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"THE SPIRITUALIST" NEWSPAPER:

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

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, PRICE TWOPENCE.

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The Spiritualist Newspaper,

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

No 336.—VOLUME FOURTEEN; NUMBER FIVE.

LONDON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 31st, 1879.

SOCIAL SPIRITUALISM.

ALL human experience proves that social custom is a stronger force than political power, and that when the two are brought into violent conflict, the political power is sooner or later overthrown. There is therefore reason why every effort should be made to foster the growth of the social aspects of Spiritualism; it should be a movement connected with family life, and made to spread from home to home, rather than from public meeting to public meeting. The professional mediums, whose manifestations and personal character deserve it, should have as many regular engagements as possible in the homes of Spiritualists, so that inquirers who wish to see them can be present only by private invitation, and not at their own will and pleasure. Perhaps it is not possible to stop public *séances* entirely, but the best mediums should be so well supported in other ways that they will receive strangers only by written introduction, and be thus protected from the remnant of the spirit of persecution yet abroad in the world. If these principles be generally adopted, political and other external powers will have no means of persecution except by trying to intrude into private homes; any attempt of that kind will rouse the indignation of every grade of society, and will assuredly fail. Drawing-room meetings next season in connection with Spiritualism would confer considerable strength.

A REMARKABLE CASE OF DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS.

To the Editor of "The Religio-Philosophical Journal," January 11, 1879.
Lottsville, Penn.

I SEND you a copy of a letter, it being a compilation of facts addressed by the Rev. Timothy Alden to Dr. Samuel L. Mitchell, of New York. I would state that Mr. Alden was a prominent Presbyterian clergyman, an early settler at Meadville, Crawford county, Pa., and founder of Alleghany College, now under the control and patronage of M. E. Church. I have a personal recollection of the reverend gentleman, he having several times visited at my father's, when I was a boy of some twelve years of age.

If you consider the letter of sufficient importance, you are at liberty to publish it, as it is a matter of public notoriety, having been published in the *Pennsylvania Historical Collections* of 1843, page 254, now before me, and from which I copy.
DANIEL LOTT.

Meadville, Penn., June 21st, 1816.

DEAR SIR,—I now do myself the pleasure to give you an account of a very singular case. Possibly you may have met with something analogous to it in your researches, but so far as my inquiries have extended it is without a parallel.

Mr. William Reynolds, his wife and children, composing a respectable family, originally citizens of Birmingham, Great Britain, settled in the vicinity of Oil Creek, twenty-seven miles from this village, in the year 1798. Miss Mary Reynolds, one of his daughters, a worthy young lady, an inmate of the family of her brother John Reynolds, Esq., one of my nearest neighbours, is the subject of this communication, upon which I shall be happy to see your animadversions. For five years she has exhibited the phenomena of a person vested with a twofold consciousness, or more definitely with two distinct consciousnesses.

I became acquainted with Miss Reynolds soon after my removal to this place, in 1815, when she was in the exercise of her original consciousness, the last evening of which she spent at my house. The following evening I was at her brother's, where there was a considerable company, of which she was one. To my surprise, when I spoke to her, she had no knowledge of me; I was, therefore, introduced to her anew. My curiosity was excited, and it was gratified by a history of

her singular case, of which you will please accept the subsequent concise narrative:—

After arriving at adult age she was occasionally afflicted with fits, but of what particular name I have not been able satisfactorily to ascertain. In the spring of 1811, she had a very severe visitation of this kind—her frame was greatly convulsed, and she was extremely ill for several days, when her sight and hearing left her, she becoming totally blind and deaf. During twelve weeks, from the time of the fit mentioned, she continued in a very feeble state; but at the end of five weeks the use of her visual and auditory faculties were perfectly restored. A more remarkable dispensation of Providence, however, awaited her. A little before the expiration of the twelve weeks, one morning, when she awoke, she appeared to have lost all recollection of everything that she ever knew. Her understanding, with an imperfect knowledge of speech, remained; but her father, mother, brothers, sisters, and neighbours were altogether strangers to her. She had forgotten the use of written language, and did not know a single letter of the alphabet, nor how to discharge the duties of any domestic employment more than a new-born babe. She, however, presently began to regain various kinds of knowledge. She continued five weeks in this way, when suddenly she passed from the second state—for distinction it may be so-called—into her first. All consciousness of the five weeks just elapsed was totally gone, and her original consciousness was fully restored.

Now the cloud which had overspread her mental hemisphere was dissipated. Her kindred and friends were at once recognised; every kind of knowledge which she had ever acquired was as much at her command as at any former period of her life; but of the time and all the events which had transpired during her second state she had not the most distant idea. For three weeks, to the comfort of herself and the family, she continued in her first state, but in her sleep the transition was renewed, and she awoke in her second state. As before, so now, all knowledge acquired in her first state was forgotten, and of the circumstances of her three weeks' lucid interval she had no conception, but of the small fund of knowledge she had gained in the former second state, she was able to avail herself, and she continued from day to day to add to this little treasure. From the spring of 1811 the subject of this address has been in this wonderful condition, frequently changing from her first to her second, and from her second to her first state; more than three-quarters of her time she has been in her second state. There is no periodical regularity as to the transition. Sometimes she continues several months and sometimes a few weeks, a few days, or only a few hours, in her second state; but in the lapse of five years she has been at no one instance more than twenty days in her first state.

Whatever knowledge she has acquired at any time in her second state is familiar to her whenever in that state, and now she has made such proficiency, she is as well acquainted with things, and is in general as intelligent, in her second as in her first state. It is about three years since an attempt was first made to re-teach her chirography. Her brother gave her a name, which he had written for her to copy. She readily took a pen, agreeably to his request, and it is a fact that she actually began to write it, though in a very awkward manner from the right hand to the left, in the Hebrew mode. It was not long before she obtained a tolerable skill in penmanship, and in her second state often amuses herself in writing poetry, yet in her first state this is an exercise which she seldom, if ever, attempts. It may be remarked that she acquires all kinds of knowledge in her second state with much greater facility than would a person never before instructed. In her second state she has now been introduced

to many persons whom she always recognises when in that state, and no one appears to enjoy the society of friends better than this young lady; but if ever so well known to herin her first state she has no knowledge of them in her second till an acquaintance, *de novo*, is formed; and in like manner all acquaintances formed in her second state must be formed in her first also in order to be known in that.

This astonishing transition, scores of times repeated, always takes place in her sleep. In passing from her second to her first state, nothing is particularly noticeable in her sleep, but in passing from her first to her second state, her sleep is so profound that no one can wake her, and it not unfrequently continues eighteen or twenty hours. She has generally some presentiment of the change, and frequently for several days before the event. Her sufferings, formerly in the near prospect of the transition from either the one or the other states, were extreme. When in one state she had no consciousness of ever having been in the other; but of the wonderful fact she was persuaded on the representation of her friends. Hence, when about to undergo the transition, fearing she should never revert so as to know again in this world those who were dear to her, her feelings in this respect were not unlike the feelings of one entering the Valley of the Shadow of Death; but she has now passed so often from one state to the other, that she does not anticipate the change with that horror or distressing apprehension with which for a considerable time she used to do.

As an evidence of her ignorance in her second state at an early period, she was once walking at a little distance from her father's house, and discovered a rattlesnake. She was delighted at the beautiful appearance of this, to her, unknown dangerous reptile, and sprang forward to catch it. Fortunately the serpent lay near a hole under a log, and as she seized it by the rattle it thrust its head in, and she was not able to draw it out. At another time she was riding in a narrow path alone, in the woods, and met a bear which did not seem disposed to give her the path. She boldly rode up to the huge animal, and in a very imperious style ordered him out of the way, and she was upon the point of dismounting to belabour him with her whip, when he peaceably "cleared off."

This young lady is naturally of a cheerful disposition, but thoughtful. In her second state her imagination glows, her wit is keen, her remarks are often shrewd and rational, and her prejudices, conceived without cause against her best friends, are sometimes very strong.

(Signed) TIMOTHY ALDEN.

Says the author: "The young lady is still living (1843), is of sane mind and in good health, and is teacher in a school. She has had no return of her peculiar insanity for many years."

The above is a true copy.

DANIEL LOTT.

THE HAUNTINGS AT WOODSTOCK.

A RECENT number of the *Foresters' Miscellany* contains a clever article by Mrs. C. A. White on "A Few Trees that have their Stories." Among several curious incidents the authoress gives an account of occurrences in connection with the famous Woodstock oak that are not without interest to Spiritualists, who probably will consider that it requires more credulity to believe in the legerdmain of the secretary than to accept the phenomena described as veritable spiritual manifestations. The following narrative is from Plott's *History of Oxfordshire*, and the details are given at greater length in the preface to one of Sir Walter Scott's novels:—

"Soon after the murder of King Charles I. a commission was appointed to survey the King's house at Woodstock, with the manor, park, woods, and other demesnes to that manor belonging, and one Collins, under a feigned name, hired himself as secretary to the Commissioners, who, upon the 13th of October, 1649, met, and took up their residence in the King's own rooms; his majesty's bed-chamber they made their kitchen, the council hall their pantry, and the presence chamber was the place where they sat for the dispatch of business. His majesty's dining-room they made their wood-yard, and stored it with the wood of the famous royal oak from the High Park, which, that nothing might be left with the name of king about it, they had dug up by

the roots, and split and bundled up into faggots for their firing. Things being thus prepared, they sat on the 16th of the same month for the dispatch of business, and in the midst of their first debate there entered a large black dog (as they thought), which made a dreadful howling, overturned two or three of their chairs, and then crept under a bed and vanished. This gave them the greater surprise, as the doors were kept constantly locked, so that no real dog could get in or out. The next day their surprise was increased, when sitting at dinner in a lower room, they heard plainly the noise of persons walking over their heads, though they well knew the doors were all locked, and there could be nobody there; presently after they heard also all the wood of the King's park brought by parcels from the dining-room, and thrown with great violence into the presence chamber; as also all the chairs, stools, tables, and other furniture forcibly hurled about the room; their own papers of the minutes of their transactions torn and the ink-glass broken. When all this noise had some time ceased Giles Sharp, their secretary, proposed to enter first into these rooms, and in presence of the commissioners, of whom he received the keys, he opened the doors, and found the wood spread about the room, the chairs tossed about and broken, the papers torn, the ink-glass broken (as has been said), but not the least trace of any human creature, nor the least reason to suspect one, as the doors were all fast, and the keys in the custody of the commissioners. It was therefore unanimously agreed that the power who did this mischief must have entered the room at the keyhole. The night following, Sharp, the secretary, with two of the Commissioners' servants, as they were in bed in the same room, which room was contiguous to that where the Commissioners lay, had their beds feet lifted up so much higher than their heads, that they expected to have their necks broke; and then they were let fall at once with so much violence as shook the whole house, and more than ever terrified the Commissioners. On the night of the 19th, as all were in bed in the same room for greater safety, and lights burning by them, the candles in an instant went out with a sulphureous smell, and that moment many trenchers of wood were hurried about the room, which next morning were found to be the same their honours had eaten on the day before, which were all removed from the pantry, though not a lock was found open in the whole house. The next night they fared still worse; the candles went out as before, the curtains of their honours' beds were rattled to and fro with great violence, their honours received many cruel blows and bruises by eight great pewter dishes and a number of wooden trenchers being thrown on their beds, which being heaved off, were heard rolling about the room, though in the morning none of these were to be seen. This night, likewise, they were alarmed with the tumbling down of oaken billets about their beds, and other frightful noises, but all was clear in the morning as if no such thing had happened. The next night the keeper of the King's house and his dog lay in the Commissioners' room, and then they had no disturbance. But on the night of the 22nd, though the dog lay in the room as before, yet the candles went out, a number of brickbats fell from the chimney into the room, the dog howled piteously, their bedclothes were all stripped off, and their terror increased. On the 24th they thought all the wood of the King's oak was violently thrown down by their bedsides; they counted 64 billets that fell, and some hit and shook the beds in which they lay; but in the morning none were found there, nor had the door been opened where the billet wood was kept. The next night the candles were put out, the curtains rattled, and a dreadful crack like thunder was heard, and one of the servants running to see if his master were not killed, found three dozen trenchers laid smoothly under the quilt by him, but all was nothing to what succeeded afterwards. The 29th, about midnight, the candles went out, something walked majestically through the room and opened and shut the windows; great stones were thrown violently into the room, some of which fell on the beds, others on the floor; and at about a quarter after one a noise was heard as of forty cannon discharged together, and again repeated at about eight minute's distance. This alarmed and raised all the neighbourhood, who coming into their honours' room gathered up the great stones, four score

in number, and laid them by in the corner of a field, where, in Dr. Plott's time, who reports this story, they were to be seen. This noise, like the discharge of cannon, was heard through all the country for 16 miles round. During these noises which were heard in both rooms together, the Commissioners and their servants gave one another over for lost, and cried out for help, and Giles, snatching up a sword, had well-nigh killed one of their honours, mistaking him for the spirit as he came in his shirt from his own room to theirs. While they were together the noise was continued, and part of the tiling of the house was stripped off, and all the windows of an upper room were taken away with it. On the 30th, at midnight, something walked into the chamber treading like a bear; it walked many times about, then threw the warming-pan violently on the floor; at the same time a large quantity of broken glass, accompanied with great stones and horses' bones came pouring into the room with uncommon force; these were all found in the morning to the astonishment and terror of the Commissioners, who were yet determined to go on with their business. But on the 1st of November the most dreadful scene of all ensued; candles in every part of the room were lighted up and a great fire made; at midnight, the candles all yet burning, a noise like the burst of a cannon was heard in the room, and the burning billets were tossed about by it even into their honours' beds, who called Giles and his companions to their relief, or otherwise the house had been burnt to the ground. About an hour after, the candles went out as usual, the crack as of many cannon was heard, and many pailfuls of green stinking water were thrown upon their honours' bed; great stones were also thrown in as before, the bed-curtains and bedstead torn and broken, the windows shattered, and the whole neighbourhood alarmed with the most dreadful noises; nay, the very rabbit-stealers that were abroad that night in the warren were so terrified that they fled for fear, and left their ferrets behind them. One of their honours this night spoke, and in the name of God asked what it was, and why it disturbed them so? No answer was given to this, but the noise ceased for awhile, when the spirit came again, and, as they all agreed, brought with it seven devils worse than itself. One of the servants now lighted a large candle and set it in the doorway between the two chambers to see what passed, and as he watched it he plainly saw a hoof striking the candle and candlestick into the middle of the room, and afterwards making three scrapes over the snuff, scraped it out. Upon this the same person was so bold as to draw a sword, but he had scarcely got it out when he felt another invisible hand had hold of it too, and pulled with him for it, and at length prevailing, struck him so violently on the head with the pummel, that he fell down for dead with the blow. At this instant there was heard another burst like the discharge of the broadside of a ship of war, and about a minute or two's distance each, no less than nineteen more such; these shook the house so violently that they expected every moment it would fall upon their heads. The neighbours on this, as has been said, being all alarmed, flocked to the house in great numbers, and all joined in praying and psalm-singing, during which the noise still continued in the other rooms, though no visible agent was seen to discharge them. But what was the most alarming of all, and put an end to their proceedings effectually, happened next day as they were all at dinner, when a paper in which they had signed a mutual agreement to reserve a part of the premises out of the general survey, and afterwards to share it equally among them (which paper they had hid for the present under the earth in a pot in one corner of the room, and in which an orange tree grew), was consumed in a wonderful manner by the earth taking fire, with which the pot was filled, and burning violently with a blue fume, and an intolerable stench, so that they were all driven out of the house, to which they could never be again prevailed upon to return."

This wonderful contrivance was all the invention of the memorable Joseph Collins, of Oxford, otherwise called funny Joe, who, having hired himself for secretary, under the name of Giles Sharp, by knowing the private traps belonging to the house, and the help of *pulois fulminans*, and other chemical preparations, and letting his fellow-servants into the scheme, carried on the deceit, without discovery, to the

very last, insomuch that the late Dr. Plott, in his *Natural History*, relates the whole for facts.

 SPRING.

BY DOLLIE MAITLAND.

OUR fairest things must fade and die—
 So bards and poets say—
 And hands that nursed the sweetest flowers
 Must bury them away;
 And ears that loved the softest strain
 Must hear the song grow strange,
 And hearts once full of golden light
 Be shadowed by the change;
 And youthful brows must furrowed be,
 And eyes no more be bright,
 For rosy morning quickly dies,
 And passes into night.

But thou, thou happy, joyous Spring,
 Thou wilt not wholly die,
 Till the sea forgets to murmur,
 The troubled winds to sigh.
 Though we lose thee for a little,
 Thou comest back again,
 With sylvan beauties in thy path,
 And wood-nymphs in thy train.
 We mark no change upon thy face,
 No wrinkle on thy brow;
 Thy beauty, as it ever was,
 Dawns gently on us now.

We know not where thy feet have been,
 Since we beheld thee last;
 We know not where thy fragrant wings
 Have fluttered in the past;
 But thou hast come, and as of old,
 With tender blossoms drest,
 With harebells twining round thy brow,
 And snowdrops on thy breast:
 With golden wreaths of petals bright,
 With breezes fresh and sweet,
 And violets hanging modestly
 About thy dewy feet.

Now brooklets ripple through the glen,
 Rejoicing in their birth,
 And sunbeams whisper to the air
 Sweet thoughts that touch the earth;
 The earth awakes with soft delight,
 She knows the sunbeams bring
 A faint and holy memory
 Of songs the angels sing:
 Of songs our spirits may not hear,
 Until our chains are riven,
 Until our souls soar far away,
 And reach the gates of Heaven.

The old man now forgets his age,
 His worn face smiles with joy,
 As he recalls his happy dreams,
 His "spring-time," when a boy;
 And they whose sunny days are o'er,
 Whose race is well nigh-run,
 Still smile to see their children smile,
 As they themselves have done.
 For every heart holds some soft voice,
 That wakens in the spring,
 And sighs its own sweet melody
 When birds begin to sing.

MR. C. E. WILLIAMS has returned to town, and holds *séances* on Thursdays and Saturdays as usual.

MISS ROSS, who gives such remarkable psychometric delineations of character, has recently been in London, on a visit to Dr. and Mrs. Nichols at West Brompton.

MR. J. W. FLETCHER'S Sunday evening services at the Cavendish Rooms, London, are well attended. Last Sunday every seat was occupied. He informs us that next Sunday, at 11.30 a.m., he will hold a class meeting for children and adults. He wishes all who are interested in Children's Lyceums to communicate with him at 4, Bloomsbury-place, London, W.C.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IDEAS IN THE SACRED POETRY
OF ANCIENT ORIENTAL RACES.*

BY C. J. PLUMPTRE, LECTURER ON PUBLIC SPEAKING AT KING'S COLLEGE.

Who can rightly define what true poetry is? Who shall limit its influence or deny its right to take the first and highest rank among those powers by which the soul of man is exalted and refined? Is there one passion of the heart beyond its control—one emotion of human nature beyond its reach of grasp? As the sea is gently stirred by the summer gale, or lashed by the winter's storm, and leaps into life, activity, and motion, so from the soul of man, when agitated by deep feeling or passionate emotion, break forth the strong waves of poetical metaphor and expression.

Lord Kaimes well remarks that when a man is perfectly cool and sedate, he is not much disposed to poetical flights, nor to sacrifice truth and reality to imaginary beauties; far less is he so disposed when oppressed with care or interested in some important transaction that engrosses him wholly. On the other hand a man when elevated or animated by passion is disposed to elevate or animate all his objects; he avoids familiar names, exalts objects by circumlocution or metaphor, and gives even life and voluntary action to inanimate beings. In this heat of mind the highest poetical flights are indulged in, and the boldest similes and metaphor relished.

Now, what is here said of man generally holds good of all nations and in all times, and of none more truly than the great Semitic race in which the Hebrew tribes are embraced. They were a people of strong passions and emotions, of deep religious feelings, and acute sensibilities and perceptions also in regard to the external world. Look into their historical records, among the oldest authentic writings in the world, and you can scarcely open a single page, no matter in what book, without finding ample evidence of their profound sentiment of love for nature, as well as adoration of nature's God. View these books either individually or collectively, and they are, as a rule, the most ancient, the most venerable monuments of poetic feeling and creative fancy with which we are acquainted. If you ask where this sentiment is most nobly and visibly manifested, I answer—in their pastoral effusions, in their hymns of praise, in their choral songs, in all the splendour of lyric poetry in the Psalms of David, and in the schools of seers and prophets, whose exalted inspiration, as the great Humboldt remarks, almost wholly removed from the past, turns its prophetic aspirations to the future.

But I have specially selected the poetry of the Hebrews as a fitting subject for a lecture, because, independently of its intrinsic beauty, its innate sublimity, it offers to us especially the attraction of being linked by the closest ties with all those reminiscences which are associated with the local seat of the religion professed by the believers in the four most widely diffused religions in the world—the Jewish, the Indian, the Christian, and the Mahomedan. There is this striking peculiarity in the Hebrew poetry, that as clearly as the broad calm lake reflects the bright image of the noon-day sun, so does it reflect the Unity. And further, as a reflex of this monotheistic idea, it embraces also the whole universe in its entirety and unity, from the glittering stars and planets in the illimitable fields of space, to this earth which we inhabit, and the myriad forms of life which it sustains. Test this assertion: look into the mind and writings of the Hebrew poet, and you will find that in general his tone is lofty, solemn, and full of a wondrous power and pathos. He dwells but rarely on the single isolated acts of nature, the individuality of phenomena; he prefers rather the contemplation of great masses in the aggregate. He does not, like some of the classic poets, present nature as a self-evolving, self-dependent object, glorious in its individual sublimity and beauty, but still self-sustaining. No, his aim is something higher than this; he calls on you to look at nature as the work of Divine creation and superintendence, the living expression of the omnipresence of the Deity in the visible universe. Thus, then, from a necessary law, I may say from the very nature of the subject, the poetry of the Hebrews is grand and sad and solemn; and nowhere more so than when it treats of man and his condition on the globe—ever aspiring to something higher, something nobler than he feels he can

ever be on earth. It is truly remarked, indeed, that the Hebrew poetry, notwithstanding its grandeur, and the lofty tone of exultation to which it is often elevated by the charm of music, scarcely ever loses the restraint of measure, as does the poetry of the Hindoos. Devoted to the pure contemplation of the Divinity, it remains clear and simple in the midst of the most figurative expression, delighting in comparisons which recur with almost rhythmical regularity.

Where, let me ask, will you find more true, more picturesque, more faithful representations of the scenery and general character of the country in which they were composed? They reflect all this as truly as the placid lake reflects the lofty mountains by which it is surrounded. As you read these wondrous records of the past, you seem to see the alternations of barrenness and fertility—the sunny plains and the Alpine forests by which the land of Palestine is characterised. In their pages you have in regular succession all the changes of climate by which the country is affected. You see the primitive rites, manners, and customs of this shepherd race, with all their pastoral affections and all their hereditary aversion to settled agricultural pursuits. Take up any of their epic or historical narratives, and with what a beautiful simplicity they are graced, and with what true colours they paint nature.

But now if you turn to the lyrical poetry of the Hebrews—such as the Psalms of David—you will find there more glowing imagery, more picturesque description, a richer conception, a more animated embodiment of the life of nature. There is one psalm, indeed (104th), in which the great traveller Humboldt used to say he found the whole image of the Cosmos. Well may we be astonished in a lyrical poem of such great antiquity to find in so small a compass the earth, the heavens, the whole universe sketched by a few bold touches. This is, indeed, word-painting of the simplest but highest order.

You see here in striking contrast the life and action of the various elements of nature, and the monotonous life and labour of man from dawn to sunset. You will find the Psalms abounding in passages such as these, and amongst the most striking are the 65th and 74th.

But of all wonderful records of remote antiquity for its beauty of generalisation, its minuteness of detail, its picturesqueness of description, and its exalted strain of piety and religious fervour, is the Book of Job. If not the most ancient (and by the best Biblical scholars it is considered to have been written before the time of Moses), it is certainly the most perfect specimen that we have of Hebrew poetry. In it, not only do we see many questions propounded evincing the most ardent search after physical and psychological knowledge, but we actually find the various processes which take place in the atmosphere mentioned—nay, we have described with minuteness and accuracy the formation and solution of vapour, according to the changing direction of the wind, its change of colour, and we are told of the generation of the snow and hail, the vivid lightning, and the rolling thunder. No matter into what language the Book of Job has been translated, its metaphors and expressions drawn from the natural scenery of the East leave universally the same deep and abiding impression. I scarcely know what chapter in this marvellous book to select as an illustration.

The celebrated traveller whose name I have already mentioned—Humboldt—says that he has always remarked in his travels that where nature has sparingly bestowed her gifts the senses of man are sharpened, and he marks every change in the moving clouds of the atmosphere around him, tracing in the solitude of the dreary desert, as on the face of the deep and moving sea, every phenomenon through its varied changes back to the signs by which its coming was proclaimed. The climate of Palestine, especially in the arid and rocky portions of the country, is peculiarly adapted to give rise to such observations. Again, this poetry of the Hebrews, as displayed in the various books of the Old Testament, takes a wide range of expression and a great variety of form. For instance, we hear, as it were, a trumpet blast of warlike enthusiasm from the Book of Joshua to that of Samuel; while, on the other hand, soft as the pastoral airs played upon the shepherd's pipe, the exquisite book of the gleaner Ruth breathes to us a strain of music that charms us by its beautiful but natural simplicity. Goethe, the great

* A paper read at the last meeting of the Psychological Society.

German poet, calls it the loveliest specimen of epic and idyle poetry which we possess.

From the Hebrew tribes, the great Semitic race, let us now turn to the poetry of the Indians, Arabians, Persians, and Egyptians. What do we find here? A literature developed under the genial glow of southern climes, presenting the most charming descriptions, not only of organic life, but of inanimate nature.

Let us take, however, the Arabs first, and for this reason, because their poetry is a reflection even now of that sublime contemplative consideration of nature which was the original characteristic of the Oriental races. The poet of the Arabs *par excellence* is Asrudi, and his grand work is named after its hero, the Autar. The English Oriental scholar, Mr. Hamilton, who has translated this poem, remarks the Biblical tone which pervades it throughout. It records the journey and adventures of the hero from the time of his leaving the desert till his arrival at Constantinople, and so introduces a striking and picturesque contrast between Greek culture and nomadic ruggedness. It may excite surprise to find how small a space in the earliest Arab poems is devoted to descriptions of the scenery and natural products of the country; but the surprise will soon vanish when we consider that a monotonous uniformity of grassy plains and sandy deserts is little likely to produce a warm feeling of love for nature, except under rare and peculiar conditions of mind. Accordingly, we find that these poems are chiefly devoted to stories of deeds of arms and the praises of hospitality and fidelity. What descriptions of natural phenomena there are refer chiefly to the winds, the storms, and the long-wished for rain.

Let us now turn to the classic poetry of the Hindoos, and avail ourselves first of the researches of the great German philosopher Lapen. "If we suppose," says that writer in his work on *Indian Antiquity*, "that a part of the Aryan race emigrated to India from their native region in the north-western portion of the continent, they would have found themselves surrounded by a wholly unknown and marvellously luxuriant vegetation. The mildness of the climate, the fruitfulness of the soil, and its rich and spontaneous products must have imparted a brighter colouring to the new life opening before them. Owing to the originally noble characteristics of the Aryan race, and the possession of superior mental endowments, in which lay the germs of all the nobleness and greatness to which the ancient Indians attained, the aspect of external nature gave rise in the minds of these nations to a deep meditation on the forces of nature, which has proved the means of inducing that contemplative tendency which we find so intimately interwoven in the most ancient poetry of the Indians. The all-powerful impression thus produced on the minds of the people is most clearly manifested in the fundamental dogma of their belief—the recognition of the Divine in nature. The freedom from care, and the ease with which existence could be maintained in such a climate, were also inducive to the same contemplative tendency. Who could devote themselves with less hindrance to a profound meditation of earthly life, of the condition of man after death, and of the Divine essence, than those anchorites whose dwellings were amid the deep forests, the Brahmins of India, whose ancient schools constitute one of the most remarkable phenomena of Indian life, and must have exercised a special influence on the mental development of the whole race?"

Of all the memorials of the religious aspirations and culture of the ancient Indians, the Vedas are the oldest and most valuable. Their grand theme is the veneration of the supreme, eternal power that pervades the universe, and next to this the deep-rooted love they bear to nature in all her varied forms. Epithets and passages, as we shall see, are to be met with that are worthy to be compared for their poetry, sublimity, and beauty to anything to be found in the glowing pages of Homer, Milton, or Shakespeare.

And here I cannot enter on the consideration of what forms the remainder of my lecture without expressing my deep indebtedness to many sources, but chiefly to the works of Professor Max Müller, to a most able article in this month's (December) number of *The Nineteenth Century* on "The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians," and to the anonymous author of the learned and deeply-interesting

History of Pantheism, published by Deacon and Co. in the early part of the present year. What I have culled from these works form but a few grains from their golden granary, and to those who wish to enter more fully into the subject I commend them most warmly to their earnest perusal.

That most learned and philosophical writer, Professor Max Müller, of Oxford, truly remarks that the Vedas, by their language and thoughts, supply that distant background in the history of all the religions of the Aryan race, which was missed indeed by every careful observer, but which formerly could be supplied by guess-work only. How the Persians came to worship Ormuzd, how the Buddhists came to protest against temples and sacrifices, how Zeus and the Olympian gods came to be what they are in the mind of Homer, or how such beings as Jupiter and Mars came to be worshipped by the Italian peasant?—all these questions can now be answered by a simple reference to the hymns of the Vedas. . . . We can watch in the Vedas ideas and their names growing, which in Persia, Greece, and Rome we meet with only as full-grown or fast decaying. We get one step nearer to that distant source of religious thought and language which has fed the different national streams of Persia, Greece, Rome, and Germany; and we begin to see clearly, what never ought to have been doubted, that there is no religion without God, or, as St. Augustine expressed it, "that there is no false religion which does not contain some elements of truth."

To appreciate these Vedas justly we must try to divest ourselves of the common notions of Polytheism, so repugnant not only to our feelings but to our intelligence. No doubt, if we must employ technical terms, the religion of the Vedas is Polytheism, not Monotheism. Deities are invoked by different names, some clear and intelligible, such as Agui, fire; Surya, the sun; Ushas, the dawn; Maruts, the storms; Prithivi, the earth; Ap, the waters; Nadi, the rivers: others, such as Varuna, Mitra, Indra, which have become proper names, disclose but dimly their original application to the great aspects of nature—the sky, the sun, the day; and yet, strange to say, whenever one of these individual gods is invoked, he is never conceived as limited in his power by others, as superior or inferior in rank. Each god is, to the mind of the suppliant, as great and good as all the other gods. He is felt at the time as a real Divinity, as supreme and absolute, without a suspicion of those limitations which, to our minds, a plurality of gods must entail on every single god. All the rest disappear for the time from the vision of the poet, and the god alone who is to fulfil their desires stands in full light before the eyes of the worshippers. Thus, it may be said, there are many persons, or many names, but one God; and in the Rig Veda occurs this passage: "They call this god Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agui, the beautiful winged Garutmat. That which is One, the wise call by divers names, as Agui, Zama, Matarisvan; though he is One, wise poets make him manifold by words."*

Now let me give you some of the sacred poetry of the Vedas, in which I think you will admit there is not only the true spirit of poetry, but a deep, sincere, and touching yearning after Divine truth.

1. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?
2. He who gives life, He who gives strength, whose command all revere, whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?
3. He who through His power is the one King of the the breathing and awakening world. He who governs man and all created things. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?
4. He whose greatness the snowy mountains, the sea, and the distant rivers proclaim; He whose these regions are, as it were, His arms. Who is the God to whom we shall offer sacrifice?
5. He through whom the sky is bright and the earth firm. He through whom the heavens were established. He who

*"Veda" signifies "Wisdom." There are four collections of hymns known by the name of Vedas: the Rig Veda, Zagur Veda, Sama Veda, and Athawva Veda. But the only important, the real Veda, is the Rig Veda. The other so-called Vedas, which deserve no more to be called Vedas than the Jewish Talmud deserves the name of Bible, contain chiefly extracts from the Rig Veda, together with a mass of sacrificial forms, charms, and incantations. The Zagur Veda and Sama Veda may be termed the sacrificial prayer books for the priests.

measures out the light in the air. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

6. He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by His will, look up trembling inwardly. He over whom the rising sun shines forth. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

7. He who by His might looked even over the water clouds, the clouds which give strength and light the sacrifice. He who alone is God above all gods!

(To be continued.)

A PRIVATE SEANCE.

ON Wednesday last week, at a private *séance*, held at the house of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, 21, Green-street, Grosvenor-square, London, Mr. Rita was the medium. The guests were seated round the table in the following order:—Mr. Rita, Mr. Annesley Mayne, Mrs. Makdougall Gregory, Miss Mattie Houghton, the Ven. Archdeacon Dunbar, Mr. W. H. Harrison, Mr. Serjeant Cox, and Mrs. Ramsay. Thus Mr. Rita was held on the one side by Mr. Annesley Mayne, of the Junior Carlton Club, and on the other by Mrs. Ramsay, of 36, Bryanstone-square, London.

Some of the usual manifestations took place, such as are necessary for the convincing of new inquirers, and for readers among the outside public who are strange to the subject, but which are familiar in the extreme to experienced Spiritualists. That is to say, chairs were piled one over the other on the table, and the arms of one or two hooked over the heads of the sitters while the medium's hands were held. A spirit face, dimly illuminated, was seen once or twice.

A voice, which claimed to belong to the spirit who produced the test physical manifestations, held a conversation with Archdeacon Dunbar, saying that there was no truth in the doctrine of eternal punishment, and that Cain was not so black as he had been painted, because, as he had never seen death, he did not know that any action of his would kill his brother Abel.

Not a few Spiritualists who hold *séances* for the benefit of their unconverted friends would be glad of more advanced manifestations, but find that for beginners a few elementary test phenomena are most convincing and useful.

TO ANOTHER THE GIFT OF HEALING.

BY J. A. CAMPBELL.

THIS remarkable case of spirit mesmerism will, I think, interest the readers of your paper. I translate it from the *Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary*, by M. de Montalembert, one of the loveliest books ever written, and one which I commend to all simple people. To myself St. Elizabeth is a very real and ever present friend, and it is from her that I have learnt a great deal of what I am most thankful to know. Last summer I spent under the shadow of her castle of the Wartburg, whence I visited her shrine and cathedral church at Marbourg, the stateliest and most beautiful specimen of early pure German Gothic left to us, built, tradition says, from money found daily *in the ground*—for every labourer his hire. Modern Roman Catholicism having changed its views upon the usury and labour questions, has built its far more elaborate cathedral of Cologne chiefly from the proceeds of a lottery, and the canonisation of its latter-day saints has usually been the apotheosis of brain sickness rather than of good works.

A poor mother, whose child had been for five years grievously ill—among other sufferings had immense tumours on the back and on the chest—had her carried to the tomb of Elizabeth, and watched beside her for two days in prayer. At the end of that time, seeing that her prayers were not listened to, she murmured loudly against the saint, saying, "Since you have not chosen to hear me, I shall prevent all others from coming to your shrine." She then left Marbourg greatly irritated; but after having walked a mile and a half, the cries and sufferings of her child obliged her to rest near a fountain in the village of Rosdorf. The baby fell asleep for

a moment, and when she awoke said that she had seen a beautiful lady whose face was shining, and whose hands were white and fine, and that she had gently passed her hands over her back and breast, and said, "Arise and walk." And "Oh, mother, now I feel myself healed through my whole body." It is pleasant to hear "that they returned together to the shrine to render thanks to the saint, and left there the basket in which the sick one had been carried."

Quamdam dominam ad se venientem vidisse, cujus facies splendida, manus graciles et candidæ, quæ manibus suis lenivit corpus ejus in dorso et pectore, et dixit: surge et ambula.

HEALING MEDIUMSHIP.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

A FEW days ago Dr. Mack called upon me, saying that he had cured a case of blindness of eighteen years standing, and that he wished me to see the patient. I went with him to Mr. Manns, 270, Goswell-road, London, and saw the servant, Emily Clarke, who had been cured, also Mrs. Manns. The latter said that her servant had been nearly blind for the year she had been with her, and had been growing worse. Dr. Mack merely let a little mesmerised water drop into her eyes, and nearly cured her in a few minutes. Before that she could never see the time by the clock across the kitchen, but ever since she has been able to do so easily, and to read small print. One eye was always worse than the other; it is not strong now, but she can read with it. There is now considerable difference in the focal distance of the lenses of the two eyes; in other words, one eye is longer-sighted than the other. I asked Dr. Mack what induced him to perform the apparently empirical act of dropping mesmerised water into the eye; he replied that, as usual with him, he did it involuntarily, under spirit control; all his cures, he said, are effected in like manner.

The following certificate was then given me for publication:—

"At about the age of two years I had what most children have in early life, the common illness called measles, which left a condition in the eyes, resulting eventually in the blindness of one and a dimness of the other. Various remedies and institutions were resorted to for the recovery of my sight. I was an outdoor patient of Little Moorfields Hospital, London; also the Maidstone and Chatham Hospitals. In the two former I was an outdoor patient about five years without receiving any benefit; and in the latter about six months, when the dimness of my left eye was partially removed. Lastly, in the summer of 1876, then living at the house of Mr. Arnold, 5, Grosvenor-street, Grosvenor-park, Camberwell, the sight of my eye became so much clouded that it was with difficulty that I could do my work. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold prevailed upon me to visit the Royal South London Ophthalmic Hospital, where I was admitted by Mr. Carter, the physician in attendance. He examined my eyes, and recommended an operation, which I declined, and was discharged as incurable.

"In 1878 I entered the service of Mr. Matthew Manns, wholesale and retail grocer, 215, Goswell-road, E.C. My work here was very imperfectly done, at times requiring great forbearance on the part of Mrs. Manns, which made me very despondent and fearful that I should be left dependent upon the charity of the world. Mrs. Manns, being herself an invalid suffering from an almost incurable disease, having heard of Dr. Mack's success in similar cases, she was induced to try his skill, although no one in the house seemed to know of him or his peculiar method of practice. Mrs. Manns, however, found so much benefit from his treatment that I felt encouraged to submit my case to him, but with the least possible hope of success. Yielding to the desire of Mr. Manns I went upstairs where Dr. Mack was treating Mrs. Manns, her daughter being also present. After a little delay the doctor looked into my eyes and stated that he might be able to benefit one eye, perhaps both, and that he would try and see what could be done in a few minutes. I must confess that I felt very nervous, because I did not know but what bad might be made worse. He evidently knew my feelings, and assured me if he did me no good he

would do no harm. Having asked for a glass of water, which I furnished, he took it in one hand while the fingers of the other were directed downwards, being held immediately over the water for one minute. He then placed the tumbler upon the table, and bending my head backwards, he dipped his fingers into the water, and allowed a few drops to fall into my eyes. Standing behind me, he placed his hands on the sides of my head with his fingers extended over my eyes, and suddenly I felt a burning or scalding sensation behind and around my eyes, and then a fluid ran from them down my face. The time occupied in this treatment was about ten minutes. He then asked me to try and see what improvement was made, and I told him I could see quite well. After placing his fingers over my right eye, which was formerly blind, I found I could see with that also every object in the room, even to the colour of the dresses worn by the ladies, a feat impossible before Dr. Mack's treatment; but still there was a haziness about my eyes. He then repeated the operation twice, the whole treatment not occupying more than half an hour, at the conclusion of which Dr. Mack requested me to keep my eyes as quiet as possible for a few days, thus allowing them to get strong and accustomed to the light. On the next day, however, he treated them again, and I could see as well as anyone could wish, the haziness being entirely removed. The first treatment was on November 27th, 1878; and my sight is now perfectly restored, my eyes are strong, and I can read the smallest print with ease. To me the powers of Dr. Mack have proved a blessing, the fear of being burdensome to myself and others through my previously helpless condition has been removed, my heart has been relieved from a dread, and my soul thanks God for endowing Dr. Mack with such marvellous powers. I am willing to answer any questions, or to prove in any possible way the facts here recorded, for the benefit of those who may suffer from the same distressing malady. (Signed) EMILY CLARKE."

"We, the undersigned, know the above statements to be substantially correct.

"MATTHEW MANNS.
"V. MANNS.
"E. C. MANNS."

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.
POSSESSED.

At the last meeting of the Psychological Society, before the delivery of an address by Professor Plumtre, Mr. F. K. Munton, the honorary secretary, read the following narrative from the *Pall Mall Gazette* about psychological phenomena in Italy:—

In a little village away up in the province of Udine, on the borders of Italia Irredenta, there is great alarm and commotion; for the young girls of the place, one after another, are showing outward and visible signs of being possessed by a devil. According to all accounts there are now about thirty young women in this unhappy condition. Why the Evil One should have selected so obscure a village for his operations does not seem quite clear. Indeed, the blame is laid not on him, but on the priests. Inquiries made by the authorities have elicited the fact that in Lent last year a series of discourses were delivered by a priest, in which he described at great length and with much detail the pains of hell; thereby terrifying weak young women that they were already lost, and that the devil had entered into them. The priests, who at first were rather pleased with the impression their brother made, have since found that though they had raised the spirit they had no power to lay it again. Holy water produces no effect, the most searching exorcisms fail, and even such practical measures as beating the person affected have been found useless. While the fit of madness is on the "possessed" crow like cocks, or mew like cats, or bark and howl like dogs and wolves. What is worse, they shock their neighbours by blasphemous and obscene language; being especially violent against the priests, cursing them for their inability to relieve their suffering by casting out the devil. The prefect of the province has sent a commission to Verzegnis, the name of the village, to see what can be done to stop the progress of this madness; for, by force of example and terror, it threatens to spread. The people of the district are ignorant and uneducated, and cannot be persuaded but that the devil is really at large amongst them. It must be remembered that the rural population in many parts of Italy is no further advanced in civilisation than England was two or three hundred years ago.

A curious incident of the same kind was related to me a few months ago by a friend who had heard it from the lips of one of the doctors at the lunatic asylum at Siena. At Siena there is a very large asylum in proportion to the number of inhabitants, but it is nearly always full. Among the patients is a man who was formerly servant to a priest in the town, and had been remarkable for his piety and devotion. A year or two ago he began to show signs of religious mania, and his master, in hope of curing him, sent him to a country house for change of air and scene. The man appeared to get better, and after some months returned to the town, but the mania soon began to show itself again. He had

an idea that he was a bishop, and used to preach in the streets; so it was resolved to place him in the asylum. Two attendants were sent with a carriage to remove him; and, to get him away quietly, he was told that he was to officiate at a religious function. As he was driving through the streets he blessed the people; and on nearing the asylum he expressed a wish to go in and bless "the poor mad people," and so was taken in. It was easy to persuade him that the patients were his flock, and he used to preach to them, and to assist the keepers in many little ways; and so, being gentle and harmless, he became a great favourite. Among his flock was a very violent lunatic, who constantly used language so blasphemous and disgusting that it shocked the keepers, and even the other patients; and to this man he specially devoted his attention, trying to reason with him and bring him to a calmer state, but always in vain. One day, without any warning, he fell on the blasphemer and strangled him, telling the keepers that the man was possessed with a devil, that he had long tried to cast him out but in vain, and so, as the possessed creature was too wicked to live, he had killed him. But now it seemed as if the spirit of the dead man had entered into his murderer. Religion was forgotten, and its place was taken by all the vicious passions of his victim. The most blasphemous language continually issued from lips that hitherto had been pure of evil speaking; his gentle nature gave place to the violence which had characterised the man he had killed; and from being the most tractable of patients he has now become one of the most dangerous and the one of whom the keepers are most in fear. They all firmly believe that the evil spirit cast out of the murdered man actually did enter into the body of the murderer.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

LAST Tuesday night one of the best entertainments which has been given in connection with Spiritualism for a long time came off in the rooms of the National Association of Spiritualists at Great Russell-street, London. It consisted of a concert and private theatrical entertainment, in aid of the funds of the Association, and the rooms were well filled by members and their friends.

The concert commenced with Nicolai's overture, "The Merry Wives of Windsor," spiritedly rendered by the Misses Withall. This was followed by a vocal duet, "Una Sera d'Amore," by the Misses Beaumont, which was much applauded. A slight change was made in the programme by the introduction of Gounod's song "Oh that we two were Maying," a composition in Gounod's own peculiar vein; although it is not in all parts fully adapted to Kingsley's beautiful words, Miss Beaumont yet succeeded well in blending, as much as might be, the power of the music with the pathos of the poetry. Miss Lucie Cobbe, of the Royal Academy of Music, gave a pianoforte recital of Schubert's "Minuet and Trio in B Minor," and Mendelssohn's "Bees' Wedding," with taste and skill, the latter piece being most noticeable for grace and delicacy of interpretation. This was followed by a song from Miss Blanche Beaumont, "The Little Mountain Lad," a pretty piece, admirably suited to the singer's rich contralto voice. Miss Leslie Younge sang two songs with her accustomed power and grace; the second of them, "Darby and Joan," was sung with sweetness and pathos, as it should be.

Later in the evening Mrs. Edwin Ellis, who had taken the lead in getting up the whole entertainment, joined Mr. Louis Weighton in the dramatic performance of *The Happy Pair*. In this piece the husband, whose part was ably acted, quarrelled with his wife, like the brutes which men always are; but when the wife, in the most natural manner possible, turned upon him, rendering evil for evil, the groans and sighs of the astonished and repentant husband would have melted the heart of a stone. The piece came to a close, after he had been so well subdued, that the example set by the accomplished heroine could not have been thrown away on any lady present.

Altogether, the entertainment was better than the average of amateur performances, and a second one of the kind would probably draw a good audience upon its own merits, apart from supporting any particular object.

IMITATIONS OF SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA BY JUGGLERY.

THE blue leaflets which we have had printed for circulation contain the following passages about those jugglers and men of science who deceive the public by telling them that spiritual phenomena are not real:—

"Inquirers into the phenomena of Spiritualism should begin by forming circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or stranger to the family present.

"The assertions of a few newspapers, conjurers, and men of science that the alleged phenomena are jugglery, are proved to be untrue by the fact that manifestations are readily obtainable by private families, with no stranger present, and without deception by any member of the family. At the present time there are only about half-a-dozen professional mediums for the physical phenomena in all Great Britain, consequently, if these were all tricksters (which they are not), they are so few in number as to be unable to bear out the imposture theory as the foundation of the great movement of modern Spiritualism. Readers should protect themselves against any impostors who, knowing to the contrary, may hereafter tell them that the phenomena are not real, by trying simple home experiments which cost nothing, thus learning how egregiously those are duped who trust in worthless authorities."

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS INSIDE A SEALED BOX.

THE following letter, by Mr. Robert Cooper, late of Eastbourne, is published in *Mind and Matter*, a new weekly Spiritualistic journal just started in Philadelphia:—

At the commencement of autumn of the present year some remarkable experiments were made through the mediumship of Mrs. Thayer, the celebrated flower medium of Boston, a full account of which has not yet been published. I now propose to give a detailed account of the experiments referred to, for I consider that such well-authenticated and conclusive phenomena should not be allowed to escape the notice of the public, but should be added to the facts, multitudinous and varied in their character, that are daily occurring, and on which the superstructure of the glorious spiritual philosophy is based.

The phenomena peculiar to Mrs. Thayer's mediumship consist principally of the production of flowers in a closed room. Of the reality of this fact hundreds of intelligent persons have become satisfied. The idea occurred to me that it might be possible for the power that brought the flowers into a closed room to go a step further, and introduce them into a closed box. The importance of this is obvious, inasmuch as the suspicion of confederacy on the part of others, and of secreting the flowers by the medium, would be entirely done away with. With this idea in my mind I proposed to Mrs. Thayer to make the trial, and with her usual willingness to oblige, she readily consented, at the same time remarking that she was not at all sure it could be done.

Accordingly, I bought a box at a store—an ordinary square packing case. It was made of three-quarter inch pine board, being nailed together with strong nails. Its dimensions were a little over a foot on all sides. I had the lid hung with hinges, and had a piece of glass securely fixed in it, so that the inside of the box could be seen without opening it. Thus prepared, I invited several intelligent and reliable persons to be present, in order to witness the trial. Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, the well-known mediums, being in Boston, kindly offered the use of their rooms, and it was there the company met—fourteen in number.

After an examination of the box, and everybody being satisfied there was nothing in it, it was closed. I then took from my pocket a padlock, which I had bought for the purpose, and which had never been out of my possession, and secured the lid. As an additional security, a strip of gummed paper was stuck on the top and thence to the side, a seal being attached to either end of it. A gentleman also stuck a strip of court plaster in a similar position on another part of the box. Everything being ready, the light was about to be turned out, when Mrs. Thayer said she had forgotten to bring her handkerchief that she usually places on the top of her head during the manifestations. This she uses to protect her head from the electrical influences that prevail, and which are apt to produce subsequent pain. Thereupon, a gentleman took from his wallet a packet of Japanese paper handkerchiefs, and offered one to Mrs. Thayer, who remarked that as it was not silk it was of no use, and it was placed on the table and the light turned out. The company, thus seated around the box in darkness, commenced singing, which was continued with intervals of cessation for about half an hour, and nothing having apparently occurred, except occasional raps on the box and on the table, it was resolved to strike a light and see if anything had taken place. On looking into the box, something was discovered, which, in the dim light, was supposed to be flowers, but which, on the box being opened, proved to be the paper handkerchief which had been left lying on the table, the red pattern of which had been mistaken for flowers. It will be noticed, in this case, that the handkerchief was not taken from the owner's pocket until the box had been "fixed," and was seen inside before it was opened. The box was then removed, and the light again extinguished, when, in a very short time, a large branch of a fir tree, several lilies, and other flowers were found on the table. They were all apparently freshly gathered and were covered with cold dew, though the room was uncomfortably hot and the medium had not been out of it for at least an hour and a half. At the conclusion of the *séance* the following certificate was unhesitatingly signed by those present, none of whom appeared to entertain the slightest doubt but that they had witnessed a most conclusive instance of the passage of one material substance through another: "This is to certify that we, the undersigned, were present at a *séance* at No. 8, Davis-street, on the evening of August 24th, 1878, when the phenomenon of matter passing through matter was conclusively demonstrated in the presence of Mrs. Thayer, the flower medium, by a paper handkerchief being passed into a sealed and locked box.—Robert Cooper, Charles Houghton, J. L. Newman, D. D. Densmore, John Wetherbee, Edna R. Houghton, J. Nelson Holmes, Jennie W. Holmes, F. E. Crane, L. H. Ross, Mrs. Augustus Wilson, Mrs. A. B. Lawrence, Mrs. A. C. Sylands, J. Martin."

It was claimed by the spirits that operate through the Holmeses that it was by their agency the handkerchief had been introduced into the box. Be this as it may, there is no doubt of the fact that the phenomenon occurred. An excellent account of the *séance* was published in the *London Medium and Daybreak*, by Mr. John Wetherbee.

Well satisfied with our success, although the full object in view had not been attained, it was determined to make another trial. After the lapse, therefore, of a week or so, a few persons were invited to be present at Mrs. Thayer's residence in Washington-street, the time chosen being three o'clock in the afternoon. The box having been duly inspected and sealed as before, and the light extinguished, we had not long to wait for results, for in the midst of the singing in which we were engaged, a loud noise was heard, suggesting the idea that the box was broken to pieces; but on a light being procured it was found to be perfectly intact and the seals unbroken, and through the glass could be discerned several objects, the principal of which were flowers. It was thought advisable not to open the box, but to submit it for inspection as it was; and for this purpose it was taken to the *Banner of Light* store, where it remained on view for two or three days, and where at length it was opened in the

presence of several persons, who examined the box thoroughly and were all assured that it was no trick-box, but, as has before been stated, an ordinary packing box, of the simplest character. The contents are given in the following certificate, which was signed by all who witnessed the *séance*:—

"At a *séance* held at 833, Washington-street, Boston, September 3rd, 1878, Mrs. Thayer medium, the undersigned, who were present, hereby certify that a copy of the *Banner of Light* and the *Voice of Angels*, a photograph, several tiger lilies, a piece of fern, roses, &c., were found introduced into a locked and sealed box, besides several flowers on the table.—Robert Cooper, Laura Kendrick, Jonathan M. Roberts, J. N. Holmes, Jennie W. Holmes, G. A. Bacon, Mrs. Anna L. Reilly, Richard Hart (of London), Mrs. I. Floyd."

The flowers on the table referred to came after the box manifestation. They were principally red roses, and the largest of them was found on the head of the medium. None of the objects, with the exception of the photograph, were, so far as is known, on the premises at the time; the photograph had been placed in a trunk in an adjoining room.

A few weeks after the above occurrences Col. H. S. Olcott, president of the Theosophical Society of New York, happened to be in Boston, and it was thought desirable that he should witness a box *séance*. Accordingly a few friends of Mr. Charles Houghton, at whose residence Col. Olcott was staying, were invited by that gentleman to his residence in Jamaica Plain to meet Mrs. Thayer. The *séance* was unsuccessful, for just as the manifestations were commencing the arrival of fresh guests disturbed the proceedings, and the *séance* was not continued. The following night, however, Mrs. Thayer held her regular public circle, and after most of the visitors had departed it was resolved to make a trial with the box, in order that Col. Olcott, who was present, might witness it. The box at this time had been further secured by having a strip of gummed paper, with a seal at each end, placed on every angle, and Col. Olcott impressed his signet ring on the seals that secured the lid. Results had not long to be waited for, for in a short time the box was found nearly half full of beautiful flowers and a large piece of trailing plant, all fresh and perfect, as if that moment gathered where they grew.

Such is a plain statement of the facts of these remarkable *séances*. They involve not only the transporting of objects from one place to another, but the still more inexplicable fact of one material substance passing through another. The passage of matter through matter is of frequent occurrence at spiritual *séances*, and very few Spiritualists doubt the fact of it occurring; but I am not aware that such an unique and striking example of it has ever occurred as I now describe, and I have therefore deemed it advisable to place these *séances* on record in a somewhat detailed form. The witnesses to the facts are persons of more than average intelligence, and their probity unimpeachable, and not one of them, I believe, has seen occasion to alter the opinion formed at the time of the *séances*; indeed, it is rare for facts, of the character in question, to be so well attested and the verdict pronounced on them so unanimous and unequivocal.

ROBERT COOPER.

Boston, U.S., Dec. 29th, 1878.

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.]

CAPTAIN BURTON'S "IFS."

SIR,—Captain Burton's series of little "ifs" are summed up by and contained within those two larger ifs of the Hebrew prophet quoted in my last letter—"If the Lord be God, worship Him; and if Baal be God, worship him;" but until the greater ifs are understood, and the commands following them are obeyed, there is small hope of solid good resulting from his suggestions. Substituting for "the Lord" the words Moral Law, and for "Baal," Political Economy, and using neuter instead of masculine pronouns, the sentence becomes, I trust, acceptable to the less "superstitious" among us.

To make my meaning perfectly plain, I take the words of the greatest intuitional philosopher who ever lived for my definition of the principles of moral law, and for my definition of the principles of political economy I take the words of the President of the Glasgow Social Science Congress, spoken in 1874; placing them in opposition:—

"Ye are all brethren; ye are all one." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "Give to him that asketh thee, and of him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away."

To the same effect I might quote Buddha, or Plato, Cicero, Jerome, and Carlyle; but what saith utilitarianism?—

"Man has been defined to be an animal that exchanges. It will be seen, however, that he not only exchanges; but, from the fact of his belonging in part to the order carnivora, that he also inherits to a considerable degree the desire to possess without exchanging; or, in other words, by fraud and violence, when such can be used for his own advantage, without danger to himself. . . . In order, therefore, to prevent or put a stop to a practice which each would object to in his own case, and which, besides, would put a stop to production altogether, both reason and a sense of justice would suggest the act of exchange as the only proper mode of obtaining things from one another."

I ask those who are really desirous that the world be made more divine to examine, in the light of the old-world teaching, Captain Burton's "ifs." To examine anything in the Egyptian darkness of modern political economy would require the carnivorous clairvoyance of that nation's cat-headed god of vengeance, who, by-the-by, is strangely related to Baal. This, I trust, they do not possess; and having so examined, they will, I think, find that every suggestion that makes for bitterness is utterly useless until men first acknowledge the unchangeable character of moral as well as physical law. You cannot teach

mechanics without making plain the law of gravitation underlying all. You cannot teach acts of honesty without making plain to heart and head of the learner the laws of love and duty that underlie all such acts.

Prophecy, or no prophecy, a nation that accepts the double-damned maxims of human brutality and human selfishness as her mother-law is already a nonentity; when the sulphurous fire within her shall reach even her external body, and the smoke of her destruction ascend, is but a question of time. NO MATTER WHO.

MADAME BLAVATSKY.

SIR,—Although I am not so bold or so unpolite as to meddle spon-taneously with that very delicate subject, a lady's age, yet, when it is thrust before me, I am in the habit of accepting it or not according to circumstances. So I must say I was considerably surprised to find in *The Spiritualist* of January 24th that Madame Blavatsky is, by her own showing, now eighty-two years of age, because I had inferred, from a letter by that lady, that it was so very different.

It had been alleged by an interviewer of Madame Blavatsky, in the *Revue Spirite* of June, 1878, that Madame "had passed nearly thirty years in India." To this Madame Blavatsky, in a letter contained in the *Revue Spirite* of September, replied:—"Speaking of age, although the journals have given me respectively, and at different epochs, the age of 25, 60, 86, 92, and 103 years, I feel myself obliged to assure your readers that I have not 'passed more than thirty years in India.' It is exactly my age—*c'est justement mon age*—although very respectable such as it is—it is in violent opposition to this chronology of fantasy." I had been led, from this, to suppose that Madame Blavatsky was thirty years of age. Madame Blavatsky has begun a series of letters in the *Revue* on the doctrines of the Theosophists, and in her letter of this month says, "If our doctrines interest the readers, in our next number we will try to be more explicit." SCRUTATOR.

SIR,—There are one or two particulars in Dr. Wyld's otherwise excellent description of Madame Blavatsky in this week's *Spiritualist* on which I should like to remark. In doing so, it is true, I have some apprehension of opening upon you the floodgates of theological contro-versy, although my object being only to guard against the old and perpetually recurring fallacy of confounding real and verbal differences, it ought not to have that result. In charging Madame Blavatsky with persisting in confusing "the essence with the external garment of Christianity," it would be interesting to know what and how much Dr. Wyld himself regards as the essence, and how much as the garment. Without assuming any other knowledge of his beliefs, I should certainly infer, from what he tells us of Madame Blavatsky's agreement with him, that were all the Churches of Christendom reunited, with an inquisition that should take the tenets common to all of them as the standard of orthodoxy, Dr. Wyld would with difficulty escape its fangs. What is that esoteric Christianity which is one and the same with esoteric Brahmanism and Buddhism? If there is nothing essential to Christianity which distinguishes it from the essence of other religions, by what right does it assume a distinctive appellation in virtue of this common truth? If these are his views, is it not obvious that it is Dr. Wyld who is using the word in a non-natural sense in defending Christianity, and not Madame Blavatsky in assailing it? If Dr. Wyld used the name "Christianity" to denote beliefs which any "heathen" may hold, can he complain of others for refusing to follow him in this misleading nomen-clature? What, in the opinion of any real Christian, would be his Christianity who should reject the identity—in a sense in which no other man can ever be identical—of the historical (or, as some of us may think, un-historical) person Jesus Christ with the supreme principle of the universe which we name God? Who should deny that that person is our Redeemer, in the sense in which no other man can ever be so termed? I will not speak of such doctrines as the vicarious sacrifice and atone-ment, against which even intelligent clergymen are revolting, but which are still either expressly enunciated, or apparently implied in most of the Christian creeds; still less of that other grotesquely shocking superstition, which yet few Christian ministers have the courage expressly to disclaim, that belief in these things is necessary to salva-tion. I speak only of the Jesus of the Gospel narratives as supplying, and exclusively supplying, in His attributes, and being the fundamental belief of Christians; and it is not the Gnostic Logos that will save Dr. Wyld from the dilemma in which he is placed. For my own part, in repudiating the term Christianity as descriptive of the profound truths of which I have but as yet a faint *aperçu*, I hold myself consistently at liberty to follow the track of those truths in the sublime, but for me, alas! too obscure writings of such great spiritual seers and thinkers as Behmen and St. Martin, for instance. So far as I have been able to penetrate into their essential teachings, it seems to me that they would be quite unimpaired by the admission that the supposed Christ of history is a myth. Yet in these writings, if anywhere among pro-fessedly Christian authors, is to be found that esoteric Christianity which is merely the ever-springing revelation of eternal truth to the prepared spirit. It argues nothing for Dr. Wyld that these men also called themselves Christians. The question is whether under the name of Christ they were speaking of a historical personage or of a regenera-tive principle. Surely the latter; and it and they might as appro-priately, or rather with as little propriety, have been called by any other name.

What, I would ask Dr. Wyld, are "the doctrines and works of all Christian teachers" for which Madame Blavatsky displays "an un-reasoning and intolerant hatred?" Are they doctrines and works which he accepts as expositions of his own Christianity? If not, is it not evident that he is taking a name to which he has no right? Is not a name, as a medium of mutual understanding by those who use it, the property of those who use it in a common sense, and not of those who use it in a peculiar sense?

Dr. Wyld's account of our friend is generally so appreciative and just, that I cannot but regret that in this and in one other respect he should seem to go rather out of his way to censure. It is true that her task in life being combative, she has the combative characteristics which can only be replaced by contemplative calm when the work of life is over. We attain to "the wisdom of the soul" by different roads. Once attained, it is perhaps not less perfect and sublime when it is the hero's repose from the battles he has fought, and his recovery from the wounds he has received, for truth's sake.

Dr. Wyld referred to another matter which it might be desirable to explain, if that were possible or allowable. I mean the age of our friend. Dr. Wyld would, I know, be the last person willingly to expose any statement of Madame Blavatsky to misconception. But he may unintentionally have done so with those who know, or who may ascer-tain, her life history only so far as any one can know it but herself. To Dr. Wyld, I believe, the statement was not incredible or inexplicable even in its apparent sense. But to other friends of Madame Blavatsky it was; and I can only say that they believe themselves to be in possession of an explanation which is at once profoundly interesting and, to them, entirely credible. C. C. MASSEY.

TESTING PHYSICAL MEDIUMS.

SIR,—I do not know that the following mode of test has ever been adopted, and, in the hope that it may prove as effectual as it would be easy to adopt, I beg to propose it.

Let a large net of silk or fine twine be made in the shape of a bag, say eight feet long by five feet wide, with only one opening at the end large enough for the medium to enter by.

The end should be capable of being drawn close together by a strong cord or fine wire.

The ends of the cord might be prepared so as to facilitate their being sealed together.

The medium having passed into this, and the net drawn overhead by the cord and sealed, might assume any position most convenient to him or her.

The enclosing net would afford an effectual bar to any successful attempt at personation, or any of the other kinds of deception which many allege, and not a few believe, mediums have been guilty of.

The room might be darkened, or the medium enclosed in a cabinet or room adjoining, or remain behind a curtain; but so long as the seal proved unbroken, it would be clearly a physical impossibility within any known law that the medium could be guilty of deception.

In this case, too, in order to save unnecessary waste of spiritual power, drapery might be provided, and whether placed on the person of the medium within the net, or outside of it, would be obviously immaterial.

The National Association would, I have no doubt, supply such nets if, after trying one, it was found to answer.

It is difficult to see why such a test should not prove an effectual, and very handy one too, particularly in the case of honest inquirers who desired to experiment for the first time. E. T. WAKEFIELD.

Hanover Lodge, Harrow-on-the-Hill.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

SIR,—The identity of those spirits who have been prematurely removed from this earth is probably made out by the aid of their guardians, or by the friendly intervention of some other spirits. I have never believed that messages are given, as a rule, by the unaided power of the spirit principally concerned. Most spirits, I believe, are unable to communicate independently, and avail themselves of the mediatorial aid of those who can; just as we, on our side, find a medium to place us in communication with spirit. I have been repeatedly told that messages given either through automatic writing or by raps proceed from a number of spirits acting in concert. And I find, as a rule, that messages are written by one who is more facile with the pen than those who use him as amanuensis.

The remembrance of earth-life is another matter. I believe that the spirit, as soon as it attains full consciousness on being freed from the body, sees and knows the events of its previous existence. And this it would do even though one's stage of that existence were a very short one. This is an invariable law in spirit life. That many seem to forget, or not to be able to tell accurately the events of their bodily life, may be owing to one or more of many causes. Either they have not mastered the difficulties of communication, or they have lost sight of the past in the absorbing interests of a wider sphere of life, or they have no strong *rapport* with earth; or, as in some cases known to me, the interval of semi-consciousness on their entry to the world of spirit has been so prolonged as to efface remembrance, or at any rate to blur the record of memory.

There is strong reason to believe that there is an evolution of spirit, step by step, up to incarnation, and that what we call earth-life is only one of many stages which the spirit, when emancipated from the prison-house of the body, is able to survey. W. STANTON MOSES, M.A.

London, Jan. 25.

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

SIR,—I had hoped to say my last in this controversy, but Mr. Mould has asked me—in the last number of *The Spiritualist*—some questions in so kind a spirit that I scarcely deem it fair to carry my lance out of the tournament without some answer being given to him.

He apparently wishes me to attempt to show that the "note of unity" is existing in the Christian faith, as exhibited in the creeds of Uni-tarians, Trinitarians, Arminians, Calvinists, and a number of other forms of opinion. To do so would involve a theological argument; and

more, it would imply a departure from my original position. It is no part of my undertaking to "bridge the gulf" existing between the intellectual conceptions of Arminians, Calvinists, or the like. The dweller on the Mendip Hills has little to do with the sports of "Giant Gomer" and "Giant Vincent" on Clifton Downs. Both an Arminian and a Calvinist would resent it as an impertinence if I were to attempt to criticise, to impugn, to defend, or to palliate any system of theology they may possess. Nor do I think it necessary to enter into a polemical discussion, which may be carried on in various methods and from various standpoints. I am also under the disadvantage that whereas anybody (who thinks it worth while) may know what is my own *critérium* of truth, I am ignorant of the platform from whence my querist may wish to address me. As a bird which has before now flown a little across the theological arena, I rather object to salt being placed on my tail, and have no intention to advocate the claims of any of the sects alluded to, or to depreciate any of them. The centre of Christian faith is independent of any particular form, and I must refrain from attempting to "bridge the gulf" which some, at least, have excavated for themselves. As I did not make the gulf, I am well content that it should exist; and I demur to all theological polemic as a side issue to the question I raised, "whether unity existed among Spiritualists?" If I have proved the negative of this proposition, it surely is unnecessary to expect me to prove the affirmative of a proposition that unity exists somewhere else. To do so would infringe on the privileges of the advocates of the sects, each of which claims unity, and require the train of reasoning of the theologian, besides being far out of the wide limits allowed to contributors to *The Spiritualist*, with the liberality which has always characterised its editorship.

I therefore must decline Mr. Mould's kind invitation, at the same time that I heartily commend to him for his perusal a rather elaborate argument on the subject, which he will find in the *Commonitorium* attached to Nakateni's *Celeste Palmetum* (Malines, 12mo., 1848), especially on page 765. The perusal of this will save me making your readers tired with the recital of my individual faith or prepossessions, or the reasons for the same, which are rather too long for the patience of that numerous class who, I hope, feel no interest in the matter; or, I will give Mr. Mould privately any reference he may desire.

C. CARTER BLAKE.

SIR,—As I do not imagine that you intend to open your columns to a discussion respecting the doctrines and polity of the Roman Catholic Church, I shall confine myself to simply answering Dr. Carter Blake's question indirectly addressed to myself. He says:—

"I must confess my entire ignorance of the time and place when (*sic*) the Roman Church 'took upon itself—for a consideration—to organise a belief for' Mr. Ellis."

My reply as to time is *now*; as to place is *everywhere*, but Rome in particular.

Dr. Carter Blake disputes my argument that the ancient Hebrews so entirely took for granted the belief in the immortality of the soul after the death of the body, that they never thought it necessary to formulate this belief into a distinct and definite shape; and he refers me in support of his doubts and views to the 113th Psalm.

I presume he means the 115th Psalm, as there, in the seventeenth verse, I find the words of which Dr. Carter Blake has given us the Latin version, and very significant words they are:—

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."

Now, I maintain that from the whole of the Old Testament you could scarcely cull another passage which more clearly expresses the opinion of Christian Spiritualists, who think that living souls praise the Lord, not the mortal persons who descend into the tomb. Our Saviour Himself said, in rebuking the Sadducees, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

I can conceive the pitying stare of astonishment with which King David would regard the imputation that his words were capable of the misrepresentation that he did not believe in the immortality of his own soul.

THEODORE ELLIS.

London, 20th January, 1879.

SIR,—In your last number, "A. J. C." and others ask an explanation of certain passages in my letter in *The Spiritualist* of the 10th inst.

I have also received private letters from Germany and elsewhere to the same effect, and I most willingly, so far as I am able, respond to these requests. I do this all the more willingly because "Esoteric Christianity," under the name of "Christian Occultism," is to be the subject of the paper which I hope to read before the Association on the 3rd March, and it seems advisable that some light should be thrown on the matter as a preparatory step.

In your last issue, Mrs. Matheson truly says that "the mystery of the Logos is revealed from within;" but at the same time I believe that the esoteric view of Christianity can be set forth categorically.

Mystical Christian writers generally repel superficial readers; but those who have pondered those writings, and have found, as it were, the "mystical key" in the illustrations furnished by the ecstatic entrancements of the psychics and saints, have had revealed to them the secret of the Logos as a fact, although none can possess the secret truly except those who have been internally illuminated.

Very briefly stated, the mystical views are to me somewhat as follows:—

1. The inner or esoteric essence of all religions is one and identical, namely, the longing of the soul to evoke its spiritual centre, and thus become *en rapport*, or at one, with the Supreme and Divine Centre—God.

2. Man is a trinity of body, soul, and spirit.

3. The soul, or mind, or terrestrial ego controls the body during the earth life.

4. The spirit is the God-like essence, the image, or gift of the Creator which dwells hidden or submerged in the centre of the soul.

5. To "save the soul" man must "know himself," and to do that he must seek, find, and evoke his spirit, and, when found, unite it to God actually, and thus become "One with the Father."

6. As a first step, man must determine to "Love the Lord his God with all his heart, and strength, and soul, and mind, and his neighbour as himself." He must resolve on a life of purity of thought, word, and deed, be temperate in all things, and practice continual love, and truth, and self-sacrifice.

7. The body and soul being thus prepared and purified by years of constant discipline, the believer then proceeds, by intense desire and prayer, to seek and evoke the hidden God-like spirit in the centre of the soul, so as to become united to God in actual unity.

8. This is a work of immense difficulty, for "many are called but few are chosen," and "narrow is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The difficulty is all the greater, because "whoso putteth his hand to the plough and turneth back is not fit for the kingdom of heaven," and relapsing into selfishness, continually retards the progress towards the light.

9. To those, however, who may be found worthy, the Spirit, the Lord, the Word, the Logos, or the "Christ within every man," comes suddenly to His temple, and the secret of the Logos is revealed in such a way as eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

10. The Spirit, or Holy Spirit, or Christ generically, thus becomes the Saviour of the soul in this life, and man while on earth becomes thus also in heaven, even as "the Son of Man who is in heaven," and he thus becomes the Divine, the miraculous, the spiritual man.

11. This as a *secret* was revealed by Jesus when He took Peter, and James, and John up into a high mountain apart, and as He prayed He was transfigured before them, and His face shone as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light.

12. Thus only can man while on earth have the kingdom of heaven, which is within him revealed, and this transfiguration of Jesus of Nazareth becomes the type of those acts whereby the saints have from time to time been raised from the ground, while their faces shone with effulgence, and their chambers became filled with light.

It is thus seen that man must "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling" from the centre of his own soul, and that any priestly intervention must be an interference with the divine anatomy of the soul, for the Christ in man is the Saviour of the body and soul as physiological and psychological facts.

This is the truest and highest theosophy, and has only been attained to in rare instances and at long intervals, although the time may possibly be not far distant when the Divine man may become more manifested to the world.

Meanwhile, it will be found an ample work to prepare to live the life; and the truer the life led the greater will become the health and strength, and wisdom and light of mind and body.

The reason, I conceive, why the mystics concealed their views under enigmatical language was, in the first place, as a protection to themselves in times of Church persecutions, and also in order that the worthy only should understand the mystery; for they knew that the powers of evil magic could be obtained by the practice of severe bodily austerities united with intense will force, and that such powers became demoniacal in the hands of wicked men and women.

There is a superficial analogy between the esoteric doctrine of the salvation of the soul and the epidemic conversions of revival periods; but this last not being prepared for by a life of continual self-sacrifice, is like the good seed which "fell on stony ground where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: but when the sun was up it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away." Further, these conversions being unaccompanied by the gifts of prophecy and healing, cannot be the truest salvation of the soul.

The views I have expressed have come to me during many years study of ecstatic entrancement, together with a continual study of the life-teachings of Jesus the Christ, and latterly by a study of the lives of the saints.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

SPIRITUALISM IN GLASGOW.

SIR,—To-day is the birthday of Burns—Scotland's son, Scotland's poet—misunderstood in his life, and worshipped after death, in common with all the great and good. Amidst the gloom of weather, hearts, and markets, a ray of light breaks through from the birthday remembrance of this great but heretical soul. Notwithstanding the depression of trade, and the excitement of the unfortunate City Bank trial, "Robbie's no forgot." The Spiritualists in Glasgow, with a number of temperance friends, met at a social gathering in the Trongate last night; Mr. Robertson, secretary of the Glasgow Spiritual Association, read an able paper appropriate to the occasion. Songs and recitations were the order of the hour, and an enjoyable "nicht wi' Burns" was spent. There is an amount of cheerfulness in the city, and should a stranger ask the cause, he is at once informed that it is Burns's birthday. A large number of *séances* is held here, and I regret that I have been compelled, from professional work, to decline invitations to many of them. Mr. David Duguid, the "Hafed" medium, holds two *séances* weekly—one at his private residence, every Wednesday evening at eight p.m., to a select circle of constant sitters, who have met thus for years. Under these favourable conditions, surprising manifestations occur under strict test conditions. Direct writing, direct painting, landscape, and miniature, being produced with several colours on "marked" cards, in from

a minute to a minute and a half. Dr. Wyld said some time ago he would gladly give £50 for positive evidence of direct writing. I venture to think Mr. Duguid's controls would not undertake this for money, but if Dr. Wyld will forward me two slates, with or without pencil, bound together in such a manner that they could not be opened without detection, I will willingly see what can be done in the matter. If accomplished (concerning which I have no doubt), I have every reason to believe that Dr. Wyld will find some useful way to invest £50 or more for the benefit of humanity, physically and spiritually. The power is very great at these *séances*, and I do not see that direct writing, conjoined to the passage of matter through matter, may not be as easy of production as "tying a knot on an endless cord." Mr. Duguid's second *séance* is given every Friday evening to members of the Association in their rooms. Trance addresses and answering questions are the leading features. These meetings are generally attended by the same persons, so the miseries of promiscuous *séances* are advantageously avoided. Mr. Robert Duguid, a brother of the gentleman mentioned, is also a medium. A circle of earnest investigators is held at his house every week. Trance and clairvoyance are the principal phenomena. Another circle has been held in the house of Mr. Bowman, the photographer, of Jamaica-street, during the last four months, every Sunday morning at 11 o'clock. The spirits or intelligences controlling the medium give great satisfaction; they enunciate broad views, practical in character, and eminently adapted to the concerns of everyday life. To certain learned minds Spiritualism, although investigated by them before I was born, affords no evidence of a "life hereafter" or immortality. To my mind there is one thing which creates in me a most profound impression, namely, the universal fact in modern Spiritualism, that all "controls," "intelligences," seen and unseen, "forms," and "materialised spirits" claim to have once lived upon this earth; also the words and deeds of many of them are awfully human. In fact "medium," "spirit of the medium," "will power," and the "etc." which covers all the rest of the speculations, has been utterly unable to account for a single rap, since the so-called spirit of a murdered pedlar thirty years ago said he did it. Philosophers differ, so do doctors, here, and I have no doubt hereafter; but upon this point all "spirits" are agreed, "they once lived on earth." They are the same Tom, Dick, and sweet Arabella we once knew. The public Sunday services of the Association continue to be fairly attended. Mr. Alex. Duguid, a third of the medical brothers, favoured us last Sunday with an inspirational address on the "New Dispensation." To describe it as an oratorical effort of the first order is not saying too much. Mr. Alex. Duguid will occupy the platform of the Association six times during the coming year. It is commonly reported that Mr. A. Duguid is about to take the field as one of the forlorn hope—one of the public mediums. He is known for his thorough earnestness, and has a large stock of zeal and enthusiasm to back him in his work; he is a trance clairvoyant and test medium. Mr. Wallis will occupy the platform of the Association next Sunday, at eleven a.m. and half-past six p.m.; the subjects will be selected by the audience. He will also lecture on the following Monday at eight p.m. Mr. Wallis's last visit to Glasgow gave such satisfaction that the Association have arranged with him to deliver a series of lectures during the year.

If Spiritualism, real and true, is not making much noise in these parts, "the work goes bravely on." The tricks of conjurers may amuse, create a hearty laugh, and thus do good; the lies of conjurers may deceive for a little; but *time* will test and wipe them out. Truth will prevail, and Spiritualism itself stand the test of man's enlightened reason and conscience. The truth will remain to cheer our hearts and help us to bear the discipline of this life; for life has its duties, the performance of which forms the steps to the greater and real spiritual life, the full enjoyment of which is the *right*, I believe, alike of peasant and king.

J. COATES.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE SPIRITUAL EVIDENCE SOCIETY.

The quarterly meeting of the Newcastle Spiritualists' Society, under the presidency of Mr. John Mould, was held on Wednesday evening last week. There was a good attendance of members. After the usual preliminary business was concluded, the secretary proceeded to read the quarterly report, which stated that there had been twenty-six *séances* during the quarter, at which 284 members had been present. After the report had been carried, the question of the re-engagement of Mr. J. J. Morse came forward, when it was ultimately moved by Mr. Hakersey, and seconded by Mr. Geo. Wilson, that "Mr. Morse be engaged for twelve months, but that the terms of the engagement be left with the committee." Only one voted against the motion.

Mr. H. A. Kersey moved, "That the name of the society be changed from its present title 'Psychological,' to that of the 'Newcastle Spiritualists' Society,'" as he thought that they ought to have a name which described what they meant. He had long thought that the present title was unsuited to the objects of the society.

Mr. Geo. Wilson seconded the motion.

Mr. W. C. Robson opposed the motion, as he thought that its present title was much better, seeing that the society included not only Spiritualists, but a great many who were only investigators. They did not want to make a sect of Spiritualism, but if they made it a "Spiritualists' Society," they barred the door against new inquirers.

Mr. Kay moved an amendment, "That the name of the society should be the 'Newcastle-on-Tyne Spiritual Evidence Society.'" He said that the word psychological did not convey any meaning to the outside world.

Mr. Dawson, in a few appropriate remarks, seconded the amendment.

A good discussion followed, and on the votes being taken the motion was lost by a large majority; only five voting for it, and twenty-one against. The amendment was ultimately carried by a small majority on being put against the original title.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

The following details about the council and constitution of the Psychological Society of Great Britain may be of interest:—Its place of meeting is 11, Chandos-street, Cavendish-square, London, W., and it was established in 1875. President, Mr. Serjeant Cox. Vice-Presidents, Lord Borthwick, Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., and Mr. George Harris, LL.D. Council, Mr. W. H. T. Balliston, Mr. P. W. Clayden, Mr. W. H. Coffin, Mr. R. H. W. Dunlop, C.B., Mr. E. B. Florence, Mr. J. Percy Gordon, Lieutenant-Colonel Hartley, LL.D., Captain Kelso, R.N., Mr. T. Russel Kent, the Rev. W. S. Moses, M.A., Mr. F. Myers, Mr. C. C. Massey, Mr. F. W. Percival, M.A., Professor C. J. Plumptre, Mr. Deputy Saunders, Mr. G. M. Tagore, and Mr. C. S. Wake. Hon. Sec. and Treasurer, Mr. Francis K. Munton.

The following are the rules of the Society:—

1.—This Society is formed for the promotion of Psychological science in all its branches. Its object is the investigation of the forces, organic and intelligent, that move and direct the material mechanism of man.

2.—The Society consists of ordinary members and honorary and corresponding members.

3.—The government of the Society is vested in the Council; and the Council, elected as hereinafter mentioned, consists of the president, six vice-presidents, a treasurer, a secretary, and eighteen ordinary members, of whom six shall retire annually, the retiring members to be selected by lot, and to be eligible for re-election for the ensuing year.

4.—The president, vice-presidents, treasurer, secretary, and six of the ordinary members of the Council shall be elected by ballot at the annual general meeting.

5.—If, in the interval between two annual meetings, any vacancy in the Council shall occur, the Council shall have the power of appointing some member of the Society to fill such vacancy.

6.—The election of members is deputed to the Council. Each candidate for admission must be proposed by a member of the Society, or give references satisfactory to the Council.

7.—Every person elected shall, on producing the treasurer's certificate that the payments hereinafter directed have been made, be admitted by the chairman at the first ordinary meeting at which he is present, according to the following form:—"In the name, and by the authority of the Psychological Society of Great Britain, I admit you a member thereof."

8.—Each member resident within twenty miles of London shall pay an annual subscription of two guineas; beyond that distance one guinea. Such annual subscriptions can at any time be compounded for by a payment of twenty guineas or ten guineas respectively.

9.—Ladies' tickets may be issued by the Council at one guinea per annum, admitting to all meetings not expressly excepted in the notice, and entitling to all the publications of the Society.

10.—All annual subscriptions become due on the 1st day of January in each year; but an original subscription commencing after the 31st day of October extends to the end of the following year.

11.—Whenever a member shall be one year in arrear in the payment of his annual contributions, the treasurer shall apprise him by letter, and if the arrears be not paid within one month after the forwarding of such letter, the treasurer shall report such default to the Council, and the Council shall use its discretion in erasing the name of such member from the list; and he shall not be allowed to attend the meetings of the Society, nor to enjoy any of its privileges, until his arrears be paid.

12.—Any member may withdraw from the Society by signifying his wish to do so by letter under his own hand addressed to the secretary. Such member shall, however, be liable to the contribution of the year in which he signifies his wish to withdraw, and shall continue liable to the annual subscription until he shall have discharged all sums due by him to the Society.

13.—Should there appear cause in the opinion of the Council for the expulsion from the Society of any member, a special meeting of the Council shall be called for that purpose; and if three-fourths of those voting agree by ballot that such member be expelled, his name shall be erased from the list of members.

14.—A general meeting shall be held annually on the third Thursday in May, to receive the report of the secretary on the state of the Society, and to discuss and determine such matters as may be brought forward by the Council relative to the affairs of the Society. No law of the Society shall be altered except by resolution at a general meeting.

15.—The Council shall call a special general meeting of the Society whenever it seems to them necessary, or when required by any five members to do so. Every such requisition shall be signed by five or more members, and shall specify, in the form of a resolution, the object intended to be submitted to the meeting.

16.—The requisition, the resolution, and the notice of the special meeting shall be sent to all members one fortnight previous to such meeting; and at the meeting the discussion shall be confined to the object specified in the motion.

17.—The ordinary meetings of the Society shall be held on the first and third Thursdays in every month from November to June both inclusive; and a printed card of such meetings shall be sent to each member before the commencement of the session.

18.—Business shall commence at half-past eight o'clock in the evening precisely, when the minutes of the preceding ordinary meeting shall be read.

19.—The regular business of ordinary meetings shall be to read the minutes of the preceding meeting, and to read and discuss such com-

munications relating to Psychology as have been approved by the Council and ordered to be read at the meeting.

20.—Every member shall have the privilege of introducing two visitors (personally or by written order) at all ordinary meetings of the Society, but the name and that of the member introducing shall be entered in a book kept for the purpose.

21.—At an ordinary meeting no question relating to the laws or management of the Society shall be introduced.

22.—The president, or any three members of the Council, may at any time call a meeting of the Council, to which the whole Council shall be summoned.

23.—In all meetings of the Council *three* shall be a quorum. All questions shall be settled by vote unless a ballot be demanded, the chairman having, in case of an equality, a casting vote.

24.—The president shall take the chair at every meeting of the Society or of the Council at which he may be present; he shall keep order in all proceedings, submit questions to the meeting, and perform the other customary duties of a chairman.

25.—It is the duty of the president to execute and cause to be executed the regulations of the Society; to see that all the officers of the Society and members of the Council and of committees perform the duties assigned to, or undertaken by them respectively; to call for reports and accounts from committees and persons; to cause, of his own authority, and when necessary, special meetings of the Council and of committees to be summoned; and to propose, from time to time, to the Council such measures as shall appear to him conducive to the welfare of the Society.

26.—As chairman of the Council he shall appoint referees to examine and report on original papers communicated to the Society, previous to their being read or published.

27.—In the absence of the president, the senior vice-president at the meeting shall preside. If no vice-president be present, the meeting shall elect any member present as president for the evening.

28.—The Council may appoint committees for any purpose, and delegate to such committees all necessary powers for the performance of their duties.

29.—The secretary has a general charge of all the arrangements, and the execution of all the directions, of the Council and of the Society, and the immediate superintendence of all persons employed by the Society; charge of its books and papers, and also, conjointly with the treasurer, of the accounts of the Society.

30.—The whole of the property and effects of the Society of what kind soever, shall be vested in three trustees for its use: one of which trustees shall always be the treasurer for the time being; and two shall be chosen by the members at a general meeting of the society.

31.—Every paper presented to the Society shall in consequence of such presentation be considered as the property of the Society, unless there shall have been any previous engagement with its author to the contrary; and the Council may publish the same, in any way, and at any time, that they may think proper. But should the Council refuse or neglect, within a reasonable time, to publish any such paper, the author shall have a right to copy the same, and publish it under his own direction. No other person shall publish any paper belonging to the Society without the previous consent of the Council.

32.—No paper shall be read exceeding twenty minutes in the reading, no speaker thereon shall exceed ten minutes, and the author shall be allowed fifteen minutes for reply. But any of the limits may be extended by the chairman with the consent of the meeting. No speech shall be commenced after 10 p.m. except the reply.

33.—Honorary members of the Society shall be selected by the Council from men eminent in psychological science throughout the world.

34.—Corresponding members shall also be elected, to consist of gentlemen residing in foreign countries, capable of furnishing information on subjects of interest to the Society.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA IN AUSTRALIA.

MR. JESSE SHEPARD, the medium, is in Australia, and the *Sydney Evening News* of October 19 last, publishes the following account of a *séance* with him:—

A circle of ten, for the most part well-known citizens acquainted with each other, and above suspicion of collusion, met at Mr. Shepard's rooms, at Mona House, Wynyard-square, on Friday evening last at eight o'clock. Our *séance* commenced by the sitters writing the names of any friend they wished to communicate with on slips of paper, which being folded up and placed before the medium, he took them up in turn, and soon obtained written answers from some who announced their presence. Two were received from very ancient spirits who purported to be present. One came in with the sitter who arrived last—a stranger to Mr. Shepard—who said immediately upon his entrance, "A Greek spirit has come in with you, who has been trying to influence you." This the gentleman, himself a medium, acknowledged to have been the case.

The writing by spirit agency, however, not being a specialty of Mr. Shepard, proved so exhausting to him that his invisible friends commanded him to close with a short developing circle.

The doors were accordingly locked and the lights extinguished, and the sitters joining hands were invited to engage in singing well-known hymns. Before the lights were well out the writer was patted gently on the hands by little fingers, which she recognised as those of her departed child, whose name was given as present, and who afterwards encircled her with his arms from behind. Mr. Shepard, it should be stated, was sitting in front of a piano, with a heavy table four feet by two and a half between him and the sitters, whose chairs were arranged in semi-

circular order towards him. Soon all present were being touched and spoken to by their invisible friends. One well-known control in Sydney circles, of the gentleman spoken of above, sustained a prolonged conversation with him in the direct voice, and also did the same with one or more besides, asserting he would show his power, which he did with a vengeance at the conclusion. All this time a guitar and tambourine at first upon the table were off, and being carried about and played by the invisibles—now resting on some of the hands of the sitters, now upon their heads; whilst the medium, from his seat near the piano, was continually speaking, giving the names of spirits present and messages from them, and occasionally drawing sweetest music from the instrument. Several in the circle were controlled by spirits—two gentlemen spoke in foreign tongues—and two ladies were simultaneously inspired by different singers. Presently Mr. Shepard announced that Malibran would herself sing through him her favourite song from the opera of *Il Puritani*—always received with the greatest applause while she was in earth life, and which she hoped would be appreciated by those composing the circle. The company were then enraptured with the most heavenly music (vocal and instrumental) that can be conceived, the guitar also accompanying, and were also treated to a ravishing duet by the medium and one of the ladies. The singers, it appeared, were controlled by departed celebrities, while the charming accompaniment was attributable to the influence of another. This wonderful *séance* was drawn to a close by the table—no light one—being raised from the ground, without contact; and after some little delay, from resting on the hands of the sitters, it was cast over their heads on to the floor, outside the circle. The spirit visitors then said "Good night," the father of the writer breathing, in his own well-remembered voice, "God bless you!" while his tender hand was laid upon her forehead.

The above is a most incomplete and inadequate account of this never-to-be-forgotten evening, the foregoing particulars of which are found to be corroborated by the other sitters spoken to on the subject, except where the experience related would naturally be confined to the mind of the narrator.—COMMUNICATED.

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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 acrid 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.
8. Should no results be obtained at the first two sittings because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.

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