. Now, this Litany lays down two especial postulates: First, that the Great Spirit, afterwards incarnated in Jesus, was called "God" in the Old Testament; and next, that when incarnated, that same Great Spirit was recognised as the beloved Son of God. And, in this duplex character, He is addressed in this Litany, and to Him is offered up this essential prayer for the dead, "that He will not be angry with the world for ever, but will finally beat down Satan under our feet." That is the feet of the world, of all mankind. Surely this is a prayer for the dead if ever there was one, for it applies to our future state, and to that alone. Most of the prayers of the Liturgy of the Church of England are addressed to the Father, who is recognised as passionless, "without body, parts, or passions;" but this prayer is offered up to one subject to passions; as the God of the Old Testament, subject to anger, jealousy, even fury; and yet to one who has taught us

to moderate our anger: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." We do not ask that; we are willing fully to accept justice, or something less. Moreover, the Litany is addressed to one who, in his position of former guiding spirit of the Jewish nation, gave precedent of changing his decrees: "I said, indeed, that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever; but now the Lord saith, be it far from me." Thus we see that, if even the word translated eternal or for ever should mean never-ending, which so many scholars utterly deny, there is still precedent for even those who stick to what they believe to be the letters, to pray for the recall of the decree, supposing such a decree ever took place. And thus the Litany is fully justified in its strong expression: we pray thee to cancel Thy decree of everlasting punishment, and not to be angry with us for ever; and, finally, to beat down Satan under our feet. How much wiser, how much more just, then, is the Litany than are its expounders in a general way? The early Christians, we all know, prayed for the dead, as is shown not only by tradition, but practically by the tombstones of perhaps all the Christians who were buried in the catacombs of Rome during the early days of persecution; on each of these is a prayer for the dead. Many of these tombstones have been lately exhumed, and can now be seen at Rome in large numbers. So, then, let us always remember that, in the use of the English Litany, we not only pray, like the early Christians, for those who have passed away and will pass away, but also, by this prayer, we acknowledge a belief in progressive spirit spheres and purgatorial states which, by the science of Spiritualism, we know to be actual facts.

Then, again, as your correspondent says, the intercourse with spirits is analogous to the Church's communion of saints. We shall understand this more fully when we remember that Christians generally, in primitive days, were called saints; and thus the communion with any spirit of a deceased Christian friend would be naturally called a communion of saints as well as the communion with higher spirits.

And then, again, how true is your correspondent's further remark, that trance conditions of the present day prefigure, or rather, I should say, are types of the religious ecstasy and inspiration of the Scriptures, often high-flown and erratic enough, but often very much the contrary; while if, in the words of your correspondent, that "Spiritualism throws in our sight a portion of that which we must still, for the greater part, hold by what theologians call faith," we substitute for the words "the greater part," these other words "in some degree," we can see nothing to find fault with in the terms; for surely Spiritualism has not yet said its last word, nor its best; for, like other things here and in the next world, we believe it to be progressive, as we have said before.

And if there is nothing in all the above that the adherents of any form of Christian worship can legitimately find fault with as unscriptural, what is there that any Spiritualist can find fault with as unspiritual or unspiritualistic? And yet how truly catholic is it all! How hopeful for humanity! how just!

What I now desire to show is, that those who worship in the different English churches can have all the benefits I have been writing of without leaving their communion for another, and, when entering the new church, having to confess their belief formally in everlasting punishment for all out of the pale of their new persuasion, who having the opportunity of studying its dogmas neglect that opportunity, or who are not convinced by them, inclusive of their formerly most loved and nearest relatives. Moreover, my object is to demonstrate that we can have all these good things without abjuring our right of private judgment that was attained so hardly in former days, as the gentleman did who lately wrote in the *Times*, that in leaving the church of his fathers for another he exercised private judgment for the last time—his fathers, I say, or let me say his ancestors of the last three or four hundred years—for the sarcasm that we have left the church of our ancestors is also applicable to our Druidical ancestors; or to our savage painted ancestors and their fetish; or to leaving Paganism for Christianity. Such changes may be good or bad, according to circumstances, progressive or otherwise. It is not because some churches cast—far too hastily—aside altogether, certain assertions of Scripture, the great value of which Spiritualism has practically shown us, on account of their belief that another church had abused them, that we should join the latter. It is not because these churches were rendered righteously indignant at this abuse, and consequently shortsighted, that we should forsake them. It is not, I say, because a certain church sold indulgences in purgatory, and nominated the times and seasons of such indulgences, which their Master had told them, just before leaving earth, that "the Father keeps in His own hands," that we should think it our duty to join that church now, which never has abandoned that sale—never has withdrawn the nomination of times and seasons that especial purgatory is to last. What we have to do is, not to deny Scripture truths which speak in behalf of suffering humanity. Above all, our duty is to show ourselves, in all our words and deeds, more charitable, more catholic than the self-styled "Catholic." What we have to do is not to forego our liberty and right of private judgment by delivering ourselves over abjectly to confessions, who often subject men, and especially women, to most trying bondage. Not to yield ourselves up to be "knocked about" and "badgered" in a way that nothing but a strong will to continue Spiritualism at all hazards, and the luck of a malleable or far-seeing confessor could have delivered another of your correspondents from, who proves herself to be not only a charming writer, but an earnest Christian woman, a true Spiritualist, and a Catholic of the Catholics.

SCRUTATOR.

SPIRITUALISM IN TEXAS.

SIR,—In last week's letter I left off at San Antonio, the beautiful and romantic city. I shall continue there a little longer, and tell you of my surprise one day to have a clergyman and his wife call on me. They were near neighbours; he was of the Methodist Church, and they had both become Spiritualists from personal experiences connected with the

death and spirit resurrection of their last and best-loved son. Mr. B. was building a church on the banks of the river, and doing it by voluntary contributions; he said that he would preach true Spiritualism, with Christ the beginning, middle, and end. The poor people loved him much; they would cluster round his verandah on the summer evenings, asking his wife to tell them something of her visions of angel glory, beseeching her to try to see their loved ones who had passed on, but thanks to God were not lost. The earnestness of these people was refreshing. I distributed many of your leaflets, found one or two sensitives, who in that clear and lovely atmosphere will easily develop into clairvoyance and test mediumship. Many of the other families in this neighbourhood were believers or investigators, but all awake to the glorious fact that we never die. The spirit of the place and the people is most conducive to development; they are so helpful, kindly, and hospitable. The balmy air induces repose and passivity; the wants of the body are not so many there as in our cold fogs and gloom; the need to appear well off, therefore "respectable," is not pressing in that climate; neither need they strive for fine clothes, gilding, nor furniture. They live so near to nature that they are rarely sick; doctors do not make fortunes there; so the great difference between us is in climatic conditions after all. *Here*, the red-hot heavy rush and crush after the body's needs stultifies the natural intreadings of spirit. *There*, the spirit demands great things; the body demands inexpensive white clothing, ice water, and fruits.

A mysterious message was sent me one day that a lady and her husband would like to see me. Their names? "Oh, no, they did not care to give names." Well, I laughed, "All right." It was the most interesting visit I had there. Members of the Roman Catholic Church would not have it known they believed in "Ism;" but would I look at the curious drawings the lady did." And she exhibited to me the most lovely little picturesque views, as exquisitely finished in fine pencil drawing, as I ever saw at any picture gallery. That they were the work of a great master I have no doubt, and as I am eminently practical, I advised the lady to test their worth in the money market. Showing the specimen that she gave me to an artist friend of mine in New York, her eyes were gladdened in due time by a cheque, and an order for more. These people had a most laborious life as teachers of dancing, and here was a valuable help to them from the spirit world. The lady told me she did the drawings at night mostly—would be seized with the "whim" to get out of bed and (as her husband said) "scribble." They did not know what to make of the affair; she could not draw, and invariably the views were executed upside down, so she did not even know what were the intentions until she turned the cardboard round, wrong side up. Sometimes one tiny view told four sides of a life history, which would be conveyed by the drape of a head, the pose of a figure, the presence of a child, then waste, ashes, and desolation, all most minute, showing the master's hand, the true genius. This was the most direct spirit control I ever saw, producing immediate and positive results. Had the lady lived near a benevolent Mr. Blackburn, of Manchester, she would be enabled to give to the world new works from the so-called "dead" great masters; but, like more geniuses, she must plod on to the end unknown and unrecognised, because bread and butter, food and shelter must be had. Alas! the laws of medial power are little understood. When the little lady tried to get pictures none came, but every day's needs came with regularity. So at our gates come angels, knocking, with knowledge, but we are not ready yet to accept; and instead of enlightening this material earth with the wonderful gift this lady was endowed with, she continues to wear short skirts and call "right and left, lady's chain, down the middle, set to partners" to the same old tune, on the same old fiddle, until I wondered the monotony did not drive her mad.

In Northern Texas, Sallas particularly, there is a large number of Spiritualists who brought their belief mainly from the Northern States. Of late years crowds of emigrants have gone to settle there, and are making rapid fortunes. At Houston I was invited to lecture, but the weather was too hot. At Galveston I spent my happiest time, bathing in the Gulf Stream at five o'clock in the morning, and being driven along the grand drive on the beach at sunset by a Spiritualist family almost every evening. Too much praise cannot be given to the enterprise and faithfulness of the Spiritualists at Galveston, particularly Mrs. Talbot (medium) and her husband, to whose exertions mainly the city owns a very pretty, well ventilated, and well lighted hall, as well as a *séance* room. Here Mrs. Talbot delivers trance addresses every Sunday evening, with inspirational poems. Her addresses are quite worthy of being set side with Mrs. Cora Tappan's finest orations. On Thursday evenings there is a meeting for discussion.

The press was very favourable to myself there. I lectured from the platform every Thursday to good and sometimes overfilled halls. They also rejoice in a piano and some musical supporters. General F— is the Mr. Blackburn of Galveston, helping mediums, entertaining them at his house, giving his parlours for their *séances*, and never permitting any to want. He is a man of letters, well-known and highly appreciated in New York literary circles: a writer, and one who has made his mark on those "sands of time"—marks never to be blotted out on eternal shores. To his lady mother and friend I was happy to be able to give some very curious tests; they helped materially to make my visit to Galveston a great treat. Owing to Mr. and Mrs. Talbot residing in that city, it will become a grand centre for Spiritualism in a short time, as they have cultivation, intellect, and medial power, combined with a pretty house and good social standing, even amongst the churches. By the way, we were all invited to a grand garden party given by church people, and enjoyed ourselves very much, resisting heavy batteries trying to force us into the lists of "Spiritualism *versus* the Church." We said, "No. We come to talk nonsense and eat ice, and we mean to do it." The principal families called, asking me did I really believe in Spiritualism? One would think we had something to gain by asserting our belief. It is not much wonder our "Ism" flourishes in Galveston,

for the beauty of the city is beyond my pen to describe—roads made of crushed shells, white as snow, lined with the dark green oleander, laden with crimson blossoms, shading beautiful villas with rich gardens in front; the foam-crested waves of the gulf visible along the road; the people all out and about in their balconies, chatting and laughing to each other, exchanging courtesies and loving kindnesses. We who live a shut-up life cannot comprehend this. Is it all climate, or is something due to the mental atmosphere our exclusive English people cultivate from generation to generation?
SARAH PARKER.

22, Hart-street, London, Bloomsbury-square, 2nd Feb., 1879.

BOEHME AND ST. MARTIN.

SIR,—I think no one can be annoyed by the correction of a quite inadvertent error.

The doubts expressed by two of your correspondents as to whether Boehme and St. Martin believed in the historic Christ would be changed by further acquaintance with those writers into the clearest conviction that they did.

Many years careful study of these writers' various works enables me, on this point, to speak confidently.

But the mistake is very intelligible. Boehme endeavoured earnestly to bring his readers away from a superficial professed faith in an historic Saviour to the inner ground of human nature where His redeeming work was effected; on that ground, therefore, and very rarely on His short earthly life, does Boehme concentrate attention.

With St. Martin there was a studied effort to give his theosophical drift as much philosophical disguise as truth allowed. Living in the most troubled time of the first French revolution in Paris, it would probably have endangered both his correspondence and his published works to have admitted the usual terms of religious faith. This precaution is proved by his so frequently using the word "*Repairer*" when he refers to Jesus Christ, *First Cause* when speaking of God, and *virtues* and *spiritual agents* when he means angels.

S. J. PENNY.

The Cottage, Cullompton, February 10th.

THE POWER OF THE WILL.

SIR,—It is an almighty thing, this will, usable to rap heads with apparently, or to break them like the precious balms of the righteous perhaps, or even to remove mountains like Faith. Usable to mend hearts also riven with restlessness, or, with more righteous rending, to mould character, our own or others, to make this dark time a little lighter. For directing it into such channels we might perhaps be slightly more useful, though we never succeed in planting Ben Nevis in Salisbury Plain, or in quite "unveiling Isis." NO MATTER WHO.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE EAST.

SIR,—There is much in the letter of M. Constant, published in your last issue, with which the majority of your readers will doubtless agree; but also, I fear, much which those inclined to theosophy will be unwilling to take on the authority of M. Constant alone. One would imagine that the opinion of a person similarly situated to himself upon theosophy in the East would be of the greatest value; but to my mind that portion of his communication devoted to this subject shows so much prejudice—I almost said animosity—against modern theosophers, that I (merely a student in these matters) feel compelled to hesitate greatly before accepting his *ipse dixit*.

From his own showing, M. Constant is eminently qualified to pronounce judgment, but his remarks are so much at variance with the statements of others (who, I presume, are equally competent to give their opinions), which have been fully reported in your pages during the past year, that I would certainly prefer corroboration before accepting them as true.

Throughout that remarkable work, *Isis Unveiled*, the author refers to the East as being not only the country where the occult sciences may be found practised in their purity, but also the place whence all science and religion originally emanated. And Madame Blavatsky, unlike M. Constant, does not make her assertions upon her own authority alone, but cites a mass of testimony in support of her statements. Indeed, the opinions of these two writers are so utterly opposed to each other, that I cannot help thinking that M. Constant, in penning his merciless letter, has allowed his prejudice against modern Spiritualism and theosophy to warp his judgment.

In connection with the subject of theosophy in the East, perhaps the following extract from St. Martin's *Le Ministère de l'Homme-esprit* (published in 1802, and translated into English by E. B. Penny in 1864) may be of interest:—

"Perhaps the time is not distant when Europeans will look eagerly at things which they now treat with distrust or contempt. Their scientific edifice is not so established as not to have some revolutions to undergo. They are now beginning to recognise in organic bodies what they call *elective attraction*—an expression which will carry them far, notwithstanding the pains they take not to call the truth by its right name.

"The literary wealth of Asia will come to their aid. When they see the treasures which Indian literature begins to open through the "*Asiatic Researches*" of the Calcutta Society; when they have studied the *Mahabarat*—a collection of sixteen epic poems, containing one hundred thousand stanzas on the mythology, religion, morals, and history of the Indians—and the *Upnekhat*, translated by Anquetil, containing extracts from the *Vedas*, &c., they will be struck with the similarity between the opinions of the East and those of the West on the most important subjects.

"In this mine some will seek correspondences of languages in alphabets, inscriptions, and other monuments; others may discover

the grounds of all the fabulous theogonies of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans; and, lastly, others will find remarkable coincidences with the dogmas published within the last centuries by different Spiritualists of Europe, who will never be suspected of having got them from India.

"But while waiting to know more of this theosophic wealth of India, I must admonish my fellow men that it is not in these books, any more than it is in any others, to take them beyond speculative Spiritualism; the radical development of our intimate essence alone can lead us into active spirituality." A. E. M.

Retford, January 29th, 1879.

THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

LAST Tuesday night, at the monthly meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists, Mr. Alexander Calder presided. The other members present were:—Mr. Morell Theobald, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. Stainton-Moses, Miss Houghton, Miss Withall, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. W. Miall, Mr. Walhouse, Mr. Reimers, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. Coffin, Mr. Pearson, Mr. Green, Mr. Withall, Mr. R. Pearce, and Mr. Harrison.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read and confirmed, one new member was elected.

The following resignation of one of the vice-presidents, Mr. C. C. Massey, was then read:—

"4, Harcourt-buildings, Temple, 3rd February, 1879.

"DEAR MISS KISLINGBURY,—I have to request that you will be good enough to convey to the Council, at its next meeting, my respectful resignation of my office of vice-president of the Association, and of my seat on the Council. It is from no loss of interest in what I believe to be the proper objects of the Association that I take this step; but I believe the present number of the Council, which seems to me unduly large, leads unavoidably to its discussions ranging beyond what I conceive to be the necessary and legitimate business of the Association. When I joined the Association I did so for the purpose of making a public profession of faith in discredited facts; and when I subsequently accepted the honour of a seat on the Council, I did not suppose that my doing so would involve, as it has done, participation in debates and discussions not, I think, very profitable or important, and the publication of which I believe to be injurious to the Association.

"In making this explanation, I beg it may be understood that nothing can be further from my intention than to express or imply any disrespect to the Council, or to any individual member of it. I must, on the contrary, accept and deplore any share of responsibility for what I deprecate which may justly attach to myself.—I remain, yours faithfully,

"C. C. MASSEY.

"The Secretary B. N. A. S., 38, Great Russell-street."

Mr. Stainton-Moses said that they all knew how Mr. Massey came publicly forward, with a name and credit to lose, in defence of Dr. Slade. He knew that Mr. Massey's decision to leave the Association was final, and he deeply regretted being separated from him in work. He would move that the resignation be accepted "with deep regret."

This was seconded by Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, and passed unanimously.

The following resignation of another of the vice-presidents, Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, was then read:—

"Monday the 10th.

"DEAR MISS KISLINGBURY,—Will you be so good as give in at to-morrow's Council meeting my resignation of the vice-presidency, and my membership of the British National Association of Spiritualists, as well as of my membership of the General Purposes Committee.—Believe me, yours truly,

"LISETTE MAKDOUGALL GREGORY."

Mr. FitzGerald moved, and Mr. M. J. Walhouse seconded, that Mrs. Gregory's resignation be accepted "with deep regret." This was passed unanimously.

The resignations of two ordinary members were then read and accepted.

Several letters were read and presents acknowledged, after which the decease of Dr. Hallock was announced, and a vote of condolence passed to Mrs. Hallock.

Mr. Stainton-Moses then read the report of the General Purposes Committee, which had been previously issued as a printed circular to the Council, as follows:—

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

British National Association of Spiritualists,

38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C., February 5, 1879.

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday, the 11th instant, at 6.30.

The following recommendations of the General Purposes Committee will be discussed:—

1. That the vacant rooms on the premises of the Association be let, by public advertisement or otherwise, to the best possible advantage.

2. That the whole suite of rooms not used for the purposes of the Association be offered, as likely to command a better rent, and to set the Association more free from responsibility.

3. That, in order to carry out this plan, Mr. Harrison be requested to be kind enough to give up the tenancy of the rooms now occupied by him, at the end of the present quarter.

4. That the Council offer £50 per annum to Miss Burke to discharge the duties of secretary; the engagement to commence from 25th February; the hours of attendance to be from 2 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. daily, except Saturday; on that day to be from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

5. That a rota be formed of members of Council who will attend for an hour or two on one day in the week to advise with the secretary, see visitors, &c.

E. KISLINGBURY, Secretary.

Mr. Stainton-Moses said that resolutions four and five had been carried unanimously by the committee, so he would move their adoption first. He accordingly moved the adoption of No. 4.

This was seconded by Mr. Harrison and passed unanimously.—Clause No. 5 was then seconded by Mr. March, and passed.

Mr. Stainton-Moses then said that Clauses 1, 2, and 3 involved an important principle, so he would leave the question in the hands of the Council whether they should be considered.

Mr. March asked—Did he not intend, as chairman of the committee, to move the adoption of that part of the report?

Mr. Stainton-Moses said that as chairman of the committee he had not voted, and he wished still to hold the balance between contending views.

Mr. M. J. Walhouse moved that the consideration of Clauses 1, 2, and 3 be postponed.

This was not seconded.

Mr. March thought that a chairman who brought up a report always moved its adoption.

Mr. Stainton-Moses: Very well, then; I move *pro forma* that recommendations 1, 2, and 3 be adopted.

This was seconded by Mr. Bennett, who spoke strongly in favour of their adoption; so also did Mr. FitzGerald, who wished that the question had been brought up on its own merits, not as a matter of finance.

Mr. Stainton-Moses then read the following letter from Mr. C. C. Massey:—

"PROTEST.

"As a member of the Association, and as a late member of the General Purposes Committee, which the Council, on the 14th January last, instructed 'to consider the question of the future secretaryship, and the general house arrangements,' I beg respectfully to submit to the Council the following protest against the adoption of the recommendations of the committee, so far as the same relate to the termination of Mr. Harrison's tenancy of the rooms now occupied by him, on the grounds—

"(1.) That the question of Mr. Harrison's tenancy, though perhaps open for consideration by the committee upon a verbal construction of the reference by the Council, was not within its apparent intention, nor was suggested by the occasion which led to the necessity of considering the house arrangements.

"(2.) That the committee considered this question, not solely with reference to the convenient and profitable disposition of the rooms, but also with reference to the general policy of retaining Mr. Harrison's offices on the premises.

"(3.) That the intention to raise this question at the committee had not been brought to the notice of the Council when it empowered the committee to make recommendations; and still less does it appear to have been present to the mind of the Council that the committee might base their recommendations upon considerations other than those of economy and convenience.

"(4.) That the question, if referred for consideration by a committee, should be so expressly, and not by implication or construction.

"(5.) That in constituting or adding to such committee, the Council should have expressly before it the character of the question to be referred, in order to ensure the unprejudiced consideration of it, and to satisfy the Association that this object has been kept in view.

"(6.) That the additions made to the General Purposes Committee by the Council on the 14th January were made without the discussion they might have received had attention been expressly called to the question which the committee has considered itself authorised to entertain.

"(7.) That some members of the Council who were absent from its meeting of the 14th January would probably have attended had they known what was involved in the business to be transacted.

"(8.) That there were members of the General Purposes Committee itself who were of opinion that it was not open to the committee to entertain the question of Mr. Harrison's tenancy otherwise than as one of economy and local convenience.

"(9.) That one member of the committee (not myself) who took this view had been present at the meeting of the Council on the 14th January*; and this fact is submitted as evidence that the Council were not informed or aware of the intention or possible construction of the resolution when it was passed.

"(10.) That the members of the committee itself were not apprised before its meeting that the question referred to them would be dealt with otherwise than as one of economy; I, for one, having been only informed of this by the courtesy of the chairman before the second or adjourned meeting for the consideration of the question, and having only attended in consequence of such information.

"(11.) That the recommendation, as originally drafted, was stated to be 'with a view to retrenchment;' and these words were only struck out by the mover at the moment before the recommendation was put to the vote, upon attention being called to their misleading character.

"(12.) That no grounds of profit or economy have been shown to exist in support of the recommendation.

"(13.) That, on the contrary, it involves the loss of a tenant who has offered to pay an increased rent for slightly different accommodation, without the least definite prospect that a new tenant will be secured when the present one goes out.

"(14.) That the question of economy was insufficiently discussed,

*In case the question is asked, I may state that this member was Mr. Desmond Fitz-Gerald.

and was treated as altogether subsidiary to the policy of removing Mr. Harrison's offices from the Association.

"(15.) That that policy is itself inexpedient and unnecessary in the opinion of many members of the Association, and will be regarded as induced or supported not solely with consideration for the interests of the Association.

"(16.) That the adoption of the recommendation under the circumstances above set forth will cause just dissatisfaction in the Association, and will be seriously prejudicial to its interests.

"I make the above protest in writing in consequence of having sent in my resignation of my seat on the Council, and as that reason only applies to myself, I have not submitted the protest to any other member of the Council or of the committee for his or her concurrence.

"C. C. MASSEY.

"4, Harcourt-buildings, Temple, 14th February, 1879."

Mr. Harrison then said—Will you kindly hear me out in the few respectful remarks I have to make, since these are nearly my last words on this Council. At the close of this meeting I give in my resignation, which is not altogether grounded, however, upon the subject now before us. Early in 1876 Messrs. Rogers, Bennett, and others, kept this Council in agitation for weeks because I rented a branch office on these premises; I accordingly gave notice of my intention to take offices elsewhere, but the Council, at a large special meeting, asked me to remain here by a majority of nineteen to two. Nearly all the strongest pillars of this Association, men whose names gave confidence to the public, and whose withdrawal would have killed it, told me they disliked the attack which had been made, and that they thought it to be a great convenience to the public to have *The Spiritualist* office and your reading rooms on the same premises, instead of forcing callers to make a journey between the two. Further, the Council never obtained the names of any objectors, outside a small circle of private friends, all on family visiting terms with each other, and it is not well that private tea-tables in the suburbs should rule a public body. Since then all has been quiet, until at last Council meeting it became necessary to deal with the rooms vacated by Miss Kisingbury, and Mr. Dawson Rogers proposed that the General Purposes Committee should consider "the general house arrangements." He proposed, further, that Miss Withall, Mrs. Fitz-Gerald, and Mr. Theobald should be added to the committee, and said he had no objection to act on it himself; whereupon Mr. Theobald proposed that Mr. Rogers should be placed on it. The committee met, and last week the recommendations of the committee now before us were issued by it, but illegitimately marked "private and confidential"—a prohibition against showing them to the members of the Association. These recommendations were carried by but a majority of one; the four persons who voted for them were Mr. Rogers, Miss Withall, Mr. E. T. Bennett, and Mr. Fitz-Gerald; the voters against them were Mr. C. C. Massey, Dr. Wyld, and Mrs. Maltby. Many of the members of the committee did not know that any such subject was coming up, and they are at present in a state of indignation, for the Council never intended the committee to deal with anything but the letting of the rooms vacated by the secretary; it never intended that the greater public question of the advantage or disadvantage of having two sets of public offices on these premises should be considered by the committee. The whole thing from first to last—the putting two or three special people on an already good committee, resulting in four votes on one side of a division where otherwise there would have been but two, and the wording of the resolution to make it cover subjects which the Council never intended—amounts altogether to a trick, which cannot be too strongly condemned by people with any sense of honour. Now to briefly criticise the details of the report. The advantages of letting a whole suite of rooms are spoken of. If the word "suite" in the report induces any readers to think of an unbroken suite of rooms, which in consequence of my departure will cover the complete flat instead of but a part of our second floor, let them know that on the said flat is our *séance* room, wherein public and private dark circles with all their noises are held, and which contains cabinets and weighing machinery, for which there is no room downstairs. Whether it is more remunerative, as the report says, to let six rooms together rather than in smaller numbers, and to turn out a paying tenant on the speculation that a public anxiety exists to take lodgings on Spiritualistic premises I do not know; but I do know that your new secretary cannot be chained immovably to your reading room from 2 till 9.30 p.m., and that if my assistant is not here to relieve her for an hour or two at unexpected times, you must add a boy or girl to your permanent staff at a cost of £20 or £30 a year. One object, the report says, of the recommendation to remove my offices is "to set the Association more free from responsibility;" that is to say, the responsibility of having at least £100 a year income over and above its expenses, for Miss Kisingbury's departure has changed our whole financial position. Lastly, the report generously asks me to take six weeks' notice from to-day to remove a somewhat responsible book-publishing office, instead of the three months' notice from next quarter day, to which I am entitled. The Council never thought that Mr. Rogers's resolution was intended to reopen the public question about the convenience or inconvenience of my office here, and the committee had no right to take up subjects not intended by the Council. But enough of this. I do not ask my friends to rally round me, as during the 1876 attack, to upset this packing of a good committee with unnecessary additional voters, or any other actions of the kind. If new subjects of inharmony had been brought up there might have been some faint hope of peace; but when an old one, authoritatively settled by a majority of 19 to 2, is brought up again in a surreptitious way, because its raising might not have been permitted had one of the usual straightforward monthly notices of motion been given to the Council, friendly working is hopeless. In spite of all the decisions and rules of the Council, Messrs. Rogers and Bennett every now and then throw brickbats (metaphorically speaking) at me, and I cannot support what I think to be the weak and inefficient public measures they frequently advocate. So I will get out of this atmo-

sphere of inharmony by giving up my seat on the Council. I have the inclination to say I will move my offices from here without delay, but that would relieve the Council from the present necessity of considering whether subterfuge has been resorted to by any person on the Council to resuscitate among honourable people a question which might not have been reopened by putting it in a straightforward way—that is to say, by giving the usual mouth's notice to the Council of bringing up again a question of public policy—and whether the Council will submit to such subterfuge. Compared with this question of honour, the trivial one of my little office here is nothing.

Mr. Dawson Rogers said that it was not correct that he had intimated his willingness to serve on the committee before Mr. Theobald nominated him.

A division was then taken. Messrs. Walhouse, Miall, Pearson, Calder, Green, and Harrison did not vote. Mr. Pickersgill and Mrs. Maltby voted against the adoption of the resolutions. The thirteen other members present voted for their adoption. Majority eleven.

A vote of thanks was passed by the Council to the friends who recently gave an entertainment for the benefit of the Association.

The report of the Finance Committee showed a balance in hand of £115 3s. 3d., and recommended payments to the extent of £29 12s. 3d. It estimated the outstanding liabilities of the Association at £5.

A letter from the Rev. T. Colley was read, explaining why he had not attended the last Council.

Mr. Fitz-Gerald moved that Mr. Colley be requested to withdraw from the Council, since he had not attended that or the previous Council meeting, nor taken any steps to substantiate his implied charges against "the authorities" of the Association. He would add that there seemed to be extraordinary discrepancies between Mr. Colley's published description of a bygone event, and the description of it given by the gentleman in whose house it took place. Mr. Colley had published in *The Medium*:—"I, in view of the family assembled, had taken the muslin and beard from that medium's portmanteau," but Mr. Owen Harries, of 15, Russell-street, Landport, who was, he believed, a respectable man, had written to him (Mr. Fitz-Gerald) under date of January 19th, 1879, that at his house the medium "had a small portmanteau with him; the following morning I felt justified in opening the portmanteau, and the first thing that rolled out was a piece of muslin (about four yards) and a beard . . . I sent to the Rev. T. Colley, and told him about it; he advised me to say nothing about it at present." There seemed to be a discrepancy in these statements.

Mr. Coffin seconded the motion.

Mr. Reimers explained that so far as attending recent Council meetings was concerned, Mr. Colley had been unable to do so.

At the request of Miss Houghton, and one or two others, Mr. Fitz-Gerald postponed his resolution for another month.

The following notices of motion by the Rev. T. Colley were then given in by Mr. Reimers:—

1. That it is inexpedient and prejudicial to the best interests of this Association longer to permit to be used any part of its premises as a shop for the sale of literature it does not endorse and cannot recommend, or continue to suffer the appropriation of any or part of its rooms as an office, branch, or otherwise, for the publication of a journal, assumed, through appearances, to be what it is not, the organ of this Association, and over which it has no control.

2. That no report of the proceedings of this Council be suffered to be made public that has not been authenticated by the chairman as honest and complete, and in fair agreement with the recorded minutes of the transactions of the Association.

The Secretary then read the following resignation from Mr. Harrison:—

"33, Great Russell-street, Feb. 11th, 1879.

"To the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists.

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I write to resign my seat on your Council. The chief reason is that I find we have no proper control of our committees, so that public acts are performed for which members of Council are responsible, but of which they know nothing. For instance, I found that three printed circulars, with the words 'British National Association of Spiritualists' at the top, had been printed and issued to the public by Mr. Bennett, at Richmond. The circulars did not tell the public to communicate with the secretary, but with Mr. Bennett. The Council would not have known anything about these circulars had I not accidentally discovered their existence some months after they had been printed. Further, our committees sometimes take up work they have not been ordered to take up, spend money without having the items previously sanctioned by the Council, and exercise the power of recording minutes of business which they do not report to the Council. Lastly, one of them has just issued a circular, which its members, our subordinates, have ordered us to treat as 'private and confidential.' I submit that our stewards have no right to give us such orders, and that our constituents have given us no authority to carry on any secret work whatever on their behalf; also that until, as in town councils, all minutes of our committees shall be of no effect or authority until read over to and adopted by the Council, the power of the Council is broken, and it has little control over much for which it is responsible. Having failed to induce you to adopt that system of working which is common all over the kingdom, I respectfully give in this resignation.—Truly yours,

"W. H. HARRISON."

The meeting then broke up.

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA.—Just before going to press we are glad to hear from Mr. Eglinton that he is going to India, where a physical medium has long been wanted among European residents. Those of Mr. Eglinton's *séances* during which both his hands are held are usually convincing. At present he is in Cape Town.

ON RELIGION.*

BY ALEXANDER CALDER, PRESIDENT OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—We have met this evening to hear our well-known friend Mr. Fletcher on some phase of the "Religion of Spiritualism," which he liberally supplies us with; and I am happy to avail myself of the privilege of addressing you for a few moments on this occasion.

Religion has been called by some the opinion of nations, and well it earns this title; for there is little else than opinion in many forms of it. When we look abroad on the different religious systems of the world, each with its creeds, its rites, and its ceremonies, widely varying one from another, and notice what they have produced, we are not far wrong if we say that none of them is divine. If we look closer and examine popular Christianity, and the good and evil with which it is credited, we may safely say that it is far from responding to the ideal of its great Founder, and we might even venture to add that were He now on earth He would be grievously disappointed. For surely the kingdom of God has no relation to the misery, the corruption, the hypocrisy, the strife, and the wars of the age. *Far, very far from it.* Yet there is, and there must be a *true arrangement*; a really *divine system* to procure human wellbeing and improvement. To do the will of our Father in Heaven—that is true religion. *There*, in a few words, lies our whole duty; and the important thing is to have a right conception of His will, and laying hold of it with all our might, steadily follow it; and act it out in our lives.

Now, this divine will, think you that it lies far off, or is wrapped up in some profound mystery difficult to unravel? *Certainly not!* Our heavenly Father has made the matter perfectly plain: the elements of His will are constantly among you; familiar words often on your tongues. The bright symbols love, peace, sincerity, honesty, temperance, charity, industry, truth, justice, economy, humility. No opinions these; but solid germs of truth which, cultivating, we fulfil the life required of all. You become the loved children of an everlasting parent, the loyal subjects of His kingdom, priests unto God. Yes, that is even required of us. Amazing fact! Each becomes a priest to himself. It must be so, as the only remedy for evil; for if we neglect the diligent practice of these virtues, we stumble into sin. But mark, our love, peace, sincerity, honesty, and so forth must not be adulterated, hollow hypocrisies, but pure and genuine; each of its kind, or it is worthless. These grand virtues will be loved for themselves and for the good they do us and others. We must not do them for the admiration of any, but assimilate them to strengthen our own souls. For as surely as light dispels darkness, and heat displaces cold, so the practice of these virtues destroys the power of sin. It cannot be otherwise. It is the simple law of culture—we reap what we sow.

You see all this plainly enough, and you will be disposed naturally to follow what you can understand to be true and good. You may be sure that if these ideas are planted in your hearts they will bring forth, if duly cultivated, most precious fruit. They are as pearls of great price which, once possessed, exceed in value all other things; and levelling all conditions, make the lowly equal to the highest. The very rags of poverty are exchanged for garments of loveliness, beauty, and strength, and the possessor becomes enriched for life, now and evermore; and this is the superiority all should ardently seek. For unless there is an active culture of these virtues, so that the sum total shall increase in measure sufficient to oppose and stop the growth of corruption, it may only be a question of time for this nation, like others, to perish. Why not? In those long-lost nations there dwelt men equally great in their way as ours—princes, priests, nobles, whose opulence and grandeur might rival anything we could show; but they wanted one thing, they had one immense defect—the heart was tainted, and becoming more and more corrupt they fell into ruin. How could it be otherwise where religion is a huge chaos, without distinct plan or unity of design, based on opinion and not on nature's facts. Where the salt of social preservation is no better than chalk, the time will come when putrefaction

will be sensibly felt, and death follow. For if we live not under the divine order, but according to disorder, disorder has but one termination. In a word, the plan of action, the sure way of safety for us, lies in the ceaseless culture of the great, noble, and pure virtues already set forth as the surest method of promoting the kingdom of Heaven on earth.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.

THE eighth annual general meeting of the members of the Dalston Association of Enquirers into Spiritualism, adjourned from the 30th ult., was held at the Association's rooms, 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E., on Thursday evening last week. Mr. John Rouse was voted into the chair in the unavoidable absence through illness of the president. The report of the Council and statements of account for the year 1878 were laid before the meeting, and, after some congratulatory remarks from various members present, were unanimously adopted.

The following officers for the current year were elected, viz.:—Mrs. W. E. Corner, president; Mr. Thomas Blyton, Mr. E. J. Davey, Mr. Edwin Dottridge, Mrs. M. A. Macauley, Mr. John Rouse, Mr. Jonathan Tozeland, Mr. Thomas Wilks, and Mrs. M. Theresa Wood, council; Mr. Thomas Blyton, hon. sec. and treasurer. The appointment of a vice-president was referred to the Council.

An amended motion for a new rule respecting the expulsion of members whose conduct may be discreditable to the Association was adopted after a spirited discussion.

A cordial vote of thanks to the officers of the Association for their services during the past year was moved by Mr. J. Bruce Gillon, seconded by Mr. G. R. Tapp, and carried unanimously.

The following is an abridgment of the report of the Council:—

The net receipts, including the balance of 10s. 1d. brought forward from the previous year, amount to £33 9s. 2d., as against £28 11s. 3d. for 1877. A valuation of the stock of the Association was made by a special committee in the early part of last year, and has been computed at an amount of £78 12s. The total number of members on the register on December 31st last, as compared with the corresponding period in 1877, is as follows:—

	Class of Membership.			Total.
	Life.	Honorary.	Ordinary.	
31st December, 1878.....	13	35	33	81
31st December, 1877.....	12	32	36	80
Increase	1	3	...	1
Decrease.....	3	...

The Hon. Alexander Aksakof has been elected a life member. Dr. J. M. Peebles, Mr. W. Eglinton, Miss Mancell, and Mr. M. Pardo have been elected honorary members. During the past year Mrs. W. Towns, a member of the Association, has passed from earth-life, and the Council express their condolence with Mr. Towns. The weekly experimental *séances* on Thursday evenings have been fairly attended by members and visitors. Various phenomena of an interesting character have been obtained, mainly in the presence of non-professional mediums, members of the Association. The Council have had their attention drawn to the desirability of providing a series of self-supporting subscription *séances* with accessible mediums. It has been resolved that such arrangements be made as opportunity may offer for such *séances*, which are to be held on some other than Thursday evenings or Monday evenings set apart for the fortnightly discussion meetings, during each winter season, and that the result of such *séances* be reported to the Council from time to time. Those members desirous of taking part in these subscription *séances* are requested to notify their wishes to the honorary secretary.

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* An address delivered last Sunday evening at the Cavendish Rooms, London.

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One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena.

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is of little importance. Any table will do.

3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an arid feeling against them is weakening.

4. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.

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

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

7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits, usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.—First Effects Produced by Mesmerism.—Sensations—Process for Causing Mesmeric Sleep.—The Sleep or Mesmeric State—It Occurs Spontaneously in Sleep-Walkers.—Phenomena of the Sleep—Divided Consciousness—Senses Affected—Insensibility to Pain.

CHAPTER II.—Control Exercised by the Operator over the Subject in Various Ways.—Striking Expression of Feelings in the Look and Gesture.—Effect of Music.—Truthfulness of the Sleeper.—Various Degrees of Susceptibility.—Sleep Caused by Silent Will; and at a Distance.—Attraction Towards the Operator.—Effect in the Waking State of Commands Given in the Sleep.

CHAPTER III.—Sympathy.—Community of Sensations; of Emotions.—Danger of Rash Experiments.—Public Exhibitions of Doubtful Advantage.—Sympathy with the Bystanders.—Thought-Reading.—Sources of Error.—Medical Intuition.—Sympathetic Warnings.—Sympathies and Antipathies.—Existence of a Peculiar Force or Influence.

CHAPTER IV.—Direct Clairvoyance or Lucid Vision, without the Eyes.—Vision of Near Objects; through Opaque Bodies; at a Distance.—Sympathy and Clairvoyance in Regard to Absent Persons.—Retrospection.—Introspection.

CHAPTER V.—Lucid Prevision.—Duration of Sleep, etc., Predicted.—Prediction of Changes in the Health or State of the Secret.—Prediction of Accidents, and of Events Affecting Others.—Spontaneous Clairvoyance.—Striking Case of It.—Spontaneous Retrospection and Prevision.—Peculiarities of Speech and of Consciousness in Mesmerised Persons.—Transference of Senses and of Pain.

CHAPTER VI.—Mesmerism, Electro-Biology, Electro-Psychology and Hypnotism, essentially the same.—Phenomena of Suggestions in the Conscious or Waking State.—Dr. Darling's Method and its Effects.—Mr. Lewis's Method and its Results.—The Impressible State.—Control Exercised by the Operator.—Gazing.—Mr. Braid's Hypnotism.—The Author's Experience.—Importance of Permanence.—The Subject must be Studied.

CHAPTER VII.—Trance, Natural and Accidental; Mesmerism.—Trance Produced at Will by the Subjects.—Col. Townsend's—Fakers.—Extasis—Extasis not all Imposters.—Luminous Emanations—Extasis often Predicted.—M. Cahagnet's Extasis.—Visions of the Spiritual World.

CHAPTER VIII.—Phreno-Mesmerism.—Progress of Phreno-mesmerism.—Effects of Touching the Head in the Sleep.—Variety in the Phenomena.—Suggestion.—Sympathy.—There are Cases in which these Act, and others in which they do not Act.—Phenomena Described.—The Lower Animals Susceptible of Mesmerism.—Fascination Among Animals.—Instinct.—Sympathy of Animals.—Snail Telegraph Founded on It.

CHAPTER IX.—Action of Magnets, Crystals, etc., on the Human Frame.—Researches of Reichbach.—His Odyle is Identical with the Mesmeric Fluid of Mesmer, or with the Influence which Causes the Mesmeric Phenomena.—Odyle or Mesmeric Light.—Aurora Borealis Artificially Produced.—Mesmerised Water.—Useful Applications of Mesmerism.—Physiological, Therapeutical, etc.—Treatment of Insanity, Magic, Divination, Witchcraft, etc., explained by Mesmerism, and Traced to Natural Causes.—Apparitions.—Second Sight is Waking Clairvoyance.—Predictions of Various Kinds.

CHAPTER X.—An Explanation of the Phenomena Attempted or Suggested—A Force (Odyle) Universally Diffused, Certainly Exists, and is Probably the Medium of Sympathy and Lucid Vision.—Its Characters.—Difficulties of the Subject.—Effects of Odyle.—Somnambulism.—Suggestion, Sympathy.—Thought-Reading.—Lucid Vision.—Odyle Emanations.—Odyle Traces followed up by Lucid Subjects.—Magic and Witchcraft.—The Magic Crystal, and Mirror, etc., induce Waking Clairvoyance.—Universal Sympathy.—Lucid Perception of the Future.

CHAPTER XI.—Interest Felt in Mesmerism by Men of Science.—Due Limits of Scientific Caution.—Practical Hints.—Conditions of Success in Experiments.—Cause of Failure.—Mesmerism a Serious Thing.—Cautions to be Studied.—Opposition to be Expected.

CHAPTER XII.—Phenomena Observed in the Conscious or Waking State.—Effects of Suggestion on Persons in an Impressible State.—Mr. Lewis's Experiments With and Without Suggestion.—Cases.—Dr. Darling's Experiments.—Cases.—Conscious or Waking Clairvoyance Produced by Passes, or by Concentration.—Major Buckley's Method.—Cases.—The Magic Crystal Induces Waking Lucidity, when Gazed at.—Cases.—Magic Mirror.—Mesmerised Water.—Egyptian Magic.

CHAPTER XIII.—Production of the Mesmeric Sleep.—Cases.—Eight out of Nine Persons Recently Tried by the Author Thrown into Mesmeric Sleep.—Sleep Produced without the Knowledge of the Subject.—Suggestion in the Sleep.—Phreno-Mesmerism in the Sleep.—Sympathy Clairvoyance in the Sleep.—Cases.—Perception of Time.—Cases.—Sir J. Franklin.—Major Buckley's Case of Retrospection.

CHAPTER XIV.—Direct Clairvoyance.—Cases.—Travelling Clairvoyance.—Cases.—Singular Visions of Mr. D.—Letters of Two Clergymen, with Cases.—Clairvoyance of Alexis.—Other Cases.

CHAPTER XV.—Trance.—Extasis.—Cases.—Spontaneous Mesmeric Phenomena.—Apparitions.—Predictions.

CHAPTER XVI.—Curative Agency of Mesmerism.—Concluding Remarks, and Summary.

London: W.C. *Spiritualist Newspaper* Branch Office.

Printed for the Proprietor by BEVERIDGE & Co., at the Holborn Printing Works, Finsbury-lane, High Holborn, in the Parish of St. Andrew-above-Bar and St. George the Martyr, London, and published by E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, E.C.